

Chapter- 5

Electoral Politics of the Uttarkhanda Dal and its Results

Almost all the political parties either national or regional in a democratic set up of a country generally involve themselves in electoral politics in order to gauge their support base among the people and also with an aspiration that their party candidates are to be elected and will represent in legislative bodies at central and provincial levels as well as in local legislative bodies of a country. Similarly the Uttarkhanda Dal, the theme of our present study, being in a democratic set up, had involved itself in electoral politics fielding its party candidates in different Bidhan Sobha (State Legislative Assembly) elections, held in West Bengal from 1971 to 1982 and Lok Sobha (Parliamentary) elections, held in India from 1971 to 1984 before its final split. However, in the following discussion of this chapter an attempt has been made to explain elaborately the electoral activities and electoral politics of the Uttarkhanda Dal and also the results vis-à-vis the presence of other national political parties in the region of our study. The present discussion will be limited to the Parliamentary election of 1984 for the Uttarkhanda Dal witnessed its split in 1987 and followed its rapid decline thereafter. It should be mentioned that the Uttarkhanda Dal had boycotted the Bidhan Sobha (State Legislative Assembly) election, held in West Bengal in the early month of 1987. Though, the Dal had participated in both Bidhan Sobha (State Legislative Assembly) and Lok Sobha (Parliamentary) elections even after 1987 as a split group but the main focus of our present discussion would be on the election years mentioned above.

The Uttarkhanda Dal, as it has been mentioned earlier in chapter-3, was formed in July 1969 at Thakurpat of Dhupguri of Jailpaiguri district. Hence, the U.K.D. made its election debut in Parliamentary and State Legislative Assembly (West Bengal) elections held simultaneously in March 1971. It was, in fact, the sixth State Legislative Assembly election in West Bengal (mid-term) and fifth Parliamentary election (mid-term) of our country.¹ However, the U.K.D. resolved to field the candidates in both Bidhan Sobha (West Bengal) and Lok Sobha elections in its special party session, held in March 1970.² Accordingly the

Dal fielded its candidates in the Bidhan Sobha seats in Dhupguri, Maynaguri, Falakata, Rajganj, Jalpaiguri Sadar---all are in Jalpaiguri district and in one seat of Cooch Behar district i.e. Mekhliganj. The Dal also fielded its two candidates in the Lok Sobha seat of Jalpaiguri (ST) and Cooch Behar. It is very relevant to point out here in this context that the organizational activities of the Dal at this very initial stage were confined in to some Blocks of Jalpaiguri district especially those mentioned above and Mekhliganj Block of Cooch Behar district and the same has already been mentioned in chapter-4. It should be mentioned that the Dal till then could not make its presence in other districts of North Bengal. Therefore, it was found that the Dal fielded its candidates in 1971 elections mostly in above mentioned seats of Jalpaiguri district. However, the candidates of the Dal contested in those elections mentioned above as independent one for it had no registration from the Election Commission of India.

However, in its debut election, the Uttarkhanda Dal went to the voters with no any specific election manifesto. Rather, it put before the voters the party programmes,³ formulated at the time of its formation, as its election manifesto. That very party programme of the U.K.D. has already been mentioned in chapter-3. In this connection mention may be made of some of its programmes such as the economic deprivation of the people of North Bengal by the Govt. of West Bengal, the Calcutta centric rule, socio-cultural backwardness of North Bengal and indifferent attitude of the State Govt. towards this backwardness.

However, the result of the Bidhan Sobha seats, the Dal contested so far, it may be said, was encouraging for the U.K.D. to some extent, leaving two Bidhan Sobha and two Lok Sobha seats aside. The matter will be very clear if we take a look at the result sheet of the Bidhan Sobha and Lok Sobha seats where the U.K.D. had fielded its candidates. The following tables will vividly show the percentage of votes, secured by the U.K.D.⁴

First of all, the results of the Bidhan Sobha seats of the election of 1971 where the U.K.D. candidates were fielded, has been shown. It has already been mentioned that probably the U.K.D. has no registration from the Election Commission, therefore, its candidates contested as independent candidates Star mark against the name of the candidate in each table indicates the candidature of the U.K.D. The tables are as follows.

1. Falakata(SC), Jalpaiguri 1971, Vote polled-43,634, Table-1.1

	Name of the candidates	Name of the party	Valid votes secured	Percentage
1	Jagadananda Roy	Cong(R)	13,410	30.72%
2	Abhay Charan Barman	CPM(I)PSP	11,415	26.15%
3	Jitendra ch. Das	RSP	1,320	3.02%
4	Deben Barman	RSP	2,408	5.51%
5	Nripendra Narayan Roy	SSP	4,885	11.19%
6	*Panchanan Mallick	IND*	4,302	9.85%
7	Hiralal Singha	Cong(o)	1,642	3.76%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D. 9.85%.

2. Dhupguri (General), Jalpaiguri 1971, Vote Polled -42330. Table-1.2

	Name of the candidates	Name of the party	Valid votes secured	Percentage
1	Bhabani Poul	Cong(R)	11,471	27.8%
2	Anil ch. Guha Neogi	SSP	11,279	26.64%
3	Wayazuddin Ahamed*	IND	5,321	12.57%
4	Bimal Bhattacharjee	BC	1,400	3.30%
5	Mangu Munda	IND	1,440	3.40%
6	Suresh ch. Dey	CPM	7,054	16.66%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D- 12.57%.

