Chapter- First

Origin of Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh
ORIGIN OF BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY: FROM SOCIAL MOVEMENT TO POLITICAL PARTY

Bahujan Samaj Party, which was formed by Kanshi Ram in 1984 in Uttar Pradesh at the time when Congress was collapsed because of disintegration; and won the support of Chamars, Backward Castes, and Muslims etc. It has its roots in Ambedkarism. It means this was Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as first untouchable leader who fought against untouchability, Hinduism and the Brahmin caste, specially. He was concerned with the reform of the caste system in society and the creation of such a society based on the three fundamental principles: justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. For this he may be said as the architect of Dalit politics in India with party building. He founded a party aiming at the rural and urban workers, “Independent Labour Party” (ILP) in 1935. After it, he founded the “Scheduled Castes Federation” (SCF) in 1942 to focus the Dalit’s status. Finally, he initiated “Republican Party of India” (RPI) in 1956 to woo all the depressed categories of the lower castes.¹

In the same way, Kanshi Ram with the legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar followed a similar political trajectory by establishing DS-4 in 1981 for the struggle of the community of the oppressed and exploited. And finally, Bahujan Samaj Party with the electoral symbol of the parties of Ambedkar, the elephant on a blue base; and its activities greet each other with ‘Jai Bhim’ means victory to Bhim ie. Ambedkar’s first name and BSP’s slogan proclaims “Baba (Saheb Ambedkar) Tera Mission Adhura, Kanshi Ram Karega Pura.” It means, Baba: your mission remains unfulfilled Kanshi Ram; the founder of the BSP will complete it. All these activities reflect the connection of Kanshi Ram with Ambedkarism, which were forged when he was posted to Poona where he felt that the condition of Mahars (untouchable community
of Maharashtra) and Mongš were miserable and worse than that of untouchables in Punjab; and he read two Ambedkar’s classics:

- Annihilation of caste; and
- What Gandhi and the Congress have done to the untouchables.

These two classics influenced him and he became close to RPI “Republican Party of India” but very soon he was demoralized by factional squabbling and alliance. Therefore, a new party in North India, specially, in Uttar Pradesh appeared BSP, “Bahujan Samaj Party” with aim of the upliftment of the Dalits and downtrodden section of society which could be possible only when the strong hold of Brahmins and Banias on the society would be completely finished and Dalits will be free from the clutches of the upper-castes (Brahmins). Such Dalits are in majority in India, therefore, their rule can be the basis of true democracy in the country.

However, BSP has raised various slogans which show the aggressive nature of the depressed classes against upper castes such as: “Brahmin, Bania, Thakur Chor; Baki Sab Hain DS-4”, “Tilak, Tarazu, Kalam, Talwar; Maro Inko Joote Char”, “Mat Hamara Raj Tumhara:Nahin Chalega, Nahin Chalega”. Therefore, BSP’s main aim is the upliftment of the Dalits by establishing their own rule who are facing two kinds of social oppression:

1. Caste-system in India which is based on the privileges for higher and disabilities for the subordinate classes and castes;

2. The majority of Scheduled Castes in India in rural areas exist among the landless agricultural workers who are exploited by the landowning classes.

So, Dalits are involved in social and economic struggle with aim at improvement of their status. BSP originated with this objective as a Bahujan
Movement, earlier, under the leadership of Kanshi Ram, who is known as the founder of Bahujan Samaj Party.

**Kanshi Ram: As an Architect of Bahujan Samaj Party**

Kanshi Ram may be said as the architect of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). He was a *Dalit* activist and devoted himself in organizing *Dalits*. He organized “All India Backward and Minority Community Employees Federation” and “*Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti*” (DS-4). He was much different from the other social elites who occupy a strong and comfortable position by raising important issues like-poverty, human rights, secularism, environment issues etc. And by presenting their well reasoned issues, they get media attention but people do not trust such elites as they have not lived such a life with negligence and discrimination etc. In India, mostly leaders have come from political background, from within existing party and by split or defection from the party. Kanshi Ram was different from such type of political leaders; in fact, he came out of adverse circumstances. He was a man who lived and suffered much in such circumstances that “as a child, a boy, a man” he lived with the feeling of inferior caste. To be a *Dalit* child in village is be up-braid every now and then by the upper castes.

Kanshi Ram was born in 1934 in Khawaspur village of Ropar district in Punjab as a Raedasi Sikh, a Chamar community converted to Sikhism. His family had 4 or 5 acres of land, some of it inherited and the rest acquired through government allocations, after independence. Kanshi Ram’s father was slightly literate and educated all his four daughter and three sons. Kanshi Ram was eldest one and he was the only graduate. After graduation, he was given a reserved position in the survey of India but in 1958, he transferred to the department of “Defense Research & Development Organization” (DRDO) as scientific assistance in Kirkee munitions.
factory in Poona. Social oppression and economic exploitation of Maharashtrian Scheduled Caste by upper casts shocked him. Seeing such type of exploitation Kanshi Ram did not remain silent spectator, he feel their pain of humiliation so, he decided to fight against such inhuman activities. In initial stage he only participated in various agitations for the rights of SCs employees in government jobs. He became caught up in a struggle initiated by Scheduled Castes employees to prevent the abolition of a holiday on Dr. Ambedkar, Valmiki and Buddha birthday. This event brought a sudden change in his life. And he became more radicalized after reading Ambedkar’s ‘Annihilation of Castes’, in one night. During his government service, he always thought about the better future of Dalits who were exploited by upper-castes. And he worked alone on his own basis, feeling the ground at first with Scheduled Castes organizations, before launching his own political party, Bahujan Samaj Party.7

In this way, Kanshi Ram’s political ideas started with the formation of Scheduled Castes organization. Firstly, he formulated these ideas with his colleague, in Munitions factory, D.K. Khaparde, to establish an organization, by organizing educated employees from Scheduled Castes, which would work against the harassment and oppression by high castes. Thus, in 1971 he and his colleagues established the, “Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, and Minorities Employees Association”, which was registered under the Poona Charity Commissioner. Within one year, 1000 members joined it. Its office was in Pune.8 This association was based on Ambedkar’s ideology and limited to the SCs employees from departments of Defense & Post and Telegraphs. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Minorities Employees Association turned into BAMCEF in 1973 to create a national platform.
Second one was BAMCEF an organization founded by Kanshi Ram in 1973. As an employee in “Defense Research and Development Organization” (DRDO) in Pune, he realized that the formation of a Dalit bureaucracy was important if Dalit’s interest were to be served. He thought to form the federation through which he worked his way of bureaucracy with some officers and through them influencing the lower staff. The motto of organization was “Pay Back to Society” to inspire Dalit bureaucrats to do for their Dalit masses. BAMCEF undertook collection of funds for the purpose of supporting agitation and training Kanshi Ram appointed State level and Mandal level conveners to act as links between state and districts. It was so effective that it brought revolution in the country. This BAMCEF “All India Backward and Minority Communities Employees Federation” had an office in Delhi. It relaunched on 6th December, 1978, the anniversary of Ambedkar’s death, when 2000 delegates joined procession. Its motto was to “Educate, Organize and Agitate” which was adopted from Ambedkar and its activities were divided into a number of welfare and proselytizing objects. Therefore, Kanshi Ram by mid 1970s got success in establishing a broad base and contacts throughout Maharashtra and other regions like Nagpur. However, BAMCEF means, “an organization of the educated employees, ‘by’ the educated employees but ‘not for’ the educated.” On this basis BAMCEF may be described as a non-religious, non-revolutionary and non-political organization. And because of this, BAMCEF has not been registered still it functions as ‘brain bank’, ‘talent bank’, and ‘financial bank’ of oppressed and exploited section of society.

To run side a huge organization certain problems were coming in its front as: lack of funds became a challenge before BAMCEF, so, to tackle this Kanshi Ram asked to his own cadres to contribution 2% of their salaries. But this strategy also did
not prove as well as its own corrupt leaders use this fund for their personal requirements that was also noticed by the public.

In spite of fund problem, another one recognized by him, was the organization as 90 percent members were SCs mainly Mahars from Maharashtra and Chamars from North India while 10 percent were Tribals and Backward Castes. Though SCs educated elite formed the majority of the BAMCEF membership but they were not in direct contact with the rest of their community members. This limited reach only to educated ones could hamper the organization’s progress or achieving its target. Its remedial measure was felt by him in organizing and forming a coalition of oppressed communities which could mobilize 85 percent society. This measure resulted into mobilizing Bahujan Samaj as educated Kurmis, a backward caste came into the influence of its success of BAMCEF in North India, particularly and Kanshi Ram’s believe in just and equitable society for the oppressed started its journey with BAMCEF, an organization for social movement, and transformed into a political movement gradually with Kanshi Ram’s believe in political power as a tool to fulfill his ideological mission. The target to achieve political power needed a state with broad base and a perfect leader such a research was completed when he decided to chose UP, being largest state and nerve centre of politics with a huge population of Chamars and support of Kurmis also. Another research for efficient fulfillment was achieved when Kanshi Ram met with Mayawati in 1977, at that time she was a law student in Delhi University and was preparing for civil services.

