

Why Rahul Gandhi's politics is that of the BSP

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Rahul Gandhi waves at supporters during Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra. (Image source: PTI)

The present era is witnessing the victory of two opposite ideologies — Brahmanism and Buddhism. Brahmanism is winning through state power and Buddhism by the conversion of a new fraternity. The latter is a cultural antidote to new politics and inculcating epochal habits for generations.

Currently, there are two national-level Dalit political parties in India — BSP and Congress. Their juxtaposition was unheard of historically, but they appear similar in clothing. Though each suspects the other and their wars are against similar issues, they differ in their methods.

Both have resorted to electoral participation to bring change. With these adjustments has come the impossibility of winning without alliances. The BSP has kept away from INDIA alliance thus far as it is not ready to work under the leadership of a volatile coalition. Besides, Mayawati is a senior leader with credentials unmatched by the other partners.

Both parties have Dalits in a position of leadership, but organisational portfolios of party structures are vastly different when it comes to Dalits in a position of power. This does not alter the quantity of representation in the Houses. The reserved seat formula applies across the board.

Indian politics, like social dynamics, were always rooted in caste affinities. So not until the Mandal Commission report did parties revolve their agenda around social justice. But BSP was the only one that

successfully made caste a currency of organising.

Columnists still ask how Kanshi Ram or the BSP could work for anti-caste politics by doing caste-centric politics? They are blinded by intellectual resources at their disposal and misplace caste as an identity with the superstructure. Politics of identity does more harm than good. But those doing politics otherwise are working with categories that benefit their cabal. If not caste, they deploy class, education and pedigree to make mediocre individuals with feudal backgrounds as leaders.

Without a qualitative change in the system, there is no hope for societal change. The measurement to assess society's change has to come from those at the absolute bottom. This is possible through a change in leadership and representation.

For the Congress to have a Dalit leader is nothing short of a revolution. The party is not ideological and its icons do not have a strong caste base, i.e, Jawaharlal Nehru, a Dattatreya Kaul Brahmin, and M K Gandhi, a Gujarati Modh-Bania. If Nehru's community voted collectively, it would not make for an impressive turnout in national, let alone regional or district-level politics. Gandhi's jaatwalas have found their holy waters in the [BJP-RSS](#). In the wake of this calamity — not having a sizable number of their ideological icon's devoted community cadres — Congress desperately needs an available source of cadres to mobilise.

Thankfully, Congress has found suitable lifesavers despite an impending ideological drought. These are the savant Dalit leaders currently at the helm of the new Congress.

[Rahul Gandhi](#)'s mind has been shaped in recent years in the company of these few Dalit minds. Barring Kharge, the rest of them do not have a public face yet but they are shaping the party's direction, making it an Ambedkarite impulse with Buddhist ethics. Rahul's politics is BSP and his thoughts are Bahujan-waad. He may adorn the attire of the majority, but his sensibility is approachable. He is playing a historical role of riding on the moral victory.

Kharge still appears early years Republican in his gestures, when throwing audacious challenges to the government. The older cogs, who are in any way a burden to the new, refined, socially accountable India, cannot be useful to Congress. That is why the Congress has followed Kanshi Ram's steps in their recent take on caste census, demanding representation to SC, ST, and OBCs, and bringing caste onto their important political platforms. They have discarded the gods who are hitherto responsible for their current status.

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