3. Maynaguri (SC), Jalpaiguri, 1971. Vote Polled-39173. Table-1.3

	Name of the candidate	Name of the party	Valid votes secured	Percentage
1	Bijay Krishna Mohanta	Cong(R)	12,781	32.62%
2	Anil ch. Roy	PSP	1,768	4.51%
3	Janakinath Roy	BC	3,353	8.55%
4	Dinanath Roy	Cong(o)	1,225	3.12%
5	Nilcharan Roy	CPM	3,851	9.83%
6	Basanta kr. Roy	CPI	2,328	5.94%
7	Jatindranath Basunia	RSP	5,161	13.17%
8	Haripada Roy	IND*	6,075	15.50%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D-15.50%.

4. Jalpaiguri Sadar (General), Jalpaiguri, 1971. Vote Polled- 54,552. Table-1..4

	Name of the candidates	Name of the party	Valid votes secured	Percentage
1	Anupam Sen	Cong(R)	25608	46.94%
2	Girish ch. Singha*	IND	1,928	3.53%
3	Aninanshu Bhowmik	Cong(o)	988	1.81%
4	Paresh ch. Mitra	CPM	14,520	26.61%
5	Bibhuti Bhusan Sikdar	BC	743	1.36%
6	Manu Chakraborty	CPI	7,551	13.84%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D- 3.53%.

5. Rajganj (SC), Jalpaiguri, 1971. Vote Polled-35,963., Table-1.5

	Name of the candidate	Name of the party	Valid votes secured	Percentage
1	Bhagaban SinghaRoy	Cong(R)	25608	46.94%
2	Imaneswar Roy	BC	1,032	3.83%
3	Jiban Roy	Cong(o)	988	8.43%
4	Jyoti PrasadBarman*	IND	2,778	2.72%
5	Dhirendranath Roy	CPM	10,345	28.76%
6	Bhabendranath Roy	SSP	4,118	11.45%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D -2.72%.

6. Mekhliganj (SC), Cooch Behar district, 1971. Vote Polled-47,666., Table-1.6

	Name of the candidates	Name of the party	Valid votes secured	Percentage
1	Mihir Kr. Roy	FB	19,880	41.70%
2	Kshir Pr. Barman	CPM	3,996	8.38%
3	Taraprasad RoyBasunia	Cong(o)	3,745	7.85%
4	Mani Bhusan Roy	Cong(R)	15,902	33.36%
5	Sudhanshu Kr. Roy Sarkar*	IND	1,687	3.54%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D-3.54%.

Below is the result of the U.K.D. IN Lok Sobha election of 1971.⁵ It has already been mentioned that the U.K.D. fielded its candidates in two Lok Sobha seats this time i.e. Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar (Parliamentary).

Jalpaiguri (ST) ,1971. Vote Polled-3,06,173., Table-1.7

Sl.No.	Name of the candidates	Name of the party	Valid votes secured	Percentage
1	Tuna Oraon	Cong(R)	1,13,104	37.67%
2	Ganga Ram Oraon	SSP	26,098	8.69 %
3	Birendranath Katham	Cong(o)	15,763	5.25%
4	Birsan Kujur	CPM	60,137	20.03%
5	Raphael Toppo	IND	22,141	7.37%
6	Stephen Kujur	RSP	40,443	13.47%
7	Soma Oraon*	IND	11,097	3.69%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D-3.69%.

Cooch Behar, 1971. Vote polled-3,59,788., Table-1.8

	Name of the candidates	Name of the party	Validvotessecured	Percentage
1	Binoy Krishna Das Choudhury	Cong(R)	1,50,869	42.16%
2	Amarendra Nath Roy Pradhan	FB	77,090	21.54 %
3	Nagendra Nath Roy	CPM	80,265	22.43%
4	Prasenjit Barman	Cong(o)	34,874	9.74%
5	Rabindra Nath Sarkar	IND	4,660	1.30%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D-1.30%.

However, the result of the concerned Bidhan Sobha and Lok Sobha elections, shown in the aforesaid table, show that the contestant candidates of the Uttarkhanda Dal fared well in most of the Bidhan Sobha seats so far as the Dal fielded its candidates, though the Dal failed to win a single seat. It may be stated, for instance, that the candidates of the U.K.D. secured 12.57% and 15.50% of the total votes polled in Dhupguri and Mainaguri Bidhan Sobha seats respectively. The above mentioned percentage of votes, secured by the U.K.D. which crossed the double figure marks should be taken into account. In other two assembly seats i.e. Falakata and Raiganj, the U.K.D. candidates had secured 9.86% and 2.72% respectively which also should be counted. The important aspect is that the U.K.D. was then a political party of merely two years old. However, it was found that the Dal could not achieve any mentionable success in Jalpaiguri Sadar and Mekhliganj assembly seats and also in two Lok Sobha seats of Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar. The above mentioned fact proves that the U.K.D. failed to make its presence felt in urban area of Jalpaiguri and it also could not make its organizational inroads in Cooch Behar district. In addition to this perhaps the lack of the organizational strength and poor financial condition of the Dal brought its electoral failure in two Lok Sobha seats.

