CHAPTER-6
COMMUNAL VIOLENCE, STATE POLITICS AND GENERAL ELECTIONS IN UTTAR PRADESH (2004-2014)
6.1. Background of Centre-State Politics and the Communal Violence before the General Elections of 2004

In the previous chapter the communal political fertility of the state of Uttar Pradesh in the context of 1989-2004 general elections was examined. In this state, political parties like Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), Congress, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Samajwadi Party (SP), Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) and various other communal groups play/played a dominant role in the state politics. The communal - caste politics appear to be counter-acting each other. The election studies specify that the caste politics of this land to a large extent weekend the role of communal politics. Sudha Pai argues that “since 1992 to October 2000 Uttar Pradesh had experienced a total of 11 governments,”¹ which were continuously making and breaking due to the causes of “Caste-Communal-Coalition” Politics. Engineer argues that “state of Uttar Pradesh which often witnessed the major riots and communal politics during eighties was seriously weakened afterwards due to the emergence of caste-based political parties there like Samajwadi Party (SP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) etcetera.”² On the other hand the ‘Mandal politics’ continually forced the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) to rely more on the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) than on ‘Brahmin-Bania’ community. Keeping such political interest it made the alliance with the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) two times that is in 1995 and 1997. The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) after the resignations of Kalyan Singh, Ramprakash Gupta attempted to secure and balance the caste card in Uttar Pradesh.³ Mr. Gupta due to his mismanagement was soon replaced by Rajnath Singh. He started the policy of “quota within quota” and gave a new turn to the politics of reservation in Uttar Pradesh. It was to impress the people in the interest of upcoming assembly elections in 2002 and to give a tuff fight that is the Samajwadi Party (SP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD). This policy became


controversial from the start from ultimately involving the Supreme Court which restricted it by an order of ban.4

The assembly election held in January 2002 brought almost a rout of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) which lost the ‘number one position’ in the State’s politics to the Samajwadi Party (SP). The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and its allies together were expecting to get 110 seats in a house of 403. The Samajwadi Party (SP), with a leading position in nearly 150 constituencies has emerged number one but was yet far away from a clear majority.5 It received 143 seats with 26.27 percent of vote share, whereas Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) got 88 seats with 25.31 percent vote share, Congress had received just 25 seats with 8.99 percent of vote share and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) won 98 seats with 23.19 percent of vote share.6 The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) strategically aligned with the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP)7 in the interest of future general elections of 2004.

This alliance proved failed and collapsed in August 2003. The Samajwadi Party (SP) the Congress and the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) joined hands together to form the new government of Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav which successfully completed its tenure. The position of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the centre slowly and gradually started to weaken. Zoya Hasan examines that firstly, “for it National Democratic Alliance (NDA) the most difficult task was to maintain the coalitions on its ideological positioning over the secularism. Second, in practice, it lacked the political will to take a firm stand against the practitioners and purveyors of polarisation and violence without fearing that it will alienate the majority community.”8 Engineer analyses another factor that since the installation of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the centre there has been no single year free from Communal Violence incidents despite the Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) argue and

assurance of communal free India. In the year of 2000, according to him, in all over India, around 24 incidents of Communal Violence incidents took place, among of which around 91 persons lost their life and 165 were injured. In Uttar Pradesh alone around 7 riots took place in which about 9 people were killed and 34 injured like as, Azamgarh (27 January; Dead: 2; several Injured), Farrukhabad (19 March), Ghaziabad, Madhupur-Bharaich (Injured: 12), Mathura (15 August; Dead: 2; Injured: 15), Moradabad (19 December), Fathegarh (3 March; Dead: 3; Injured: 12), Mau (Dead: 1; Injured: 3). The year of 2001 was also like previous year, nation has witnessed about 27 riots in which around 56 people were killed and 158 injured. The state of Uttar Pradesh faced 5 riots in which about 23 people were killed and 9 injured. The riot-prone cities of it were Moradabad (5 March; Dead: 2), Kanpur (Dead: 12), Lucknow (5 June; Dead: 3), Moradabad (23 July; Dead: 6), Muzaffarnagar (5 August). But the Kanpur Communal Violence according to Engineer “is like a wakeup call by all committed secularist.” Because it was the first major riot after the Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu) in 1998, which took place in direct of post-Babri Masjid demolition period. The year 2002 in its start became the witnessed of huge ‘pogrom against the Muslims in Gujarat state’. Including this, the nation witnessed about 28 Communal Violence in which about 1173 people were killed and 2272 injured. Three riots took place in Uttar Pradesh that is, in Bahraich (1 April), Saharanpur (13 May), Badaun (14 May; injured: 12). The point to be noticed here is that the “Gujarat riot” took placed shortly after the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) lost badly in state elections. Afterwards Modi became the political star of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) hardliners who insisted that “the only way of reversing the party’s fortunes was to aggressively revive its ‘Hindu chauvinist or Hindutva, agenda’.”

10 Ibid, 232.
12 Ibid, 224.
13 Ibid, 232.
16 Hasan, *Congress after*, 77.
Following this approach, he appeared as the successful Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and captured the political power with 126 seats out of the 182 in Gujarat.\textsuperscript{19}

Zoya Hasan argues that “the event of Gujarat pogrom became the one of the most important factor for the Congress, not only in terms of its response to the mass violence but how to deal with Hindutva politics at central and state levels.”\textsuperscript{20} Another significant event happened when National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government made certain changes in the national curriculum framework for schools in the name of Indianising education. The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has been working overtime to ensure that the socio-cultural component of school education acquired a distinct ‘Hindu flavour’ and to execute the saffronisation plans, Murli Manohar Joshi appointed his men in key places in policy-making organisations dealing with culture, history, and education.\textsuperscript{21} Here ‘key issue’ was the changes in textbooks issued by the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in 2002-2003. This issue became the subject of criticism of the Congress along with the numerous Historians.\textsuperscript{22}

While Joshi continually dismissing the opposition blames of saffronisation of the education system claiming it as “politically motivated strategy” to create a division within the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) but they will not succeed.\textsuperscript{23} The other major communal activity took place in early 2002 when “the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) held the Government hostage in a major standoff in Ayodhya over the Ram temple. At the 10th anniversary of the destruction of the Babri Masjid, the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) wanted to perform a Sheela Daan, or a ceremony laying the foundation stone of the cherished temple at the disputed site. Around tens thousands of Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) activists assembled and threatened to overrun the site and forcibly build the temple. A grave threat was not only of the Communal Violence, but an outright


\textsuperscript{20} Hasan, Congress after, 78.


\textsuperscript{22} Hasan, Congress after, 78.

breakdown of law and order owing to the defiance of the government by a religious organization hung over the nation.”

In 2003, about 67 riots took place in which 58 people lost their life and 611 were injured. Among them Uttar Pradesh faced certain famous riots as in Bareilly (7 March; Dead: 1; Injured: 4), Bahraich (two children were burnt alive and twelve persons were injured), Gorakhpur—a highly sensitive town (20 March; Dead: more than 2), Agra (13-14 October; Dead: 1), Aligarh (01 November). In the start of the elections year of 2004, Engineer argues that nation has witnessed several riots in different places of the nation, but before the poll date in April-May Uttar Pradesh has not witnessed any riots. Then after it experienced several riots in Meerut (19 June; Dead: 3), Sanghavli village in Muzaffarnagar (21 July; Dead: 1), Muradabad (15 September; Dead: 1; Injured 18), Badohi (24 October; Injured 14), Padrona Qasba of Kushinagar (Injured: 25). This was the background before the Lok Sabha elections of 2004.

