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**Politics and Public Policies:
Politics of Human
Development in
Uttar Pradesh, India**

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POLITICS AND PUBLIC POLICIES: POLITICS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

Shyam Singh¹ and V Anil Kumar²

Abstract

In India, public policies for human development are politically contested for many reasons like diverse political interests, commitment to specific social bases by political regimes etc. They have rendered human development policies and programmes ploys for political bargaining and clientelism to secure vote banks. There is ongoing implicit bargaining between the political regimes in power and their social bases. This is reflected in the public policies related to human development as well. We illustrate this argument by taking the case of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. This paper attempts to illustrate the basis and priorities on which public policies are formulated.

Keywords: Public Policy, Politics, Human Development, Political Regime, Social bases, Uttar Pradesh

Introduction

The term human development in the post-colonial world came to be used frequently in the early 1990s. Prior to that, official policy pronouncements on development were in terms of growth rates or growth and sectoral changes often with some combination of market and state interventions. The post-colonial state in general was an interventionist state and took the lead in the development process. It took nearly four decades for the development discourse to change from growth rates to human development. This change was a result of the efforts of the United Nations (UN), especially the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), taking inspiration from the ideas of economists such as Mahabubul Haq and Amartya Sen. The realisation on the part of the states that development should be about 'human development' – focusing on primary and elementary education, health, gender equality and improvements in basic demographic indicators such as infant mortality, child mortality, maternal mortality, longevity – rather than exclusive economic growth, made them shift their policy discourses to human development. The UNDP particularly attempted to exercise moral pressure on the developing countries to reorient their economies and politics towards policies that promote human development.

One of the main attempts was to technically prepare a composite human development index and rank the countries on a scale showing their place in the world in terms of the index. Ever since the early Nineties, the UNDP regularly brought out annual world Human Development Reports (HDRs) focusing on all the issues pertaining to the human development policies and attempted to regularly track the developing countries on that scale. This happened in conscious contrast to the World Development Reports (WDRs) that were brought out by the World Bank that placed the nations of the world on a scale of global and national *economic* indicators.

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Two points that are central to this paper need to be noted at the outset. First, ever since the focus was placed on human development, the states have attempted to shift their policy discourse towards human development language. Secondly, we contend that this was done with certain naivety. We may be sure that the inventive economists and social scientists that propounded the concept may not have been that naïve in terms of the operation of their concepts. However, the discourse and the enthusiastic economists that incorporated the concept into the policy pronouncements have surely underplayed or underestimated the nature and role of the state and politics in policy enunciation, formulation and implementation of human development. This is our central argument: public policies in general and those for human development in particular have politics both as guiding and operating forces. Politics is central to policy enunciation, formulation and implementation. The experience of the developing countries in general and India in particular clearly brings this out in bold letters. In this paper, we elaborate this argument.

Before elaborating our argument, we must note two things. One, the projects of human development also had a sub-component of promoting and deepening liberal democracy in the developing countries. The UNDP did exert moral pressure on developing countries to take this matter seriously. Therefore, the policy discourse on human development was not entirely apolitical and/or technical. Secondly, for most of the developing countries the early Nineties was also a period of rapid economic change, particularly that of structural adjustment policies advocated by the Bretton Woods Institutions. These policies meant, largely, pruning the state expenditure on the social sector and, if necessary, restricting the state as an interventionist economic agent. While the UNDP focused on human development, and the lack of it, asking developing countries to increase their expenditure on the social sector, at the same time, the World Bank's policies and structural adjustment cut the fiscal space for developing countries to do the same. This broadly shaped the international political context in which the policies of human development had to be envisaged and implemented. A paradox did exist in development policies.

While the developing countries needed to do more for human development, the economic reforms and structural adjustment meant less money and autonomy to do so. While the UN and UNDP could only exercise moral pressure, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund could exert tougher economic pressure with tough terms and conditions for loan disbursements. Therefore, for some time, the debate was centered on 'state versus market' in development policies. The rolling back of the state and more freedom for market were either decried as retrogressive or seen as historical imperatives. In this context, economists like Amartya Sen have argued – mainly keeping in mind the Indian context, where the debate was intense among economists – that both the sides were wrong. The state needed to step back in controlling private capital investment and measures such as licence-permit-raj needed even more intervention at the same time in human development policies.