However, in West Bengal Bidhan Sobha election of 1971, no political party received absolute majority. Therefore, a Coalition Govt. with Ajoy Mukherjee as Chief Minister was formed in West Bengal. But this newly formed govt. lasted only for three month and the chief minister voluntarily resigned on 19 June 1971. Thereafter, the president's rule was imposed on 29 June 1971 which continued till March 10, 1972. In the same month of 1972, again the Bidhan Sobha (Assembly) election (mid-term) was held in West Bengal.⁶

In Bidhan Sobha election of 1972, the U.K.D. was again in the fray.⁷ But it is very interesting to note that in this election the U.K.D. fielded its candidates only in three Bidhan Sobha seats-two in Jalpaiguri i.e. Dhupguri and Mainaguri Assembly seats and one in Cooch Behar district i.e. Mekhliganj. It was very surprising that in 1971 the Dal had contested in six Assembly seats but it was found that in 1972 the Dal had contested only in three Assembly seats. However, no evidence is available for explanation of such limited participation of the Dal in Bidhan Sobha election of 1972. One reason may be pointed out that the Dal had no financial strength to meet the expenditure of consecutive two elections.

It is to be mentioned that the U.K.D. had the clear cut election manifesto in the election of 1972. Its election manifesto contained the following points.

1. Protesting against the exploitation of resources of North Bengal.
2. Removing the economic differences between rural and urban areas.
3. Giving permanent tenancy rights to the landless farmers on the vested lands.
4. Providing the free education in rural areas.
5. Setting up industries according to needs.
6. Nationalization of tea industry of North Bengal.
7. Introduction of the principle of single profession and family based job distribution with a view to solving the unemployment problems.
8. Allocation of budgetary funds for North Bengal's development in accordance with the revenue earned from North Bengal.
9. Vesting of surplus houses or homestead plots of the city owners to solve the refugee problems.
10. Amending Agricultural Income Tax law in consonance with the Income Tax law for welfare of the farmers.
11. Resolving the 'Chhit mahal' (enclave) problems of India and Bangladesh.⁸

Though the U.K.D. went to the people for vote with the above mentioned manifesto underlining the development of rural North Bengal but so far as the election results of 1972 show the response of the voters of the constituencies where the party fielded its candidates was not encouraging for the party. The election results of the assembly election where the U.K.D. fielded its candidates have been shown in the table below.⁹ Star marks against the name of the candidates belonged to the U.K.D.

Mekhliganj(SC), 1972. Vote polled-45,990., Table-2.1

Sl. No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid Votes	Percentage
1.	Madhusudhan Roy	Cong	25,816	56.13%
2.	Amarendranath RoyPradhan	FB	18,233	39.64%
3	Sudhanshu Kr. Sarkar*	IND	675	1.46%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-1.46%.

Dhupguri (General)-1972. Vote polled-41,286., Table2.2

Sl. No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid Votes	Percentage
1.	Bhawani Paul	Cong	22,670	54.90%
2.	Nishit Nath Bhowmik	SOC	13,810	33.44%
3	Bimal Ch. Bhattacharjee*	IND	2,326	5.63%
4.	Manga Munda	IND	675	1.68%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-5.63%.

Maynaguri (SC) – 1972. Vote polled- 35,903., Table2.3

Sl. No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid Votes	Percentage
1.	Bijay Krishna Mohanta	Cong	19,716	54.91%
2.	Panchanan Mallick*	IND	6,862	19.11%
3	Jatindra Nath Basunia	RSP	8,318	23.16%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-19.11%.

The aforesaid result of the U.K.D. in the assembly election of 1972 shows that the percentage of votes cast for the U.K.D. declined almost 2% in Mekhliganj seat, almost 7% in

Dhupguri Assembly seat compared to what it had obtained in the Assembly poll of 1971. But the same time it should be remembered that in Maynaguri Assembly seat where the president of the Dal himself was the party's candidates increased its percentage of votes from 15.50% to 19.11%. It is very interesting to note that the Dal fielded a Brahmin candidate Sri Bimal Bhattacharya in Dhupguri Assembly Seat (general) in that election. But in spite of that the percentage of votes (which has already been shown) in Dhupguri was dropped sharply for the party. However, the leadership of the Dal claimed that throughdefeated, the U.K.D. earned popularity even in the remote villages in spite of the existence of well established political parties.¹⁰

However, in the above mentioned Bidhan Sobha election of West Bengal (1972), the Congress (R) party won 216 seats out of 281 and Sri Sidhartha Shankar Roy took over the charge of Chief Minister of West Bengal. During Sidhartha Shankar Roy's Chief Minister ship, though the U.K.D. continued its activities very strongly for next five years but received a setback due to the promulgation of emergency throughout India on 26 June 1975. It should be mentioned that at the time of emergency, the Govt. of India imposed prohibitory rules and amended the MISA (maintenance of internal security act). The govt. also banned political activities of Ananda Margi, RSS, CPI(ML), Jamat-i-islamic etc. The emergency continued up to June 1977. However, during the said period the activities of the U.K.D. became very weak.¹¹

After the end of emergency in June, 1977, the Lok Sobha election was declared and at the same time Bidhan Sobha election of west Bengal was also declared. This time also the U.K.D. fielded its candidates in one Lok Sobha seat and three Bidhan Sobha seats. It fielded its candidate in the Lok Sobha seat of Jalpaiguri and Bidhan Sobha seats of Dhupguri, Maynaguri and Kranti of Jalpaiguri district. It is very interesting to note that the Dal could not field its candidate even in some of the Assembly Seats where its candidates were in the Bidhan Sobha election of 1971 and 1972. It was no doubt revealed the organizational weakness of the party at that time. However, in the election of 1977, the Dal more or less followed the manifesto of the last election of 1972. But the Dal failed to achieve any mentionable success in this election too. The following tables show the result of the Dal very clearly.