6.2. The 14th General Elections-2004: United Progressive Alliance (UPA) versus National Democratic Alliance (NDA) politics

The Election Commission announced for the general elections in 2004. Political parties started to impress the people with their past successes and future programmes and policies. Congress according to Zoya Hasan “adopted campaign on a much clear position against the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and its communal agenda. Sonia Gandhi campaigned strongly on the issue of pluralism and reiterated the commitment that Congress would preserve the ‘secular identity’ of the state. She fully exhorted the people’s mind to throw out this ‘communal government’ and restore the Congress rule. She called the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) as equal to the firka-parasti (disruptionist forces) and made the appeals to the peoples to reject the politics of hate. She also said ‘we will go to the people with politics that unites and not divides, politics that heals, not wounds.’ For the first time in the post–Indira Gandhi period, the Congress campaigned in

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specific secular manner.” Simultaneously, “the Congress also accepted the reality of coalition politics as a necessary pathway to regain power and contain the further expansion of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), regional parties, and caste politics.” The Party had experienced the taste of lost in three state elections of December 2003, therefore it decided to launch the collective secular forces against the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) under the banner of United Progressive Alliance (UPA). “The Congress collectively and strongly attacked on the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and Hindutva forces.”

The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) entered into fray by dissolving the parliament before the completion of its due term in order to capitalise on the perceived ‘feel good factor.’ Its successes in December 2003 assembly elections in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh also contributed to the fee good factor. In these state elections Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) did not play the “Hindutva card,” and the victories were viewed as a triumph of the politics of development associated with Vajpayee. Nalini Taneja argues that “despite the recent victories in the assembly elections, one can say that in electoral terms the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) remains just where it was in the last round of national elections. It is in no position to win the coming elections and form a government on its own. Yet it gets away with attacks on culture and educational institutions, both matters of direct concern to people. In ideological terms it is much stronger than it was in the last round; primarily because it’s social and political vision finds favour with and reflects the prerogatives of the ruling classes better than any other party.” In the general elections Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) hoped to capitalise on the slogan “India Shining” and released many ads touting the economic growth of the nation. The central message was that of it, ‘India never had it so good.’ On this slogan during in her whole

28 Hasan, Congress after, 78.
29 Hasan, Congress after, 79.
31 Hasan, Congress after, 85.
32 “Prime Ministers of India Atal.”
33 Kronstadt, “India’s 2004,” 5.
35 “Prime Ministers of India Atal.”
36 Hasan, Congress after, 82.
campaign, Sonia was asking from the people that “Where is India Shining?” Engineer has also asked a question from the nation that “can India really shine under the Hindutva?” He further argues that “even from an economic perspective such claim is totally untenable. Moreover the people were more concerned about the communal situation under the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) rule than the economic situation.” Against the “India Shining” slogan Congress has made a simple slogan- “Congress ka hath, aam aadmi ke saath (Congress Hand is with the Common Man).” The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) countered by raising the explosive issue of “foreign origin of Sonia Gandhi, saying that only an Indian-born person could hold the nation’s highest offices.” Mr. Vajpaye said “the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) had parted ways with the Congress on the “big issue” of “foreign origin.” I don’t understand this alliance.” When the question was asked to him about the inclusion of Ayodhya issue in its manifesto he replied that “it is an important public, national issue. It is not possible to move on by ignoring it “iski upeksha kar ke nhi chla ja skta (We do not want the issue to linger on).” However, simultaneously he also declared that “we will not make it an electoral issue.” The electoral campaigning of Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) was more focused on non-communal issues through its sumptuous and showy ad blitzkrieg strengthened by the false belief the state victories in December 2003 would be repeated.

The people were galvanised by local parties also. In the state of Uttar Pradesh the Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) invoked the caste politics maintaining a safe distance from both the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress. The Samajwadi Party (SP) criticised the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) as the saffron party only using the ‘Ram temple’ issue for political gains and describing the Congress as a dead party in the state with no hopes of the revival in the upcoming elections.

40“PM draws lines between diatribe, debate,” The Indian Express, April 2, 2004, New Delhi, p.3.
42Siraj Qureshi, “Mulayam keeps BJP, Cong at bang,” The Indian Express, April 21, 2004, New Delhi, p.3.
Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) attacked the Congress and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) for being dominated by upper caste Manuwadi. The party also alleged that “communal forces” have gained strength in the country because of the ‘Manuwadi’ tend among upper caste members in the Congress and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). The slogan of the party was “Chadh Gundo Ki Chati Par, Vote Padega Hathi Par (the vote will be cast in favour of the elephant–BSP symbol- riding on the chest of the villains).”

In 2004 general election the right of centre coalition of 22 parties, Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) was seeking a second consecutive term in office. Its main challenger was the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA), led by Ms. Sonia Gandhi. The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and Congress led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) were directly pitted against each other. The outcome of the elections was not was not on expected a predictable lines.

6.2.1. Election Results
The 2004 election was distinct in more than one way. It was the first general elections since 1977 that has upset every electoral calculation and poll prediction. There was significant increase in the tally of the left winning 61 seats out of 543. The Congress performed above expectation everywhere except in Kerala. It secured 145 seats with 26.53 percent of valid votes. The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) was able to win 138 seats with 22.16 percent of valid votes. Its tally dropped to 138 down from the 182 seats it won in 1999, while Congress increased its tally from 114 to 145. The allies contributed 74 seats and 9.1 percent of the vote share to the combined tally. It won only 54 seats in the absence of allies which was a little more than a third of its total strength of 145 seats. The coalition was extremely important in the Congress alliance’s victory just as it was for the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) alliance in 1998 and 1999 elections.

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43 “Cong’s ‘Castiest’ supporters won’t vote for us: Maya,” The Indian Express, April 2, 2004, New Delhi, p.3.
44 “‘Slow’ n’ steady, smug Maya sets off on UP elections trail,” The Indian Express, April 12, 2004, New Delhi, p.5.
47 Hasan, Congress after, 82.
polls, the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) had got 182 seats while the Congress got 114. The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) got 8.65 crore votes (23.75%) while the Congress got substantially more – 10.31 crore votes (28.30%). In the 2004 polls, the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) obtained 138 seats while the Congress got 145. The vote shares were as follows – Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) 8.63 crore (22.16%), Congress 10.34 crore (26.53%). Clearly, neither did the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) lost many votes in comparison to the 1999 polls nor did the Congress gain heavily. Yet, with almost a similar vote-base the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) ended up with 44 seats less and the Congress gained 31.48

In Uttar Pradesh voter turnout was 48.16 percent.49 The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) faced the biggest loss by capturing only 10 seats with vote share of 22.17 percent. On the other hand Congress won only 9 seats with the vote share of 12.04 percent. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) won 19 seats with 24.67 percent of vote share.50 Out of this tally, the Samajwadi Party (SP) won 35 with 26.74 percent of vote share and the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) won 3 seats with 4.49 percent of vote share.51 (Table: 6.1).

<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>2004</td>
<td>9/ 12.04%</td>
<td>35/ 26.74%</td>
<td>10/ 22.17%</td>
<td>19/ 24.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the state the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) has been declining in the state ever since the “Ram Lehar” of the mid-1990s has receded. The Congress emerged as the real gainer from Uttar Pradesh in many ways. It managed to retain its tally of the 1999 Lok Sabha elections with a small proportion of votes.52 The Communal campaigning was not

49 Rana, *India votes*, 593.
completely done away. Mahant Yogi Adityanath, a Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) Star campaigner in Uttar Pradesh, a known face for his militancy and extremism of Hindutva, allegedly involved in the Gorakhpur riots of March 20, 2003, bluntly campaigned saying “Vote only for Hindutva, not for the development.” He also propagated that “I want Muslims votes too, but wash them in the Gangajal (holy water for Hindus that is the river of the Ganga) first.” This communal attitude of him proved successful in polarising the votes winning his constituency with the high margin of votes that is 353647. In other Communal Violence places of Uttar Pradesh, the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) candidates had distinctive positions with their vote share in compared to the others parties. (Table: 6.2).

