



# West Bengal Towards Change



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# Index

1.	West Bengal: Towards Change	5
2.	Implications of change in West Bengal politics	10
3.	BJP's Strategy	12
4.	Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Statements on West Bengal – excerpts	14
5.	Statements of BJP National President Amit Shah on West Bengal - excerpts	15
6.	Corrupt Mamata Government	17
7.	Anti-people Mamata government	28
8.	Dictatorship of the Trinamool Congress & Muzzling Dissent	36
9.	Political Violence and Murder in West Bengal	40
10.	Trinamool Congress's Undignified Politics	49
11.	Politics of Appeasement	52
12.	Mamata Banerjee's attack on India's federal structure	59
13.	Benefits to West Bengal from Central Government Schemes	63
14.	West Bengal on the path of change	67
15.	Select References	70

## West Bengal: Towards Change

**I**t is ironic that Bengal which was once one of the leading provinces of the country, radiating energy through its spiritual and cultural consciousness across India, is suffering today, caught in the grip of a vicious cycle of the politics of violence, appeasement and bad governance. Under Mamata Banerjee's regime, unrest and distrust defines and dominates the atmosphere in the state. There is a no sphere, be it political, social or religious which is today free from violence and instability.

It is well known that from this very land of Bengal, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore had given the message of peace and unity to the whole world by establishing Visva Bharati at Santiniketan. Eternal icons born in this land such as Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee have all imparted a new direction and light to our evolution as a civilization and people in the social, religious and political arenas. Bengal also had a robust entrepreneurial spirit and some of the most well-known business ventures in India, especially during the Swadeshi period had their roots and origin in the State. In fact, apart from being one of the most vibrant seats of cultural nationalism and renaissance, Bengal was also a centre of what has been rightly termed as 'entrepreneurial nationalism'. But if we look at the history of the last five decades, West Bengal has gone retrograde in every sphere. The moot question therefore is who is responsible for this?

Britain had established a colonial empire and its representatives in India, in the name of administering the subcontinent, actually engaged in looting and exploiting the resources of Bengal and other provinces. However, that was in the past, but later, those who were

given the opportunity of ruling the state after independence, added insult to injury by their exploitative and violent ways. Their policies further ruined West Bengal. Mainly three parties- Congress, Communists (Communist Party of India (Marxist) led Left Front) and now the Trinamool Congress have ruled West Bengal since independence and the creation of the state.

Under each of these three parties, the state has gone from bad to worse. Bengal, which alone had a 27% share in the industrial production of the country in 1950, has seen its share continuously deplete and plummet to 3.39% today. In 1955, 70 percent of the medicines were produced in West Bengal, that has dropped to just 8 percent today. It is hard to imagine today that in the past, Bengal was home to some of the most successful Swadeshi medical ventures that produced some of the most popular and well-known brands in the history of Indian medical industry. Till about the early 1960s Calcutta (Kolkata) and West Bengal continued to be a major industrial and commercial hub, it ranked second, next to Bombay (Mumbai) in “terms of per capita income.” Well-known companies such as “Indian Iron and Steel Co., Andrew Yule, Bird and Co., Braithwaite & Co, Jessop & Co, Burn and Co.,” were based out of Kolkata and “its share in all-India stock of capital in the Census of Manufacturing Industries (CMI) sector was 24.6% in 1950.

Frustrated with three decades of Congress rule, the people of West Bengal elected the communist parties in 1977. The CPIM led the Left Front regime. During a nearly three-and-a-half decade rule, the communists only brought misery and misfortune to the state. Under the Communist regime, West Bengal saw a progressive de-industrialisation, a stagnant economy, destruction of the education sector with violence and chaos prevailing in every sphere. Eventually, people saw a ray of hope in Mamata Banerjee's leadership and in her call for 'Poriborton' and gave her a mandate to rule the state. However, it gradually became evident that Mamata is as corrupt and as inefficient as communists were and that the call for 'Poriborton'

was a false call.

Just to proffer one example amidst a plethora of instances, power consumption the world over is considered to be an important indicator of growth. From 2011 to 2018, electricity consumption in the country had increased by 1 percent. But in West Bengal electricity consumption is stagnant because the industrial sector is stagnant; indicating that growth in the state has come to a standstill.

Today in the era of digital connectivity, when all states are increasing and widening access to the Internet in rural areas, West Bengal's progress continues to be slow. Statistics show that 5590 villages of Gujarat, 5904 villages of Bihar and 3645 villages of Odisha are connected to the Internet but despite being a big state, West Bengal has provided access to internet to only 2170 villages till July 2019.

Displaying extreme insensitivity towards the welfare of the people of West Bengal and indulging in partisan politics Mamata Banerjee's government has refused to implement the Modi government's transformative public welfare schemes like Ayushman Bharat and Kisan Samman Nidhi. Mamata Banerjee appears to be apprehensive that if farmers and the poor from West Bengal receive the benefits of central government schemes, they would veer round to supporting the BJP and Prime Minister Modi.

Due to this narrow political consideration, due to her extreme political insecurity; Mamata Banerjee has deprived 67 million farmers of West Bengal from receiving the supporting amount of the Kisan Samman Nidhi directly into their account. She has deliberately prevented them from receiving this support. That a "Maa-Maati-Manush" government can be so insensitive towards the needs and welfare of the farmers is unthinkable.

Mamata Banerjee did not stop at merely preventing the implementation of Ayushman Bharat or Kisan Samman Nidhi, she has gone a step further. She has displayed extreme political opportunism and dishonesty and renamed schemes of the Modi

government and has been passing them off as if they were initiated by the TMC government in the state. She has refused to attend meetings of the NITI Aayog and has even publicly said that she does not accept Shri Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister of India. She has repeatedly demonstrated a disdain and disrespect for the federal spirit of India as articulated and enjoined by the Constitution. On the whole, there is a clear frustration and disenchantment with Mamata Banerjee's rule among the people of West Bengal. Local TMC leaders, in the name of providing basic amenities, are levying "cut money" on a regular basis from the poor and the marginalized. Only those who pay this "cut money" are given access to benefits of government schemes. The education system in the state has also been severely crippled. It will not be too much to say that West Bengal is passing through a dark phase once more and the people of the state see a hope of regeneration and renaissance only in the BJP. The results of the just concluded Lok Sabha elections and the Panchayat elections in 2018 prove this point. The BJP's phenomenal performance in West Bengal in the Lok Sabha elections (2019) is definitely indicative of the yearning for change.

The increase in popular support for the BJP in West Bengal proves that the party contested the elections in the state through an organized and well planned strategy. Every worker of the BJP's West Bengal unit faced numerous obstacles, attacks and hardships during the period of the elections with great courage and conviction. The party has succeeded in earning the trust and confidence of the people of West Bengal who are deeply disturbed with the condition of the state.

The whole country was witness to how Mamata Banerjee and her party, frustrated over the BJP's growing influence, had not only unleashed political violence but also made a concerted attempt to prevent people from voting for the party. She assaulted the democratic and human rights of the people of West Bengal who wanted to vote in these elections. The BJP's success, in face of these



adverse circumstances, , may be termed as a slap of democracy at Mamata's undemocratic behaviour.

Bengal has a glorious history. The state had once been a centre of spirituality, had a rich literary tradition and was known for its knowledge systems, but today the situation is exactly the opposite. The state is on the brink of collapse. Sonar Bangla (Golden Bengal) envisaged by our sages and thinkers, has lost its glory. Hence it has become incumbent upon us to free the state from the clutches of misrule and to lead it on the path of resurgence. That BJP has ignited a new light of hope in the hearts of the people of West Bengal, was evident in the results of Lok Sabha elections and, undoubtedly, in the upcoming Assembly elections, the people will ensure that the state is back on the track of development by conferring a majority to the BJP.