The seats where the U.K.D. fielded its candidates in the Bidhan Sobha election of

1977 are mentioned below in the tables. Star marks indicate the U.K.D. candidates.¹²

Dhupguri (SC), Bidhan Sobha election, 1977. Vote polled-36,502., Table-3.1

Sl. no.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Banamali Roy	CPM	10,870	29.77%
2.	Kehab Ch. Choudhury	IND	1,527	4.18%
3.	Gunadhar Barman*	IND	3,381	9.26%
4.	Jagadananda Roy	CONG	8,894	24.36%
5.	Jagneshwar Roy	IND	4,738	12.98%
6.	Satish Ch. Roy	IND	94	0.025%
7.	Haripada Roy	IND	142	0.38%
8.	Haralal Singha	JAN	6,146	16.91%

Percentage of Vote for the U.K.D.-9.26%.

Maynaguri(SC), 1977. Vote polled-40,915., Table-3.2

Sl no.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Tarakbandhu Roy	RSP	14,376	35.13%
2.	Barmadeb Das	IND	1,164	2.84%
3.	Bhabendranath Roy Hakim	JAN	11,017	16.92%
4.	Matilal Roy*	IND	2,073	5.06%
5.	Mridulendra Deb Raikat	CONG	9,228	22.55%
6.	Sadananda Baidya	IND	248	0.60%
7.	Harish Ch. Mandal	IND	1,358	3.31%

Percentage of Vote for the U.K.D.-5.06%.

Kranti (SC), 1977. Vote polled-42,339.,Table-3.3

Sl. no.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Parimal Mitra	CPM	13,940	32.92%
2.	Anil Guha Neogi	IND	37	0.08%
3.	A.H. Md. Abu Saleqile	CONG	11,865	28.02%
4.	Panchanan Mallick*	IND	4,012	9.47%
5.	Bhawani Poul	IND	387	0.91%
6.	Rabindranath Sikdar	JAN	5,894	13.92%
7.	Radhaballav Saha	CPI	4,159	9.82%
8.	Sudhanshu Bhusan Das Gupta	IND	959	2.24%

Percentage of Vote for the U.K.D.-9.47%.

It has already been mentioned that the U.K.D. fielded its candidate in one Lok Sabha seat only i.e. Jalpaiguri Lok Sabha. The result is shown in the following table.¹³

Jalpaiguri Lok Sabha election, 1977. Vote polled-3,15,866.,Table-3.4

Sl. no.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Khagendra Nath Das Gupta	IND	1,73,484	54.92%
2.	Smt. Maya Roy	CONG	1,15,786	36.65%
3.	Joydev Mandal	SUC	8,640	2.73%
4.	Panchanan Mallick*	IND	5,071	1.60%

Percentage of the vote for the U.K.D.-1.60%.

The above mentioned Assembly election results which has been shown in different tables indicate that the U.K.D. had slightly improved its percentage of votes comparing the result of 1972 Bidhan Sobha election but it is found that the percentage of vote secured in the Assembly election of 1977 could not touch the result of 1971. It was found that the Mekhliganj Bidhan Sobha seat that there was sharp decline of the percentage of vote comprising the previous election results. With regard to Kranti Bidhan Sobha seat, it should be mentioned that it was a newly created seat and that is why, there was no scope for any comparative explanation. With regard to the result of the lone Parliamentary seat that the Dal fielded its candidate i.e. Jalpaiguri, a sharp decline of percentage of votes was found comprising to that of the Lok Sobha election of 1977. Thus, it is to be stated that the Dal failed to garner the support of the people of the area of its origin till 1977 in spite of the repeated clamor for the all round development of the region. However, it is well known to all that the left front came in power in West Bengal with absolute majority and in the center, the Congress Party was ousted from power and Janata Party came in power in its place along with other regional parties like D.M.K., Akali Dal, CPIM, etc.¹⁴

It is very relevant to mention that the functional struggle within the Janata Party (Janata Party was a conglomeration of many parties) in the centre took an acute form in the middle of 1977. As a result of which Morarji Desai Govt. reduced to a minority due to the withdrawal of support by Charan Singh and other socialists and in 15th July, 1980 Desai Govt. was dissolved. In the next development Charan Singh formed the Govt. which lasted till 20 August, 1980. Thereafter, the President dissolved the Lok Sobha and announced a mid-term election which was held in January 1980.¹⁵

However, the U.K.D. also fielded its candidates in this mid-term Lok Sobha election in three Lok Sobha constituencies viz, Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar and Darjeeling. The Dal issued its manifesto-cum-party program with which it went to the voter in the aforesaid election. The manifesto of the Dal contains the following programmes.

1. The U.K.D believed in socialism and its aim is to acquire its various demands through constitutional and democratic manner.