Amartya Sen, one of the chief proponents of the basic idea of human development, argued that the state needed to roll back in areas where its presence was uneconomical and unnecessary and increase policy attention and money in areas pertaining to human development that needed a thrust. Prof Sen took the interesting example of China where the success of economic reforms and record levels of economic growth were made possible, because of and not in spite of, the efforts of the

interventionist state prior to 1978 policy shifts under Deng Xiao Ping. According to this argument, the pro-active public policy intervention in human development enables the state to create a social and economic base to take advantage of economic reforms and the opening up of markets. Investment in human development and promotion of elementary education and health, improving the status of women as well as improving the basic demographic indicators would actually help in the long and medium term to reap the benefits of opening up of markets and globalisation. There was no contradiction between the rollback of the state in some areas and increasing its policy intervention in others. These ideas come from one of the chief proponents of human development and we are as yet unsure of their effectiveness on the public policies of the Indian state. Surely, the arguments have drawn the attention of the social-science community.

In this context, we focus on the politics of human development in one of the most extensively researched but rather 'underdeveloped' State of Uttar Pradesh (We use State with capital 'S' to refer to Indian provinces as against the term state in the generic sense throughout this paper). We present a case study of how the focus and policies for human development, such as education, health, housing and social security, are intertwined with politics of the governments at that level. The relationship appears inextricable given the nature of the politics of the state.

The structure of the paper is as follows. After we provide the context and argument for the paper in the first section, we focus on the human development situation in UP in the second section. This section throws light on why the State is called by demographer Ashish Bose as one, or the main, among the BIMARU states (the acronym connotes States Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, and metaphorically, in Hindi, 'bimaru' connotes ill-health). The third section highlights the politics of public policies of the political regimes of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) led by Ms Mayawati and the Samajwadi Party (SP) led by Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav. We deal with these regimes as contrasting cases of human development led strongly by their respective social bases. In the fourth section, we concentrate on how politics affect public policies and how public policies are in fact singularly shaped by the nature of political regimes. While concluding, we claim that this is increasingly happening in India not only at the Central level but also at the State level and would increasingly be so in the future.

Human Development: Status of Uttar Pradesh among Indian States

In this section, we deal with the human development scenario of UP. The standing of UP in human development is neither very impressive nor steady¹. It has continuously been languishing behind other Indian states in this respect. According to the National Human Development Report 1991, it ranked 14th among all the 28 Indian States. It improved by one rank to 13th place in 2001. UP's population is the highest in the country at 16.16 per cent of the total population.

Economic growth in UP too has been stagnant with substantial impact on the per capita income of the State. In the 1990s, UP's growth rate was 3.9 per cent per annum while India as a whole registered 6.9 per cent per annum. In this period, only two Indian States – Bihar and Orissa – were behind UP. In 2002-03, the state per capita income was Rs 10,289. The growth rate of per capita income in UP during 1997-2001 was 0.4 per cent while it was 3.3 per cent for India. The head count

poverty rate for UP was 29.2 per cent in 2002-03. In absolute terms, the absolute number of poor in UP was 48.8 million in 2002-03. UP still has 22 per cent of the total Below Poverty Line (BPL) population of the country and is only ahead of Bihar (24.39 per cent).

Health is one of the important constituents of human development. In UP it is not impressive and has been declining over time. UP has a large public sector health infrastructure but only 9 per cent of the population make use of this for treatment of ordinary illnesses and depend on the private healthcare. The state of health in UP is a human development challenge because life expectancy here is one of the lowest in the country (HDRUP 2003) and it ranks 11th among the Indian States. For the rate of undernourished children, UP stands in the 22nd position among all 25 Indian States. The per capita health expenditure of UP is much less than India's average. All the Indian States, except Bihar, spend more on health than UP.

Table 1: Health Situation in UP

SN	Indicators	India	UP
1	Life Expectancy Rate (2001)	65.4 %	63.8 %
2	Infant Mortality Rate -per 1000 (2007)	55	69
3	Underweight children below 3 years of age (2005-06)	45.9 %	47.3 %
4	Children suffering from anemia (2005-06)	79.2 %	85.1 %
5	Per capita health expenditure (2003-04)	214.62 (Rs)	91.43 (Rs)

Source: HDRUP, 2003; HDRNI, 2003; PSMS-II, 2006; and www.indiastst.com

Education is another important area of human development. Educational development in the State does not show promising trends. Table 2 presents the scenario of educational development in UP and the comparison with India. UP secured 23rd rank in Education Development Index in 1998-99, but in 2006-07, it fell to 26th rank. The literacy rate in UP is less than the Indian average. Dropout rates for boys and girls are very high but less than the India average. Per capita expenditure on education in UP is considerably lower than that in India as a whole.