During this first meeting of Mayawati and Kanshi Ram, she was influenced by him and agreed with him in providing the right type of political leader. But such a decision of Mayawati created a fight between her and father who wanted to see her as an “Indian Administrative Services” officer. Rift resulted into the Mayawati’s
decision to leave her home and took shelter in BAMCEF office in Karol Bagh, temporarily. Again Kanshi Ram inspired with her uncommon courage and dedication towards her community. Mayawati gave him courage to move on from BAMCEF.

DS-4 was a synonym for the Bahujan Samaj to mobilize a larger body of Dalits, Backwards and Minorities on major issues. Its first event was “People’s Parliament” on the lawns of Boat Club in New Delhi in 1982, a platform to discuss their problems. People’s Parliament was held after the publishing of Kanshi Ram’s ideological treature ‘Chamcha Age’- a booklet was an attack on SCs elite who were as an agent or instrument for Congress Party. He continuously tried to broaden base of high movement by an alliance with Other Backward Castes. For the mobilizing purpose he adopted ‘mild to wild’ strategy but non-violent. But solution was seen by him in formation of a political party that would end one chamcha age. Such a thought was followed by companies as 40 days long ‘Cycle March’ in March 1983, called “The miracle of two feet and two wheels,” in Jabalpur, Bhopal, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh as well as in Madhya Pradesh to recruit them to the organization.

Kanshi Ram also presented the teachings of Ambedkar before a wider audience. Such as he put a road show, which was an oral and pictorial account of Ambedkar’s life and views on oppression, atrocities and poverty, this show was called “Ambedkar Mela on Wheels” in 1980. Thus, he talked about Ambedkar’s struggle for the downtrodden classes, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backwards and Minorities who all were victims of Brahmin. By organizing these road shows, he organized the people of these classes and developed the concept that these people are in a great number, so they had the potential to convert themselves from beggar to rulers. These activities reflects the BAMCEF motto- “educate, organize and agitate”. Because of these road shows Jang Bahadur Patel, belonged to Backward Castes, joined BAMCEF.13
These agitation activities brought him into politics. And he organized 'Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti' (DS-4) in 1981, which was a political organization and may be said as the quasi-political party, because government servants were forbidden to take part in electoral politics. This was organized to struggle by mobilizing the Dalits against oppression. Kanshi Ram was President of both BAMCEF and DS-4. The slogan coined by DS-4 was, "Brahmin, Bania, Thakur Chor; Baki Sab Hain DS-4". At the same time, Kanshi Ram launched his own political party, 'Bahujan Samaj Party' in 1984. And Kanshi Ram announced that he would remain the President of BSP and to work only for it, in 1986. In this way, he became a politician from a social worker.\(^{14}\)

Kanshi Ram's strategy, of social change, also transformed into a political strategy, so he no longer believed in social change. His political strategy was that the oppressing upper castes, the 'Savarna' are a minority and all other castes with Muslim added constitute the Bahujan Samaj, overwhelming majority. So, the Bahujan Samaj should unite and take power. He said that the policies like liberalization of Indian economy or land reforms, literary and class are irrelevant to gain the political power. So, he came with an objective, 'power'. He said Dalits should seek power and other things shall be added to them. His idea was that it is the power (administrative power) which will bring about desired social change. Political power brings about desired social change. Political power has been the main concern of SCs leaders and Kanshi Ram. They believed that\(^{15}\) "Political Power Is the Master-Key to All Problems".\(^{16}\)

Kanshi Ram was much concerned about the rights, dignity and interests of Dalits. He knew that because of the century's oppression, Dalits had lost their self-respect and suffered grievous physical damage. So, Kanshi Ram wanted to break the psychological fetters of Dalits, which was only possible by attaining power. Thus, as
a politician, his first move was in a direction to achieve political power by uniting Depressed Classes (Dalits) with Backwards, Minorities and STs as Bahujan Samaj. According to the office secretary of BSP, “we have one point programme- take power”. And under the leadership of Kanshi Ram, BSP was a party of Dalits, Backwards and Minorities, and power was within its grasp, it was believed by Kanshi Ram. Because the Dalits and Shudras together constitute 85 percent and we do not need to form any alliance. We can rule on our own. So, BSP projected itself not as Dalit Party but as Bahujan Party, as it is a party of Dalits, non-Brahmins and Minorities, which have a solid base of Chamars in North India and OBCs and Minority Communities.

Thus, with the establishment of BSP rule in UP, enthusiasm generated among Dalits because, for Dalits, this was the independence in true sense which Kanshi Ram brought from grass root level. Initially, he conducted his public meetings by get up and before beginning his speech, he announced that all, Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas should leave the meeting because it was not for them. He convinced Dalits by identifying his enemies repeatedly. His hard work of mobilizing Dalits with another oppressed castes and Minorities succeeded when BSP’s government was formed in Uttar Pradesh with Mulayam Singh’s Samajwadi Party. And to achieve his main objective the pursuit of political power, he has not hesitated to seek the support of “Bharatiya Janata Party” (BJP) even.

However, Kanshi Ram was the architect of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) of SCs, STs, OBCs and Minorities, with one objective, achievement of political power that brings desired social change. And he has followed some of Ambedkar’s line but he has been criticized on various grounds for this. Such as: Ambedkar as only election symbol for BSP and, for its caste- politics. On 17th birthday anniversary on
14th April, 2008 various political parties paid tributes to Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar in Lucknow. On this occasion, a function organized by “Dr. B.R Ambedkar Mahasabha’ Co-operative Minister, Swami Prasad Maurya said that it was the dream of Ambedkar to establish a caste-free society and this dream was realized by late Bahujan Samaj Party leader, Kanshi Ram. But state BJP president Dr. Ramapati Raml Tripathi said that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was a great leader, and an architect of Indian Constitution and freedom fighter. So, he belonged to the entire nation. But efforts are made by the Bahujan Samaj Party to make its election symbol to cash in on his name and popularity. He said the Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati has continued its caste agenda for political gains. The circulation of literature containing filthy language against ‘Ram’ and other God and Goddesses has increased since the installation of the Mayawati government. All these activities show the caste-politics agenda of Bahujan Samaj Party. Though he has followed Ambedkar, yet he has been criticized on various grounds. Such as: BSP has been blamed for not trying hard and neither has analyzed caste society nor it has enough emphasis to education as a priority for the emancipation of the Dalits as Ambedkar has done. He has been closely concerned with the achievement of power. Bahujan Samaj Party has been closely identified by only one leader. Earlier, it was Kanshi Ram, and now with Mayawati for example, one of Bahujan Samaj Party’s slogans has been “The BSP is Kanshi Ram and Kanshi Ram is the BSP”.

Kanshi Ram’s main aim was power for the Dalits. But his understanding of power-officer was extremely superficial. Because he thought power does not arise out of the activity of an awakened people but power is a mysterious essence inheres in office of SP, DM, CM, and PM. So, his party lacks the new spirit, seriousness, enthusiasm and dedication to the cause of the downtrodden. There are various
aspects of Dalits' problems, which need more attention because their problems are usually not as presented as to be available. So, this needs systematic involvement with them and prolonged pressure to overcome the problem. But Kanshi Ram’s party is based on the idea of power.

Therefore, it may say that Kanshi Ram was not motivated by the deep love for his own people Dalits. But he was motivated by a hatred of their oppressor. Another aspect in that he emerged from adverse conditions by the force of his personality and by creating awareness in the minds of Dalits. When he came into power, his aim also became to acquire and enjoy power like other politicians. However, Kanshi Ram remained in power without any clear vision of an egalitarian society. In spite of Kanshi Ram’s and Bahujan Samaj Party’s weakness, it is a fact that he has brought Dalits, the oppressed section of society, to the centre stage of Uttar Pradesh politics.

Caste Equation as an Objective of Bahujan Samaj Party:

Bahujan Samaj Party, which was formed by Kanshi Ram on 14th April 1984, started as a Bahujan Movement. This is concerned as Bahujan Movement by academicians, activists and politicians who have contributed in promoting bahujan ideology. This is a movement against Brahmin or Hinduism. Kanshi Ram, the leader of this movement, stated that SCs, STs, OBCs and Minorities as well as the converted from these categories to Islam, Buddhism, Christianity and Sikhism all are equally oppressed under the Brahminical order, which has given privilege position to Brahmins whereas above mentioned categories are underprivileged. So, these people should form a socio-political block together as they are in majority i.e. 85 percent of total population. Therefore, they started with the aim to form a ‘Bahujan Samaj’ which would be only possible by “Jati Todo Samaj” movement (means caste-annihilation)
because of the presence of untouchability. However, the main aim of *Bahujan Movement* has been the struggle against untouchability.\(^{24}\)

But the main aspect i.e. closely related with untouchability is the caste structure in India. Untouchability has its roots in caste system. Though India is the world’s largest democracy with 16% of the world population, having sufficient agriculture, increased literacy rate from 18.33 in 1951 to 55.21 in 1991, world’s tenth industrialized country and sixth nation to have gone to outer space, yet in spite of all these development India is still facing the caste problem which is a threat to ideals of Indian constitution: “Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity”.\(^{25}\) Indian society being a caste-ridden society, represents a social hierarchy whereby restrictions or privileges may be afforded to different classes of people according to their heredity. Caste as the system of social and economic governance is based on principles and customary rules that:

i. Involve the division of people into social groups (castes) where assignments of rights are determined by birth;

ii. The assignment of basic right among various castes is unequal and hierarchical with those at the top enjoying most rights coupled with least duties and those at the bottom performing most duties coupled with no rights; and

iii. The system is maintained through the rigid enforcement of social ostracism in case of any deviations.