This booklet has collated instances of the TMC's culture of political violence, its dictatorial and intolerant rule, its politics of corruption and appeasement, its misrule and some other facets of the current scenario in West Bengal. It is not exhaustive, nor is it definitive, as the situation in the state is continuously evolving, it is meant to give an idea of the state of affairs and the issues that afflict the common citizens.

## Implications of change in West Bengal politics

**T**he victory of BJP in West Bengal carries several messages. It is well-known that West Bengal was the only state in this Lok Sabha election (2019), which saw large scale violence in every phase of the election. Trinamool Congress leaders perpetrated and patronized violence and winning seats from the state was indeed a tough challenge for the BJP.

The Mamata Banerjee government created impediments for BJP at every stage by misusing its constitutional rights and the state machinery which it controlled. Her government repeatedly denied permission for rallies and meetings that were to be addressed by BJP leaders, their helicopters were not allowed to land and permission for holding rallies were cancelled at the last minute on flimsy grounds. Concerted attempts were made to prevent Prime Minister Modi and BJP national president Amit Shah from holding rallies in the state. BJP workers were continuously attacked, many were maimed and murdered, but they did not give up, they did not retreat and continued to reach out to people with great determination and energy.

In the past, people of West Bengal had completely rejected the Left and its politics of violence and degeneration. They have now decided to reject the TMC's politics of violence. The BJP's huge victory in the Lok Sabha elections, its quantum leap in the number of seats won from West Bengal is the peoples' message to Mamata Banerjee that there is no place for violence in the politics of West Bengal. Symbolically the BJP's tally of seats from the state is also a massive blow that the people have dealt to those who resort to the politics of violence, possess a dictatorial temperament and disregard

democratic rights.

The days of syndicalism, of muscle power and money power in politics are over. The people of India endorse and support value based and governance oriented politics of aspiration and accountability. This election has proved that the people of West Bengal aspire for their Sonar Bangla (Golden Bengal) once more. They see a Sonar Bangla intrinsically linked to a golden future for India; they aspire for able leaders, for effective and transformative policies and no longer want to live in a state plagued with corruption, nepotism and uncertainty.

For the past few years, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has continuously and crassly indulged in a divisive and dangerous game of appeasement. It is clearly because of this approach that a large section of people in West Bengal are feeling neglected, insecure and helpless. It is they who have resoundingly rejected the politics of appeasement. Amidst great challenges, BJP karyakartas and supporters continued to work with a firm faith that the policies, initiative and achievements of the Modi government would eventually usher in an era of prosperity for West Bengal in the same way as it had in other parts of the country. The BJP's victory is thus the defeat of routine politics as we know it, it is a victory for nationalism and unity over the narrow confines of the politics of regionalism, the narrative of the insider and outsider and the politics of division.

## BJP's Strategy



*Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing a rally in Coochbehar*

The country awaited with great anticipation the results from West Bengal during the Lok Sabha elections. BJP national president Amit Shah had repeatedly asserted that the party would win 22 seats from West Bengal. In order to understand the source of this confidence, one would have to look at the activities of the party during 2017.

Amit Shah began his countrywide tour for the party's expansion drive - the Vistarak programme - from Naxalbari in North Bengal on April 25, 2017. During that particular tour which also extended to Kolkata, Shri Shah reached out to a large number of people including office-bearers of the party, workers and supporters, in charge of the booths, the intelligentsia and also journalists. He had set the process of change in motion during those grueling summer days with himself going from booth to booth, meeting the ordinary voter and urging them to come out in support of the party.

About a year after Amit Shah's visit, the contours of the BJP's

politics in West Bengal began taking shape, and the party emerged as the number two in the Panchayat elections held in 2018 in the state. It won more than seven thousand seats. This result in the Panchayat elections infused greater energy in the rank and file of the party. Amit Shah had clearly gauged that the people of West Bengal yearned for change and the party began to systematically work on that aspiration by moving according to a plan. Through a consistent struggle and political movements the BJP gradually filled the vacuum left in the state's politics by a weak, scattered and compromised opposition. It succeeded in convincing the people of West Bengal that it was ready and capable of struggling with the Mamata Banerjee government to address their problems. In order to keep up the morale of the party's worker, BJP national president Amit Shah himself began interacting and communicating with the panna pramukhs, workers and social media volunteers. This direct approach bound the workers and infused great energy and enthusiasm.

During the election campaign, Amit Shah fiercely attacked Mamata Banerjee on the record of her misrule, on her anti NRC stand and on rampant corruption. Of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal, the BJP divided 20 seats into four clusters. It is clear that when Shri Shah was talking about winning 22 seats, he had already made thorough preparations in 20 seats; it was this which resulted in the BJP winning 18 Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal. At 40.25 percent votes, the BJP has got more than double the percentage of votes that it had bagged in the 16th Lok Sabha from the state.

Amit Shah also succeeded in connecting well with the Bengali psyche during election campaign. While Mamata Banerjee kept describing him as an outsider; Amit Shah repeatedly referred to and invoked Bengal's golden past, when the state was a cultural and spiritual leader. He rightly read the mind and aspirations of the people of West Bengal and had drawn strategies based on that reading; it resulted in an unprecedented success for the BJP.

## **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Statements on West Bengal – excerpts**

- Your sweat, your sacrifice is empowering every person in West Bengal—whose voice has been suppressed for decades, whose rights have been taken away by the goons, whose earnings have been looted by the Jagai-Madhaialliance..
- Now the destiny of West Bengal and the direction of the country will be decided by those who chant Bharat Mata ki Jai.
- The youth of West Bengal is going to usher in a new era in politics. They do not want to be associated with the culture of political violence, terrorism, and smuggling. They want a new India and a new West Bengal. They aspire for a new West Bengal where the five streams of development will flow: education for children, employment for youth, health care for the elderly, irrigation for farmers and attention to grievances of the common people, these are the five streams of development.
- I have come here to assure you that every single intruder, who the TMC has settled here for increasing its cadres and its vote-bank, will be identified. Those who eve-tease our daughters, those who create a nuisance for the civilised and peace loving citizens of Bengal will be identified.
- Exercising the Right to Vote has become a question of life and death for people of West Bengal. Political activists are being killed for campaigning. Those who chant 'Jai Shri Ram', 'Jai Maa Kali' and 'Jai Maa Durga' are being threatened with arrest.
- Like the British, Didi is also following the policy of 'bhag koro, shason koro' (divide and rule), while our policy is 'ek koro, sheba koro' (unite all, serve all).

## Statements of BJP National President Amit Shah on West Bengal - excerpts



*BJP National President Shri Amit Shah at a road show in Kolkata.*

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will leave no stone unturned to bring a golden era in West Bengal, this will be done by defeating Mamata Banerjee, who has turned West Bengal into a poor state.
- Even if we lose our lives in this endeavour, we will definitely establish true democracy in West Bengal.
- Today, in West Bengal, which is the land of great spiritual

leaders and intellectuals like Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, where people used to listen to the songs of Rabindranath Tagore, the deafening noise of bomb blasts prevails. The music of Gurudev Tagore has disappeared amidst the noise of bomb blasts.

- With great anguish, I would like to say that we will not tolerate this situation in West Bengal; we will fight against it and bring about a change. We understand the fear that Mamata Banerjee has of this change, but she has to endure this fear.
- As the BJP has raised its voice against Mamata Banerjee's misrule for seven years in every district and every division of West Bengal, and as awareness is spreading to every nook and corner of the state, Mamata Banerjee is apprehensive, she is feeling scared.
- Anyone wanting to perform religious rituals, to immerse Durgamurtis, to organise a political rally or to organise a political meeting, has to go to court in West Bengal as the local administration does not allow it.
- I would like to reassure every refugee of Bengal that they need not be afraid of anyone. We consider Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Gurkha refugees as the progeny of Mother India. They will be given citizenship here and intruders would be identified and expelled.
- Under the 13th Finance Commission, the UPA government had allotted 1.32 lakh crore rupees to West Bengal. Modi ji has allotted 14.4 million rupees to the development of Bengal in the 14th Finance Commission, but the TMC's networks comprising of local and state level leaders have always focused on siphoning off all this money.