Table 2: Educational Scenario in UP and India

SN	Indicators	UP	India
1	Literacy Rate (2001)	56.3 %	64.8 %
2	Literacy Rate- Female (2001)	42.2 %	53.7 %
3	Dropout Rate for Boys (I-X) (2005-06)	39.5 %	60.41 %
4	Dropout Rate for Girls (I-X) (2005-06)	47.36 %	63.44 %
5	Dropout Rate- Scheduled Castes (2005-06)	72.56 %	70.57 %
6	Per Capita Expenditure for Education (2005-06)	567.88 (Rs)	1049.39 (Rs)

Source: HDRUP, 2003; HDRNI, 2003; PSMS-II, 2006; and www.indiastst.com

The situation in UP is matter of serious concern. Human poverty is high in UP and varies across the districts. None of the districts in UP are able to achieve Kerala's performance. Before 2000, the hill

region, which is comparatively high in human development, was a part of Uttar Pradesh. However, when a separate State was carved out of this region, UP's human development status came down rapidly. UP is divided into regions like the central, eastern, western and Bundelkhand (the southern part) and human development varies in each region. Bundelkhand is economically the poorest part of the state. The western region is economically prosperous. However, the Human Development Report for UP (2003) states that even if the western districts are prosperous in terms of income, they are among the worst performers in human development.

Thus, the status of human development in UP is cause for serious concern. The State has not been successful in improving human development and, therefore, it remains a challenge to policy-makers. It may be argued that because of huge population, measures for human development have had very little impact. Nevertheless, this also reflects the State's governance system. The agrarian economy of the State has not prospered due to lack of advancement of technology and low production (HDRNI 2003). UP has not been successful in securing high economic growth either. Similarly, the service delivery system in UP is very poor. It has been noted that the failure of public intervention in UP extends well beyond the provision of public goods and services. Most of the major developmental and redistributive programmes have not had much impact (Dreze and Gazdar 1997).

Politics of Human Development Policies in Uttar Pradesh

The above section has presented the scenario of human development in UP. Now we illustrate how human development in UP, or the lack of it, is linked to the politics in this State. UP has been a battlefield for the national and regional parties. These parties evolved based on the ethnic diversity in the state. The Congress was in power in the State till 1989 and the need and struggle for maintaining the party's hegemony started during the 1970s. The Congress targeted votes of the 'lower' caste sections of society through anti-poverty programmes (Kaviraj 2000). Indira Gandhi's '20-Point Programme' and '*GaribiHatao*' (remove poverty) were important instruments to win the support of the lower and backward castes. During 1971-77, the Congress launched a number of schemes to strengthen its social base among the rural poor, especially the lower castes. The ceiling on land holding was reduced so that surplus land could be distributed amongst the poor. Houses and wells for drinking water were provided for the lower castes (Pai 2001a). The Congress's interventions in the State through populist policies were not based on caste but on the economic class. It did not introduce specific policies for separate caste sections such as Scheduled Castes (SCs), Other Backward Castes (OBCs) or Muslims. The Congress targeted all the lower classes as an economic category.

The politics of human development in UP became prominent much during the 1990s and later. During the 1980s and until the early 1990s, caste and identity politics were important political calculations in the State. Caste has become a determining factor for policies on human development. The Samajvadi Party (SP) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), two important political parties of UP, have been major proponents of the caste politics in this State. These parties have succeeded in mobilising the lower and backward castes but to keep the momentum of mobilisation for their own political gain they have provided material benefits to their social bases. Caste-based politics in UP has not treated poverty as a homogeneous or secular phenomenon. The term 'poverty' has been used to

identify only those from specific lower castes and not all castes. 'Poor' and 'lower caste people' have been used interchangeably. Hence, political parties could present justification more prominently for launching identity-based human developmental programmes to benefit particular sections of society from which they attempted to get electoral support.