This shows that the *doctrine of inequality* is the core and heart of the caste system.\(^{26}\)

Caste system was established by Hindu Priests (Brahmins) 3,000 years ago. This system gave dominant position to upper castes and has divided the people into four ‘Varna’ (castes):
1. Brahmins - The highest caste
2. Kshatriyas - Soldiers and Administrators
3. Vaishyas - Artisan and Commercial Class
4. Shudras - Farmers and Peasant Class

This Varna system is based on the innate qualities of the man, such as, Brahmin is educated, wise, pure and a master of himself. So, they are engage in studying, teaching and protecting the Vedas. While Kshatriya has the courage i.e. why they are the guards of wealth, and protect the masses and are engage in politics. But Vaishya perform the duty of agriculture and trade while Shudra work for other as slaves. But not everyone has a caste. There is a section of society who is out of this caste-system or Varna order. They are known as untouchables. Thus, the primary feature of caste is the idea of hierarchy. Here hierarchy means inequality. And untouchability is an inequality because they are excluded from the society since ages and have been the most downtrodden and oppressed people. However, being the out of the castes, they are termed as ‘Outcastes’ and also known by different names such as: ‘Harijans’ by Gandhi, means children of God, ‘Avarrias’ meaning worst of the earth, ‘Depressed Class’ given by British during colonial days in 1919, and the ‘Scheduled Castes’ given by the Indian Constitution. But now, a new term as been included ‘Dalit’, it is derived from Sanskrit word ‘Dal’ which means split, break and crack etc. This word was firstly coined by Dr. B.R Ambedkar. Now, 200 million untouchable people, today they call themselves Dalit, a new name for those who demand their share in the nation building. This is not only a name but an expression of hope and identity for the recovery of their past identity which has been lost because of the oppression by upper castes for centuries. Thus, the term Dalit has a positive meaning. Dalits constitute the 20 percent of Indian population, are considered as untouchables as a result of the
Hindu concept of “ritual pollution and purity”. In Varna system Brahmins are considered as most ritually pure while Dalits are not, in the category of pure one they are considered as the most polluted.\textsuperscript{30}

In fact, untouchability has been a matter of shame for centuries which is the greatest curse of Indian social system. The practice of untouchability is based on the idea of touch. The creams of the twice-born are sacred or pure because they are insulated from the touch of the ‘other’. On the other hand the idea of touch assigns negative power to the untouchables who are subjected to be untouched. For them untouchability has become like a poison weapon because it creates anxiety among them for the sacred or pure bodies. Untouchables are not only excluded from the society but lack many of the basic services and legal protection which are available to the rest of the society like they are treated worse than animal. Denied access to water, food, health care, housing and clothing etc.\textsuperscript{31} Those, who fall outside the caste system, are considered "lesser human beings", "impure" and thus "polluting" to other caste groups. They are known to be ‘untouchable’ and subjected to so called ‘untouchability’ practices in both public and private spheres.\textsuperscript{32} Here, it may said that “God made man, and men made boundaries”.\textsuperscript{33}

Therefore, various efforts have been made by government for the eradication of the practice of untouchability, and to protect the Dalits from atrocities. In post independence period, for which constitution promised equal protection of laws to the lowliest and has forbidden untouchability and made free access to all places of public resorts, a fundamental right. Some articles, which deal with the removal of untouchability and provide special provisions for the welfare of this section of society, are:
ARTICLE 15 (2): states that citizens will not be disable, liable, restricted or conditioned on the grounds of religion, race, sex, place of birth or any of them with regard to shops, public restaurants, hotels and public entertainment places, and use of wells, tanks, roads and public resort etc which are maintained by the state funds wholly or partly.

ARTICLE 17: has abolished the practice of untouchability in any form and it shall be punishable offence in accordance with law.

ARTICLE 19: states that no one will he denied in getting admission, in any educational institutions which are receiving aid out of state funds, on the basis of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.

ARTICLE 23: prohibits the beggar and forced labor.

Besides these articles, there are other Acts made by the parliament also, for the removal of untouchability:

Protection of Civil Rights Act 1955 (PCR): made by Parliament known as 'Untouchability Offences Act” 1955 to give effect to Article-17. But this act was amended in 1976 and renamed as “Protection of Civil Rights Act” 1955.

Prevention of Atrocities Act (POA) 1989: is known as “Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (PCR) Act- 1989” which came into effect from 30 December, 1990 to stop the atrocities on SCs and STs. Atrocities are an official category of crime in India defined by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. The act defines atrocities as crimes such as:

- Forcing Dalits to eat obnoxious substances;
- Dumping excreta or carcasses in Dalit premises. Assaulting a Dalit woman with intent to dishonor or outrage her modesty;
- Using a position of dominance to sexually exploit a Dalit woman;
Parading Dalits naked or with painted face or body;

Forcing Dalits to do forced or bonded labor;

Dispossessing Dalits of their land and forcing Dalits from their homes;

Preventing Dalits from voting etc.\(^{35}\)

The recent example of this act is of 'Mahendra Singh Tikait's arrest under POA act in April 2008, when Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader, M. Singh Tikait passed the casteist remarks against Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Mayawati that her democracy as 'Rifsaltantra'. And he criticized her for reign of terror against her rivals. She does not allow anyone to talk openly and characterized her government as 'dictatorship'. Because of majority rule she is behaving like a dictator. We (farmers) are not getting adequate prices for sugar crop and do not get electricity and water facilities. All these have been said by Tikait in a farmer's rally in Bijnore on 31\(^{st}\) March, 2008. So, a case under SCs, STs, and Atrocities (Prevention) Act was registered against him and arrested on 2\(^{nd}\) April, 2008 after his surrender admitted that this was a mistake, Mayawati is like my daughter.\(^{36}\)

Thus, untouchability related offences are to be registered under the PCR Act while atrocity related offences are to be covered under the POA Act. Besides these two Acts Constitution has also a provision under Article-338 to appoint 'Special Officer' to investigate all the matters which are related with the safeguards provided to the SCs and STs. And after investigation he has to report to the President of India. However, on November 18, 1950 a special officer for SCs and STs was appointed as 'Commissioner'. But in 1978 a broad based multi-member body was thought to replace the Commissioner. However, in 1990 Article-338, which was already amended two times: 46\(^{th}\) Amendment Bill 1978 and 51\(^{st}\) Amendment Bill 1979, was once again amended as 65th Amendment Act-1990 and came into effect on March 12,
1992 and government became enable to setup the “National Commission For SCs and STs.” In this way, it has been compulsory for the union and states governments to consult the commission on all major policy matters which affect the SCs and STs, according to Article-338(9). And under Article- 338 (5) (c) it is said that commission is required to participate and advise on the planning process of socio-economic development of SCs and STs and to evaluate it.\(^\text{37}\)

However, under these special Constitutional provisions, a number of special practices which are considered proper under Manu’s laws (Hindu Law Giver) became illegal. Such as he denied the access to education for untouchables but now it is a law. Under Article-46, it is said that ‘State shall promote the educational and economic interest of the weaker section particularly of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and protect them from social injustice and exploitation.’

Though a number of provisions and laws, have been made under Indian Constitution, for the protection of Dalits (SCs) from untouchability and for their upliftment, yet atrocities are still continued on them. They are still exploited, oppressed and discriminated, even after the social and political mobilization of untouchables. Dr. Ambedkar, Kanshi Ram and Mayawati etc. are the great examples of untouchable leaders. And their government has been formed in states like Uttar Pradesh. Mayawati, a leader of BSP which won 91 seats out of 403 assembly seats in the 2002 elections with a share of 33.6 percent, has been Chief Minister for two terms. Now in 2007 Assembly elections BSP has won 206 majority in Uttar Pradesh, yet Dalits still suffer from social and economic backwardness.\(^\text{38}\) They are being exploited physically also, of which the recent example is of a six years old girl who was thrown into a fire by a 18 years old youth as she was passing through a road which is supposedly to be used only by upper castes people in Mathura on 30\(^{\text{th}}\) April, 2008.\(^\text{39}\)
Another recent example of caste-based discrimination is, of a survey or finding of education resource society, partner organization of CRY “Child Right and Youth” of 22 primary schools in eight districts of Uttar Pradesh, including Allahabad and Kaushambi in 2006-07. In this survey it is found that caste-based discrimination is still exists in schools. At Manjhanpur blocks in Kaushambi district and three schools in Shankhargarh and Jasra in Allahabad district, children were forced to face caste based discrimination on the basis of which they were allotted seats in the classroom. The caste factor is very prominent in these schools. Such as the general category children were made to sit in the front row, followed by OBCs and Scheduled Castes (SCs). This discrimination has resulted into the dropout rate of children 46 percent in 200 schools including Allahabad and Kaushambi districts.40

Thus, according to the SCRB- “State Crime Records Bureau” the crime against Scheduled Castes in Uttar Pradesh has been 2821 in 2003 and 3785 in 2004 whereas “National Crime Records Bureau” (NCRB) has estimated that in 2005 Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest number of crimes against Scheduled Castes in country with 4,397 cases which is 16.8 percent of all crimes committed against the SCs in the country. “National Scheduled Castes Commission” (NSCC) has estimated 45 percent incidents of poverty among SCs in Uttar Pradesh.