## Corrupt Mamata Government



Source : [economictimes.indiatimes.com](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com)

### **Saradha Chit Fund Scam:**

The names of a number of TMC leaders have appeared in the Saradha Chit Fund scam of ₹ 10,000 crore. TMC Rajya Sabha MP Kunal Ghosh was the Chief Executive Officer of the Saradha's Media Group. Madan Mitra, who was the sports and transport minister in the state government and is considered close to Mamata Banerjee, was also arrested for his involvement in the scam. Rajya Sabha MP Srinjoy Bose of the TMC and Vice President Rajat Majumdar were also sent to jail in connection with this scam. Bose resigned from the party after being released on bail. In 2011–2012, the Saradha Group had channelized crores of rupees for bicycles, motorcycles, ambulances, which were distributed by Mamata Banerjee in the Jangal Mahal region and other backward areas of West Bengal. At that time,

the TMC government had issued a circular that only newspapers belonging to the Saradha Group will be kept in government libraries. The name of former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram's wife, Nalini Chidambaram, also appeared in the charge sheet of the Saradha scam. According to SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India), Manoranjana Singh, the wife of former union minister Matang Singh, had introduced Sudipto Sen, chairman and managing director of the Saradha Group, to Nalini Chidambaram. Sen's purpose of meeting Nalini was to influence investigations against Sen by the SEBI and the Registrar of Companies. Sudipto Sen had also paid ₹1.4 crore to Nalini Chidambaram through her company.

### **Rose Valley Scam:**

This scam is of 17,000 crores and is being investigated by a team from the ED (Directorate of Enforcement) and the CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation). So far, Sudip Bandyopadhyay and Tapas Pal have been arrested in the Rose Valley scam. The CBI has recently arrested filmmaker Shrikant Mohta over this case. Shrikant Mohta is known to be very close to the TMC leadership, and has been arrested for a fraud of ₹25 crore.

### **Narada Sting Operation Case:**

In the Narada Sting case, TMC leaders Subrata Mukherjee, Sultan Ahmed, Saugata Roy, Subheendu Adhikari, Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, Aparupa Poddar, Firhad Hakim, Prasun Banerjee, Sobhaan Chatterjee, Madan Mitra and Iqbal Ahmed were caught on camera accepting bribes in return for favours done to a particular company.

### **Vivekananda Road Flyover Collapse:**

Over twenty seven people died in the under construction Vivekananda Road flyover collapse in North Kolkata on 31 March 2016. Later, it was found that the local Trinamool leaders supplied low-quality materials that were being used in the construction of the flyover. This is the manner in which the syndicates operate in West Bengal. They insist on supplying low quality material in order to make a profit and in the process barter away human life.

The funds were not being released on time by the state government for the construction to be completed and Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) did not care to undertake regular checks and monitoring. A combination of syndicate raj, neglect, callousness led to the collapse and the loss of lives.

### **Cut money (Commission):**

In June 2019, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had herself accepted the prevalence of the habit of levying cut money, i.e. illegal commission in the state. Cut money is the commission that leaders of the ruling party take from the amount allocated for the government projects. In a party meeting in Nadia district, Mamata accepted that there are thieves in her party and asked her party workers who had levied cut money to return these to the people. This public admission by her opened the floodgates with people pursuing TMC local leaders and asking them to return the 'cut money' that they had taken from them. While her ministers tried to explain her words, it was a clear admission by the Chief Minister that she was aware of the manner in which her party people perpetrated corruption at the grassroots and fooled the ordinary people. She did not however take any steps to rectify the situation. The surfacing of cut money networks has clearly exposed the large-scale corruption that prevails in West Bengal especially at the grassroots. The TMC interferes in the implementation of the Union government's welfare schemes in the state and has ensured that the promise of benefit is given to those who pay 'cut money.' As has been seen in the past months the promises are hardly ever fulfilled. Cut money is levied but the benefits never come. benefits of the Union government welfare schemes.

### **Protests by People against Cut Money: – some instances**

- A complaint has been lodged against TMC Councillor Soma Ganguly in Nadia Police Station. She is accused of taking 27,000 rupees from those wanting to avail a house under the Prime Minister's housing scheme—Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

- Local people in Siuri, Birbhum District, organised a salishi sabha, (local trial court) where the Panchayat demanded the repayment of cut money from TMC leader, Trilochan Mukherjee, who had collected ₹1,617 each from 141 people, after getting their signatures on blank papers with the promise that he would get them the exact amount once the work was completed and the money sanctioned. Local people say that an amount of ₹2.28 lakh was approved for villagers under MGNREGA, for the work they had done for the restoration of a drainage canal. The work was completed, but the local TMC leader had grabbed the entire amount. After the matter came to light, the people of the village staged a demonstration outside his house, and forced him to return the money.
- Ujjwal Mondal, a TMC leader from Bardhaman District, has admitted to having received an amount of eight to ten thousand rupees in the name of welfare activities undertaken by the party from poor people who were beneficiaries of the government's schemes.

In districts across the state, there is a huge reaction among ordinary people against this habit of robbing the poor in the name of welfare schemes and benefits. People are angry with the TMC's cut money network that is duping them of their hard earned money. People are extremely worked up against this mechanism of corruption. They have lost their patience. TMC leaders at the local level are being cornered, gheraoed, accosted and confined by the ordinary people and are being asked to return the cut money. Those who are most adversely affected and exploited by the cut money networks are the poor tribals, the and those who are backward and marginalized from across the state. In their struggle against cut money, the poor tribal women from Bankura, for instance, have been agitating and demanding their money back. There are also reports of TMC leaders beating up those demanding the return of cut money. In July 2019, reports came in of TMC workers and

leaders severely injuring villagers of Bankura's Gangajalghati who were demanding the return of cut money. In Hatinagar gram panchayat in Behrampur, Murshidabad, tribals protested against the local TMC panchayat member who had taken Rs.10,000 from 30 tribal families after they were allotted Rs.60,000 under the rural housing scheme. TMC leaders have been levying an amount from the state government's Samabyathi scheme which gives a supporting amount of Rs 2000 to the poor to meet the funeral expenses of their family members who have passed away. The amount levied from the dead is Rs 200. As pointed out, the Central government schemes have also been targeted by the ruling TMC cadres. Mamoni Sardar, a resident of Hooghly had paid Rs 550 last December to a local TMC leader for an LPG connection under the Ujjwala scheme. She complained "I thought that was the cost of the connection. I came to know later that I need not have paid any money... I was so angry. Now, I want my money back...", she said.

- People have disclosed that they were forced to pay five thousand rupees as cut money by local TMC cadres under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. Some women in a particular village pointed out that under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, they had paid five thousand rupees as cut money. According to reports, so far, houses of 28 families have been constructed in Ratanpur Gram Panchayat, in Onda, and all the beneficiaries were forced to pay cut money by the local TMC leaders. According to reports a local resident of Ratanpur village revealed that, "In lieu of availing homes under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, TMC leader Mangal Pal used to take thousands of rupees from the beneficiaries forcibly. We were forced to pay money under the pretext of installment. We have now come to the police station to get our money back."

### **The Cut money Rate of every Scheme is Fixed:**

- If a person wants to get wages for 100 days, under MGNREGA, the workers also have to pay a cut of 56 rupee.