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Regime (1995, 1997 and 2002-03)

The BSP regime in UP was very keen to provide welfare schemes to its social bases - especially Dalits. At first, it formed a government in alliance with the SP in 1993 when Mulayam Singh was the chief minister. Therefore, the BSP could not initiate exclusive programmes for its social bases. However, the BSP later aligned with the Hindu nationalist the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and formed a new government. During its first and second tenures (1995 and 1997), the BSP government was known as the 'Dalit Government' ('Government for untouchables') for its clear inclination towards exclusive human developmental schemes and programmes for Dalits and oppressed people. The Dalits are known to be the most economically poor and socially backward castes of Indian society that are included in the list of Scheduled Castes in the Constitution of India. The BSP claimed that human development in Uttar Pradesh was the development of the oppressed. The Dalits have been the main beneficiaries of social welfare and development schemes. The poor from upper castes did not were kept out of the government's priorities. It caused heartburn among the people of the other castes who were poor but not part of BSP's definition of Dalits.

The BSP advocated a one-point programme seeking proportional representation to all social groups in the bureaucracy and government and educational institutions. It attempted to meet the aspirations of the Dalits because they were under-represented in such institutions (Hasan 2002). Due importance for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was given through public policies. Partly because of the public policies based on protective discrimination since Independence, a privileged class was created among the oppressed and these Dalits usually formed the social base of the BSP (Pai 2001b). By advocating such public policies, the BSP could justify the pumping of resources and benefits to the Dalits through social welfare schemes and programmes. The BSP introduced social policies, especially related to health, education, housing, employment and social welfare, targeting Dalits and other oppressed people. For example, in 1995, scholarships were provided for Dalit students up to Standard 8. This was expected to have benefited about 72,00,000 students, and for that the government arranged Rs 1,110 million. As many as 53 new student hostels were to be constructed and several old student hostels to be renovated. The BSP government also arranged coaching centres for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students who wished to appear for civil services examinations at the State and Central levels. Mayawati started the Ambedkar Rojgar Yojana (Ambedkar Employment Scheme) for Dalit women with an outlay of Rs 600 million. The outlay for family health/planning programmes was increased and 50 per cent of the beneficiaries were Dalits. In 1997, Rs 700 million was allocated for setting up schools on the ashram model for the children of the Balmiki (SC) caste. Scholarships were increased during this period. Marriage support money for SC girls was increased from Rs 5,000 to Rs 10,000. A sum of Rs 1,000 was provided for medical expenses. The allocation of funds for the Indira Awaas Yojana [Indira Housing Scheme (IAY)] was increased four-fold.

Similarly, the BSP adopted the Ambedkar Village Programme (AVP) the largest programme to be adopted by it to ensure electoral support. The AVP² was actually started by the SP Government in 1991 and later adopted by the BSP as a priority and implemented more prominently. The programme was to be implemented in villages where the population of SCs/STs was more than 50 per cent of the total population. This programme aimed to improve the lives of the oppressed (mostly Dalit) people who have been underprivileged for centuries. The main objective of the programme was to provide a developed rural infrastructure and exclusive benefits for the human development of the backward and lower castes. For better implementation of this plan, in 1995, the BSP government established a separate department named '*Dr Ambedkar Gram Vikas Vibhag*' (Dr Ambedkar Village Development Department). In 1995-96, 1997-98 and 2002-03, as many as 19,176 villages were declared Ambedkar villages. The priority given to this programme by the BSP can be understood by the orders given by the then Chief Minister Mayawati to stop all other social welfare programmes so that funds could be diverted to the Ambedkar villages.³

Under the AVP, 36 schemes and programmes were implemented in each village. Some of the programmes were related to rural infrastructure like roads, electricity, public buildings and so forth. Though the number of schemes and programmes has been changing, a major chunk of the plan outlay was related to human development. Construction of toilets under sanitation programmes, immunisation, supply of safe drinking water, housing facility under IAY, widow pension, old age and disability pension, scholarship for children, construction of school buildings, family welfare and employment benefits were the important elements of the AVP. Families below poverty line, mainly Dalit families, were entitled to these benefits. In its first two tenures, the BSP hoped to improve the lives of 92 lakh SCs/STs through the Ambedkar Plan. After assuming office in September 1997, the BJP stopped almost all the Dalit-oriented programmes, but in 2002 when the BSP came back to power, they were re-introduced. Whenever the regime and its politics at the State level changed, the public policies for human development and social security changed.