Table No. 4: Number of Cases/Crimes against SCs in Uttar Pradesh

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Bureaus</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. Cases</th>
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<td>State Crime Records Bureau</td>
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<td>2821</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>3785</td>
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<td>National Crime Records Bureau</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

An important aspect which is related with untouchability is the Dalit’s quit Hinduism and their conversion to other religions: Islam, Buddhism, Christianity and Sikhism. The practice of untouchability or discriminatory nature of Hindu religion is responsible for this phenomenon, because untouchables see conversion as a means of escaping from the caste-system. They are so discriminated that when a Dalit attempts to buy a drink from a street vendor, he or she is often forced to purchase a separate clay cup so that it cannot be reused. Even to get water from the well they have to wait for a higher person. The Dalit Human Rights Monitor gave one account of 30 Dalit homes which were burned by mob because government had given them land.\(^4^2\)

However, in protest of their treatment by higher castes, thousands and thousands of Dalits have been converted. Many untouchables have been converted to Buddhism. The great example in this context is of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. In his views, religion should be judged by social standards and be based on social ethics. But Hindu religion is nothing but a multitude of commands and prohibitions. He belonged to the Mahar Community of Maharashtra, an untouchable. In initial years, he criticized Hinduism and wanted to reform it rather than reject it as he worked for temple entry for untouchables in 1920s. According to Ambedkar, "Religion should be judged by social standards and be based on social ethics. But he said, “What is called religion by the Hindus,” he noted, “is nothing but a multitude of commands and prohibitions.” But in 1935, he declared that “I was born in Hindu religion but I will not die as Hindu.” So on 14\(^{th}\) October, 1956 he converted to Buddhism in Nagpur. He said that Buddhism as an excellent for untouchables because it contained all communism’s violent methods. In converting to Buddhism, untouchables reject all Hindu Gods and rituals. However, like Ambedkar many untouchables have converted to Buddhism. By 1951, Ambedkar urged his followers to convert to Buddhism. Conversion to
Buddhism was an attempt to build a conscious non-Hindu identity for depressed classes (SCs), its example is the case of the Chamars of Uttar Pradesh. They claimed that they are descended from Kshatriya (warriors) caste. On the old logic of ‘Sanskritisation,’ they gave the logic that their name ‘Jatav’ is a deformation of Yadav which is the name of the Kshatriya dynasty founded by Krishna. Thus, they believe in this myth history and they did not reject the caste system but they wanted to seek recognition as Kshatriya within this caste-system. But they did not get recognition. At the same time they were influenced by Ambedkar in 1940s so much that they took initiative to form new parties like ‘Jatav Mahasabha’ in Agra, ‘Chamar Mahasabha’ in Kanpur etc. and they converted to Buddhism which brought the feeling of solidarity among them.

Besides Buddhism, many untouchables have been converted to Islam because Islam is an egalitarian religion through which they want to escape from the cruelties of the Brahminical order. Yet despite their conversion, their overall economic condition did not improve much. Regarding the conversion to Islam, there are two views:

Firstly, Islam was forced by Muslims rulers who spread the Islam;

Secondly, conversion to Islam took place by Sufis, Saints who sanctified and legitimized folk religious and cultural practices.

Thus, Dalits have been converted to Islam and had voiced their rebellion against oppressive Brahminical system by converting to Islam. “Sachar Committee” (organized by Manmohan Singh Government to examine the social and educational status of the Muslims Community) on the basis of its research, it identified three social segments of Indian Muslims:
1. **Ashraf:** Muslims who converts from Hindu upper castes or have foreign blood.

2. **Ajlafs:** These Muslims are similar to that of Hindu OBCs.

3. **Azals:** They are converts from ‘untouchables’ Hindu communities.

However, the term ‘**Dalit Muslims**’ is used to denote these Muslim castes converted from Hindu untouchables. Ali Anwar has used the words like ‘**Pasmanda**’- downtrodden and backward; and ‘**Dalit**’ for Dalit Muslims. And he included the castes like: Bhatiyara, Tikyafarosh, Itafarosh, Halalkhor, Khakrob, Magalzada and Chirimars. Thus, an overwhelming majority of Indian Muslim population come from the lower Hindu castes to escape from social prosecution and the oppressive socio-economic disabilities. However, they attracted towards Islam because of its egalitarian nature. Though they gave up their religion (Hindu) and adopted Islam, yet they could not get social equality because Indian Muslims also have castes in practice. When Muslims came to India then Indian casites system also influenced the Muslims in this way that converts from Hindu untouchables brought castes system with them in Islam. Though their socio-economic conditions improved but remain worst than the SCs, because after independence the backward section of society was identified by the government and the provisions were made in the Constitution for the special treatment to improve their socio-economic conditions. These sections are:

- Scheduled Castes (SCs)
- Scheduled Tribes (STs)
- Other Backward Classes (OBCs)

In this context various compensatory (positive) discrimination policies are made for these categories in the sphere of job, education and development. But the
problem towards Dalit Muslims is that they are not included in the SCs list because it is restricted to the Hindus, Buddhist and Sikhs, not for Muslims and Christians. Untouchables have not only converted to Buddhism and Islam but Christianity also. Because of their Scheduled Castes origin they are known as Dalit Christian in Christian Community. So, they are denied equal status among Christians. Dalit Christians are twice discriminated group:

_Firstly_, they are discriminated in general as they are not original Christians;

_Secondly_, they are not benefited from those provisions which are made for Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh SCs in the Constitution, whereas people of Christian origin claim that Dalit Christians are benefiting from Christianity. But it is not true because they are still treated as untouchables and are known as Dalit Christians. Christianity is a part of Indian society which is predominantly Hindu. Moreover, the Scheduled Castes converts constitute to about 80% of around 21 million Christians in India. All non-Hindu religions of India profess egalitarianism. But the practice differs widely from the preaching. However, the most important reason responsible for the prevalence of caste structure among Christians is conversion from Hinduism. The untouchables, who constitute around 80% of the Christians, are not treated as equals by the converts from the upper castes. They are underrepresented in the church which is dominated by the upper castes converts.

However, the caste evil though originated from Hinduism has infiltrated into Islam, Christianity and Sikhism and other communities, although it has no place in them. About this prevailed caste-system, the Supreme Court, in its historic verdict in Mandal Commission case, observes that “Even among Sikhs, Muslims, and Christians casteism prevails in varying degrees in practice, their preaching notwithstanding. Casteism has thus been the bone of the entire Indian society, the difference is its
rigidity being of a degree varying from religion to religion and from region to region. Though they have been converted, yet they continue to be referred to by their caste names.

Thus, various untouchables have been converted to Islam and Christianity but they are not included in the category of ‘Scheduled Castes’ and demands have been made for this. But there is a difficulty related to Scheduled Castes converts to Islam and Christianity, because ‘Scheduled Castes’ is a legal and administrative term denoting castes among Hindus, Sikhs and Neo-Buddhists who possess some attributes:

1. Those who are engaged in traditional defiling occupation;
2. Those who are excluded from the main residential areas within localities;
3. Untouchability is practiced against them by other castes people who are ritually superior.

However, Muslim Dalits and Christian Dalits are not included in the SCs categories, which create various problems for them. Such as, there is a case of Mukesh Kumar who converted to Islam and changed his name as Mohammad Sadiq and whose wife elected as Sarpanch on a reserved seat in village in Uttar Pradesh and she wanted to follow her husband’s religion and became a Muslim. But the problem arises when she would have to resign from her post because as per law Dalit Muslims and Christians are not considered Scheduled Castes (SCs) by the state. Therefore, this case shows that how Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians are not benefited from the SCs provisions. They are not only denied for reservation benefits but also from other benefits such as development programs, scholarships and hostel for student, reserved seats in educational institutions, special laws against atrocities on Dalits such as, PCR Act, POA Act etc.
However, Muslims (15%), Christians and Sikhs (5%) did not come from outside the India. At least 90% of its followers are untouchables, Tribals and Backward Castes because they see conversion as the powerful weapon to liberate them and after conversion they feel liberated and powerful. This feeling has created fear among the Brahmin rulers that, “their majority religion would become a micro-minority religion.” So, because of this fear Hindutva forces are opposing the reservation of Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians. This fear is that if SCs, STs reservation are extended to the converts, it not only lead to the majority conversion from Hindus, but converted Dalits would join hands with non-converted Dalits and this would pose a threat to the Brahminical rule in India.  

In this way, the issue of untouchable’s conversion to other religion is much more related with the practice of untouchability by upper caste Hindus and the removal of unouchability has been the objective of Bahujan Samaj. It is only because of untouchability and inequality in Hindu religion that great political leaders like Ambedkar, Kanshi Ram, and Mayawati etc. have converted to Buddhism and Sikhism and their conversion has been followed by other untouchables in majority.

