

BSP not to attend UPA dinner

Uttar Pradesh's ruling Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Wednesday decided not to attend a dinner hosted by the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) to mark the fourth anniversary of its government Thursday even as all MPs of the Samajwadi Party received an invitation.

This shows that the Congress, which leads the UPA, and the Samajwadi Party - staunch rivals till recently - are coming closer. Simultaneously, it indicated that the relations between BSP and the Congress are worsening.

When Chief Minister Mayawati came to power May 2007, it was speculated that the Congress and her party would have a poll alliance in the Lok Sabha elections due next year. The belief strengthened after Mayawati met UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi early this year.

However, the bonhomie between the Congress and the BSP did not last long.

Congress general secretary Rahul Gandhi's tours to Dalit regions in Uttar Pradesh provoked Mayawati into criticising his efforts as a 'farce'.

Lately, the chief minister has also been accusing the central government of not helping the state in tackling drought conditions in the Bundelkhand region. The Congress, in return, has been alleging that billions of rupees allocated to the state to improve the condition of people affected in that region are being siphoned off.

On the other hand, there has been a thaw in the relations between the Samajwadi Party and the Congress with the former realising the need to have a truck with the latter to check the possible rise of Mayawati as a major player on the national scene after the general elections.

The Congress simultaneously perceives that it could improve its performance in Uttar Pradesh if it had an understanding with the Samajwadi Party.

(© IANS / India eNews)