2. Fixing the ceiling on individual property without making any discrimination between town and village.
3. Introduction of irrigation system to increase the productivity of the soil of North Bengal.
4. Introduction of jute, paper, cement, tobacco, sugar and wood industries in North Bengal.
5. Setting up of Agricultural College in every district of North Bengal.
6. Preservation of the culture and heritage of North Bengal.
7. Establishment of circuit Bench of the high court in Jalpaiguri.
8. Introduction of Arbi and Urdu in Higher Secondary level for Muslim Students in place of Sanskrit.
9. Establishment to the educationally qualified offspring of the tea Garden labourers in the same tea garden.

Apart from the above mentioned programmes, it has also been mentioned in the manifesto that 'North Bengal' is a resourceful region but the people here were kept in abject poverty. The inhabitant of North Bengal was one sixth of the total population of West Bengal and the agricultural production was also one third of that of total production of West Bengal. It has also been mentioned that during the last three 'Five Years Plan' when the total expenditure for the whole of West Bengal was Rs. 687 (Six hundred and eighty seven) crores whereas the expenditure for the five districts of North Bengal was only 15 crores i.e. for the people of South Bengal the per capita expenditure was Rs.200/ and for that of North Bengal was Rs. 25/ only. Because of the aforesaid disparity in all the walk of life for the people of North Bengal as the U.K.D. thought so, it made a clarion call to join in it and vote for its candidates for the total development of North Bengal.¹⁶

Now let us see what response the U.K.D. received from the voters of North Bengal vis-à-vis its party programmes cum manifesto. The election results will show it vividly which are as follows.¹⁷ (Tables are in the next pages).

Cooch Behar (SC),1980. Vote polled-5,24,577.,Table-4.1

Sl no.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Amar Roy Pradhan	FB	3,04,158	57.98%
2.	Ambika Charan Roy	CONG	1,86,012	35.45%
3.	Dharma Narayan Barma*	JAN(S)	11,532	2.19%
4.	Durga Charan Roy Karat	IND	6,752	1.28%
5.	Paresh Ch. Barman	JAN	2,809	0.53%
6.	Surendra Mohan Roy	IND	609	0.11%

Percentage of the vote for the U.K.D.-2.19%.

Jalpaiguri, 1980. Vote polled-4,46,409. , Table4.2

Sl.No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Subodh Sen	CPI(M)	232751	52.08%
2.	Sri Ram Singh	CONG	142355	31.85%
3.	Rabindranath SIKDAR	JAN	14404	3.22%
4.	Manmath Nandi	IND	13078	2.92%
5.	Joydev Mandal	SUC	9269	2.07%
6.	Anen Kr. Maitra	CONG(U)	8028	1.79%
7.	Bankim Ch. Roy	IND	7136	1.59%
8.	Panchanan Mallick*	IND	3440	0.76%
9.	C.C. Kiran	IND	745	0.16%

Percentage of Vote for the U.K.D.-0.80%.

Darjeeling, 1980. Vote polled-4,19,397. Table-4.3

Sl. No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Ananda Pathak	CPI(M)	185612	44.25%
2.	K.B. Chhtri	CONG	167451	39.92%
3.	Abul Kami Chowdhury	CONG(U)	20153	4.80%
4.	Ranjit Monotosh Pal	JAN(S)	8468	2.01%
5.	Md. Ekzamul Hag	JAN	8123	1.93%
6.	Lakshmi Kanta Joshi	IND	5192	1.23%
7.	Tapan Kr. Biswas	IND	5048	1.20%
8.	Ramendranath Barman	IND	3960	0.94%
9.	Sampat Roy*	IND	1778	0.41%

Percentage of Vote for the U.K.D.-0.41%.

The above mentioned Lok Sobha (House of people) election results for the U.K.D. was very miserable. If it compares with the results of previous Lok Sobha elections, it would be found that while in 1971, in Jalpaiguri Lok Sobha Constituency the percentage of vote for the U.K.D. was 3.84 percent, and in 1977 it was 1.67 percent but in 1980 the percentage of vote declined sharply and dropped further to 0.80 percent. In case of Cooch Behar Lok Sobha seat the result was more or less the same. However, the Dal fielded its candidates for the first time since its birth in Darjeeling Parliamentary seat but the election result was very much poor. The Dal received only 0.43 percent vote and lost its security deposit.

It is very relevant to state that if we consider the election result as a barometer for gauging the support base of the U.K.D., we can say without reservation considering the analysis of the above mentioned election results that it had failed to garner the support of the people of North Bengal as an ethnic based regional political party.

However, the Eighth Legislative Assembly in West Bengal was dissolved on 24 May 1982. Before its dissolution the Assembly election was held in April 1982. The Uttarkhanda Dal was again in the fray and fielded its candidates. It should be mentioned in this connection that meanwhile the U.K.D. raised for the first time the demand of a separate state of 'Kamotapur Mukta Pradesh' (Though the prevailing spelling is Kamatapur, but the U.K.D. leader in their memorandum to the P.M. OF India in 1980 had mentioned the term 'Kamotapur') consisting of the five districts of North Bengal.¹⁸ Later the leadership of the Dal sent a memorandum to the then Prime Minister of India Smt. Indira Gandhi in this context mentioning the separate state of 'Kamotapur' only in place of 'Kamotapur Mukta Pradesh.'¹⁹ Therefore the U.K.D. this time went to the State Assembly election of 1982 with the manifesto containing mainly the demand for a separate state of 'Kamotapur'. In this Assembly election of 1982, the U.K.D. fielded its candidates in three seats of Cooch Behar, 5 seats of Jalpaiguri and one seat in Darjeeling district. However, the manifesto of the Dal had included the following points, published in two languages viz., Bengali and Rajbanshi.