**Caste Based Mobilization: AS A Strategy to Gain Political Power:**

Caste is a very peculiar aspect of Indian society and it is a very old and prominent basis of social, stratification. It has influenced the political process from top to bottom as it plays a central role in Indian politics which has two aspects such as:

1. Castisation of politics
2. Politicization of Castes

Castisation of politics means the influence of caste on politics which is reflected in various forms: the alignment of castes with political parties, political
awareness and participation of castes in politics, voting behavior of different castes, emergence of various political parties to serve the interests of a particular caste, mobilization of party workers on caste lines and emergence of caste leaders etc, whereas the politicization of castes means the influence of politics on castes. Politics has affected the castes through the utilization of politics for furthering the interest of castes, raising social status through political mobility and securing various benefits for caste members through political connections. Thus, in this way, a kind of relationship exists between caste and politics as both help each other. Such as castes help the political parties in winning seats in the elections while political power helps castes in achieving higher social, economic, educational and occupational status in society.

The role of castes may be divided into two phases after independence:

1. In first phase, upper castes dominated the political power;
2. In second phase, lower castes and masses in general mobilized.

The most important feature of second phase has been that it has expanded the democracy through the participation of lower castes in political affairs. Besides it their interests are also articulated which could not be articulated under the Nehru era. And the main factor, which is responsible for this participation of lower castes, is the mass mobilization, particularly in Uttar Pradesh which is the site of the most recent phase of political democratization in India.

Uttar Pradesh is the largest state in India and one of the most socially and economically backward states in North India. The caste and class structure of Uttar Pradesh is also different such as: twice born castes are of 20 percent of the population, indeed, Brahmins alone account for over 10 percent of the entire Brahmin category in India and they dominate the caste hierarchy. The backward and other backward classes (OBCs) account for 35-40 percent of the population. They are divided into
various sub-castes including one extreme and dominant landowning peasant castes and at other extreme, the many poor artisan and service castes living just above the poverty line. These include the wealthy Yadavs, and the poor service castes. The poorer jatis among them are known as the ‘Most Backward Classes’ (MBCs), they constitute 26 percent of population. At last at the bottom of hierarchy there are untouchables known as Scheduled Castes (SCs) who perform the most menial jobs and the majority of them are dependent upon wage labor. However, the caste composition in Uttar Pradesh is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmans</td>
<td>11 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thakurs</td>
<td>9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaishyas</td>
<td>4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayasthas</td>
<td>1 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jats and Bhumihars</td>
<td>4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>16 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>22 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Uttar Pradesh is a highly politicized state where politics means capture of power. There are two forces which influence the state politics are:

1. Hindu Nationalism
2. Parties of lower castes and classes

In Uttar Pradesh lower castes and classes have been mobilized politically in three different ways: peasant politics, reservation politics and social engineering of strategy of Hindu Nationalism to counter the influence of lower caste challenge of upper castes control. Hindu nationalist party is BJP in Uttar Pradesh which try to win power by exploiting division between lower castes parties in Uttar Pradesh.
Uttar Pradesh was dominated by upper castes earlier. Nearly 20 percent of the upper castes population was over-represented in political sphere, education and professions, business and in employment etc. But the increased participation of lower castes started and the decline of Congress also took place which was only because of the mass-mobilization. This process of mass mobilization was started since 1960s with economic and political shift. At this time government shifted its attention of development policy from industrial growth to the agricultural production with technological change and price incentives. The effect of this shift was the rising prosperity of sections of the peasantry who belonged to the intermediate and backward castes. In 1970s these groups began to enter legislative assemblies in large numbers and posed a serious challenge to the Congress power. This was the first type of mobilization of lower castes. And second type of mobilization took place in the form of reserved quotas in government. Reservation was seen as the only way of securing representation for groups in political process and public employment. The strategy, which was associated with these reserved quotas, is caste politics. This caste-politics was strengthened with the influence of BSP which was found in 1984 with aim to mobilize the lower castes by promising them a share of political power by their own caste or community members.

The emergence of Bahujan Samaj Party in electoral politics in Uttar Pradesh has introduced a new discourse as Kanshi Ram the founder of BSP put the caste in politics because earlier caste influenced the ticket distribution, reservation for SCs, STs and OBCs. But with the origin of BSP, caste has become as an ideology of the party. Here, Kanshi Ram’s new paradigm is based on the notion that SCs, STs and OBCs constituting ‘bahujans’ (majority). Therefore, they should unite to come into
power. In this way Kanshi Ram’s Bahujan Samaj Party came into existence on the ‘bahujan’ formula based on castes on 14th April, 1984.

But at its initial stage, there was a problem of ‘Other Backward Classes’ (OBCs) in projecting this new formula of Kanshi Ram because OBCs were not conscious of its political potential. They did not have faith in this bahujan formula and its possibility of electoral constituency but few factors, which changed the OBCs perception towards bahujan ideology and forced them to form the bahujan constituency, these are:

1. Implementation of Mandal Commission Report in 1990 by V.P. Singh Government;

2. The Anti-Mandal response of the upper-castes youth supported by interested political parties.\(^{56}\)

OBCs constitute the largest chunk of the society nationally and in most of the states and Union Territories. The OBCs “Other Backward Classes” are legal-constitutional category who is striving to obtain acceptance of the independent social identity. The term ‘OBC’ was not used in the Indian Constitution until the amendment of Article-338 until OBCs were a part of Weaker Sections (Article-46) or SEBCs Article 15(4) under Article-15(4) or BCCs under Article-16(4). Several consideration have been made that only communities which are above the SCs, STs and below the twice born in ritual hierarchy among the Hindus termed as ‘Shudras’ are OBCs. But this consideration has been criticized that only Shudras constitute the OBCs category. Most middle castes in most of the states are termed as OBCs, yet it is not universally applied in the case of all states and Union Territories. However, identification of castes and communities as OBCs and their listing in OBCs list has been a matter of
debate. In post-independence period Commissions have been setup to indicate criteria of identification of OBCs. These Commissions are:

1. Kalelkar Commission
2. Mandal Commission

Thus, the reactions, aroused from the decision of VP Singh Government to implement the Mandal Commission report gave an opportunity to OBCs and SCs to come closer. Because the caste based identities play an important role in democratic India in the formation of identities and alliances. And provision of reservation, for particular castes for which backward commissions were established, turned to an instrument for the fight against 'social injustice' and advance of the weak.\(^5\)

However, Kanshi Ram strategy of bahujan unity based on caste ideology came into existence with OBCs inclusion in Post-Mandal Commission period. And Bahujan Samaj Party has supported OBCs for their reservation also. Such as 104\(^\text{th}\) Constitutional Amendment bill 2005, passed by both Houses of Parliament, (Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha) for amending the Article 5 and has included clause (5) to provide reservation for OBCs, SCs and STs in unaided educational institutions other than minority educational institutions. During the debate on this bill BSP Members of Parliament (MPs) have supported the Bill. Favoring this bill, MP from BSP, Satish Chandra Mishra said during debate in parliament that this Bill aims to ensure social justice to the SCs, STs and Backward Classes people. And unless social justice is given, there is no question giving political and economic justice to them. If proper education, is not given to these people, they would be deprived of god and proper jobs and livelihood and also be deprived from political justice etc.\(^6\)

Another issue, which proved helpful to Kanshi Ram’s new concept of bahujan unity was the Mandir- Masjid issue i.e. Ayodhya issue. This Masjid- Mandir issue is
related with the Babri masjid i.e. one of the largest mosque in Ayodhya in UP. This was constructed by the first Mughal emperor of India, Babar in 16th century. Babri masjid has been a source of Hindu extremist mobilization for the last 20 years. But Hindus claim that Babri masjid was built where the Ramjanam bhoomi temple was once located. Mosque has been used by Muslims as a prayer site for hundreds of years. In 1949, Hindu activists replaced it with Rama temple and placed status of inside the mosque. And state government sealed it but in 1986 mosque was reopened by a lower court at the request of Hindu Nationalist “Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP)” to allow Hindu to worship. In 1990, Lal Krishna Advani, a top member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) began a campaign tour a Rath Yatra build support for a Rama temple at the mosque site. However, mosque as destroyed on 6th December, 1992 by a crowd of nearly one million activist (Karsevaks) of the VHP, which occurred at the end of Advani’s Rath Yatra. This destruction was followed by the Central government rule in UP at 6 pm on 6th December, 1992. This demolition of Babri mosque led to the communal riots between Hindus and Muslims across India. During the following weeks riots spread throughout the countryside, killing some 1700 people. Since then, the militant “All India Babri Masjid Movement Action Committee” (AIBMAC) and other extremist Muslims groups have been campaigning to rebuild the mosque at the same site whereas “Vishwa Hindu Parishad” (VHP) has been moving with the plans to build a Rama temple there. ‘In December, 2002 the Vishwa Hindu Parishad announced that it would construct the temple in a year and a half. Even Prime Minister, Vajpayee said during election campaigning in Himachal Pradesh that he believed that Babri mosque is existed on the site of a temple, in 2003. While the Congress Party was continues stance so that the Hindu vote could not be alinate. However, the Babri mosque is central issue which has left thousands dead in
India in the last 50 years. And the Ramjanam bhoomi temple mobilization divided the BJP's remarkable growth of support in North India in the 1991 elections.

