

Chapter - VI

PATTERN OF LEADERSHIP IN U.P.

(A) Rural Leadership

(B) Muslim Politics

(A) Rural Leadership

Panchayati Raj Institutions and their Impact on Rural Leadership

The introduction of Panchayati Raj institutions in the State has given rise to a new pattern of rural leadership in Uttar Pradesh. These leaders are quite different from traditional leaders and has resulted in conflict between the two types of leaders. In the past there was confluence of social, economic and political power in the same group. This fact was responsible for the emergence of dominant caste which ruled supreme over all groups in the villages. But the forces of change which were generated as a result of political, social and economic changes have now broken the monopoly and tend to shift the axis of power from the traditionally high group to the other aspirant lower groups.<sup>1</sup>

Rural leadership has undergone certain changes in authority and structure, which is applicable to most of the villages of Uttar Pradesh. Andre Beteille says that the halo about the traditional leaders and caste Panchayats is gradually becoming dim. There are various reasons for the waning influence of traditional leaders. Especially with the appearance of

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1. Chhabra, HK & Jones, W.T., State Politics in India, Surjeet Publication, Delhi, 1980, p.216.

Gram Sabha on the village scene, the caste Panchayats have almost become defunct, for the Gram Sabha enjoyed the protection and patronage of the government. These days the judgement pronounced by the Caste Councils are not always accepted. Fines and Punishments are ignored. The power of Caste Panchayats, though on the decline, has not completely disappeared. Among the people there still lingers a fear of heavy fines and other kinds of punishments. During the elections for Gram Sabha, some of the qualities that seem to command respect and elicit votes are wealth, age, intelligence, honesty, kindness, being born of a good family etc. However all these qualities are rarely possessed by a single individual, neither are they all very essential hall marks of popularity. For instance a man may be poor and yet respected because of his intelligence and honesty.<sup>1</sup>

But probably the most important feature of the new political order, according to Andre Beteille, "is the emergence of networks of interpersonal relations which ramify in every direction. The creation of new political opportunities and new bases of power has provided congenial conditions for the development of elaborated network of patronage. Such networks

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1. Andre Beteille, Caste, Class and Power, Asia Publishing House, Delhi, 1972, p.184

serve to link the village with territorial units of increasing wider scope and they also provide inter linkage between caste, class, panchayat and political party."<sup>1</sup>

According to Andre Beteille, following has been the impact of Panchayat Raj development on rural leadership.<sup>2</sup>

(i) The village society has undergone complete transformation. The traditional leadership which was based on religion, caste etc. is slowly giving way to a new leadership based on secular and merit consideration.

(ii) With the coverage of the village India by democratic institutions at the village, block and district level, the village now operates in another dimension. Their prestige in their own village may depend on the power they wield in higher bodies (i.e. block or district level).

(iii) Weaker Sections of society as well as women have been associated with the village administration, but they have not been able to play an effective role.

(iv) Power in rural areas is getting diffused rather than centralized, formerly, a number of functions were discharged by the same person, because many persons were not willing to share the responsibility. With the introduction of Panchayati Raj Institutions a new sense of responsibility has been instilled

1. Andre Beteille, Caste, Class and Power, Asia Publishing House, Delhi, 1972, p. 185

2. Ibid.

among the village people and more and more are sharing the responsibility.

(v) The position of the village headman, who previously used to be the nucleus of all power and authority, has been greatly weakened. Most of the powers formerly enjoyed by the village headman have been taken over by the Panchayat. However, within the Panchayat the Sarpanch has come to wield enormous powers.

(vi) Nature of leadership at the village level has undergone complete transformation. Instead of an autocratic leadership there is a democratic leadership.

(vii) The present rural leadership in India maintains a contact with the outside authorities, which is so essential for getting the approval and assistance for the various development schemes. This explains for the increasing participation of the Panchayat Samiti at the Block level, which is composed of representatives from several villages and is the chief financing agency. Even the State leadership is keen to have a linkage with the village Panchayats because of their political stakes.

#### Type of Rural Leaders in U.P.

The leadership in U.P. villages can be determined under following heads:-<sup>1</sup>

Traditional Leaders: Their leadership is based on their hereditary status, position as well as wealth. They do not

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1. Chhabra & Jones, Op.cit., p.210

Provide the requisite leadership to the community nor do they think in terms of the good of the community, yet they are respected by the rural people and their advice carries much weight with the local people. With democracy taking deeper roots in the village community the influence of this type of leaders is on decline, although they still exercise considerable influence on the social, economic and political life of the village community. The best example of this traditional leadership are the big zamindars and money lenders.

Sectional Leaders: These leaders have complete hold over a particular section of the community. The members of that community do not take any action contrary to the advice of these leaders. The leaders of various castes, factions as well as political groups fall in this category.