**List of Successful Candidate from Uttar Pradesh, Conflict Constituency in General Elections-2004**

<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>Bareilly (7 March 2003)</td>
<td>Santosh Gangwar</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>269651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahraich (7 March 2003)</td>
<td>Rubab Sayeda</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>188949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorakhpur (20 March, 2003)</td>
<td>Aditya Nath</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>353647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agra</td>
<td>Raj Babbar</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>243094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligarh</td>
<td>Bijendra Singh</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>INC</td>
<td>167142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moradabad March 2, 2004</td>
<td>Dr. Shafiqurrahman Barq</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>218079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikandrabad (Bulandshahr) March 7, 2004</td>
<td>Kalyan Singh</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>258284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghazipur (poll violence)</td>
<td>Afajal Ansari</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>415687</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table: 6.2: Note: M=Male, F=Female, SC=Scheduled Caste, GEN= General.*


However, in 2004 election the Indian electorate defeated the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and elected the United Progressive Alliance...
(UPA) government instead\(^\text{56}\) while the party in itself was too confident about the success on the back of ‘India Shining’ theme.\(^\text{57}\) The Congress on its success reacted by saying that “the people expressed their resentment against divisive politics of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) that had damaged social harmony and its elitist’s economic policies that had neglected weaker sections of society.”\(^\text{58}\) The Congress managed to win and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) lost when their votes were largely intact.

**6.3. The 15th General Elections-2009: The Continuity of United Progressive Alliance (UPA) and Caste-Communal Politics**

The government of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) before 2009 election faced two major problems from opposition parties relating to the signing of the ‘nuclear deal’ with the United State of America in July 2005 and the Mumbai terrorist attack on 26 November 2008 in which around 166 peoples were killed. It happened just before the next general elections in 2009. On nuclear deal issue, four parties including the Communist Party of India (CPIM) left the coalition government, triggering a vote of no confidence in July 2008. But the government survived by a one-vote majority and completed its tenure in 2009.\(^\text{59}\) With the coming of its end the Election Commission announced the fresh general elections in the month of April to May in 2009.

The 2009 Indian general election was held in five phases between April 16 and May 13, 2009. Before this election, the state of Uttar Pradesh experienced the assembly election in the year of 2007. Mulayam Singh Yadav after proven his majority on the floor three times that is, on the February 28, 2006, January 25, 2007 and February 2007, at last completed his tenure in the April 2007. In this assembly election the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) attempted to incite communal strife. As part of the Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) propaganda, its state unit produced and released a communally incendiary Video Compact Disk {\((VCD: \text{an inferior quality (DVD)}\)} just a few days before of first voting phase on April 7, 2007. The Video Compact Disk (VCD) contains crude and vile


\(^{58}\)Hasan, *Congress after*, 84.

caricatures of Muslims, depicting them as a vicious, calculating, and a conniving lot who are out to destroy “Hindus” and their way of life. On this conspiracy Congress reaction was that “the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) is trying to spread hatred.” The former prime minister V.P. Singh, also blamed that the “Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) should be de-recognised. It is spreading communalism. Politics should be devoid of all this.”

On April 6, 2007 a day before the start of the first phase of the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections, the Election Commission filed a First Information Report (FIR) for a cognizable crime against Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) national party president Rajnath Singh and Lalji Tandon. They charged for attempting to provoke communal tension and of trying to obtain votes by appealing on religion basis.

The result of the election was in favour of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) with clear-cut victory with 206 seats with 30.43 percent of vote share ending the 14 years of coalition rule. The Congress-22 (8.61 percent), the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP)-51 (16.97 percent) and the Samajwadi Party (SP)-97 (25.43 percent) seats were able to win. The Uttar Pradesh has been the mainstay of communal politics. The state in 2005 faced various communal riots. According to annual Home Ministry Report (HMR) the nation witnessed 779 communal incidents in which around 124 people died and 2066 injured. The state faced riots in Azamgarh (9 February; Injured: 12), Agra (13 February), Sambhalnagar- Moradabad (19 February), Lucknow (Dead: 3; Injured 14), Balrampur; Faizabad (27 March 27; Dead: 6; Injured: 50), Mau (13-14 October; Dead: 9; Injured: 37).

In among of all riots, the violence in Mau and Agra in 2005 according to Venkitesh Ramakrishnan has shown that communal politics in Uttar Pradesh can rise

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61 Ibid.

62 Ibid.


65 Asghar Ali Engineer, Communalism in Secular India: A minority perspective (Haryana: Hope India Publication, 2007), 222-228.

again and overwhelm the State’s social atmosphere with disastrous consequences.67 Because the incidents in Mau were so serious, it continued for three days killing. Informal estimates by nonpartisan sources put the death toll at 12. While the politically motivated statements of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Hindu Yuva Vahini (HYV), a local “Hindu outfit controlled by the Hindu Maha Sabha (HMS), spoke of “narsanghar” (massacre) of Hindus. In this riot Mukhtar Ansari, the local independent Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), the “don politician” of Mau, took to the streets in an open jeep, self-professedly to calm the people and control the riots. But his involvement gave more fire to the situation and support to the Muslims rioters.68 The Sangh Parivar workers started a campaigning on communal lines in neighbouring districts of Bahraich, Ghazipur and Ballia.69

In the year of 2006 just before the elections year of 2007 assembly elections, the state also faced various riots in Muzaffarnagar (17 February; Injured: 7), Lucknow (3 March; Dead: 4), Aligarh (8 April; Dead: 4; Injured: 13), Aligarh (29 May 29; Dead: 2), Goda-Pratapgarh (18 June; Dead: 3), Muzaffarnagar, Blandshahar and Ambedkarnagar (22 October; Dead: 2).70 In the year 2006 the turbulence in Aligarh was seen as politically motivated to be part of a larger stirring in the Hindu heartland that has seen riots in both Lucknow and Mau in the last six months.71 Communal Violence happened in Gorakhpur on January 27-29, 2007. In this riot two persons died and several injured.72 Another incident of Communal Violence occurred in Aliganj area of Sultanpur in which two people were set ablaze.73 As commonly found that the political parties after the riots have starts to blame each other same as has found in also this case, Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) has started to blame the Samajwadi Party (SP) of conspiring to create the violence

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68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
to polarize the Muslim votes. While the Uttar Pradesh Congress committee spokesman, Dwijendra Tripathi said that “the communal tension in Gorakhpur could have been nipped in the bud, but for the dubious intentions of the Samajwadi Party (SP), which was bent on engineering communal riots to polarise Muslim votes.” In short, the political parties are found to just busy in trying to take mileage out of the situation instead of ensuring that the situation is first brought under complete control. The situation was used by the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) to consolidate a larger Hindu electorate across the state ahead of assembly elections in 2007.

Even after the making of chief minister Mayawati in May 13, 2007 riots have continued to happen. In the year of 2007 after the Gorakhpur and the Aliganj riots, the state has faced another riot on September 1 in Allahabad. The year 2008 also witnessed various riots in Azamgarh (8 September; Dead: 2), Agra (9 September), Gonda (10 September). Before general elections of 2009 till to April Tanda town- Ambedkarnagar faced communal Violence; five towns witnessed communal tension in Banaras, Azamgarh, Lucknow, Bareli and Ghazipur on the occasion of Holi, in all 5 person were killed and 22 injured. These riots have taken place under the chief ministership of Mayawati. Asghar Ali Engineer argued that during 2009 period about 23 lives were lost and 73 people injured in whole of India. This abundantly proves that communalism is a political and not a religious phenomenon and that communal graph goes up and down depending on political dynamics of a region. The general elections-2009 was held in the presence of this environment.