- For the construction of government toilets, the beneficiaries had to pay a sum of ₹ 3,600 as cut money.
- ₹ 200 is charged as commission from old people and widow pensioners.
- For a government house, an amount of five to fifteen thousand rupees has to be paid by the beneficiary.
- As per some findings, for central schemes TMC workers levy the following approximate amount of cut money:
- Ujjwala scheme for LPG connection: Rs.500-600 per beneficiary,
- Banglar Bari (Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana): Rs. 10,000-25,000 per beneficiary
- Nirmal Bangla (Swach Bharat Mission-Gramin): Rs 900-2000 per beneficiary
- MGNERGS: Rs.20-40 per day

*(Data source: Financial Express online: 'What is Cut Money? Here is what you need to pay to avail govt benefits in Mamata Banerjee's West Bengal', July 3, 2019)*

### **Syndicate Raj in West Bengal:**

- Syndicate tax for Mamata Banerjee's government of West Bengal is flourishing. Funds related to development projects allocated by the state government that should be spent on hospitals, schools, colleges and road constructions are being extracted and siphoned off by the TMC's network of workers and leaders.
- For example, if one wants to build a house or purchase land, one has to pay a bribe to the local TMC councillor or leader. If one wants to open a shop, one has to pay bribe to the TMC councillor or the local TMC leaders. Apart from this, whoever buys cement, sand, etc. for construction of their shops or houses, are forced to buy these materials from designated shops owned by TMC goons, otherwise they risk being threatened and their houses and business ventures risk being attacked and vandalized. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's grand-nephew and former TMC MP,

Professor Sugata Bose, was himself at the receiving end of the syndicate's ire, in July 2017, when he had undertaken renovation work in his house in Kolkata's Sarat Bose Road. The house is a historic one and both Bose and his mother Smt Krishna Bose, veteran TMC leader and three time MP, were threatened because they had not bought construction material from the local syndicate. 'According to the MP, a group of bike borne men first landed at his house in the morning after noticing some repair work which was underway in the balcony, and questioned the masons on duty. Later, they resurfaced in the afternoon when the MP and his 86-year-old mother encountered them and were even threatened.' Bose was asked to report to the local TMC office. The TMC goons said that it did not matter to them that the house belonged to family members of "Netaji."

- In industrial areas like Asansol and Raniganj, rampant illegal coal mining and sand mining throughout the riverbeds speaks volumes of the grip of the syndicate across West Bengal. Prime Minister Modi has repeatedly spoken of the 'Trinamool-Tolabaji [levy-syndicate]-Tax', 'Triple Tax.' How correct he is – both rampant syndicalism and cut money networks have proved him right.

### **Failure of Police Administration:**

- In West Bengal, TMC's goons have no fear of law or police. When there are incidents of violence or political murders, in both the situations, the police administration choose to play the role of mute spectator and bows down to the disruptive elements of the TMC. There is a nexus between the TMC and the police administration, and both work to cripple the rule of law. Whenever political murders occur in the state, which is quite with the casualty being invariably from among the BJP workers, police administration work overtime to protect the perpetrators.
- It is well known that during the general election of 2019, there was no violence anywhere in the country except in West Bengal.

Every phase of elections saw heightened political violence in the State. TMC goons and cadres unleashed mayhem across the state, while abusing and heckling Jawans of the Central forces who were carrying out their duties. More than 60 BJP workers were killed around the time of the elections, but the police did not take any action against a single accused. In Panchayat elections too, there was fierce violence. BJP candidates were attacked and efforts were made to prevent the voters from casting their votes. The announcement of the Panchayat elections, nomination, voting and counting, all phases saw rampant violence, bombing and knifing and yet the police only followed Mamata Banerjee's orders and failed to contain this unprecedented assault on democracy.

- Five CBI officials were detained outside the residence of Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajiv Kumar located in the Salt Lake area, when they went there to serve a notice to Kumar on the chit fund scams. The CBI officers were manhandled by the State police and were taken to the nearest police station, while the Chief Minister, in an unprecedented move, sat on a dharna with her police officers in uniform to protest against the CBI's action. This was a serious Constitutional breach and an assault on the federal spirit and structure of India.
- During BJP national president Amit Shah's mega road show in Kolkata on 14 May 2019, the police failed to perform its duty of maintaining law and order and allowing a legitimate political programme from being carried out. A murderous attack was made on Amit Shah by TMC goons with the intention of harming him and creating chaos. BJP workers were attacked and abused even though the padayatra was a peaceful one exhorting people to usher in a new India and new West Bengal. TMC goons vandalized the bust of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in Vidyasagar College, in order to divert attention and create large scale disturbances along the path of the road show. But instead of arresting the vandals, the police arrested BJP workers and



activists. So callous is their attitude that till date, they have been unable to produce the CCTV footages of the incident. Despite Mamata Banerjee continuously threatening that she would make public the CCTV footages, she has desisted from doing so, simply because the footages, if they actually exist, will only expose the TMC.

- In March 2018, violence occurred during the Ram Navami festival in Raniganj of West Bardhaman, Kakinada of North 24-Parganas and Kandi of Murshidabad. Ram Navami processions were attacked, devotees were abused and idols vandalized and yet the police hardly made any arrests and did not proactively try to prevent these attacks. These attacks were launched in a well planned manner.
- In June 2019, in Bankura's Panchayasar, three BJP workers sustained bullet injuries when the West Bengal Police fired at them for chanting 'Jai Shri Ram.' A 14-year-old boy was also injured in the firing.
- Similarly, when a three member delegation of BJP MPs visited Bhatpara in North 24 Parganas to report on the situation after a number of BJP workers were attacked in multiple incidents, the police lathi charged workers who were chanting 'Jai Shri Ram' and raising slogans against Mamata Banerjee

### **Cow Smuggling:**

- According to a 2016 estimate, 3000 cows are smuggled every day through the India–Bangladesh border. Hauled from hundreds of kilometres away, from states such as Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand, the cows reach Bangladeshi cattle markets having been transported to the border in trucks through West Bengal. The helpless cows are transported in trucks, their eyes smeared with green chilli powder so that they keep standing and don't sprawl during the journey so that more cattle can be loaded into the truck. They are transported through the Kalindi, Ichamati, Raimangal and Hariabhanga rivers. In

remote villages, the cattle are tied with iron chains, and at night, the local youth 'rakhals' or local swimmers carry away the cattle by water. The remuneration received by every rakhal is close to three thousand rupees for each visit. Secret tunnels are also dug by these smugglers and their retainers at the India-Bangladesh border to facilitate smuggling. In order to deal with cattle smuggling, the BJP government has directed the Border Security Force (BSF) to increase its patrolling and to be proactive on the India-Bangladesh border. The Modi Government has shown great dynamism in dealing with this problem. The smugglers of India and Bangladesh are well connected and keep information regarding the location of security forces patrolling the border. There are instances when smugglers outnumber the platoon of BSF jawans. At times cow smugglers are equipped with countrymade bombs and pistols.

- Although there has been a decrease in cow smuggling due to the advanced methods and techniques adopted by the BSF, but still the State police's cooperation is paramount for achieving better results. The West Bengal's TMC government has displayed reluctance in tackling this challenge. The Modi Government has approved the deployment of a larger contingent of forces along the border to tackle this menace and other law and order challenges. This has had positive effects. According to the data, in 2014, 2015 and 2017, 153,602, 168,801 and 3,099,744 cattles have been seized by the BSF from smugglers respectively.
- The Mamata Banerjee government has refused to acknowledge that the problems exists. Local TMC leaders along the border areas are also known to be involved in the cattle smuggling racket. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs, in its report on border security presented to the Rajya Sabha in 2017, for instance, was "particularly anguished to note that the West Bengal State Government has failed to implement its own order dated September 1, 2003 that outlaws existence of any cattle haats

within 8 km of border area.” The Committee recommended “that the State Government of West Bengal should take steps to cancel the licenses of all cattle haats that are illegally functioning within 8 km of border area and hold the officials responsible for illegally issuing/renewing licenses to these haats.” The Committee also observed that the “West Bengal Police has failed to intercept or stop the movement of the cattle.”

