

Obama and Mayawati: a Comparison in Contrast



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It will be apt to mention in the beginning that a comparison between Obama and Mayawati (Dalit woman Chief Minister of UP state in India) is not very appropriate because there is a world of difference between their personalities and deeds. But some over enthusiastic followers of Mayawati have started comparing them and are spreading the dictum that "if Obama can do it why cannot she?" They have started projecting her as the future Prime Minister of India. As such it becomes necessary to make an attempt to make a comparison between Obama and Mayawati.

The first point of comparison between Obama and Mayawati is their social background. Obama is an African-American. His father was black and his mother was white. Mayawati's both parents are dalits. But it is pertinent to

note that during his electioneering he nowhere used his black identity to influence his voters. Throughout his election campaign he spoke about his policies and plans whereas in the case of Mayawati she has never spoken about her policies and plans. On the other hand her dalit identity is the starting point of her politics for emotional exploitation of dalits.

The second point of comparison between Obama and Mayawati is their ability to mobilize fund for the party. Obama through small contributions raised a party fund to the tune of \$650 millions but he deposited it in the party fund account and used it for electioneering. Mayawati also raised her property to the tune of Rs. 520 millions up to 2007 and further added Rs. 600 millions during 2007-08. But she did not deposit this amount in party fund account. Rather she deposited it in her personal and her family member's accounts. There are also allegations of selling MLA's and MP's tickets at election time at competitive rates. It is worth mentioning that CBI has already prepared a charge sheet against her for amassing personal property worth Rs. 300 millions beyond her known sources of income.

The third point of comparison between Obama and Mayawati concerns their policies and plans. As we know Obama fought the election on the plank of "Need of change for America" and has won it with this promise. He has promised to take America out of financial crises and reduce unemployment. As regards Mayawati she has never made any promise to solve any public problem. In fact she does not have any such plan or program to solve the public problems like poverty, unemployment, lack of health infrastructure, drinking water, housing and illiteracy etc.

The fourth point of comparison between Obama and Mayawati is their pursuit of political power. Obama has been elected as the most powerful President of the oldest democracy of the world. Mayawati has also been elected for the fourth time as the Chief Minister of the most populous state (Uttar Pradesh) of India. Obama has promised to use the political power for solving the problems facing the U.S. people whereas Mayawati has been accused of using it for self aggrandizement. Dr. Ambedkar had remarked that political power should be used for social progress. But Mayawati lacks such inclination even in the case of dalits who are her prime constituency. As a result of it the dalits of U.P. continue to be behind the dalits of all other states of India except that of Bihar and Orissa. In spite of her occupying the Chief

Ministership for the fourth time U.P. continues to suffer from under industrialization and over all backwardness. As such she can be held responsible for the backwardness of U.P. as well as that of U.P.dalits to a good extent. According to one study U.P. has suffered regression during the last decade. It is noticeable that Mayawati has been in power since 1995 with some breaks in between.

The next point of comparison between Obama and Mayawati can be in respect of psychological impact of their victory on their voters. In case of Obama his victory has exhilarated Blacks, Minorities and Whites also to good extent. In case of Mayawati dalits excluding intellectual section thereof and muscleman and moneyed men of higher castes are only exhilarated because the latter are especially the main beneficiaries of her position. Dalits have only the psychological satisfaction of having a Chief Minister of their own caste. They are totally deprived of all the material gains of power on account of corrupt and inefficient administration being run by Mayawati. Minorities, mainly the Muslims are highly skeptical about Mayawati because in her pursuit of political power she can make alliance with their staunch opponent and a communal party like B.J.P. as she had done thrice in the past.

From a brief comparison between Obama and Mayawati it becomes evident that it is not very appropriate because there is a world of difference between their personalities and deeds. Rather it can be said to be a comparison in contrast. Even then if admirers of Mayawati are so anxious to make a comparison they should look for qualities like a vision, an urge for change, impeccable integrity and inclination to use political power for social progresses as exemplified in Obama. They must display mental honesty and proper courage to criticize her for her personal greed to amass wealth, lack of vision and unprincipled pursuit of power. She may also be dissuaded from wasting public money in creating memorials and installing her own statues in an effort to immortalize her. People are immortalized by their noble deeds and not by their statue. Obama is to be judged in the near future but Mayawati has already been judged.

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