Thus, because of the Mandir- Masjid issue, the Minorities (Muslims) have realized that they are not secure in aggressive Hindutva politics. Muslims in Uttar Pradesh closely linked with Mulayam Singh party for their security from Hindu commercial politics. The BJP’s Hindutva politics- Ram Rajya -contributed in strengthening SP and BSP in UP politics. Samajwadi Party of Mulayam Singh Yadav based on OBCs support and Bahujan Samaj Party of Kanshi Ram (BSP) combined together to form the government in UP against BJP and Muslims joined SCs, STs and OBCs party in order to got security from BJP’s Hindutva politics because Muslim did not have any other option.

This situation dividend between Hindu- Muslim; and Mandir- Masjid issue gave an opportunity to Kanshi Ram’s formula of bahujanisation. Because India is basically a caste society and because of the Hindutva slogan of one religion, one nation provide enough ground to the Dalit- Bahujan to assert their autonomy from Hindutva as Dalit- Bahujans were never an integral part of Hindu religion. And Kanshi Ram understood reality that caste is much more emotional issue than religion in India. So, he gave the slogan of "Jail Todo, Samaj Jodo" (break the caste and unite the society). It is the caste on the basis of which one is being treated as untouchable. Kanshi Ram said that caste must be made a double edged knife, in first phase, lower castes must achieve power by creating socio-economic base for than which is possible only through capturing political power through elections. Kanshi Ram has used the concept 'bahujan' rather than 'Dalit' in order to create the base for political empowerment. Thus, converting caste into an ideology and capturing political power by the bahujan through parliamentary means is an important development in Indian
political system. This new formula of caste ideology has challenged the Hindutva School which is trying to appeal to the sense of religious community whereas Dalit-Bahujan force is trying to appeal to the sense of caste community. Thus, Kanshi Ram began a new phase in Indian political history with the concept the only through the mobilization of Dalit-Bahujan forces with caste annihilation objective, fast spreading Hindu ideology can be contained.

Bahujan Samaj Party’s ideology is caste, based on Dalit-Bahujan unity, BSP is a party of not only Dalits (SCs) but STs, OBCs and Minorities. The growing support of BJP reflects the important of caste based politics. BSP’s strategy is building support among Backward Classes, Scheduled Tribes and Muslim as well as Dalits. It is a Dalit based political party in UP where a number of Dalit castes exist.

Table No. 5: List of Scheduled Castes in Uttar Pradesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Caste Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Agaria/Agariya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Badhi/Badi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bhalia/Bahaliya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Baiswar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bajaniya/Bajania Nat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bajgi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Balahar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Balahi/Balai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Bandi</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bansphor</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Barwar</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Basor</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Bawaria/Bauria/Bawariya</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Bhantu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Bhuinya Boria</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Chamar, Ramadaria</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Jatava/Chamar</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Chero, Chura</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Debgar</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Dhanuk/Dhanak</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Dharkar</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Dom/Dumar/Mahasha</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Domar</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Dhaba/Dhupi</td>
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<td>Fauji</td>
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<td>Habura</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Hela/Mehtar</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Kandra/Kandra</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Karimpalan</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>Khawar</td>
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<td>Korama</td>
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<td>Kori/Koli</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>Korwa</td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Lalbegi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Majhwar/Manjhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Mushhar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Meeting of ‘Gond Adivasi Committee’ for Increasing Reservation Quota: There was a meeting of ‘Gond Adivasi Committee’ on Sunday 14th July, 2008 as per the news of Amar Ujala 14th July, 2008. In this meeting it was said that 8% reservation provision has been given by the administration to the Scheduled Castes people. And two castes: Gond and Kori and after that Kharwar were included in the list of Scheduled Castes in 1997. This increased the number of Scheduled Castes up to 66. But in spite of increased number of Scheduled Caste, the reservation percentage is not increased. Because of this the people from this section are not benefited from various government schemes. Such as the students from Gond caste are not receiving scholarship which is affecting the education of these students.64

Though Bahujan Samaj Party is Dalit based political party, yet is has been most successful in building support among the Dalit Chamar leather worker caste in North India. Apart from various Dalit (SCs) castes in Uttar Pradesh, BSP’s core group has been the Chamar which is the largest untouchable class of North India.

Kamshi Ram, the leader of untouchables, was also a Chamar. He was born in a Raedasia family in rural Punjab in Khwaspur village in Ropar District, converted to Sikhism. Another example of Chamar leader of BSP is Mayawati who belongs to Badalpur village of Ghaziabad district in Uttar Pradesh. But she studied in Meerut a town of UP where she completed her BA and B. Ed and L.L.B from Delhi. She was also a school teacher in 1997. During this year, she met with Kanshi Ram who persuaded her to enter into politics. In 1984 she left job and joined BSP. And she has been successful as a politician as she has been Chief Minister (C.M.) of UP two times.
in 1995 and 2002-03 and in 2007 election also. However, because of her successful career, she is projected as a source of pride by BSP. She has become an icon and she also adept at manipulating symbols especially the pan Dalit symbol i.e. Ambedkar. Agra University has been renamed as Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar and Mahamaya (the mother of Buddha) and Agra stadium has been renamed as ‘Eklavya.’ These two examples of BSP leaders from Chamar Community in UP who are also known as ‘Jatav’ in UP.

Being the largest untouchable caste, Chamars constitute 56.6 percent of population of UP in 1991. They have given the name, Jatav from ‘Yadav’ the founding father of Kshatriya dynasty. This reflects their craze for sanskritization. They wanted to the acceptance of their identity within the caste structure, not destroying the caste system. This was the ‘Jatav Movement’, but Ambedkar had a great impact on this during 1940. This Ambedkar’s influenced lead to the conversion from Hinduism to Buddhism. However, this Buddhist identity has replaced the Sanskrit kshatriya identity. And they became the strong support of RPI (Republican Party of India) of Ambedkar. But later, BSP recaptured the same segments of the Dalits population: Chamars (Jatav) which is reflected from this slogan of BSP: “Tilak, Taraju Aur Talwar; Inko Maro Jute Char.” This slogan states that the “Tilak’-Brahmin’s symbol, the ‘Balance’-symbol of merchant castes and ‘Talwar’-the symbol of warrior castes: hit them with shoes that is the symbol of Chamar who are the leather workers. UP’s Chamars form the BSP’s main group because of their elite group, education and modernization. Among various Dalit castes, only Chamars are more benefited than any other Dalit castes and have been educationally progressed.
In this education progress of SCs the most benefited caste is Chamar who are not only educationally progressed but modernized also. Earlier, they were mostly leather worker but now they have become artisans and traders. And in post independence India, the reservation system has lead thousands of Dalit to join university and the public service in large number. In UP among IAS cadres, SCs officers form the largest number only after Brahmins and Kyasthas. But these officers are denied important posts in the districts as well as the state level. This denial has led the emergence of BSP cadres as Dalit elite who belong to new generation of young educated Dalits. Such as in 1993 out of 66 BSP MLAs: 16 had B.A., 7 had M.A., 15 had an LLB and 1 Ph.D. But three years later out of 67 MLAs, 24 had B.A., two had an M.A., had LLB and one had M.A. Ph.D. in view of Kanchan Chandra these young Dalit elites joined BSP as they find better economic opportunities and higher status in politics. Among these new Dalit leaders who captured the most important posts within BSP were Chamar. 85 percent of state level posts of BSP in UP were captured by Chamar in 1995-96 not by other Dalit castes like Pasis (Pigherders), Balmikis (Sweepers), Khatiks (meat-cutters) etc. they also dislike the Chamar because of their socio-economic and political potions. In UP Balmikis supports the Congress or the BJP. Not only the Chamar leaders joined BSP but most of BSP voters come from

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Literacy Rate in Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>7.14 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>10.2 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>27 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chamars which is reflected from the BSP’s voter’s percentage in 1996 Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly) elections and 1999 and 2004 Lok Sabha elections:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Castes and Communities</th>
<th>1996 Vidhan Sabha Elections</th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upper Castes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bania</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intermediate Castes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBCs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadav</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurmi</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koeri</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pal/Gadaria</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Lower OBCs)</td>
<td>19 Peasants</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisan</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scheduled Castes</strong></td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamar</td>
<td></td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasis</td>
<td></td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Muslims</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim (Low)</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim (high)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, this data shows that in 1996 and 1999, three fourths of Chamar votes given to BSP. Though Chamars are the largest untouchable caste and is main group of BSP, yet BSP is not confined only to this group. There are other Dalit castes also which votes for BSP, such as Pasis voted for BSP more than 45% in 1996 Lok Sabha elections and others 66.6 percent.