### **Fake Currency Note Racket:**

Malda area of West Bengal is known for fake currency rackets. In Malda District, fake notes of ₹ 7 lakh was seized and on 26 May 2019, a person was arrested in this connection. A fake currency racket was busted at Inayatpur under Manikchak Police Station. The arrested person was a resident of Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh. The police had seized high-quality fake Indian currency notes (FICN) from him. Significantly, the West Bengal Police does not take any action on fake notes. Both the State police and the TMC government have been reluctant to address the issue of counterfeit currency. It is said that one of the reasons for a massive attack on Kaliachak police station in January 2016 was because it had several files and details of TMC patronized networks and groups running FICN rackets in the area. Political pressure have compelled the TMC government to initiate half hearted action in cases such as these. Mamata Banerjee was quick to blame the BSF, She has always displayed a disdain for the Jawans of the Central forces and ludicrously alleged that it was a fight between the ‘BSF and the people!! In 2014 itself Central Agencies had given inputs to the West Bengal government on how smugglers were setting up bases in Kaliachak and nearby areas but the TMC government never acted on these tip offs allowing the situation to go out of hand till it exploded in January 2016.

## **Anti-people Mamata government**

The fundamental duty of an elected government is to work for the peoples' welfare. The elected government should lead people on the path of development and prosperity and work to solve their problems and challenges. But what is happening in West Bengal is exactly the opposite. A large section of the people of the state are aggrieved at Mamata's dictatorial approach to issues, they are fed up and apprehensive of her brazen politics of appeasement and her neglect of crucial issues that adversely affect the people. On a number of occasions Mamata has been seen castigating people whenever they have raised a certain demand or have voted against her. Intolerance of dissent has become a hall mark of Mamata Banerjee's governance. We give below a few brief examples of how West Bengal faces several challenges. These examples are not exhaustive and detailed and are not placed in any chronological order, these are cited merely to give an overall idea of the multiple issues and challenges that continue to face the State under the TMC dispensation.

### **Lack of doctors in rural areas**

Rural West Bengal is reeling under a severe shortage of doctors. The TMC government is apprehensive that even if 10% of the trainee reserve MBBS doctors, working State Government hospitals, go on leave, then the State's medical system will collapse.

There are currently 923 primary health centers in West Bengal and there are 918 doctors in these primary health centers. Most of these doctors have completed their MBBS and are working on a 3 year contract with the government. There should be essentially 5 doctors in every primary health center, but still most of the centers are working with only 1 doctor. The healthcare system of the State, especially in the rural hinterland, continues to be plagued with neglect and challenges since the days of the Left Front regime.

The Government of India's National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) aims to provide accessible, affordable and quality healthcare to the country. However the Bengal Government has not implemented it in a proper manner. According to the Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) norms, the existing health centers in the State lack basic facilities like water supply, electricity etc.

According to the IPHS, West Bengal has a severe shortage of doctors, nurses and other support staff at all levels.

### **Denial of Dengue related deaths in Bengal & Intimidation of Doctors**

In November 2017, the Mamata Banerjee government dismissed Dr Arunachal Dutta Choudhary, who was working as a doctor in Barasat Government Hospital in North 24 Pargana. Dutta Choudhary had expressed concern about the growing number of dengue patients on Facebook and had said that the government was pressurizing him to suppress facts and details about the dengue epidemic then raging in the state. He also revealed how the state government was pressurizing doctors to not reveal the actual cause of death of dengue patients. The instruction was to suppress the facts and causes of death so that the inefficient handling of the dengue epidemic by the TMC government could be covered up. Dr Dutta Choudhury's case was symbolic of how the Mamata Banerjee government was brazen and dishonest about its record and capacities of handling such an epidemic. The issue of his dismissal snowballed into a major controversy with doctors organizing rallies across the state in his support. Apart from this, Dr Anup Roy, Superintendent of

***When the Union Health Minister Dr Harshvardhan tried to contact Mamata, there was no response from her, she did not take cognisance of the letter that he sent her, appealing to her to proactively address the issue and solve the challenges.***

the North Bengal Medical College and Hospital was also suspended because he had described the actual state of affairs in the region when State was reeling under an encephalitis outbreaks.

### **Neglect of demands of medical students**

In July 2018, the students of Calcutta Medical College sat on a prolonged hunger strike because they were not being provided basic amenities in their hostels. Students pointed out that only first year students were provided rooms in the new 11 storey hostel which had a capacity of accommodating 800 students, while the 1st year had only 250 students. The old hostel for senior students had become shabby and dilapidated. It lacked proper arrangement for food and drinking water. There was an immediate need to repair the roof of the building after a student was injured when a portion of it had collapsed. The students had been awaiting the allotment of rooms in the new hostel for the past 3 years. Some of the fasting striking students fell ill and had to be hospitalized. The striking students who were sitting in front of the Principal's room were lathi charged by the police and manhandled by TMC goons who had barged in. They were dubbed 'Maoists' by the College authorities who had full backing of the state of government.

### **Doctors afflicted in West Bengal**

After the death of an elderly patient Mohammed Shahid (75), in Kolkata's NRS Medical College Hospital in June 2019, relatives of the deceased at the head of a large mob, which had gathered in trucks attacked junior doctors at the College. The miscreants broke the skull of a promising junior doctor, Paribaha Mukhopadhyay. The attack triggered protests and the strikes by doctors across the State and then across India. Doctors resigned from service in large scale across West Bengal in protest at the TMC government's deliberate inaction and attempt to shield the perpetrators. Mamata Banerjee's intransigence, her immature outbursts, her refusal to reach out to the afflicted doctors, her insensitivity towards their plight, her threats to them to return to work, her accusing the BJP of hatching a conspiracy to

defame her and to destabilize her government further compounded the problem. Junior doctors said that they would not return to duty until their demands on safety and other issues were met. Due to Mamata's mercurial and obdurate attitude, the healthcare sector of the entire country practically came to a standstill, this caused unnecessary suffering to people in general. Mamata Banerjee should have ensured the safety of the doctors, which would have facilitated their resumption of duty providing relief to patients. But instead of sympathizing with the doctors, a livid Mamata Banerjee began threatening them saying: 'If a policeman dies in some incident, do his colleagues go on strike?' It was a strange analogy. She also threatened saying that if they did not return to their duty, they would be evicted from their hostels. She ordered the junior doctors to return to duty at once and warned that if they did not resume work within four hours, action will be initiated against them.

- Mamata didn't stop at that, she branded the striking junior doctors as outsiders and said that these outsiders were spoiling the situation. She publicly ordered the police to take strict action against the striking doctors. After this brazen display of attitude by her, the doctors started resigning from their posts. Instead of introspecting on her behaviour Mamata Banerjee blamed BJP for colluding with the doctors in their strike.
- When the then Governor of West Bengal, Kesari Nath Tripathi wanted to speak to her about the spiraling situation, he got no response from her end. The Governor's message was delivered to the Chief Minister's Office that the Governor wanted to meet her, but Mamata Banerjee did not deem it necessary to respond.
- When the Union Health Minister Dr Harshvardhan tried to contact Mamata, there was no response from her, she did not take cognisance of the letter that he sent her, appealing to her to proactively address the issue and solve the challenges.
- The Calcutta High Court also rebuked the Mamata Government and asked what steps it had taken to end the deadlock with

the doctors. It wanted to know the steps it had taken to ensure protection of doctors. Surprisingly, at the time when her first and foremost priority should have been to handle the situation, Mamata Banerjee was just weighing her political gains and losses in this issue. Over 600 doctors had resigned across West Bengal. Doctors in government hospitals other cities were on strike and demonstrations were being held, but Mamata Banerjee deliberately allowed the situation to worsen. Finally she had to bow before the collective will of the people of the country and had to call in the striking doctors for a talk. This episode, among other things, clearly showed that Mamata Banerjee is incapable of handling crisis situations in a mature way and is incapable of having a national perspective. This episode also showed that she remains captive to the politics of vote-bank and to appeasement.