1. The formation of a separate state comprising five districts of North Bengal viz., Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, West Dinajpur and Malda and the end of the Calcutta centric colonial exploitation would be the chief responsibility of the Uttarkhanda Dal.
2. Priority would be given to all the poor and helpless families of North Bengal without making racial or religious (Hindu-Muslim) discrimination with regard to job, education and business opportunities.
3. The income from various resources of North Bengal would be expensed for all round development of all the people of North Bengal and agriculture based industries would be set up for meeting employment problems of the region.
4. Measure would be taken to develop the history, literature, education, language, sculpture of this neglected region of North Bengal.
5. Murder, killing, rape, violence, dacoitis, plunders, arson etc. would be put down with strong hand for the sake of peace and order in all the parts of the state.

6. A radical change was to be made Railway, Motor and Air services for the convenience of transport system.

7. The U.K.D. would take initiative to wipe out the economic disparity between the rural and urban areas which was like hell and heaven (huge economic disparity); all the farmers of North Bengal would be given agricultural aids and land revenue up to 24 bighas of land would be exempted. All the loans provided by the Govt. of West Bengal to the small businessmen and farmers would be let off. Landless farmers would be given four acres of vested lands per family.²⁰

Considering the above stated election manifesto of the U.K.D., this election was very crucial for it, especially for the demand of a separate state of Kamotapur in the concerned region. Therefore, it is very important to go through the details of the said election results which are shown in various tables below.²¹

Star mark against the name of the candidates is that of the U.K.D.

Cooch Behar District (Assembly Election), Year-1982.

1. Mekhliganj (SC), 1982. Vote polled-80,807. Table-5.1

Sl.No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Sadakanta Roy	FB	40,958	50.68%
2.	Niren Chakraborty	CONG	28,528	35.30%
3.	Arun Roy	SUCI	6,426	7.95%
4.	Sibendra Nath Roy	IND	1,628	2.01%
5.	Manindra Nath Roy*	IND	1,114	1.37%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-1.37%.

2. Cooch Behar West (General), 1982. Vote polled-93,524. Table-5.2

Sl.No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Bimal Kanto Basu	FB	53,170	56.85%
2.	Shyamal Chowdhury	CONG	37,065	39.63%
3.	Nirendra Karjee	IND	646	0.69%
4.	Jahiuddin Miya	IND	617	0.65%
5.	Janabuddin Bepari*	IND	227	0.24%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-0.24%.

2. Cooch Behar North (General), 1982. Vote polled-83261. Table-5.3

Sl.No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Aparajita Gopi	FB	46,180	55.46%
2.	Sunil Kar	CON-1	33,873	40.68%
3.	Rabindra Nath Sarkar*	IND	766	0.91%
4.	Bhabeswar Das	IND	458	0.55%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-0.91%.

Jalpaiguri District (Assembly Election), Year-1982. Table-5.4

1. Dhupguri (SC), 1982. Vote polled-70,333.

Sl. No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Banamali Roy	CPM	35,929	51.08%
2.	Jagadananda Roy	CON-1	28,340	40.29%
3.	Panchanan Mallick*	IND	2,959	4.20%
4.	Paresh Ch. Roy	JAN	1,074	1.52%
5.	Bamkim Ch. Roy	IND	318	0.45%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-4.20%.

2. Maynaguri (SC), 1982. Vote polled-71,613. Table-5.5

Sl no.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Tarak Bandhu Roy	RSP	37,491	52.35%
2.	Mridul Deb Raikat	CON-1	28,240	39.43%
3.	Panchanan Mallick*	IND	2,150	3.00%
4.	Ranu Roy	JAN	1,811	2.52%
5.	Upendra Nath Roy	IND	268	0.37%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-3%.

3. Jalpaiguri (General), 1982. Vote polled-73,389. Table-5.6

Sl. No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Nirmal Base	FB	35,220	47.99%
2.	Anupam Sen	CON-1	34,084	46.44%
3.	Dilip Mukherjee	SUCI	1,410	1.93%
4.	Rukmini Ranjan Roy*	IND	899	1.22%
5.	Prabir Ranjan Roy	IND	281	0.38%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-1.22%.

4. Rajganj (SC), 1982. Vote polled-84,574. Table-5.7

Sl. No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Dhirebdra Nath Roy	CPM	48,787	57.68%
2.	Jiban Kr. Roy	CON-1	28,332	33.49%
3.	Barmadeb Das	JAN	1,268	1.49%
4.	Harendranath Barman*	IND	1,264	1.47%
5.	Manomohan Roy	BJP	1,173	1.38%
6.	Purenda Nath Roy	SUC	1,125	1.33%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-1.47%.

5. Madarihat (ST), 1982. Vote polled-65,132. Table-5.7

Sl. No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Sushil kumar	RSP	36,837	56.55%
2.	Jagat Baria	CON-1	20,373	31.27%
3.	Julias Toppo*	IND	2,265	3.47%
4.	Sanjay Kr. Oraon	IND	1,458	2.23%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-3.47%.

Darjeeling District, 1982.