6.3.1. State Politics: United Progressive Alliance (UPA) versus National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Election Campaign

The announcement of the general elections by the election commission raised the temperature of the state politics in Uttar Pradesh. National and local parties and their leaders crisscrossed the state holding mass rallies and giving rousing speeches, appealing

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74 “Riots in Gorakhpur: A preliminary report.”
75 Engineer, “Communal riots, 2007.”
78 Ibid.
to the audience for their votes. The real and ultimate fight was in between the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). In this election the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) made an alliance with Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD). Advani during the election campaign in Uttar Pradesh said “we are sure to bring the end to the suffering of the common man under the five years long United Progressive Alliance (UPA) rule. It is also a step towards ending the Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) misrule of Uttar Pradesh.” At the same time, the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) was playing with the fire of Hindutva politics. It raised the issues of the Ram temple and Article 370 in its election manifesto. It stated that the “overwhelming desire of the people in India and abroad to have a grand temple at the birthplace of Sri Ram in Ayodhya” and the intent to explore all possibilities including negotiations and judicial proceedings to facilitate it.” At the launching time of party manifesto, L.K. Advani declared that “he will not say “Jai Shree Ram” till the construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya has not completed.” Because the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) having the belief in the concept of ‘Ramrajya’ and always put the nation before everything else.

The feeling of hate against the minority was expressed when Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Varun Gandhi in his speech at the Pilibhit allegedly criticised the local Muslims by saying that “he did not want any Muslim vote and that ‘these people (Muslims) needed to be picked up, one by one, and sterilized.” He further said “If anyone raises a finger towards Hindus or if someone thinks that Hindus are weak and leaderless. If someone thinks that these leaders lick our boots for votes, if anyone raises a finger towards Hindus, then I swear by the Gita that I will cut that

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81 Vohra, *The Making*, 381
The Congress has condemned the Varun’s statement and demanded the stern actions should be taken against Varun.\(^87\) The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) president Rajnath Singh replied that “the Varun issue is neither an embarrassment nor an opportunity, but of political harassment, which the party is against.” After the arrest of Varun, Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) has comes out in open defence and has alleged the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) for attempting to “Communalise the General Election for political gain.” It all happened only for the sake of vote bank politics in Uttar Pradesh.\(^88\)

N. Ram observes that the Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) election manifestoes since 1996 shows a consistent pattern of fielding the core Hindutva issues during elections campaign.\(^89\) However, simultaneously this is also true that Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) has set up its own minority front, promising heaven to them, through some Muslim members like Shah Nawaz Hussain, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and others. It is also projecting Naqvi as its spokesman. But the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) does not want to give up its mool mantra (basic formula) of “Ram Mandir (Ram temple)” to woo hardcore Hindu votes.\(^90\)

Following the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) campaign, Congress also became busy in impressing the people. For this Congress led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) used the implementation of number of promises like the enactment of Right to Information (RTI) which obliges the bureaucracy to explain its decisions when asked by concerned citizens also believed to address the issue of corruption, the \textbf{National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme} (NREGS) which institutes a minimal guaranteed wage to all rural casual workers and the implementation of a 27 percent quota for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the universities. It also waived off far loans in 2008.\(^91\) The Congress dwelt mostly on it performance during the 2004-2009 tenure in offices and its “pro-aam


\(^{87}\) “Tactic understanding between BSP, BJP: Cong,” \textit{The Indian Express}, April 8, 2009, New Delhi, p. 4.

\(^{88}\) “BJP changes line on Varun: Cong, Maya, EC plotting,” \textit{The Indian Express}, April 2, 2009, New Delhi, p. 1.


admi policies.”92 All this pleased a popular electorate, which was also sensitive to the fall of the inflation rate: in India, a double-digit inflation can make a government fall whereas the growth rate (on the decline since mid-2007) does not play such a big role in a country used to slow growth till the 1990s. The urban middle class also appreciated the 2008 nuclear deal with the United States—through which Washington agreed to transfer civil nuclear energy technology to India in spite of the fact that the country had not signed the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT)—, not only for the mark of international recognition it represented, but also because of its implications in terms of energy.93 The regional parties the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Samajwadi Party (SP) the two bitter rivals campaigned to woo the voters in their own respective ways targeting the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress focusing to influence the state’s minority Muslim vote as well as lower caste votes.

6.3.2. Election Results

The month-long voting period ended on May 13. A total of 8070 candidates contested for 543 Lok Sabha seats. The average election turnout over all 5 phases was around 59.7 percent. The results of the election were announced within three days of phase five, on 16 May 2009. The Congress led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) made its triumphant return to the power. The Congress’s score was up from 145 seats in 2004 to 206 in 2009 with 28.55 percent of vote share, the highest any single party had got in 25 years. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) numbers had gone up from 217 to 261 (only 11 short of a clear majority). Whereas, the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) was reduced to 116 seats with 18.80 percent of valid vote share and have lost its 61 seats.94 The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), which fielded the highest number of candidates 503 among all political parties, could win only in 21 constituencies, that too none beyond Uttar Pradesh. This marked a success rate of just on 6.17 percent.95 The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has actually made progress compared to the 2004 Lok Sabha elections (21 seats against 19) and is still, by far, the first party in terms of valid votes, 27.4 percent in Uttar Pradesh, 3

points more than in 2004 and 10 more than the Congress. The success of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh was attributed to Rahul Gandhi who was projected as a strong contender for the post of prime minister after Manmohan Singh. The Samajwadi Party (SP) tally in this election has gone down from 36 to 23 seats only. (Table: 6.3).

The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) led by the Indian National Congress (INC) formed the government after obtaining the majority of seats based on strong results in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Dr. Manmohan Singh became the first prime minister since Jawaharlal Nehru in 1962 to be re-elected after completing a full five-year term. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was able to put together a comfortable majority with support from 322 members out of 543 members of the house. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) received support from the two bitter rivals who fought elections against the Congress in Uttar Pradesh and elsewhere have chosen to pledge their support on the ground that they want to strengthen secular forces and to keep the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) out. The other parties like Janata Dal (Secular) (JD(S)), Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) etcetera extended their support to the alliance.

### Seats and Vote Share of Four Major Political Parties in Uttar Pradesh General Elections-2009

<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>2009</td>
<td>21/18.25%</td>
<td>23/23.26%</td>
<td>10/17.5%</td>
<td>20/27.42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 2009 elections the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) electoral campaign did not prove beneficial for the party in terms of winning seat. Its Hindutva manifesto, attack on Manmohan Singh and support of members like Varun Gandhi gave a confusion sight to

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96 Verniers and Christophe Jaffrelot, “India’s 2009 Elections.”
97 Ibid.
99 Engineer, “Democracy, Elections.”
the electorate. The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), “polarisation as a political strategy” which has always been remaining a double-edged sword has proved at times highly beneficial, at other times damaging the party’s prospects. A National Election Study 2009 survey indicates that some of the issues highlighted by political parties had almost no impact on voting decisions. They included, for instance, the Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) campaign issues such as the Indo-United States nuclear deal and the Ram Sethu controversy. However, economic concerns, basic services, welfare policies and citizens’ security were significant in influencing voting decisions. Surprisingly, the United Progressive Alliance’s (UPA) vote did not suffer much even though the price rise and terrorist attacks during the government’s term in office were matters of concern to a majority of the voters. The real loser of the elections was the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). Receiving about 19% of the valid votes, it felled even below its 1991 tally. It was routed from some of its strongholds, like Delhi (no seat at all) and Rajasthan (5 out of 25 seats), and has been badly affected in others, like Uttar Pradesh (10 seats as in 2004 but with 5% of valid votes less) and Uttarakhand (no seats, against 3 out of 5 in 2004 and 7% votes less).

However, in Uttar Pradesh the Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) communal role has played a successful role. Varun Gandhi’s open communal role has given the highest votes of margin among the conflict constituencies of the state. This success has been telling that Uttar Pradesh has still having its communal political roots. (Table: 6.4).