### **Attacks on lawyers in Howrah affecting judicial functioning**

On April 24, 2019, in the Howrah District Court, after a minor altercation had taken place between the employees of Howrah Municipal Corporation and lawyers, the police lathi-charged all lawyers who were present there. Local police also used abusive words against women lawyers. The police had entered the premises without requisite permit. Following this nearly 55 thousand lawyers stopped their work, due to which entire judicial system of West Bengal came to a standstill affecting a large number of people. The Supreme Court termed the situation as 'extraordinary', affecting the fundamental right of life and liberty of citizens to even seek bail. The TMC government did nothing to address the situation allowing things to drift.

### **Tragedy of Sabar Starvation Deaths**

In November 2018, 7 members of the tribal Sabar community in Lalgah, Junglemahal, West Midnapore died due to starvation. Mamata Banerjee tried to cover up these deaths saying that these had occurred due to 'age-related disease and alcoholism'. In fact on the day these tribals died the TMC government inaugurated a food



festival in the up-market New Town and called it 'Ahare Bangla' – Bengal through Food!. The Trinamool government tried to distract people's attention from this issue and did not try and find out the causes of these deaths. Was it because its food distribution had collapsed or had been ravaged by the syndicate? How was it that rice had not reached these poor tribals despite it being available in the area at Rs 2 per kg? The Maa-Maati-Manush government tried to bury the truth of how its Manush in the Maati – at the grassroots were dying due to lack of food.

### **Police firing on students of Daribhit High School**

In September 2018, students and their parents were protesting against the appointment and imposition of Urdu teachers in the Daribhit High School in Islampur in North Dinajpur district of West Bengal. The students wanted teachers for English, Bangla, geography and computer applications. Police opened fire on the protesting students and their parents and mentors killing two former students Rajesh Sarkar and Tapas Burman, who had joined the protest. More than a dozen people were injured in the firing. Tapas and Rajesh's parents and the entire school has demanded a CBI enquiry into the firing but the TMC government refuses to heed. The firing on students of Daribhit High School shook the conscience of a section of West Bengal's intelligentsia, while others look the other way pretending as if nothing had happened. No intellectuals who profess faith in secularism came forward to organise open letter campaigns on the issue.

### **School Service Commission candidates neglected**

Despite passing the examination of the School Service Commission in between 2013 and 2017, candidates were not recruited and were kept in the waiting list. The applicants fasted for 600 hours. Many of those on hunger strike became critical and had to be admitted to the hospital. Police also threatened them with eviction. The state's education minister, Mr Partha Chatterjee, met the agitators made promises but never carried these out. Finally a month after the

hunger strike had started Mamata Banerjee came and met with the candidates. The intimidation continued even after she left. 'After the CM left, nearly 50 police officials had come to the protest site. Till late in the evening, they kept forcing us to lift the strike. We stood like a wall and told them that a call will be taken only after a proper meeting is conducted and a unanimous decision is taken', commented one of the protestors.

### **Anti-women Mamata government**

- Under the Central Government's Janani Suraksha Yojna, six thousand rupees are credited to women after delivery of their child. But due to the negligence of the West Bengal Health Department, women receive a mere 300 to 600 rupees. Important programs related to women's empowerment such as 'Matritva Labh Matri Vandana Yojna' and 'One Stop Center Scheme' are not being implemented in the state.
- According to the statistics from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), there has been an alarming increase in cases of domestic violence in West Bengal. In 2015, 20265 women were victims of domestic violence; however this figure reached to 34,205 in 2016.
- The NCRB report for 2016, for instance, points out that 44 per cent of human trafficking cases nationally have been reported from West Bengal. Women and young girls are the most vulnerable when it comes to human trafficking and yet all that Mamata Banerjee did was to denounce the report as motivated.
- West Bengal continues to be unsafe for women. For the last eight years repeated incidents have exposed as sham the TMC's slogan of Maa-Maati-Maanush. Heart rending episodes such as the Park Street gang rape case (February 2012) in which a 37 years old Suzette Jordan, mother of two was gang-raped and the Kamduni gang rape (June 2013), where a nineteen years old student, Shipra Ghosh was waylaid, gang-raped and murdered, shook the conscience of the country. On both occasions Mamata

Banerjee said that these were conspiracies to defame her. On the Park Street case she said it was “fabricated” (Sajano Ghatana) and on the Kamduni case, she promised to take action but backed off after realizing that the area was a TMC stronghold. In most of such crimes it is seen that the perpetrators are from a particular community and have the backing of the local TMC leadership.

- Mamata Banerjee’s behaviour is reminiscent of Jyoti Basu’s reaction in 1990 on the infamous Bantala gang-rape case. On 30th May that year, three female health officers were on their way back to Kolkata after attending an immunization programme, when they were intercepted by a group of young men in Bantala, their driver killed, three of them dragged to a field and gang raped and killed. One of them, a UNICEF officer Anita Diwan was killed. And all that Comrade Basu did was to say ‘Why do they go there...Such things happen.’ CPIM local goons were among those involved in the case.
- West Bengal is described as a place of worship of Matri Shakti (Goddess as the embodiment of Power), but today women are not safe here. Significantly, despite being a woman Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee has not only failed in protecting women but has also displayed extreme insensitivity towards their plight.
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# **Dictatorship of the Trinamool Congress & Muzzling Dissent**

## **Attack on freedom of expression**

In the past few years, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has often attempted to subvert the Constitution, assault democratic values and dilute the decency of public life for petty political gains. Her statement, her style of functioning display glimpses intolerance and shades intellectual terrorism. By perpetrating extreme political violence, disrupting rallies of BJP leaders, unleashing mayhem during the Panchayat elections in 2018, threatening and jailing people who chant ‘Jai Shri Ram’ and letting her party goons kill them – hundreds of such instances abound – she has clearly displayed a streak of fascism, intolerance and a dictatorial mindset.

## **Ban on films**

In February 2019, ‘Bhobishyoter Bhoot’, a film directed by Anik Dutta was released. Just after two days of film’s release its shows were abruptly stopped in theaters and it was virtually banned. The film depicted the state of affairs in West Bengal and as soon as Mamata Banerjee was informed of it, the TMC goons were unleashed and sent to disrupt its screenings across the city. The cinema hall owners were intimidated and forced to stop screening. Various well-known faces of the Bengali film industry raised their voices against this strangulation of freedom of expression. When the director of the film approached the Supreme Court, the Apex Court delivered a severe rebuke to the TMC government and imposed on it a fine of twenty lakh rupees. The SC observed that ‘Speech can’t be silenced due to fear of the mob...’ and imposed an additional Rs 1 Lakh fine against the TMC government towards cost of litigation. It also directed it to ensure smooth screening of the movie. ‘We specifically direct the Chief Secretary and the Principal Secretary, Department of Home,

Government of West Bengal to ensure that no obstruction or restraint of any kind whatsoever is imposed on the viewing of the film or on the film being screened in theatres, it said.

In 2013, just two years after Mamata Banerjee had come to power, filmmaker Suman Mukhopadhyay's Bengali film 'Kangal Malsat' was denied approval for release by the regional body of Central Board of Film Certification. Besides lampooning Left rule in West Bengal the film had negatively portrayed Mamata Banerjee, her Singur agitation and satirically depicted her oath taking ceremony. The revising committee of the Censor Board, whose members are appointed by the state government recommended that the film be denied permission. "The way the honourable CM's oath taking ceremony has been shown seems a distortion of history and may hurt many common people of West Bengal and create sensation (violence)," the letter issued by the Board said. Since the failures of the Trinamool government were also depicted in the film; Mamata ensured that the film was banned.