The BSP's policies for human development in UP were not merely populist in nature. The regime did strive for successful implementation of these policies (though the issue could be debated). The BSP government appointed Dalit officers to important posts of administration to ensure that the exclusive programmes started for Dalits were implemented sincerely. One Dalit programme officer was posted in every district to watch proper implementation of such plans. Mayawati resorted to the strategy of large-scale transfers of officials to accomplish the BSP's targets. As many as 1,350 civil and police officials were transferred during her tenure in 1997—467 IAS and 380 IPS officers, 300 PCS and 250 provincial police officials were shifted (Hasan 2002). The BSP adopted the politics of symbolism – and perhaps more – to win the sentiments of the Dalit community. It not only established new educational institutions naming them after noted Dalit leaders but also changed the names of many existing ones. Agra University was re-named Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar University and Kanpur University was re-named Chhatrapati Sahuji Maharaj University (Jaffrelot 2003).

Even though most of the policy initiatives taken by the BSP government focused on Dalits, some were taken to benefit OBCs and Muslims in order to woo them too. Mayawati even announced that 27 per cent share of the state budget would benefit OBCs. She included some new castes in the list

of OBCs. Mayawati implemented the recommendations of the Second UP Backward Classes Commission, which insisted that Muslims too should benefit from the reservation policy.

Policy initiatives of the BSP regime during its first three tenures reflect a clear predisposition of the party towards its social base, Dalits. Since Dalits are economically one of the most backward communities in the country, the BSP targeted them with its human development policies to woo them. This strategy gave the Dalit community a clear message that the BSP was the only party that had concern for their well-being. Special protection given to the Scheduled Castes (i.e., Dalits) in the Constitution of India provided a logical basis for the BSP to extend exclusive policy benefits to Dalits. If the BSP adopted other policies, like economic or political incentives to benefit Dalits, the party could have faced tough opposition and found it difficult to defend itself. However, adopting human development policies to cement its social base, the BSP was able to defend itself in public domain. The language of empowerment also supported the BSP's efforts. The policy view of the empowerment of the oppressed and poor people penetrates the very idea of providing direct and exclusive benefits to them and that helped the BSP to carry out its political agenda to maintain Dalits as its social base.

One of the contentions that intellectual debates have centered around opposes the idea of the BSP being a party of the Dalit community. This debate reflects that the BSP's exclusive social welfare benefits to Dalits were not meant for Dalits as a homogeneous social community. It is claimed that most of the benefits provided by successive BSP governments were grabbed by Jatavs/Chamars (Jeffrey & Jeffrey, 2008). It has been argued that the BSP was a party constructed by Chamars keeping their broader interests in the centre. Kanchan Chandra (2004) observed that during 1995-96, about 85 per cent of state level posts in the BSP were occupied by Chamars. However, for political suitability, the BSP posed as a party of the Dalit community. Therefore, the social policies of the BSP governments had to provide benefits for the Dalit communities, instead of being limited only to Chamars.

Samajvadi Party (SP) Regime (1989-91, 1993-95 and 2003-07)

The SP has heavily relied on mobilisation of the OBCs – mainly Yadavs and Pals (these two castes are generally known to comprise shepherds or known as cattle-rearing and sheep-grazing castes) and Muslims for electoral support. The main social base of SP – *Yadavs* and *Pals* – is not as poor and oppressed as the Dalits. The 'green revolution' benefited the upper backward castes of *Yadavs* and *Pals*. Peasant movements in western UP were mobilised by OBCs in a substantial way. Mulayam Singh did not adopt such strong populist measures as Mayawati because the SP did not have a very poor social base. However, he was very successful in keeping rich OBCs (*Yadavs* and *Pals*) organised under the SP banner by using political power to benefit his social bases rather providing them with benefits through formal social welfare policies. Under He even granted many political posts and powerful positions within and outside the government structure to his social base – mainly *Yadavs* and *Pals*. Mulayam Singh allegedly recruited his own caste people many times to state government posts. A number of authors have noted the ability of the *Yadavs* to manipulate the process of recruitment to government posts and several other reports highlighted the 'Yadavisation' (majority of *Yadavs* in recruitment) of the police force in UP in the mid-1990s and argued that they were being systematically favoured in recruitment (Hasan 2001).