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100 Vohra, The Making, 383.
103 Verniers and Christophe Jaffrelot, “India’s 2009 Elections.”
104 Vohra, The Making, 382.
**List of Successful Candidate from Uttar Pradesh, Conflict Constituency in General Elections-2009**

<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>Azamgarh (Two Times Riots)</td>
<td>Ramakant Yadav</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>247648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agra</td>
<td>Dr. Ramshankar</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>203697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorad</td>
<td>Beni Prasad Verma</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>INC</td>
<td>155675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambedkar Nagar (Tanda)</td>
<td>Rakesh Pandey</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BSP</td>
<td>259487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varanasi</td>
<td>Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>203122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucknow</td>
<td>Lal Ji Tandon</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>204028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breilley</td>
<td>Praveen Singh Aron</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>INC</td>
<td>220976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghazipur</td>
<td>Radhey Mohan Singh</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>379233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilibhit</td>
<td>Feroze Varun Gandhi</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>419539</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table: 6.4: Note: M=Male, F=Female, SC=Scheduled Caste, GEN= General.*


Amartya Sen points out that “The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP)’s powerful role in mainstream Indian politics and the might of the Hindutva movement are parts of the new political reality in India. Even though the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) is no longer dominant, in the way it was over the last few years, it remains a politically powerful force, and is working hard to return to office.”\(^{105}\) The Congress in 2009 performed very well in terms of seats, a feat even more remarkable that it was already in office since 2004. It had never won so many seats since 1991. However, the decade of the United Progressive Alliance’s (UPA) was also not remained free from Communal Violence. (Table: 6.5).

Communal Violence during United Progressive Alliance’s (UPA) Rule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Communal Incidents</th>
<th>Number of Deaths</th>
<th>Number of Injured Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>3317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>2138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>2342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>943</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>2354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>2170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>2066</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The 2012 Uttar Pradesh legislative assembly election followed as a result the termination of the five year of the previous Uttar Pradesh legislature elected in 2007 in which Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has won an absolute majority of seats. The incumbent chief minister Mayawati’s Bahujan Samaj Party (BJP) was overpowered by Mulayam Singh Yadav’s Samajwadi Party (SP), which secured a comfortable majority of 224 in the house of 403 and 29.15 percent of valid vote share outperforming the ruling Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and other national parties, the Congress and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). Mulayam’s son and Samajwadi party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav was nominated as chief minister by the party. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) crashed to just on 80 seats securing almost 26 percent of vote, down 4.5 percentage points since 2007. The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) finished third with 47 seats and 15 percent of the vote share, a decline of four seats and 2 percent votes share respectively since 2007. The Congress has managed to win 28 seats, a marginal increase of six seats since 2007 and
garnered nearly 12 percent of the vote share, up 3 percentage points. The outcome of the elections was believed that it will also alter the power politics in the centre.

In the month of March 2012, Akhilesh Yadav assumed the power as the chief minister of the state. Since then it is said that India’s most communally sensitive state started to face various account of communal clashes. A report in The Economics Times says that there were 39 incidents of communal riots in the state according to the police records in between March 2012 to August 2013. The opposition criticised the Samajwadi Party (SP) government and called for its dismissal. There were nearly 100 incidents of violence among of them certain main riots are as, in Firozabad-Rasulpur (April 17, 2012), Bhagpat (23 May), Katholi-Jansath village (23 May), Moradabad-Tehsil Bilari (24 May), Deoband (26 May), Tilhari village (20 May), Azamgarh-Nizamabad (1 June), Muzaffarnagar (3-4 June), Saharanpur (4June), Meerut (5 June), Attrola-Thana Kotwali village Dalia (5 June), Muzaffarnagar (6 June), Phoolpur-Azamgarh (9 June), Meeranpur-Kathoda tehsil of Kathuli district (11 June), Aligarh (12 June), Sikanderabad (12 June), Gorakhpur (12 June), Bhmroah village (13 June), Kandeela (14 June), Bareilly (19 June), Pratapgarh (17 June), Lahsad village of Shamli (18 June), Kosi Kalan riots in Mathura (21 June), Meerut (22 June), Nihod (23 June), Agra (23 June), Badaun (27 June), village Tasuli in Kheta Sarai (27 June), Pratapgarh (30 June), Farukhabad (8 July), Saharanpur (13 July), Shajahanpur (13 July), Bareily (20 July), Karatpur & Meerut, Pratapgarh (21 July), Rampur (23 July), Nawabganj (24 July), Himatpur (24 July), Bareily (24 July), Sayidana-Aonla (24 July), Kathuli (24 July), Baghpai (24 July), Faizabad (24 July), Nawgaon Sadat (24 July), Thana Bichraun, Dhampur (27 July), Dhampur (30 July), Khurja.

In above communal riots to a great extent political parties were directly and indirectly involved or played a role to suit to their interests. It is commonly said that the communal riots do not occur; they are engineered and the people engineering them have motives that usually have to do with political mobilisation and elections. Communal identities and their violent manifestations are an on-going socio-political problem. Communal Violence has graduated from being sporadic incidences of violence into being an unceasing recurring feature of Indian politics. The production of such riots involves calculated and deliberate actions by key individuals, the conveying of messages, recruitment of participants, and other specific types of activities, especially provocative ones, that are part of a per- formative repertoire. The 2013 communal riots of Muzaffarnagar and Shamli are/were worst riots of Indian history after the riots which had taken place during the partition of the subcontinent and the 2002 riots in Gujarat. These riots involved the elements of calculated and deliberate actions, various provocative activities and rehearsals of riots before the actual riot of September 2013.

6.4.1. Muzaffarnagar Riot versus Communal State Politics and Election Campaign

The 2014 elections were fought on a presidential-style system as Modi was declared prime ministerial candidate of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), while Rahul Gandhi was the undeclared candidate of the Congress Party. The campaign was more personality-driven. An important development was the role of social media, which was fully utilized by the leaders. The tweets, like ‘Aab ki baar, Modi Sarkar’ (This time, we will have a Modi government), went viral. So was the case with others, such as ‘Aab Acche din ayenege (Good days will come now).’ The prime ministerial candidate of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) Mr. Narendra Modi started his campaign, focusing on the issues of ‘Development’ and ‘Good Governance,’ but this was interspersed with ‘identity politics’, when he invoked ‘religion’ and ‘caste’ elements to his advantage. He also focused on fulfilling the rising aspirations of people and youth in particular. “As the campaigning gathered momentum, Mr. Modi added the slogan ‘Congress-mukt Bharat (Congress-

free India’) to this script. The slogan ‘Congress-mukt Bharat’ was thought out to resonate in terms of the corruption and non-performance of Congress-led governments in the past and for the diehard Hindutva voters, however, this same slogan would signify an end to the ‘appeasement of minorities’ and an assertion of Hindu national identity. He also attempted to mix up issues of development, nationalism and Hindu identity. He argued that nationalism is development and being nationalist is the core value of Hindutva. His ‘Hindutva’ was associated more with ‘national development’, thus bypassing issues of inter-community relations and minority rights.”

In one of his interviews, Modi clarified that “there is no contradiction between Hindu nationalism and development.”

“The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) publicised ‘development and governance’ as the key narratives of its 2014 electoral campaign, while, at the same time, carefully adjusting the campaign in order to meet local community expectations in many parts of the country.” The party adopted a multifaceted strategy of segregating the development constituency, the nationalist constituency and the Hindutva constituency, and addressing them in different ways according to the electoral situations/demands. While Mr. Modi addressed the development constituency, Rajnath Singh in Uttar Pradesh raised a strong Hindutva identity. Intermixing of ‘development’ and ‘Hindutva’ was mixed together into the electoral campaigns of the party. However, its electoral campaigns were multifaceted and carefully standardised to the national mood, to state-specific contexts and to local factors at the constituency level. Depending on the need it tried to make efforts to construct a communal split as the main basis of its electoral strategy. As a result, many party leaders did selectively engage in aggressive Hindutva rhetoric during the election campaign in 2014. In Uttar Pradesh it attempted to woo ‘Hindus’ against Muslims under toning Hindutva in the garb of development. The Congress, on the other hand, projected Modi as a disruptive leader, who would destroy the secular structure of the society.