***During the 2019 general election campaign BJP youth leader Priyanka Sharma had shared a meme on Mamata Banerjee in the social media. Mamata Banerjee's police arrested Priyanka.***

### **Why is Mamata Banerjee afraid of chants of Jai Sri Ram?**

On 5 May, when Mamata Banerjee was passing through Ghatal Lok Sabha constituency, some ordinary village bystanders chanted 'Jai Sri Ram.' The chants of 'Jai Sri Ram' were enough to infuriate Mamata Banerjee. She alighted from her car and yelled at the people, 'Where are you running? How dare you abuse me?' 'You people are criminals.' It was shocking to see the Chief Minister equate the chants of 'Jai Sri Ram' with abuse!

A seething Mamata didn't stop there. She ordered the arrest of those who had chanted the name of 'Sri Ram.' 7 people were

***In 2013, just two years after Mamata Banerjee had come to power, filmmaker Suman Mukhopadhyay's Bengali film 'Kangal Malsat' was denied approval to release by the regional body of Central Board of Film Certification.***

arrested for chanting 'Jai Sri Ram'. Mamata Banerjee is so overtaken by appeasement politics that she opposes chants of 'Jai Sri Ram' and her party hoodlums and workers have also prevented the observance of Saraswati Puja in schools in West Bengal. A video surfaced where she is seen calling those who chant 'Jai Sri Ram' as criminals. The situation has worsened to the extent that the chanting of 'Jai Sri Ram' has been unofficially banned by Mamata

Banerjee. On another occasion when she heard chants of 'Jai Sri Ram' she yelled out, 'Oh you are all BJP's goons! You are living here at our mercy in the state. All of you people are scoundrels. I will skin you alive, I will force you leave this State'. The country watched in great astonishment, appalled at her behaviour. The champions of free speech and dissent were naturally silent! Mamata Banerjee must answer as to why if chanting 'Jai Sri Ram' is not a crime or act of terror, is her government slapping court cases against those who chant 'Jai Sri Ram'?

### **Hitler Didi furious at cartoons**

In West Bengal where one often hears a vocal advocacy of democracy by certain sections of the 'Left-Liberal' intelligentsia many of whom have now sided with the TMC, a Jadavpur University professor Ambikesh Mahapatra was arrested in 2012, just because he shared a spoof on Mamata Banerjee on the internet. Significantly, Mamata defended the arrest of Professor Mahapatra. Prof. Mahapatra had stated that he had sent this spoof to his friends only for fun. Still Trinamool activists beat him up and then he was arrested. Most of the Trinamool Congress leaders supported this arrest. West

Bengal's Urban Development Minister Firhad Hakim had then said that no such activity will be tolerated. Likewise, Labour Minister Purnendu Basu had said, "It is an attempt to defame Mamata Banerjee and to malign her image. Whatever the police did in this case is absolutely right." This arrest was an assault on the basic democratic right to freedom of expression. Such incidents showed that Mamata Banerjee had no capacity or wit to tolerate even a satire. She was determined to suppress the voice of democracy in West Bengal. In 2012, the State Human Rights Commission had ordered that Prof Mahapatra be paid a compensation for his arrest and harassment; this was ignored by the TMC government. In 2015 the Calcutta High Court intervened and directed the TMC government to ensure that Prof. Mahapatra be compensated.

***On another occasion when she heard chants of 'Jai Sri Ram' she yelled out, 'Oh you are all BJP's goons! You are living here at our mercy in the state. All of you people are scoundrels. I will skin you alive, I will force you leave this State'***

### **Mamata's fear of meme**

During the 2019 general election campaign BJP youth leader Priyanka Sharma had shared a meme on Mamata Banerjee in the social media. Mamata Banerjee's police arrested Priyanka. It was the height of intolerance. She displayed a dictatorial attitude, while her party's spokespersons defended the action of arresting Priyanka Sharma. When the matter reached the Supreme Court, the Apex Court came down heavily on the state government and ordered Priyanka's release. Even after the order of the Supreme Court, the Mamata Government did not release Priyanka Sharma as per schedule. She was released only after a contempt notice was issued by Apex Court to the West Bengal Government.

## Political Violence and Murder in West Bengal

**M**amata Banerjee and Trinamool Congress are in a panic over the growing influence of Bharatiya Janata Party in West Bengal and the people's growing confidence in the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Betraying her frustration Mamata Banerjee kept making false statements that Amit Shah is responsible for violence in the State. 'I'm sitting here quietly. Or else, in a second, I can occupy the BJP office and your homes in Delhi', she threatened BJP workers across the country. This irrational outburst showed how jittery she was on Prime Minister Modi's increasing popularity among the people of West Bengal.

This statement also exposed the actual perpetrator of violence in West Bengal. What kind of a government would blame others for an atmosphere of violence when it is in saddle in the state? These political murders perpetrated by the ruling TMC reminded people of the Communist government in the state when political opponents were targeted by the Communist Party cadres. However, the present situation in West Bengal is far more frightening and more serious than the period when the state was ruled by a Communist government.

The Trinamool Congress has made West Bengal the epicenter of violence. It is a state in which only Mamata Banerjee's supporters and camp followers are safe, there is no security and protection for her political and ideological opponents. Under Mamata Banerjee's rule, democratic values have been decimated and the Constitutional framework has been assaulted and crippled. The situation needs to be fast rectified, ordinary people of the state are living in a perpetual state of uncertainty and conflict.

In the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP won two out of 42 seats from West Bengal. Since then, the BJP's influence has gradually increased; an increasingly depressed Mamata Banerjee chose violence to counter



the BJP's growing influence. In the 2019 elections, political violence reached a peak. There was no phase of voting in which BJP candidates and activists were not attacked by Trinamool Congress goons. As discussed in the earlier sections, even BJP National President Amit Shah's road show in Kolkata was also attacked. Addressing the press after the roadshow, BJP President had said that if the central security forces had not been present, it would have been impossible for him to escape alive. This also demonstrates Mamata Banerjee's hatred for the BJP and its leaders. Apart from this, permission was denied for rallies to be addressed by leaders during the elections and their helicopters were repeatedly denied landing permission. These actions of vendetta and intolerance only exposed her growing frustration, she had realized that the ground beneath was slipping away.

### **Some incidents of political violence in West Bengal:**

We have given below some recent incidents of political attacks and murders of BJP workers perpetrated by TMC goons. Just after the elections results were declared on May 23, attacks on BJP workers increased. The same cycle of attacks and murder was seen after the party had done well in the 2014 general elections:

#### **Rambabu Shaw and Dharmendra Shaw's murder**

**June 20, 2019**

On 20th June, TMC activists shot at two BJP workers, Ramababu Shaw and Dharmendra Shaw, after there was a scuffle at Bhatpara of North 24 Parganas district, and killed them.

#### **Murder of Anand Pal**

**June 18, 2019**

In West Bengal's Cooch Behar, the TMC's goons killed a 28 year old Anand Pal, BJYM activist brutally, by slitting his throat.

#### **Murder of Saraswati Das**

**June 13, 2019**

42 years old Saraswati Das, a BJP worker of Amalani Panchayat in Hasnabad under Basirhat Lok Sabha constituency was shot in the

head and killed.

### **Murder of Anil Singh**

**June 11, 2019**

Bharatiya Janata Party activist Anil Singh was missing from Malda area for two days. A popular BJP worker, Anil Singh, was abducted and later murdered by TMC goons. His body was eventually found in Englishbazar area of Badhapukur. There were injury marks on his dead body.