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) is a party with Dalit base. But various attempts have been made by BSP leader for constructing Dalit vote bank in UP, these efforts include the special treatment granted to the Dalits by Mayawati, supremo of the BSP. These special treatments are: Ambedkar Village Scheme and she has allotted special funds for socio-economic development for one year to those villages, which had 50% of Scheduled Castes population and Mayawati extended this programme in June 1995 to those villages having 22-3 percent SC population. In 1997-98, 10 were related with 30 percent SC population or more, in each assembly constituency. Thus, 25434 villages were included in the Ambedkar Village Scheme, and in villages roads, hand pumps and houses etc. were built. When Mayawati came back to power in 1997, the Ambedkar Villages Programme (AVP) was revived under the direct supervision of Chief Minister (CM) with this statement that she was focusing her attention on “one section of society, ‘Dalits’ under this AVP, Rs: 3500 million covered 11, 000 villages.65

Lack of Developmental Work in Ambedkar Villages:

After coming into power BSP government has issued various orders for the developmental work in Ambedkar Villages in UP In spite of these orders the conditions in Ambedkar Villages are not satisfactory. Such as in Belwania Kishunpali, village in Deoria district, where Indira Awas, drinking water, clean toilets, roads and ration cards are still not available to the poor families. There is also
the problem of electricity in the village and they live in darkness. Besides these students do not get any scholarship, labourers do not have any job card etc.\(^{66}\)

**Construction and Condition of the Roads in Ambedkar Villages:**

Government provides finance for the construction of roads in Ambedkar villages. But in reality, the construction works has not completed in most of the Ambedkar Villages like ‘Dehri’ in Salempur. In this village department was given 66-40 lakh rupees for the construction of 3.90 km road. But it is not completed till today, while this village was selected as Ambedkar village in 2002-03 and the construction was to be completed in December 2007. This is only because of improper functioning of the Department.\(^{67}\)

On other hand, government granted 4 lakh 86 thousand rupees for the reconstruction of the road in ‘Semri’ village which was selected as Ambedkar village in 2002-03. This work was to be completed in December 2007 but this has completed in April 2008. But the poor condition of the road has proved the corrupt construction of the road because of which it was ruined within two months from the date of its completion.\(^{68}\)

**Ambedkar Vishesh Rojgar Yojna:**

This kind of scheme was started by government, known as ‘Ambedkar Special Employment Scheme.’ Under the provision of this scheme the candidates are given 36,000 rupees by the department for doing business of paper-plate, decoration, furniture, hair-cutting, clay-pot, dairy, saree-weaving etc. 2% candidates from Scheduled Castes are to be included in this scheme and administration has given 12.75 lakh rupees to the department during 2007-08. But only 15 people are benefited from this scheme and rests are struggling still for this. It is only because of officer’s ignorance towards their job that unemployed people, who claimed for receiving
money to start their business, are still making efforts. All these reflect that department is not working properly.69

Besides these special provisions, 15,000 Ambedkar statues were installed throughout UP like Lucknow which cost of Rs. 25,000. Rs. 1200 Million Ambedkar Udhayan (park) with 12 feet tall bronze Ambedkar statue was made in Lucknow.

'Bahujan Samaj Party is not only the party of Dalits but Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Minorities also as reflected from the party’s name. It means BSP is the party of OBCs too is proved by their vote and support to BSP in elections. Such as in 1996 Lok Sabha (House of Representatives) elections in UP 24.7 percent Koeris and 27 percent Kurmis voted for it Even 9% Yadavs, voted for it in 2004 general elections, which are the vote bank of SP ‘Samajwadi Party’ of Mulayam Singh Yadav. Not only Yadav’s but non-Yadav and most backward castes (MBCs) also voted for BSP 16 percent and 17 percent respectively. In 1999 non-Yadav OBCs supported BSP- 13 percent.

Table No. 8: Other Backward Castes (OBCs) Votes for Bahujan Samaj Party

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBCs</th>
<th>General Elections UP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadavs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koeris</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurmis</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBCs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Yadav OBCs</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From above data it is clear that BSP has also its vote among OBCs. Because it is the party of OBCs also who constitute Bahujan Samaj, Kanshi Ram the leader of the BSP came with this bahujan formula because he believed that in a democratic
country 'nothing can be achieved only with a particular community. Any organization based on one community would fail because democratic processes need majority. This strategy of Bahujan Samaj is based on his inspiration from Ambedkar and Phule; such as Ambedkar considered that Dalits, Tribes and Backward Castes were 'natural allies' against the 'Savarna' upper castes. However, Dalits needed to make alliance with these castes. On other hand, Kanshi Ram also influenced with Phule’s theory of Aryans from whom upper castes descended Aryans conquered India and brought their culture - caste system with them which was not the culture of people of Indian origin, to whom he called ‘Bahujan Samaj’ the low castes people. However, Kanshi Ram’s strategy to come to political power was that, ‘in a democracy number of vote form the government. And it is Bahujan Samaj who constitutes 85% of vote but the foreign Aryans (upper castes) with 15% vote are ruling over Bahujan Samaj. So, Bahujan Samaj should rule as they are in majority. He defined Bahujan Samaj in opposition to twice born upper castes the Savarnas whom he called ‘manuwadi.’ However, Kanshi Ram, the founding leader of BSP, formed the ‘Bahujan Samaj Party’ of SCs, STs. OBCs and Minorities. Kanshi Ram has always defended the interest of OBCs. Even, when the debate on the Mandal Commission report was going on, Kanshi Ram emphasized the claims of OBCs. For example, during election campaign for Vidhan Sabha of Haryana in 1987, he said OBCs are the part of Bahujan Samaj, even after a long period of India’s independence this section of society (OBCs) has neither recognized nor have been introduced in the legislation for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Government is not ready to recognize them. On the basis of 340 section of the Constitution for the welfare of these people, Kaka Kalelkar and Mandal Commissions were appointed but the reports of these Commissions were not
recognized by the Central Government on the basis that they had identified 3,743 castes as OBCs who cannot be recognized as OBCs.

Kanshi Ram also admitted that the conditions of SCs are better than OBCs, in some respect because of reservation provision. He said in our country out of 450 district magistrate more than 125 are from SC/STs but OBCs are very few, though they are 50 to 52%. So, reservation is needed in the government and administration because if 52% people cannot participate in government administration then where they can participate. This is not true democracy. He also said that in 1994 among 500 IAS officers in UP, 137 were SCs only 7 OBCs - six of them were Yadavs. However, by supporting the interest of OBCs, Kanshi Ram wanted to constitute *Bahujan Samaj* by getting support from OBCs. His strategy for getting support of OBCs was benefited in such a condition, when Mandal Commission affair was going on. This atmosphere helped Kanshi Ram in his strategy of bahujanisation by getting OBCs votes during elections in UP. So, one of BSP’s slogans has been “*Mangal Ayog Lagu Kuro, Kursi Khali Karo*”. It means, Mandal Commission’s report should be implemented or vacate the seat of power. After coming into power Mayawati, in 1995 announced that OBCs would be benefited from 27 percent of the state budget. Some castes at lower stratum of the OBCs known as Most Backward Classes (MBCs) were included in the OBCs list and Nishads (Mallahs or Kewote) were given the privilege of hiring plots of sandy land alongside the river. Another most important recent example is of “Rs. 200 crore fee waiver for UP students” by Mayawati government in UP 2008, May. Mayawati (then Chief Minister of UP 2008) on Saturday, 24 May said that the state cabinet had decided to pay fee of general category students along with OBC students who are enrolled in government institutions from class 10th onwards. But the government would extend the benefit only to those students with an annual
family income is up to Rs. 1 lakh. State government has made a budgetary provision of Rs. 200 crore for this purpose.  

The reason behind this provision was of electoral politics. It means to get the votes by these sections of society in coming general elections of 2008 in UP. Thus, OBCs constitute a major and important part in BSP which is reflected from their presences in party as MLAs from 1989 Assembly elections in UP till today. In 1989 elections when for the first time BSP MLA were elected, among them 3 were OBCs out of 13. Majority of BSP MLAs were not Dalits but Muslim and other castes whereas in 1991, the number of BSP MLAs from OBCs increased and became 11 MLAs. And in 1993, OBC MLAs of BSP was 44.7 percent more than SCs MLA i.e. 34.3 while in 1996 elections the percentage of OBC MLAs was 38.6 as against the 29.5% SC MLAs. In 1996 Assembly elections in UP 34% BSP’s candidate were OBCs while SCs candidates were only 29%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>MLAs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>3 (No.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>11 (No.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table No. 9: BSP MLAs from OBCs in UP Assembly Elections


Not only, BSP MLAs have been OBCs more than SCs but OBCs share in state office bearer has been more than Dalits. Even the president of BSP party of UP has been OBC for years. Such as Sone Lal Patel (Kurmi) was replaced by Shagwal Pal (Gadariya) who was replaced by Daya Ram Pal also a Gadariya. Thus, it is clear that most of BSP leaders came from MBCs, not from the dominant BCs like Yadav. Though Yadavs were important till 1990s but they become the vote bank of BSP’s
rival party SP ‘Samajwadi Party’ led by Mulayam Singh Yadav. Samajwadi Party is a 
Yadav dominated party. For the first time BSP and SP came closer in 1993 Assembly 
elections in UP and formed a Coalition Government in UP 1993. But the hostile 
relations were developed between SP and BSP soon because of some reasons firstly, 
BSP felt that there had been Yadavisation of the state by Mulayam Singh Yadav. 
Secondly, Yadavs were improving their social status by keeping SCs in their place. 
So, Dalits agitated which was reacted violently by Yadavs. This led to the fall of SP-
BSP Coalition Government in UP.