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114 Palshikar, “The BJP and Hindu nationalism,” 725.

same electoral strategy was in play in Uttar Pradesh. This state also experienced communally charged campaigning often out bursting into Communal Violence.

Few months prior to the election, the Western part of Uttar Pradesh experienced Communal Violence in Muzaffarnagar in August-September 2013 which was ‘allegedly politically engineered.’ The atmosphere in “Muzaffarnagar has been vitiated over several months through sustained communal mobilization. Few days preceding the violence in Muzaffarnagar and its surrounding areas there were incidents of violence, counter-attacks, various groups calling for bandhs and protests. The supposedly secular forces including the institutions of state were also complacent in facilitating the communal campaign. Emotions were running high since 27 August with the killing of a young man accused of molesting a girl, followed by the revenge killing of the two men who were killed apparently to protect their sister’s honor. The glaring fact is that there was simply no overarching issue or context that can explain how the violence not only escalated rapidly, claiming number of lives but also spread to neighboring districts.”

The clashes between the Hindu and Muslim communities in resulted in at least 62 deaths including 42 Muslims and 20 Hindus and injured 93 and left more than 50,000 dislocated. Subsequently about 30 children have frozen to death due to the awful conditions in the refugee camps where thousands are/we still staying out of fear of returning to their looted homes. The Times of India reported that 95 deaths were took place in 500 incidents and communal conflicts in Muzaffarnagar alone intense 53 deaths. A total of 219 Muslims and 134 Hindus were injured. The Indian Express has also reported that in Muzaffarnagar riot alone 62 people died in which 46 were Muslims and 16 were Hindus. The riot was described as “the worst violence in Uttar Pradesh in recent history with the Army; as a result, being deployed in the last more than two

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decades.”\(^{121}\) The Ministry of Home Affairs placed the Uttar Pradesh at the top in the list of Communal Violence incidents.\(^ {122}\) Nationally the year 2013 was worse than 2012 from the standpoint of Communal Violence. “According to the Home Ministry data released in the National Integration Council meeting, 107 people were killed in communal riots across the country, which includes 66 Muslims and 41 Hindus in 479 incidents of Communal Violence this year.” Apart from those killed, 1,647 people including 794 Hindus, 703 Muslims and 200 policemen were injured.\(^ {123}\) It is obvious to anyone who considers the “Muzaffarnagar riots with more than a casual glance that there was willful political incendiaryism.”\(^ {124}\)

Besides this “there was consistent raising and reporting of numerous controversial issues that either define Hindutva or seek to mobilise Hindus on a religious basis and blatantly reduce non-Hindus to secondary status. These ‘controversies’ consist of attacks on places of worship, delegitimising of inter-faith marriages, privileging of Hindu symbols and identities, equating of Hindu identity with national identity and, perhaps most dramatically and contentiously, challenging the right to propagate religion by running a campaign that seeks to convert Muslim and Christian families ‘back’ to Hinduism. The issue of ‘ghar wapsi’—reconversion—made the headlines from October 2014 onwards, and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) president and many other functionaries in the party have been vocal in defending it. The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) president has dared opponents of reconversion to engage in a debate on the issue of conversion, and both he and the Union home minister, Rajnath Singh, have indicated that reconversion is only a reaction to conversion from Hinduism in the first place, and that the best remedy would be to legally ban all conversion. The controversy of love Jihad was also raised. It was alleged that Muslim boys marry Hindu girls in the name of love but actually in order to get them converted to Islam and thus ultimately benefitting the demographic imbalance

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\(176\)
in favour of the Muslim community to create anxieties among the Hindu community. Many other controversial statements continue to flow from different quarters of the larger group of organisations claiming allegiance to the Hindutva cause. While there are indeed inconsistencies and contradictory voices, many Rashtra Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS), office - holders have been involved in making provocative statements. Mohan Bhagwat, Sarsangchikal (chief) of the Rashtra Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS), asserted that India is a Hindu nation and that all those who live in India are Hindus.”

For over a year the Sangh Parivar stigmatized love issue between a Muslim boy and a Hindu girl as “love jihad.” In this context they were also found in continually attacking over the students of Darul Uloom Deoband and Nadwatul Ulama (Uttar Pradesh) while travelling in train or outside their campus. The attacks and deaths of Muslims have taken place as part of a sustained campaign in different villages. Common communal myths propagated by the Hindutva forces against Muslims that they have large families and do not believe in family planning; they are anti-national and that they will create a Kashmir like situation here as well were liberally put forth. The victims were all innocent lower class Muslims who had no role in attacks on Jats, the main community involved in the riots. There is an important distinction in the manner of Muslims and Jat deaths. Almost all the Jats who were killed were those who had participated in the ‘Mahapanchayat’ at Nangla Mandaur village on, 7th September, 2013. There were accounts of the Jats, in tractor trolleys from different villages that went to take part in the Mahapanchayat, raising provocative slogans as they passed by Muslim habitations. Provocations like dogs being dressed in burqa and beaten with slippers were on display along with slogans like – ‘Musalmano ke do sthan – Pakistan ya kabristan.’ Even the Jats we talked to admitted that ‘these youth have been taken in by the charisma of Modi and they raised slogans in his support’ on way to the Mahapanchayat.”

The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) has been actively involved in the violence and could emerge, as the major gainer. Its leaders have been active in organising the ‘Panchayats’ and the ‘Mahapanchayas’ in the villages where hate speeches pushed the crowd to take revenge

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126 Irfan Engineer, “Communal Violence in 2013.”
against the Muslims for harassing their women. Slogans against Muslims for ‘killing cows’ and ‘assaulting Hindu women’ mixed with slogans in support of Narendra Modi rent the air after the series of meetings and ‘Mahapanchayats’ in the villages. Like as “Desh, Bau aur Gai ko vchana hai toh Narendra Modi ko lana hai (Bring Narendra Modi to save the country, women and cows),” this saffron slogan that put fuel to the Muzaffarnagar riots fire. Several Muslims, including women, in the ‘relief camps’ told the team monitors that the mobs were shouting “Har Har Mahadev” and slogans in support of Narendra Modi when they assaulted the villages. “The handwork of the larger communal design and organization was evident in the well-rehearsed and similar arguments which the Jats from different villages forwarded to rationalize the killings and the displacement of the Muslims.” A fake old Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS) of Pakistan has also surfaced on social media (WhatsApp), in which two boys were shown killed cruelly by an angry mob. The video was circulated by ‘Sangeet Som,’ a Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA), who claimed that the two Hindu boys Sachin and Gaurav were killed because they had tried to save to respect of their sister from a Muslim who had been teasing and harassing her for a long time. It has done a petroleum job for furthering hostility and helped in maintaining a large mobilization of Jats in the last ‘Mahapanchayat’ which was held on September 7th, 2013 where he openly and wrathfully talked and incited the mobs to violence so as to “save” their women. Leaders belonging to the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), according to eyewitness accounts, were responsible for the gathering. At last, this Mahapanchayat became the witnessed for the brutal physical violence against the Muslims which included the fierce sexual assaults against women during the riots. “A Jat teacher in Kakda village described the Communal Violence in the region as - ‘Yeh hai Amit Shah ka jadoo (this is Amit Sha’s magic).’ The Qutba village had been witness to a panchayat that was attended by the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) president

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130 Harsh Mander, “Muzaffarnagar riots: We had been brothers until yesterday. Where did this hatred come from?,” Scroll, October 05, 2016, https://scroll.in/article/817229/muzaffarnagar-riots-we-had-been-brothers-until-yesterday-where-did-this-hatred-come-from (Retrieved March 16, 2017).