During his earlier tenure (2003-07), Mulayam Singh recruited more than 18,000 police constables and many of them were allegedly *Yadavs* (Verma 2006). When the BSP government came to power in 2007, it cancelled these recruitments and a litigation regarding this issue is pending in the Supreme Court of India. Since the *Yadavs* were prosperous, they could not qualify for welfare schemes like housing, pension or informal employment on daily wages. Hence, the Mulayam Singh government provided them with elite jobs in the public sector. Further, the SP government increased the income limit to provide academic fellowships to OBC students at the middle and higher educational level because the OBCs in UP are not as poor and oppressed as the Dalits are. Mulayam Singh has the support of *Yadavs* who are prosperous and considered the 'creamy layer' of the OBCs. Therefore, even if he could attract some of the social sections through the welfare schemes, he could not have justified that on the grounds of pumping the benefits to some specific groups/castes like the BSP. Table 3 reflects the vote share based on class (we use the term class to connote economic group) in the Lok Sabha (the lower house of the Central legislature) and State assembly elections in UP. The SP has secured votes from the poor and non-poor sections, more or less equally. This equal share of votes from the poor and the non-poor poses a dilemma for the SP as to which section of its social base should be targeted through government schemes in order to strengthen their support. If one section is targeted, the chances are that other may slip from the support net of SP.

Table 3: Class-wise Votes Share of the BSP and the SP in Uttar Pradesh

Political Party	Class	Indian Parliamentary (Lok Sabha) Election 1996	Uttar Pradesh State Assembly 1996	Indian Parliamentary (Lok Sabha) Election 1999	Uttar Pradesh State Assembly 2002
BSP	Very Poor	32.8	35.1	34.3	47.5
	Poor	29.1	17.2	21.2	26.5
	Middle	13.3	10.8	9.9	17.7
	Rich	4.9	6.3	5.7	7.3
SP	Very Poor	19.8	20.6	17.3	19.4
	Poor	18.2	23.8	21.5	30.0
	Middle	23.8	20.1	21.2	22.5
	Rich	22.3	15.7	13.5	15.6

Source: Verma (2003)

The impact of sharing of class-wise votes captured by the SP was reflected in many programmes. In 2004-05, Mulayam Singh started the *Kanya Vidya Dhan Yojana* (scheme providing monetary assistance for the education of girls) under which Rs 20,000 was given to each girl as soon as she passed Class XII examination. Under this scheme, 5.87 lakh girls benefited during 2003-06. Priority was given to girls from poor families and the balance amount was distributed to girls belonging to families above the poverty line in the ascending order of income. The scheme benefits all girls belonging to all social and caste groups without any prejudice.⁴ The impact of the class-based social

bases of the SP is visible in the plan document of the SP government presented by Chief Minister Mulayam Singh at the National Development Council meeting on December 9, 2006. Though he mentioned the need for social equality, he did not allocate any specific programme or schemes for any caste or section of class. This official plan document is politically neutral. Achievements in the plan document have been targeted on the basis of common success rather than by targeting class or caste-wise.

Under another ambitious scheme, Mulayam Singh provided unemployment allowance to the educated unemployed people irrespective of social and economic status, caste, creed, community or sex. The chief minister disbursed a monthly unemployment allowance of Rs 500 for April and May to about 52,000 educated unemployed persons at a massive rally in Lucknow (*India Today* 2006). Some other benefits provided by the SP government that were beyond caste boundaries are as follows:

1. Almost 6,000 political prisoners arrested during the Emergency imposed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi during the mid-1970s to receive a monthly pension of Rs 500.
2. B Ed (Bachelor in Education) graduates to get jobs.
3. Retirement age for teachers was raised from 60 to 62.
4. 12,000 jobs for ex-servicemen were promised.
5. 18,000 rural youths who are at least matriculates to be appointed temporary teachers with a salary of Rs 2,000 per month.
6. 18,000 persons, each with a monthly wage of Rs 2,000, to be temporarily appointed to Panchayats.
7. 1,825 youths to be appointed technical assistants.

While summarising this section, it can be noted that the SP, during its three tenures at the helm of power in UP could not target human development policies to the extent that BSP has done. The reason is that SP's social base (*Yadavs*) is not as poor as the Dalits. In fact, the *Yadavs* are one of those social groups who got most benefits from the Green Revolution of the 1970s and are among the middle-ranking economic classes. Prior to the post-Independence land reforms, they were small tenants who used to either plough the lands of big landlords or were part of the share-cropping pattern of the agricultural economy. Being a part of the agricultural production system, and since Green Revolution benefited small landholdings, the *Yadavs* have been successful in improving their economic conditions substantially. To persuade the *Yadavs*, the SP, unlike the BSP, had to rely mostly on recruitment policies rather than health, education and employment security policies. The SP tried to provide benefits to the *Yadavs* through popular policies such as irrigation benefits, tenders of the public constructions, recruitment to the police force, teaching faculty and other public services. Therefore, policies and programmes related to human development got neutral treatment during the SP regime in UP compared to the BSP regime.