1. Phanshidewa (ST), Vote polled-94,203 Table-5.8

Sl. No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Patras Minz	CPM	41,362	43.90%
2.	Iswar Ch. Tirkey	CON-1	36,076	38.29%
3.	Teresa Sorang Chacho	JAN	5,120	5.43%
4.	Edwar Tirkey*	IND	3,973	4.21%
5.	Santi Munda	IND	2,735	2.90%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D. -4.21%.

However, the above mentioned election results show that though the U.K.D. this time went to the voters with a demand of a separate state comprising five districts of North Bengal but there was no encouraging response from the side of the voters of the assembly seats where the Dal fielded its candidates. It was even found that the percentage of votes at every Assembly seat where the Dal had been contesting since its birth was downward direction

including Dhupguri and Maynaguri assembly seats; the places of its origin. Therefore, it would not be wrong to state that the majority people of North Bengal had rejected the conception of creating a separate state by the U.K.D. in-toto so far as the election results of results of 1982 West Bengal State Assembly had shown. But at the same time, it should be admitted that the Dal extended its organizational base in some parts of Cooch Behar and Darjeeling districts.

The last election so far as the U.K.D. had contested before its split was the eight Lok Sabha election which was held on 24 December 1984. It should be mentioned that this general election was held after the assassination of the then Prime Minister of India Smt. Indira Gandhi. In this general election the U.K.D. fielded its candidates in Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling Parliamentary seats with the following promises which were include in its election manifesto.²²

1. The U.K.D. is determined to form a separate Bidhan Shobha (Legislative Assembly) comprising of five ditriacts of North Bengal and apart from this, the Dal has the demand for setting up a High Court in North Bengal for the convenience of the people of this region.
2. The Dal is in great effort to make the education system very pragmatic.
3. Introduction of ceiling system on the basis of income and the Dal is firm in resolution to wipe out economic disparity between rural and urban area.
4. The Dal is very active to create employments, preserving forests, developing agriculture and industries in North Bengal.
5. The Dal is determined to change the system of Tribal reservation based on inter-colonial pattern and in its place the reservation would be on the basis of number.

Apart from the above mentioned promises, it has been started in the aforesaid manifesto of the Dal that Calcutta centric economic and political exploitation made the manual labours and the farmers of the region shelter less and had driven them out from their homesteads. Therefore, most of the people of North Bengal had become street beggars without food and clothing. It has also been mentioned that most of the people of rural North

Bengal were living in the country *hats* and becoming slaves for their daily living. Besides this, educated youths are jobless. Therefore, in order to get relief from all these woes viz., sorrow, troubles, poverty etc. the U.K.D. called all people of North Bengal to vote for it and make it win in the election and provide an opportunity to make a society on North Bengal without exploitation.²³

However, though the Dal had contested the aforesaid election with above mentioned election manifesto which was, it is to say pro-people, but the election result this time also was not up to the expectation for the Dal. The following tables show the election results of the Uttarkhanda Dal.²⁴ Star marks against the name of the candidates indicate the candidature of the U.K.D.

Lok Sobha Election, 1984.

Jalpaiguri Constituency. Vote polled-5,80,864. Table-6.1

Sl. No.	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Arun Moitra	CONG(1)	25,2447	43.43%
2.	Joydev Mandal	SUCI	6,134	1.05%
3.	Tapan Biswas	BJP	7,513	1.29%
4.	Panchanan Mallick*	IND	8,362	1.43%
5.	Bmkim Ch. Roy	IND	2,086	0.35%
6.	Manik Sanyal	CPM	2,85,619	49.17%
7.	Sitansu Bhusan Das	IND	3,543	0.60%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D. -1.43%.

Darjeeling Constituency-1984. Vote polled-5,61,738. Table-6.2

Sl.No	Name of the candidates	Party	Valid vote	Percentage
1.	Ananda Prasad Pathak	CPM	228679	40.70%
2.	Dawa Norbula	CONG	2,27,290	40.46%
3.	Padam Bahadur Rai	IND	5,010	0.89%
4.	Sampad Roy*	IND	3,441	0.61%
5.	Sidhartha Sankar Roy	IND	80,557	14.34%

Percentage of vote for the U.K.D.-0.61%.

The above mentioned election results of the U.K.D show that the Dal could not win over the mind of the people of the region in spite of their pro-people manifesto or the call for a separate state of Kamotapur. But it should be mentioned that in Jalpaiguri parliamentary seat, the Dal improved its percentage of votes from 0.80% to 1.48% in this election. On the other hand, it was for the first time that the Dal fielded its candidates in Darjeeling Lok Sabha seat and secured only 0.63% of total votes polled so far and lost its security deposits. However, it is to be mentioned that till 1984 the Uttarkhanda Dal could not gain the support of even the Rajbanshi population in spite of its demand for a separate state of 'Kamotapur'. Therefore, it clearly proved the fact that the Rajbanshi population as a whole did not extend their support to the demand for the creation of a separate state in the region under review.

The Bidhan Sabha election of West Bengal was held on 23 March 1987 just before the split of the Uttarkhanda Dal on 10 Oct.1987. However, it is very interesting to note that the Dal for the first time refrained itself from participation in the aforesaid election. But we need not go too far to seek the reason for its abstention from the above stated election. The Dal in this regard circulated leaflets mentioning the reasons for abstaining itself from the State Assembly election of 1987. The following reasons were being pointed out by the Dal.