Mr. Rajnath Singh about 6 months back.”132 These points to the forces that have been at work in the area.

It is however noteworthy that no Communal Violence has been reported from any of the Muslim dominated villages. Simultaneously, “there were Jat dominated villages where the Jats took up the responsibility of protecting their Muslim brethren. Despite the constitutional the ‘secular’ character of the Indian state, the de facto reality remains that the state machinery has acted in a highly communal manner which undermines India’s secular credentials. India’s secularism ostensibly sways between ‘Hindu Rule’ of the “secular parties” of the ruling classes and the ‘Hindu Rashtra’ of the saffron brigade. Despite information, the state government did not move to prevent the ‘Mahapanchayat’ and subsequent ‘panchayats’ that vitiated the secular atmosphere in the villages.” 133 Thus the Supreme Court has criticised that “we prima facie hold the state government responsible for being negligent at the initial stage in not anticipating the Communal Violence and for taking necessary steps for its prevention.”134 “This has served to reinforce the terror of Communal Violence in the minds of affected families besides driving a schism in the composite culture of the area which mars the possibilities of gradual healing. Muslims are now being ghettoized in towns and localities dominated by them.”135

The 2013 Communal Violence in Muzaffarnagar need to be seen in the context of other violence in different parts of the country “in 2013 beginning from Kishthwar (J&K), Masoori and Meerut in Uttar Pradesh, Indore and Harda in Madhya Pradesh (MP), Bettiah and Nawada in Bihar and Rangpur in Cachar district of Assam. Uttar Pradesh has witnessed a sustained campaign at communalization – may it be the ‘chaursi kos parikrama’ or innovations like ‘love jihad’, ever since Amit Shah took over the reins of Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) in the state. This is pathognomonic of the communal forces

133 Ibid.
represented by the Sangh Parivar. The approaching Lok Sabha elections in 2014 provide the leitmotif of this campaign.\textsuperscript{136}

In this regard Ward Berenschot, Nivedita Menon, Ajoy Ashirwad Mahaprashasta, Irfan Engineer analysed that behind the Muzaffarnagar Violence was the conspiracy hatched to polarize the voters along caste and communal lines in view of 2014 general elections.\textsuperscript{137} These riots were manufactured is evident from the two pronged political strategy of the Sangh Parivar. Firstly, the Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) campaigns, in the last few years, have specifically targeted rural areas of Western Uttar Pradesh, dominated by an agrarian population. “Since the Jats own most of the cultivable land, they are powerful. A substantial Muslim and Dalit population work in their fields. The rest, being a few affluent Muslims and, focus on commercial enterprises.”\textsuperscript{138} In short it could be said that “a fury sweeping Muzaffarnagar has been generated because of the scuttling of the MAJGAR — Muslim, Ahir (Yadav), Jat, Gujjar and Rajput — alliance and the intense competition among political parties to grab its fragments.”\textsuperscript{139} Second by the mobilising the issue of ‘love jihad’ they specifically targeted the notion of ‘honour’ amongst the rural Jats.\textsuperscript{140} It is said that “for Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) the land of Uttar Pradesh has always been a first choice for communal politics.” This time it badly required to recover its political image for 2014 general elections so accordingly for the couple of years it been working and creating an atmosphere which finally came in the form of riots in Muzaffarnagar where Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders like Sangeet Som and others have communally poisoned the atmosphere with angry hateful speeches during. Their militant defence of the Jat community seems a calculated attempt to solidify Hindu support \textsuperscript{141} and mobilised the electorates at the Shamli election rally that “they all should caste a revenge vote in the polls.”\textsuperscript{142}

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{138} Mahaprashasta, “Muzaffarnagar - A case.”
\textsuperscript{140} Mahaprashasta, “Muzaffarnagar - A case
\textsuperscript{141} Berenschot, “Muzaffarnagar Riots Perils,” 15.
\textsuperscript{142} Garimella Subramaniam, “Development is intrinsic to a secular project,” The Hindu, April 14, 2014, Delhi, p. 7.
One of the main rumours that was also circulated not just in Muzaffarnagar area but in whole Uttar Pradesh and Delhi that “Mulayam Singh and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) have been working together to ensure the consolidation of their vote banks.” Although there is not sufficient evidence on the ground to support this but the Muslims were bought into the narrative of the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) being complicit in the violence to consolidate their respective vote bank. They became confused and had divided attitude towards their choice which were equally drawn towards the Samajwadi Party (SP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), and the Congress and which could be proved a success key for the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP).

In this election the Hindutva politics went a step ahead in articulating the ‘idea of Justice’ groomed in the politics of development. “The idea of the ‘Gujarat Model of Development’ was formulated to club with other ideas and issues of Hindutva. The ‘Gujarat Model’ in simple terms refers to a period from 2002-03 to 20011-12 during which the Indian state of Gujarat experienced a quantum jump in its growth rate. The driving force behind was described as the then chief minister Narendra Modi’s innovative interpretation of neoliberal policies. He himself was busy in mobilising the idea of development during the election on the basis of Gujarat model.”

On this idea Varghese K. George has argued as “the linkage between the Hindu assertion, material prosperity and economic growth is what makes the idea of Hindutva rate of growth, as opposed to the ‘Hindu rate of growth,’ which is a derisive description of a slow economy.” Another hot and communal agenda for the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) was the ‘protection of cows’ from slaughters. For this Mr. Modi tried to communally sensitise the issue by saying that “we brought in white revolution in the country, but the Congress wants a pink revolution,” intended to target the meat industry/animal husbandry despite the fact the Gujarat too exported meat. “The battle

143 Menon, “Muzaffarnagar 2013 – Violence by.”
148 George, “A Hindutva variant.”
lines however were drawn for the national elections on issues of democratic governance, corruption and poor economic management, Uttar Pradesh politics remained mired in communal-based identity politics.” Mr. Narendra Modi who was the prime ministerial Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate was instrumental in adding and abetting communalism in the state.\(^{150}\) He was found saying proudly that “I learnt to live for the others and not for myself and I owe it all to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).”\(^{151}\)

He is a “trained paracharak (propagator) of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) deeply soaked in the ideology of Hindu nationalism, working for the agenda of Hindu nation.”\(^{152}\) So he longs and woks for the agenda of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The slogan “Har Har Modi, Ghar Ghar Modi,” was widely used at Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) rallies in Uttar Pradesh to subside communal attitudes.\(^{153}\)

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has also decided this time to come forward with full-fledge support to Mr. Modi with huge number of ‘volunteers’ to man the election campaign from both level upwards, “even the nationalist organisation pressed all its workers and volunteers, number over 10 Lakh besides 40,000 and odd local units, call Shakhas, beside sympathizers and likeminded people to support the Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) prime ministerial candidate Modi, in mission form.”\(^{154}\) The Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) manifesto also contained many of the controversial and polarising issue and promises. The construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya, abrogation of Article 370 and adaptation of Uniform Civil Code (UCC)-issues than in one way or another appear to be unjust to Indian Muslims.\(^{155}\) The Congress has alleged that “the Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) manifesto was just a veil behind its original Hindutva agenda.”\(^{156}\)

On the other hand Congress has appeared in this political war with the slogan of “Har Haath Shakti, Har Haath Tarakki (power in every hand, progress to everyone).”


\(^{154}\) Puniyani, “Modi’s victory 2014,”5.

\(^{155}\) Subramaniam, “Development is intrinsic.”