BSP Regime (2007 onwards)

A dramatic change occurred in the social base of the BSP during the State assembly election in 2007. The BSP secured a full-fledged majority to form the government in UP. This change was the result of its

'social engineering' that combined Brahmins (an upper caste) with Dalits as its social bases. The BSP shifted its ideological stance from *Bahujan* (majority) to *Sarvajan* (all people). Though, *Sarvajan* policy of the BSP speaks about the people of all castes, politically the party allied with upper castes, mainly Brahmins. This change was initiated by the BSP during the 2002 State assembly elections but was confined to its earlier agenda of pro-Dalit public policies. In 2002, Mayawati declared that only those schemes that are in the interest of Dalits and other downtrodden castes would be carried out but other schemes would be reviewed (Pai 2003).

Unexpected victory in the state assembly election 2007 influenced public policy preferences of BSP heavily. Now there is a clear view of the BSP accommodating higher castes in the set of benefits that had been earlier given to the Dalits exclusively. Now, the agenda of *Sarvajan* is more clear and evident in the policy documents and programmes of the present BSP government⁵, the impact of changes in the social bases of BSP and in its public policy preferences is more pronounced at present. Even the Ambedkar Village Programme (AVP), which is the most privileged programme of the BSP, is undergoing structural changes. Earlier, the AVP was to be implemented only in villages where the share of the SC population is more than 50 per cent, but since 2007, the BSP government has launched it to every village of the State. The implementation of the plan will be completed within five years in five stages. In addition, the benefits of the plan given exclusively to Dalits have been extended even to the 'high-caste' people. Table 4 shows the various programmes that benefit high-caste people.

Table 4: Benefits for Higher Castes under Changed BSP Dispensation

SN	Schemes/Plans	Benefits for High Castes
1	Construction of cleaned toilet	Available for all castes
2	Free Bore-well (irrigation) facility	All general castes
3	Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (a self-employment scheme)	BPL (for all castes)
4	Drinking Water	One hand-pump per 100 population (for all castes)
5	Savitribai Phule Balika Sahayata Yojana (Savitribai Phule Girl Assistance Plan)	Rs 25,000 and one bicycle to girls belong to BLP Families during secondary education (for all castes)
6	Scholarship for students	Poor high-caste students
7	Housing security	BPL (for all castes)
8	Land distribution to the landless	All castes (but priority will be given to SCs/STs)

The AVP is the main programme that has channelised substantive human development benefits to the people. For example, in 1997, the government issued an order to the Dr Ambedkar Rural Development Department of UP to implement 37 schemes under AVP. Among these, 18 were related to health, housing, education and the rest for developing irrigation, land and other infrastructure in villages. In 2007, when BSP changed its political strategy and adopted Sarvajan Policy, the structure of AVP was altered. In 2007, as many as 27 schemes had to be implemented under AVP and again a substantial part of this programme aimed to deliver the human development benefits in selected villages. The plan consisted of the following human development related schemes and programmes: Construction of primary schools, clean latrines, Indira Awas Yojana, drinking water, Swarn Jayanti Gram

Swarozgar Yojana, Rozgar Guarantee Yojana, Sampoon Gramin Rozgar Yojana, old age, widow and disability pensions, construction of health centres and sub-centres, health facilities, polio eradication, registration of birth and death rate in rural areas, scholarships for SCs/STs, OBCs, minority and general category students and scholarships for the students living below the poverty line.

