

realized that he had lost the command of the party to Mayawati's new alliances and tremendous financial clout. As he had no wealth, no home, no friends, he experienced helplessness typically like millions of Dalits who end up in traps of Chankayan making. Since Mayawati increased her surveillance to monitor his movements and people he met with, Kanshi Ram apprehended a grave threat to his life. He allegedly gave hints of a conspiracy to his supporters. Before Kanshi Ram could wriggle out of the trap, he suffered the paralytic stroke making him completely at the mercy of Mayawati, an Amazonian figure in Dalit politics. Earlier, Kanshi Ram tried to spend more time in Punjab. Mayawati had vehemently disapproved of his new love for his family. According to a report, she even used a filthy language for his 93 year old mother. Mayawati now had resolved to demonize Kanshi Ram's family, and she spared no effort to succeed in her mission. Consequently, all the aggressiveness that was reserved previously for Brahmins, Banias and Thakurs had shifted singularly against Ram's family whom she considered as a threat to her fiefdom. She skillfully substituted slandering Brahmins in UP with vilifying his family in Punjab.

Kanshi Ram's increasing interest in Punjab was ascribed to his remote fixation with his family. Mayawati needed a strategy to project his family, and the Sikh background as fundamentally opposed to the national interests. Such a scheme had a greater traction in it as it would help Kanshi Ram become harbinger of hopes for Dalits and Brahmins in UP. As the paralytic stroke affected the right side of

his brain, it was strong reason to retire him compulsorily to the bed. Mayawati idolized him to an extent that he existed as an Icon of Dalit revolution, but had nothing to do with everyday politics. Kanshi Ram tragic withdrawal from active politics left a void. Circumspect Dalit leaders apprehend that Brahmins were

looking for long to fill the void created by Ram's absence. In real politics, Kanshi Ram was immediately replaced by Satish Chander Mishra as the most dominant influence in Mayawati's life. She said that Mishra helped her in difficult times when Kanshi Ram had a stroke and his family was instigated against her. The son of the former Chief Justice of Guwahati High Court, Satish Mishra as her legal counsel, bailed her out of Taj Corridor corruption case. Mayawati got Mishra elected to Rajya Sabha seat. She also appointed him general secretary of BSP. As soon as Mishra took the center stage, it is believed, a major shift in Ambedkar's ideology took place. According to a report, Satish Mishra travelled 22,000 Kilometer across about 70 districts of Utter Pradesh between July 1, 2006 to Sept 2006. Earlier, he had convinced Mayawati that the iconic value of Kanshi Ram's life could not be allowed to waste away by his family in Punjab. A few days before his death, Mishra had completed his tour of magnetizing



Brahmins to the BSP fold. He now needed to manipulate media so that the family feud turns to BSP advantage. After Kanshi Ram's death on October 9, 2006, a host of well coordinated strategies were seen in operation. Since Delhi High Court unexpectedly rejected the plea of Kanshi Ram's family for the post-mortem of the

body, his brother and sister became mute spectators to what followed at the funeral rites. The manner of hurriedly disposing of Kanshi Ram's body aroused some people's suspicion. The body was supposed to be for the public view for about two hours, but it reached one hour late leaving hardly any time for his supporters to have the last look. The funeral was advanced from 3PM to 2 PM. The cremation was carried out hurriedly according to Buddhists rites. Kanshi Ram's family had neither any leader nor any court on their side. The funeral pyre was lit by Mayawati herself in the presence of the BSP founder's brother and sisters. The last severe blow came with the announcement that his ashes would be the exclusive property of the party. Satish Mishra next planned strategies to cash on the sympathy wave in ensuing 2007 elections. On October 17, 2006, Mayawati took Kanshi Ram's ashes in an urn to Lucknow. It took six hours from Lucknow Airport to Ambedkar Bhawan where she made one hour speech to several hundred

thousand people emphasizing that she was the sole inheritor of his political legacy. She appealed to voters to honor Sahib Kanshi Ram by electing her with absolute majority. Voters indeed surprised pollsters by giving Mayawati absolute majority in the Vidhan Sabha. On the eve of his two death anniversaries, many development projects were announced, but the question still remains, "Is Mayawati, the sole inheritor of what Kanshi Ram symbolized in his life?" If she is, she will definitely give a program for social emancipation of Dalits in accordance with the ideology of Kanshi Ram and Ambedkar. Kanshi Ram said that once Dalits 'capture power, social emancipation would follow keeping in line with most progressive political philosophy and ideology.' In the next Parliamentary elections, Mayawati maybe a strong candidate for Prime Ministerial berth; if she gets the coveted post, she will fulfill the prophecy of her mentor. The question of 'social emancipation' as it is more complex and subtle, will require entirely a different strategy. Dalits have to be extricated from the swamp of 'inferiority complex' on the one hand and their self-esteem has to be attached with power structures of the social domain on the other. Social emancipation is more akin to personal growth of character and conviction. It has a fundamental difference with the Varna system which seeks to empower through exclusion. Social emancipation takes guidance from spiritual stock that promotes inclusiveness and bipartisanship even with rivals. Kanshi Ram's siblings in such circumstances maybe partners with Mayawati for a new era of pride and glory

HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS



I congratulate all Sahib Shri Guru Ravidass & Baba Saheb Dr. Ambedkar's followers around the world on this special occasion of the launch of AMBEDKAR TIMES Newspaper. The credit goes to the Editor Mr. Prem Kumar Chumber for setting this history by launching first newspaper under the banner of Dr. Ambedkar in abroad. My best wishes are with him.

And als g reetings on the birth anniversary of Sahib Shri Kanshi Ram Ji, the Messiah of Dalits, Downtrodden and Backwards for dedicating his whole life in order to help them stand on their feet with dignity, self-respect and courage.

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