\(^{156}\) Smita Gupta, “Midway through polls, the Gandhis take the battle to an ideological plane,” *The Hindu*, April 17, 2014, Delhi, p.8.
The party used another catchphrases to take a dig at the Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) like as “Kattar Soch Nahi, Yuva Josh” (It’s not about extreme views, but about youth power)” and “Main Nahi, Hum” (Not I, We). It also alleged that “the nation is at cross road ...people have to choose between two ideologies ...one is that of the Congress which an inclusive ideology while the other is the politics of caste and religion for grabbing power.” The Congress candidate Imran Masood from Saharanpur was caught on video saying as “If Modi tries to turn Uttar Pradesh into Gujarat (means here Gujarat riot), then we will chop him into tiny pieces... I am not scared of getting killed or attacking someone. I will fight against Modi. He thinks Uttar Pradesh is Gujarat.” The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) accused the Congress leadership of “inspiring violent, provocative and unparliamentarily” speeches which the Congress denied. However, Imran Masood told the reporters “he was sorry for his remarks.” The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) agitated when Muzaffarnagar police charge sheeted the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) national party president Amit Shah for allegedly making a hate speech in Muzaffarnagar in April during the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections.” He was caught in video clip in which “he was saying that the general elections, especially in Western Uttar Pradesh, are ‘an election for honour.’ It is an election to take revenge for the insult. It is an election to teach a lesson to those who have committed injustice. This election is about voting out the government that protects and gives compensation to those who killed Jats. He also said that It is about badla (revenge) and protecting izzat (honour).” He declared that “Nobody wants riots. But when there is one-sided action, people are forced to come out of the streets.” The reaction of the Congress to this hatred speech was to demand the arrest of Mr. Amit Shah and derecognition of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). The Samajwadi Party (SP) has also used this opportunity and accused the Amit Shah of ‘creating a fear psychosis among the Muslims demanding a ban on him

158 Mahim Pratap Singh, “What magic wands does Modi have to transform India, ask Sonia,” The Hindu, April 14, 2017, Delhi, p. 8.
from entering in the Uttar Pradesh.\textsuperscript{163} The Communal mobilisation and the Muzaffarnagar riots and their aftermath resulted intensification of communal divisions in the region reflecting a trend of tension evident across most of the state politicizing the religious identity in a manner that causes injustice to other communities for electoral benefits. “The political parties exploited the widening fault lines in Uttar Pradesh to their advantage that influenced their electoral performance in the 2014 general elections.”\textsuperscript{164} The polarization of the electorate induced by riots advantaged the communal political parties. Both the parties counter played to each other. Western Uttar Pradesh considered to be the ‘communal breeding ground,’ divided on religious/communal lines, and home to Muzaffarnagar that witnessed communal riots in August and September 2013, witnessed the most of communal exploitation.

6.4.2. Election Results

The political fight among the political parties at national and state level ended on May 16, 2014. The Election Commission announced the results in which the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) registered an outstanding victory. In this election, from it’s highest-ever vote share prior to 2014 (25.6 percent in 1998), the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) jumped to 31 percent in the election of 2014 winning 282 parliamentary seats. Compared to 2009, this was a huge leap of more than 12 percent. India has placed its faith in “Modi” by giving huge votes to his party.\textsuperscript{165} Modi proclaimed victory with a tweet, saying “India has won! Ache din aane waale hain (Indian has won! We’re approaching the good days).”\textsuperscript{166} The Congress which ruled the country since 2004 was able to capture only 44 seats with 19.52 percent of valid vote share.\textsuperscript{167} For astonishing success of Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) in Uttar Pradesh, Times of India has caught up Amit Shah “is the biggest winner of this election After Modi.”\textsuperscript{168} It was going to form a first majority government at the centre since 1984 with the ‘golden fact’ that is a stunning comeback in Uttar Pradesh as it surged ahead 72 of total

\textsuperscript{164} Pai, “Uttar Pradesh: Competitive Communalism.”
\textsuperscript{165} “India places its faith in Moditva,” \textit{The Times of India}, May 17, 2014, New Delhi.
\textsuperscript{166} “Modi victory tweet breaks records,” \textit{The Times of India}, May 17, 2014, New Delhi.
\textsuperscript{168} “My mission was to deliver in UP,” \textit{The Times of India}, May 17, 2014, New Delhi.
80 of Lok Sabha seats. In the last highest in 1998, Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) had won 57 Lok Sabha seats in an undivided Uttar Pradesh.\(^{169}\) (Table: 6.6).

**Seats and Vote Share of Four Major Political Parties in Uttar Pradesh General Elections-2014**

<table>
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<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>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>2/7.53 %</td>
<td>5/22.35 %</td>
<td>71/42.63 %</td>
<td>0/19.77 %</td>
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</table>

\(^{169}\)―BJP conquers UP after over a decade,‖ *The Times of India*, May 17, 2014, New Delhi, p.6.


Communalism during elections is a persistent problem which affects the length and breadth of each and every corner of India. Political manifestoes thrive on the sentiments of religious and ethnic identities and infest them with a sense of divisiveness and hatred. They create ‘electoral separation’ and then eventually move in on their chosen electorates to garner their respective votes. Voters are motivated vote on communal lines. In 2014 elections the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) mostly succeeded in the areas where communal polarisation was caused by the communal innnings played by the political parties’ leaders. The state of Uttar Pradesh being the hot bed of communal politics becomes witness to the open and underneath communal activities especially at the time of elections. The Western part of Uttar Pradesh which witnessed serious Communal Violence in Muzaffarnagar recorded ‘heavy poll’ turnout in Muzaffarnagar that is the 67.78 percent and 70.85 percent in neighbouring district like as Shamli.\(^{170}\) Secondly all three riot accused- Dr. Sanjeev Balyan (votes-401150), Kunwar Bhartendra (votes-205744) and Hukum Singh (votes-236828) won by a margin of more than hundred thousands from their nearest rivals. They exploited the communal fervours during the riots. The trio certainly got the advantage of the ‘Modi wave’ as well as strong polarization that Muzaffaranagar riots ensured to the saffron party which it has never in history. It also happened due to the disillusionment of Muslims who voted for Samajwadi Party (SP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), directly strengthening the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP).\(^{171}\) (Table: 6.7).

Zoya Hasan points out that “the Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) in Uttar Pradesh focused its campaign on both development and division. Mr. Modi talked about the development and simultaneously he allowed other leaders of his party to raise communal issue. After Modi’s close aide, Mr. Amit Shah took charge of the party’s campaign; it took an open turn towards Hindutva which has since become the main plank in the party electoral strategy. Thereafter, the communal agenda was intensified. The “save cow” campaign and “love jihad” propaganda and various other tactics were used. It shows that polarisation remains the principle instrument of mobilisation. It was the focal point of the Uttar Pradesh campaign which was/is the central Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) game plan. Mr. Modi’s decision to contest from Varanasi further underlines the Uttar Pradesh’s importance to the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) to signal that Hindutva will underpin its camping in the election in the state.”\(^{172}\) The Bhartiya Janata Party’s (BJP) development ‘mantra’ was a daydream to just lure voters. The saffron brigade was able to polarise voters along communal lines.

List of Successful Candidate from Uttar Pradesh Conflict Constituency in General Elections-2014

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<tr>
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<td>Raghav Lakhnepal</td>
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6.5. Conclusion

In the three general elections that are the 2004, 2009 and 2014 it becomes observable that the Communal Violence is the pre planned and politically engineered game for political power. In this game political parties particularly the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) directly and indirectly have been playing an important role in communalizing Indian politics. Communalising is fortifying itself at various levels of social existence. The state is communalisation itself by becoming party and participating in the process. It converges here that riots are not spontaneous outbursts of community anger. They are meticulously planned by vested interests for the purpose achievement. The upshot was that localised tensions and skirmishes acquired serious dimensions leading to large-scale rioting with extra-local implications in this election. Western Uttar Pradesh faced the sustained communal propaganda that helped victory to the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) in 2014. There are conscious and deliberate ways in which prejudices among Hindus and Muslims are not only allowed to exist and grow but are strengthened to cause the movement of Indian society towards the deepening of communalization. The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) occupies a specific space in this game of “politics and Hindutva.”