Dalits and OBCs relation has been hostile for years. Because both’ interests 
are mostly contradictory in some regions of UP such as in east UP the OBCs and SCs 
labourers have a common enemy, the upper castes elites ex landlords. Untouchables 
in their region are often landless laborers who work for OBC farmers. This raises the 
issue or conflicts about the wages for agricultural laborers and disputes regarding the 
ownership have always been among them. The hostile relationship has its roots in 
various land-reforms measures introduced by government after independence. This 
resulted into the absentee land-lordism by 1970s. However, fourth Varna Shudras or 
the resent castes (OBCs) emerged as owner, cultivators whereas untouchables 
remained landless. However, OBCs became a dominant castes and due to their 
acquired ownership and control over land led to the conflict with the Dalits who 
remained as agricultural landless labourer. As this long run OBCs and Dalits hostile 
relations created and improved the rivalry between SP and BSP; and influenced the 
working of coalition between them in 1993 which is proved by various incidents of 
atrocities or Dalits by OBCs in 1994. Such as on 21st January, 1994 a Dalit woman 
was stripped and paraded naked in Dauna, a village 45 km from Allahabad, by gun-
toting gangsters who belonged to OBC community of Kurmis a part of SP vote bank.
The reason behind this case was the plot which was allotted officially to Dalit woman but it was illegally occupied by Kurmi family. The incidence took place when son of Dalit woman claimed for it. And after two days police arrested the Kurmi who was guilty. Another incidence was of mass rape of Dalit woman in Hamirpur in Uttar Pradesh which led to the clash between Dalits and OBC Kurmis at Fatehpur, followed by the casteist conflagration in Banaras by killing of a BSP leader. In spite of making effort by Kanshi Ram and Mayawati to create a socio-political base of SCs and OBCs in particular, the clashes and conflicts between them still exist.

Besides Dalits and OBCs BSP also represents the Minorities (Muslims) as they also suffered from the upper castes oppression. For example Dr. Mahsood Ahmed, a temporary lecturer at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) joined DS-4, ‘Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti’ in 1983 to attract the votes from Muslim community. Mayawati designated Muslims for receiving the same grants as SCs children and she also implemented the recommendation of the UP Backward Classes Commission which insisted that low caste Muslims should benefit from reservations in the state government of 11 July, 1994. Mayawati has granted the Muslims 8.44 percent of the 27 percent of OBCs and 8 percent of police officer posts were reserved for Muslims.

However, Kanshi Ram the founding leader of BSP founded the party with caste as an ideology, by uniting these sections of society, known as bahujanisation to achieve political power against the Brahminism. Though it is a party of Bahujan (Majority People), yet the dominant caste is of Chamars. This hegemony of Chamars has divided the SCs votes as Balmikis and Pasis voted for other political parties because of the fear from Chamars hegemony in the party, BSP. Though BSP stood against the manuwadi (upper castes), yet it changed its caste politics based on the
bahujan castes to broaden its base including the upper castes also. For this party gave tickets to the upper caste candidates. Such as during 1999 Lok Sabha elections, it nominated 10 upper castes candidates according to their proportion i.e. 12 percent out of 85 candidates. As Kanshi Ram believed in the theory of ‘Mirror Representation’, means assemblies should reflect the composition of the society. That is why he also nominated the candidates from others castes and communities, during 1999 Lok Sabha elections, 17 Muslim candidates (20 percent), 20 SCs (23.5 percent) and 38 OBCs (45 percent). Among 10 upper castes candidates five were Brahmin and five Rajputs. In 2002, UP elections tickets were given to 37 Brahmins, 36 Rajputs while in 2004 Brahmins who voted for BSP were only 5% and Rajputs 4%.

Table No. 10: Upper Castes Candidates of BSP: In Lok Sabha Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Castes</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmins</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajputs</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmins</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajputs</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Castes Vote to BSP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmins</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajputs</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Therefore, to form the vote bank among upper castes, various efforts have been made by the party supremo, Myawati like Brahmin Sammelans which were organized across UP and in Lucknow, Brahmin Maha rally marked the culmination of ‘Brahmin Jodo Sammelan’ (Brahmin Enrolling Conferences). As BSP leaders believe that ‘Bharatiya Janata Party’ (BJP) led by upper castes bent over backwards to woo
Dalits and Muslims votes; and divided the BSP’s vote bank. So, Mayawati also adopted the similar strategy of caste-politics to woo the upper castes votes particularly of Brahmins by organizing various sammelans. BSP had organized a Brahmin Sammelans at various places in the state particularly in such states where Samajwadi Party had stronghold. Recently BSP has coined a new slogan of “Brahmin- Dalit bhai bhai’ to connect with upper caste Hindus, in May, 2005 and Mayawati decided to setup “Bhai Chara Samiti” (brotherhood committee) in all the assembly constituencies with Brahmins as presidents and Dalits as secretaries. Another strategy, to woo the OBCs votes, has been the ‘Yadav Sammelans’ in UP. The party has setup a “Yadav Vikas Manch”.76

Thus, from above discussion it has been clear that BSP has been successful in achieving the support and votes apart from Dalits to OBCs, Muslims even of Brahmins to broaden its base for political power. All these have been possible by mobilizing people on castes basis which can be termed ‘caste-politics’. But this success of BSP is praised because it is Dalit based political party.

Khushwant Singh said in his article in Hindustan Times on 31st May, 2008 that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was the messiah who wanted to change the caste hierarchy and he exhausted his followers to opt for another religion and persuaded his Mahar community to covert en mass to Buddhism. He is the most respected icon of the Dalits.77 Kanshi Ram inspired by the philosophy of Dr. Ambedkar Kanshi Ram came from a Dalit Sikh family of Roper and he became aware of the humiliating discrimination suffered by other Dalits after passed out of college and go into government service. During his service, he studied Dr. Ambedkar’s writings, travelled Maharashtra and met other Dalit leaders. However, like Gautam Buddha, he took sanyas to devote his life to serve Dalits by making them aware of their rights and
power potential. He travelled all over country, meeting Dalits and organizing them. And he became popular among the poor and downtrodden Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Sikhs.

Once, Kanshi Ram heard about Mayawati and turned up at Mayawati’s home. At that time she was busy in the preparation of Indian Administrative Services (IAS) examination to become collector of a district. He spent over an hour with her family and said to Mayawati that her courage, dedication to Dalit cause and his other qualities could make her such a big leader that whole row of collectors will line up in waiting for her orders. Then, in true sense, you can serve the constituency and get things done. However, she moved with Kanshi Ram. Though in initial years both Kanshi Ram and Mayawati lost few elections but BJP helped her in becoming Chief Minister of UP for the first time. Since then, Mayawati has been the Chief Minister of UP four times.

The credit for turning the Scheduled Castes officers, working in different organization at lower level into political power, goes to Mayawati and her master Kanshi Ram. Mayawati now, become a identifiable personality for Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). The credit of being Mayawati an icon to the downtrodden and oppressed community goes to her master Kanshi Ram; she may be aid as the search of Kanshi Ram who gave her a way to reach on the top of the state politics. Though she may have shown a path by her master but her inner talent too helped in her path of success as it was her courage, self-respect and respect for human dignity which raised an inner voice against social injustice, caste system and undignified behavior or attitude against them (Dalits). In her early childhood stage, she thought that it is only education that, could give her a position or status or dignity in the unequal order of society. Education, the way of achieving respected attitude for them was shown by
her father Prabhu Das. This was the stage also, when Dr. Ambedkar became for her a role model because of his efforts for humanity specially, for SCs by giving them an identity in Indian society; and from him she learned the lesson of social justice. In this way, BSP’s journey of success started in the form of social movement and turned into political one because of restless efforts of Kanshi Ram and Mayawati, and a number of SCs devotees also. It was being noticed by media, political leaders and their political parties when BSP in 1984 Lok Sabha elections contested first time. During this election BSP still did into recognized by the Election Commission and not allotted a symbol too. So, both Mayawati and Kanshi Ram contested elections independently, Mayawati from Kairana, parliamentary constituency in Muzaffar Nagar district in Western UP while Kanshi Ram from Jahangir constituency then in Madhya Pradesh. Though Mayawati was a debut but came on third position in number of vote preceded by Congress and Lok Dal. For second time, she contested by-election for parliamentary seat from Bijnor (reserved) in 1985, again she came on third number winner but with the increase in number of votes over sixty thousand. Though with such a high number of votes, yet her party remained unrecognized by Election Commission. Again in 1987 her participation in parliamentary by-elections from Haridwar (reserved), her vote percentage increased to over 1 lakh 30,000 and this time her party got recognition.

Because of BSP’s rapid progress or development it was being noticed by national media and also faced criticism from other national political parties like Congress because it, the party of downtrodden community, created a fear in Congress Party, “Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh” (RSS) etc. Congress on one hand questioned the source of BSP’s funding while RSS was worried about BSP’s progress which posed a threat for it. As RSS was planning for reviving the BJP in North India. Kanshi
Ram in April 1985 said, “The measure of the BSP success in uniting such victims of Brahminism can be assessed from the fears of the RSS”. This may also be proved right when RSS chief Balasaab Deoras was quoted illustrated weekly of India in 1988, pointed out BSP as one the real problem for the RSS in North India.
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