Functional Leaders: These leaders are those persons who have specialized in a particular field like agriculture, medicine, art etc. The people of village come to them for advice in their respective fields of specialization and hold them in great esteem.

Professional Leaders: Professional leaders are those who come to the villages to render certain professional services as well as to acquaint the village community with the new ideas and

scientific developments taking place elsewhere. These leaders do not belong to the village community and do not provide direct leadership to the village people. They exercise influence through the acknowledged leaders of the village community. The Gram Sevak and the School teachers belong to this category of leaders.

Institutional Leaders: In this category come heads of certain institutions like Panchayats, Cooperative Societies etc. They are able to play a vital role because they are vested with certain powers in their respective fields by the law.

According to Oscar Lewis,<sup>1</sup> following are the factors which influence the village Leadership:-

(i) Caste: Caste is the most important factor which determines the rural leadership. A person born in high caste has an edge over the members belonging to middle and lower castes. In majority of U.P. villages leaders hail from high castes. A person from lower or middle castes may also get a chance to become a leader but he does not exercise much influence. Efforts made by U.P. Government to uplift the backward people have failed, and they have not been able to assert themselves.

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1. For detailed study see Oscar Lewis: Village Life in Northern India, Asia Publishing House, New Delhi, 1978

(ii) Land Ownership: Uttar Pradesh is an agricultural State and seventy percent of its population living in villages represents mostly zamindars as village leaders. No doubt during the Congress, SVD and BKD governments in Uttar Pradesh, due to the imposition of ceiling on land holdings and distribution of land to the landless farmers, the importance of Zamindar has declined, but decline in their accepted leadership by the village community will take years to come.

(iii) Wealth: Land and property as a source of immense wealth and sound financial status of a person has been a factor for his acceptance as a leader of village.

(iv) Family Status: In India, the family status which is determined by financial soundness, wide relations and high connection, also helps a lot in making a person leader. In recent years, because of change in social set ups, change from agrarian to industrial and bureaucratic societies decline in leadership on account of family status has also been marked.

(v) Sufficient Leisure: In U.P. villages it has been noted that usually leaders are financially well off and have enough time to spend. Helping villagers financially (in the form of loan), solving their quarrels and disputes, attending meetings of the Village Panchayat etc. All these factors force the villagers to accept continuation of their leadership.

(vi) Maturity of age: In U.P. villages, one factor which counted most in making one a leader was ripen age. But now this trend is changing because of youth taking part in political parties and active politics.

(vii) Education: Education which had always been given respect in villages has now become less important. The factor that counts now is capabilities of a person and his influence over the village.

(viii) Good Contacts: Person possessing good contacts with high ups outside the village and with the local people has greater chance of emerging as their leader.

#### Village Politics in U.P.

India is essentially a rural society since the very ancient times. The rural side of the country has played a dominant role in building up traditions of rural administration. The <sup>term</sup> Panchayat which denotes three tier structure at the district, block and village level is modern. It aims at making democracy real by bringing the activities of the millions into the functioning of democracy. It is a system of grassroot democracy which seeks to link the individual family in the remotest village with the government. In the words of Dr Zakir Husain: "with the introduction of Panchayati Raj we have laid the foundation for the extension of democratic form of government and democracy to the village level."

The end of this process is to realise the basic objectives of an enlightened political liberty, equality and welfare. Decentralized pattern of local self government is necessary not only for the purpose of community development but also for building up democracy from grassroots.

#### (B) MUSLIM POLITICS

Muslim in U.P., Delhi and neighbouring areas of Delhi had become socially, economically and educationally backward just after the rebellion of 1857. After the formation of the Congress some of the Muslims joined it. In the beginning of the 20th Century Muslims formed the Muslim League with the patronage of Government. Till the Non Cooperation Movement both the Muslim League and Congress were very close.

In U.P., the rupture between both occurred over the Coalition Ministry which led to drifting away of the two organizations and in 1937 the Muslim League became a mass organization and more anti-Congress and communal in approach. In 1940 the Muslim League demanded a separate sovereign State for Muslims and as a result Pakistan was formed. Muslims in India, educationally and socially became most backward and economically ruined. Communal riots (Hindu Muslim riots) also spoiled Muslims a lot.

A convention of Muslim leaders was held at Lucknow in 1964. Muslim leaders of all shades of opinion joined hands together to solve their problems, and an organization came into existence known as Majlis-e-Mushawarat.<sup>1</sup>

A consultative meeting was held on August 8,9,1964 at Nadwatul Uloom, Lucknow.<sup>2</sup> It was attended by seventy five delegates belonging to many parties and groups. This meeting was presided over by Dr Syed Mahmood, veteran Congress Muslim leader. The inaugural address was delivered by the rector of Nadwatul Uloom, Maulana Abdul Hasan Ali Nadvi. A number of resolutions were passed at the meeting. The main resolution urged to remove Muslim grievances.