Besides, there were plans for upper-caste people as well in the form of pensions, maternal benefits and death compensation. Under the Kanshi Ram Urban Development Plan (named after the deceased Dalit leader and mentor of Mayawati), a new plan formed by the present BSP government, mainly consists of benefits to the high-caste people. This social security scheme with an allocation of Rs 54 million, provides assistance during marriage and illness of girls belonging to poor families. About 28,995 high-caste families have been benefited under this scheme. Mayawati has even criticised the Central government for failing to provide any special measures for the high-caste poor⁷. After adopting the *Sarvajan* agenda, policy initiatives are highly inclined towards the new social bases of the BSP. Mayawati is repeatedly advocating reservation for the poor among higher castes and has demanded an amendment to the Constitution of India⁸ to ensure this. Though this should not be mistaken to mean that because of a greater focus on the upper-caste people, Dalits are getting fewer benefits than earlier. Plans and schemes that existed earlier have not been disturbed much and new one introduced. The BSP did not want to lose its Dalit and *bahujan* support because of the expanding space for the upper-caste people in public policy.

Confrontations between the 'upper castes' and 'lower castes' have always existed in North India, especially in UP. Therefore, reducing the assistance for lower castes may cause much political harm to the BSP. In 2008-09, under the social component plan, the BSP government increased the budgetary allocation to the SCs/STs by 41 per cent. The government attempted to fill the backlog posts for SCs that were vacant. The government has also initiated steps to ensure job reservation for SCs and STs in the private sector. The daily wage rate was increased from Rs 58 to Rs 100. This decision benefits Dalits most because the share of Dalits in the agricultural and informal labour is larger than other sections of society. In another initiative, the government started an important housing scheme in rural areas – Mahamaya Awaas Yojana (Mahamaya Housing Scheme) – under which 16 lakh SCs/STs have been projected to get housing. The government has also doubled the amount of old-age pensions and marriage assistance.⁹

The BSP changed its political strategy from 2007 onwards due to political compulsions. This change did not alter the scope of the human development policies of the BSP government but led to the changes in the coverage of these policies and programmes. For example, the AVP of 1995 and 1997 is not very different from the AVP of 2007. Schemes and programmes are more or less similar in nature and scale but only the profile of the expected beneficiaries has changed. Now benefits are offered not only to Dalits but also to all social sections and that is the meaning of *Sarvajan*. This change happened because of the compulsion of inclusive politics. The BSP had to give benefits even to the upper castes that have always been identified as main culprits causing the deprivation of Dalits.

Conclusion

After the Nineties, public policies in UP for human welfare and development were very much been influenced by the politics of the State. The social bases of the political parties clearly dictated the nature of public policy making. Uncertainty of the social bases of political parties has stimulated such trends. In order to support, and gain the support of, specific social sections, various political parties adopted different agendas to channelise resources and material benefits to the social bases. Poor people, as an economic class, were not targeted; it was largely politics in terms of caste mobilisation. The public policies for human development and welfare were already mandated by the Indian constitution. For example, positive discrimination is already present in the Indian Constitution but the spirit and the aim of adopting the public policies to benefit specific social sections to garner electoral support, and the politics of public policies, pre-eminently public policies meant for better human development is reflected in UP. This paper has attempted to elaborate the tripartite relationship between the social bases of political regimes, their public policies and how they affect human development. Human development still eludes UP after all this. In this context, we can conclude that the public policies for human development – education, health and other aspects – will only become more and more political.

Notes

- ¹ Factual details on human development in UP have been from HDRUP, 2003; HDRNI, 2003; PSMS-II, 2006; and www.indiastst.com.
- ² Sources of information about the AVP are Pai (2001a), Pai (2001b), Department of Dr Ambedkar Gram Sabha Development, Government of UP. <http://agvv.up.nic.in/>.
- ³ DainikJagran (Hindi newspaper), Meerut, October 4 and 6, 1995, quoted in Pai (2003).
- ⁴ Mulayam Singh speech in National Development Council, December 9, 2006. Department of Planning, Government of UP, <http://planning.up.nic.in/>.
- ⁵ Priority to provide benefits for poor high-castes people has been mentioned in the 'Priorities of BSP Government', available in government website of UP, www.upgov.nic.in.
- ⁶ Government Orders and Plan Documents, Department of Dr Ambedkar Gram Sabha Vikas, Government of UP.
- ⁷ 'Historical Decisions Taken by BSP Government in March 2008', Department of Information and Public Relation, Government of UP. www.upgov.nic.in.
- ⁸ 'Uttar Pradesh: One Year of Development and Progress', Department of Information and Public Relations, Government of UP, www.upgov.nic.in.
- ⁹ 'One Year Achievements of Government for SC/ST', Department of Information and Public Relation, Government of UP, www.upgov.nic.in.

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