

# Dalit Politics in Contemporary India

The formation of this organisation was critical because it is these organisations that provided the initial organisational and financial base for the BSP.

Kanshi Ram tried to argue and mobilise dalits on the ground that the further advance of the community could only take place if the whole community stood as a group.

He was successful in this effort considering that within a span of more than a decade in the early 1990s the BAMCEF had a membership of around 2 lakhs.

The most important decision was taken in the case of the founder of the BSP was the formation of Dalit Shiksha Sangarsh Samiti Committee known as DSK in 1981. The founder of this organisation was of critical importance considering that it is through this organisation Kanshi Ram could try to increase his influence among other sections of the society which remain untouched by the activities of BAMCEF.

The DSK in fact served as the organisational base for the formation of the BSP and took up political issues. It did so in four significant ways. One was the through ideological campaigns that it carried out with its mouthpiece 'The Oppressed India' and secondly through the organisation of meeting rallies, mainly bicycle rallies as

Social action programme throughout the country. Through the first it sought to educate, organise and agitate the oppressed group and through the second it tried to restore self respect and equality for the oppressed caste in the society.

The activities of the DSA were prominent and frequent in 1983 and 1984 just before the formation of the BSP. Hence it is clear that the DSA was the precursor to the formation of the BSP by Kanshi Ram and in this sense the formation of the BSP was a calculated and deliberate one. It appears that it is through the DSA Kanshi Ram sought to do the necessary spad work before the formation of the BSP.

Having set the stage and the ground Kanshi Ram inaugurated the BSP on the 14th of April 1984. He acquired a useful partner when he persuaded MAYAWATI to join the party in Ullah Pradesh. The joining of Mayawati in Ullah Pradesh became crucial for Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) because with this party's other useful leader in the Ullah Pradesh, Mayawati belong to a Chamar family and studied in Meerut and Delhi universities and was in the teaching profession. She left her job to become a full time politician. Her family was in fact associated with the RPI.