The main grievance was that Muslims were not recruited in the CID and the police. They demanded Muslim representation in Police department in adequate number. This was believed to be one of the effective remedies for communal riots. The attitude of Muslim legislators towards communal disturbance was most disappointing to the Muslims. It was decided to constitute a Committee of Jamate Islami, Muslim League, Jamaatul Ulema and Tamir-e-Millat of Hyderabad and leaders of other Muslims organizations. The Committee elected Dr Syed Mahmood as the President and "All

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1. The Siyasat, (Urdu Daily) Kanpur, July 13,1964

2. Khan, Laiqur Rehman: Role of Muslim Majlis in U.P. Politics from 1967-77, M.Phil Dissertation, Department of Political Science, AMU,Aligarh, 1982, p.44.

India Muslim Majlis Mushawarat" was formed which, it was expected, would bring unity among all the Muslim Parties in order to boost political action at all levels.

The Mushawarat presented a number of demands regarding the status of Urdu, restoration of the minority character of AMU, the Preservation of Muslim Personal Law, the revision of text books etc. before the Government. In U.P. the Mushawarat started functioning withholding a meeting at Allahabad on March 26, 1966 and at Rampur and Moradabad on April 1, and April 9, 1966 respectively.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the federating units of Mushawarat were not in favour of its taking part in active politics especially in contesting elections. Dr Faridi, a prominent Muslim Leader of U.P. was of the view that opposition parties of secular outlook should be supported by the Mushawarat. On July 21, 1966 The All India Muslim Majlis Mushawarat adopted a manifesto at Delhi based on following points.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Dr A.J. Faridi's Presidential address at the first annual conference of U.P. Muslims Majlis Mushawarat held at Rampur on Aug 9, 10, 1967.

2. Ibid.

1. Reform in field of education.
2. Change in election system i.e. introduction of proportional system.
3. Establishment of a welfare state
4. Safeguarding Muslim Personal Law
5. Preservation of Urdu Language
6. Formation of minority commission
7. Preservation of the fundamental character of any institution
8. The management of religious auqafs by the elected members, elected by the Community to which the Waqf belonged
9. Social reforms including prohibition

The fall of Congress in U.P. elections of 1967 can be attributed to the role of Mushawarat. In some constituencies Muslims damaged the prospects of Congress. The Congress, as against 390 seats in 1952, 286 seats in 1957 and 249 seats in 1962, could bag only 198 seats in 1967. The Congress government was installed with the support of Independent MLAs, but lasted only for 18 days and Charan Singh after defection from Gupta ministry, installed the S.V.D. Government headed by him. C.B. Gupta, in an interview with Dr Faridi, had admitted that it was mainly because of opposition of Mushawarat that the Congress had to step down.<sup>1</sup> The U.P. Majlis Mushawarat became very much disillusioned by the attitude and performance of U.P. Assembly members whom it had supported in the Fourth General

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1. Khan, Laiqur Rehman, Op.cit., p.51

Election of 1967. It was thus felt by Muslims that they should enter politics directly and send maximum number of Muslims to the U.P. Assembly. Jamate-Islami did not concur to this idea. Thus it was decided to form a new political party in U.P. and the Muslim Majlis came into existence. But it was decided that Muslim Majlis shall be a federating unit of the Central Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat and would cooperate with it in all common matters relating to the community.<sup>1</sup>

Dr Faridi was of the view that the problems of minorities scheduled castes and backward classes were same. He called a convention of backward classes, scheduled caste and other minorities which was held at Lucknow on October 12 and 13, 1968. In this convention representatives of Muslim Majlis, Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and other minorities participated. The convention decided to constitute an organization known as the Federation of Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and other Minorities. A manifesto containing an eleven point programme was prepared in which main emphasis was given on reform of educational system, electoral reforms, establishment of welfare state, safeguarding of Muslim personal Law, preservation of mother tongue, establishment of a ministry for backward classes.

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1. Dr Faridi's Presidential address at the first annual conference of the Muslim Majlis, Feb 1970, p.3

scheduled castes and other minorities, social reforms and religious trusts.<sup>1</sup>

In November 1969 there was split in the Congress Party over the issue of Presidential election in which Mrs. Gandhi's Government fell in minority. As a result in December 1970 the Lok Sabha was dissolved and fresh elections were to be held in 1971. Under such circumstances, the Majlis renewed its policy and on invitation by Congress(N), Dr Faridi met Mrs. Indira Gandhi and appraised her of the grievances and problems of the Muslims. He also met other Congress leaders. Mrs. Gandhi and other leaders assured Dr Faridi that Muslim grievances and problems would be looked into and sought support for the Congress. Following is the text of assurances given to Muslims by the Congress party:

"An Urdu University would be established at Rampur. The Government would give all possible facilities for Urdu to regain its due place which had been denied to it so far. Schemes for the uplift of the economic conditions of Muslims would be drawn up, as was being done for the other weaker sections of the population. Inadequate representation of Muslims in Central and State services, especially in Police, would be made up. The autonomy and the minority character of Aligarh Muslim University, as defined in Article 30 of the Constitution,

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1. Khan, Laiqur Rehman, Op.cit., p.56

would be restored. Text books which were being taught in our schools would be revised according to the recommendations of the Sayyadain Committee".<sup>1</sup>

After getting assurance from Congress(N), Muslim Majlis decided to support it wholeheartedly. Muslim Majlis candidates contested in the Constituencies of Moradabad, Kanpur, Amroha, Ghazipur and Muzaffar Nagar, but all the five were defeated the Congress did not contest in these constituencies.

The overall performance of Muslim Majlis was very poor. Constituencies where Muslim Majlis contested had adequate Muslim population but even in those constituencies it failed to secure the support of the Muslims.

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Parliamentary Elections of 1971

Constituencies	Total votes polled	Secured by Majlis	Percentage of votes secured by Majlis.
1	2	3	4
Kanpur	2,44,185	1258	0.2
Ghazipur	2,73,828	3,463	1.2
Amroha	2,48,312	18,154	14.7
Muzaffar Nagar	3,75,460	4,061	1.0
Moradabad	2,37,937	7,880	3.4

1. First Annual Conference, Muslim Majlis Presidential Address, A. Faridi, Allahabad, May 6, 1972

2. Source: Khan, Laiqur Rahman, Op.cit., p.61

Dr Faridi claimed that the greatest achievement of the Majlis was that it had infused a sense of confidence and courage among the Muslim community and had made them feel that they commanded balancing power in the politics of the country.

Promises made by the Congress were only not fulfilled but the new Amendment Act of 1972 deprived the autonomy and minority character of A.M.U. This act of Government completely alienated Muslim Majlis from Congress(R) and a number of Muslim volunteers including its President Dr Faridi, the SSP leader Raj Narain and Vishwanath Kapoor MLA were arrested. This agitation was against the closure of A.M.U. and for the restoration of minority character. Muslim Majlis then decided not to support the Congress in the Assembly elections of 1974, and made an alliance with BKD and SSP. These parties entered in an electoral adjustment and decided to contest the election on BKD tickets. BKD and SSP included the demands of Muslim Majlis in their manifestoes.<sup>2</sup> In 1974 U.P. Assembly Elections the Muslim Majlis contested twenty six seats, but only three were elected (Masood Khan from Azamgarh, S.A. Faiz from Ghazipur and Nanhelal Kureel from Fatehpur)<sup>3</sup>

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1. National Herald, Lucknow, May 10, 1973

2. Pioneer, Allahabad, May 16, 1973

3. National Herald, Lucknow, Feb 25, 1974  
 Also see: Humayun Kabir, Minorities in a Democracy  
 Firma Mukhopadhyaya, 1960.

### Muslim Majlis Alliance with Janata Party

In the elections to Lok Sabha in 1977 the Muslim Majlis decided to support Janata Party.<sup>1</sup> Under this alliance two seats were allotted to Muslim Majlis. Zulfiqarullah from Sultanpur and Bashir Ahmad Advocate from Fatehpur. Both were elected. Zulfiqarullah was taken as a Minister of State by Janata government at the Centre.

The All India Muslim Majlis Working Committee met on April 28, 1977 and decided that the Majlis should have an election agreement with Janata Party in the U.P. Assembly Elections. An eleven member Committee reached an agreement with the Janata Party. According to this agreement 10 seats were allotted to the Majlis out of 425.<sup>2</sup> Among the Majlis candidates were Harijans, Qureshis, and Ansaris. The main issues of Majlis were A.M.U., Urdu as second official language, representation of Muslims in services and establishment of Urdu University at Rampur. The Majlis leaders toured all constituencies of U.P. and campaigned for Janata Party. The result of this campaign was that out of 10 Majlis candidates 8 were elected in U.P. Assembly elections.

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1. Qaumi Awaz, Lucknow, Feb 4, 1977

2. Ibid., May 6, 1977

Masood Khan a leader of the Majlis was appointed a Minister in Janata Ministry in U.P. Out of 351 Janata Party MLAs the number of Muslim MLAs was 37. Among these 37, Majlis MLAs numbered only 8.

The Majlis had representation in the Central as well as in U.P. governments having one Minister in both. But they never raised voice for Muslim problems or Majlis issues. Selfish attitude of Muslim legislators, rivalry with Muslim League and death of Dr Faridi, lack of leadership have contributed to the poor performance and negligible role of the Majlis.