1. We have pledged touching our religious scripture the *Gita*, *Tama* (copper), *Tulsi* (sacred basil), *Mati* (earth) and the sacred water of the *Ganga*, *Agni* (fire), *Shiva Linga* (phallus);

Muslim comrades touching their religious scripture the Quran, Christian touching their religious scripture the Bible that we would abstain ourselves from casting vote in the Bidhan Sobha election (MLA) until or unless a separate state of 'Kamotapur' is formed.

2. We have totally ruined casting our votes in favour of the Calcutta centric political parties viz. Congress and left parties almost for last forty years. Therefore, we have no trust on the Calcutta centric politics. The present Govt. (Left Front Govt.) is not our Govt.

3. The election which is going to be held on 23 March is for West Bengal and for the people of the 'Kamota'.

4. That the people of 'Kamota' (Uttarbanga) would not be beneficial or gained whichever party (Calcutta Centric) is elected to the Bidhan Sobha (State Assembly) of Calcutta because out of total 294 M.L.As of West Bengal Assembly, 245 from South Bengal and only 49 from North Bengal and the latter have no any importance to the former.

5. There is no questing of casting vote and electing a Govt. in West Bengal Assembly by the people of North Bengal as because West Bengal Govt. generally consider North Bengal its maternal uncle's house and use the administration for the interest of the ruling party. It is the West Bengal Govt. that has created communalism, separatism and regionalism and above all made the people of North Bengal its slave.

6. That the West Bengal Govt. which is ruining humane characteristics and is not allowing the people of North Bengal to be developed or advanced citizen uprooting completely the language, literature, history and culture of Kamotapur (North Bengal), then what is the gain of electing such a Govt. in West Bengal Assembly? Why would we cast our vote to elect a Govt. which would vitiate and destroy the freedom of the people of North Bengal? So, we would not cast our vote, would not would not ,.....

7. That respected Jyoti Basu (Chief Minister of West Bengal) has gifted 'Tin Bigha' (Three *Bighas*) to Bangladeshi Govt. and thereby pushed forty thousand people in Cooch Behar district on the point of death. Therefore, no further vote is for the formation of the Govt.of West Bengal.

8. That the police of Jyoti Basu Govt. made inhumane treatment to the picketers of the *Rail Rokho* movement (25 January 1987) which was peaceful and democratic and four of them were shot and two of them.....Jagadish Roy and Gajen Roy were died on the spot. It is in protest of this and also in favour of forming the separate State of 'Kamotapur' all the people of the region are being requested to abstain from voting.

9. That the development by a Calcutta centric Govt. would mean the development of the people of Calcutta and not the Kamotabasi (the people of North Bengal).²⁵

However, the above mentioned leaflet of the Uttarkhanda Dal was address by Sri Panchanan Mallick, the president of the Dal, Sri Sampad Roy, the general secretary and the president of the 'Yuva Uttarkhanda Dal' Sri Jagadish Chandra Roy.²⁶

Thus it was found that the U.K.D. made an appeal to the voters of North Bengal for refraining from voting in Bidhan Sobha election 1987. However, the turnout of voters in the concern region in that election reveals the fact that the appeal of the U.K.D. for refraining from voting had its little effects on the voters. However, it is to be mentioned that it had its effects, to some extent, on the voters of Dhupguri and Maynaguri Assembly Seats.....the place of the origin of the Uttarkhanda Dal. But in other Assembly Seats where the Dal fielded its candidates had its effect on the voters. In case of Dhupguri and Maynaguri, it was found that the percentage of votes so far as was polled in the Assembly election of West Bengal in 1982 was 80.8 percent and 76.95 percent respectively.²⁷ Whereas in 1987, as a result of the Dal's appeal for refraining from voting, percentage of votes so far as polled was slumped into 71.5 percent in Dhupguri and 74.1 percent in Maynaguri respectively.²⁸

However, if the electoral activities of the U.K.D. since its debut in the electoral politics in 1971 till 1984 are to be analyzed, it will be found that the percentage of votes so far as the Dal earned was not countable at any rate, even after raising the demand of a separate state in the 1980s, when as the DI failed to gain considerable percentage of vote in its favour. Thus it was found that the Dal had no any solid support base since its very inception till its final split in 1987.

Apart from this, it is very interesting to note that the Dal failed totally to extend

organizational base in other districts of North Bengal barring Jalpaiguri, a few part of Cooch Behar and Darjeeling. The Dal could never field any Bidhan Sobha or Lok Sobha candidate in West Dinajpur and Malda districts. It was even found that in case of Darjeeling, the Dal fielded its candidates only in Phansidewa Assembly Seat in 1982 and Lok Sobha Seat in 1984. Thus, the Dal tried to gauge its support base through various Bidhan Sobha and Lok Sobha elections, it was found that its candidates not only failed to win any seat whether Lok Sobha or Bidhan Sobha but even in most cases lost their security deposits in the election.

Thus it is almost clear from the aforesaid analysis that the appeal of the Uttarkhanda Dal first to abolish Calcutta centric rule and later to form a separate state for North Bengal to the people of the concerned region especially to the Rajbanshi community and other indigenous people was not heard of. Therefore, it would not be wrong to point out that the ethnic solidarity which was found among the *Gorkhas* in the Darjeeling hills, the same was almost completely absent among the Rajbanshis in the plains of North Bengal, so far as the electoral politics of the U.K.D. and its results show.

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