### **Murder of Swadesh Manna**

**June 9, 2019**

Senior RSS swayamsevak from Howrah, Swadesh Manna's body was found hanging from a tree in Atchata village. Swadesh Manna had been organizing local 'Jai Sri Ram Rallies' over a few days and. TMC goons threatened to kill him. Eventually they kidnapped Manna, and beat him to death and hung his body from a tree.

### **Samtul Dolui's murder**

**June 9, 2019**

BJP worker Samtul Dolui was also killed because he had been organizing 'Jai Sri Ram' rallies in his area. It was reported that in a local programme, Dolui had chanted 'Jai Sri Ram' several times, that night he was kidnapped by TMC goons and beaten to death. His body was then hung from a nearby tree. Dolui was an active worker in the area, his hard work had ensured an edge for the BJP in his booth during Lok Sabha elections. Dolui's house was also ransacked by TMC goons immediately after the election.

### **Triple murder of Sukanta Mandal, Pradeep Mandal and Tapan Mandal**

**June 8, 2019**

In the North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal on June 8, 2019, Trinamool Congress goons surrounded BJP workers of Sandeshkhali in Bashirhat and hurled bombs and fired bullets at them. TMC goons shot these three workers of BJP in the eyes and killed them. It is also to

be noted that the Hindus of Sandeshkhali were prevented from voting during the 2019 general elections. TMC leader Shah Jehan Sheikh, whom Mamata Banerjee called a 'popular leader' and 'social worker' of the area continuously terrorized the Hindus of the area

### **Murder of Tanmay Santra**

**June 3, 2019**

TMC workers of brutally killed Tanmay Santra in Bishnupur Lok Sabha constituency on Tuesday, June 3. TMC's goons killed Tanmay as he had raised the BJP's flags on various occasions and programmes.

### **Murder of Ajay Mandal**

**June 2, 2019**

In Basirhat area of North 24 Parganas, BJP worker Ajay Mandal was stabbed to death on June 2. Before the Lok Sabha elections, Mandal, a resident of Baduria, had broken the ties with the Trinamool Congress and had joined BJP.

### **Killing of Sushil Mandal**

**May 30, 2019**

After the declaration of results of Lok Sabha election, BJP worker Sushil Mandal (52) was killed in Ketugram of erstwhile Bardhaman district on 30 May, a few hours before Prime Minister Modi's swearing-in ceremony. Sushil's wife said that TMC workers killed her husband because he chanted 'Jai Sri Ram.'

### **Murder of Chandan Shaw**

**May 27, 2019**

BJP worker Chandan Shaw was killed on May 27 in Bhatpara in north 24 Parganas. TMC activists hurled bombs at 10:30 pm at Chandan when was he was returning home, killing him on the spot.

### **Killing of Shantanu Ghosh**

**May 24, 2019**

Shantanu Ghosh, 25, had to pay the price of leaving the Trinamool to join BJP with his life. Shantanu had left the TMC and joined BJP on May 24. He was killed in Kakinara, in North 24 Parganas,

### **Murder of Jaideb Burman**

**May 21, 2019**

In Cooch Behar, TMC goons shot and killed BJP leader Jaideb Burman with an AK-47.

### **Murder of Hardhan Mridha**

**May 17, 2019**

In Krishnanagar Lok Sabha seat, 46-year-old BJP activist Haradhan Mridha was killed by Trinamool goons.

### **Murder of Raman Singh**

**May 11, 2019**

During the Lok Sabha elections, TMC activists in Jhargram Lok Sabha constituency of West Bengal killed BJP worker Raman Singh (30). He was killed when he was hit on the head with an iron rod.

### **The murder of Sisupal Sahis**

**April 18, 2019**

In Purulia, BJP's Gram Panchayat member, Shishupal Sahis, 22, was killed by TMC's goons. Sahis was murdered and his body was hung from a tree. In a similar way, in May 2018, Trilochan Mahato (18) BJP youth leader from Purulia was kidnapped and his body was found hanging from a tree the next day. A poster was stuck on his back, which said he was killed because he was a BJP worker. 'Being involved with BJP politics at the age of 18 claimed your life. I have been looking for you since the elections and now you are dead,'

### **Murder of Nitya Mandal**

**April 4, 2019**

A day after Prime Minister Modi's rally at Siliguri, TMC goons hung BJP worker Nitya Mandal (42) at the BJP's booth office.

### **Murder of Patnu Mandal**

**March 29, 2019**

In Harishchandrapur area of Malda, BJP worker, Patnu Mandal was killed by the TMC goons when he was asleep.

### **Other incidents of violence**

- In the Nadia district of West Bengal, TMC workers beat up and killed BJP activist Karan Debnath as he raised chants of 'Jai Sri Ram'.
- In Balrampur of West Bengal, 32-year-old Dulal Kumar was killed on June 1, 2019, just because he was a BJP worker. West Bengal BJP in-charge Kailash Vijayvargiya had himself raised the issue of the threat to Dulal's life with ADG law and order, Anuj Sharma. In spite of this, Dulal was killed, it raised questions on the impartiality of the police administration and also on the collusion of the ruling party and police.
- Assault on BJP workers continued even after the results of 2019 general elections were declared. Recently, BJP worker Khagapati Mahato (22) was shot at point blank range and killed during a Harinaam kirtan congregation at Jhargram.
- Office of BJP candidate from Dumdum Lok Sabha seat Samik Bhattacharya was ransacked and BJP workers were attacked. The district secretary sustained bad injuries.
- During the fourth phase of elections in the 2019 general elections, TMC workers in Asansol clashed with central security forces. Not only this, BJP MP Babul Supriyo's car was also broken. The police remained a mute spectator and refused to act. Special election observer Ajay V. Nayak, posted in West Bengal, observed that people have lost their faith in the state police.
- BJP candidate from Ghatal, Bharati Ghosh was attacked during the campaigning in the sixth phase of voting and an attempt was made to attack BJP state president Dilip Ghosh during the voting in this phase.
- The body of 54 year old Dharmaraj Hazara was found in a lake in Shaktipur village. Dharmaraj Hazara was a member of the BJP's block committee and was receiving threats of murder since the Panchayat elections as he had supported BJP.
- Prior to Dharmaraj Hazara, Purulia's Dalit Trilochan Mahato and

Dulal Kumar were also killed. TMC goons not only killed these Dalit youth BJP workers, but also hung their corpse from a tree. While Trilochan's body was found hanging from a tree, Dulal Kumar's body was found hanging from a high tension pole. In April 2018, Ajit Murmu succumbed to injuries that he sustained after TMC goons had attacked him in Bankura's Ranibagh. Ajit Murmu was BJP's candidate in Panchayat elections.

- Bombs were hurled at the BJP's 'Vijay Rally' in Birbhum after the Lok Sabha elections.
- Even after deployment of 713 companies and 71 thousand personnel of the Central forces during the elections in West Bengal, violence continued unabated. Each phase saw violence perpetrated by the ruling TMCs, goons, while its ministers and MPs, with the Chief Minister in the lead, abused Jawans and other personnel of the Central forces.
- During the 2014 Lok Sabha elections also, there was extreme violence in West Bengal. According to government figures, more than 14 people were killed during 2014 general elections and more than 1100 incidents of violence in the state were recorded during that period in the state.
- According to NCRB data, in the year 2016, there were 91 incidents of political clashes in West Bengal and 205 people were victims of political violence. Earlier in 2015, 131 incidents of political clashes were recorded and 184 people were victims. In 2013, 26 people were murdered in political violence in West Bengal, which was higher than any other state.
- According to the figures presented by the Union Home Ministry, incidents of political violence in the state have continuously increased over the years. In the year 2017, where there were 509 incidents of political violence in West Bengal, the figure went up to 1035 in 2018, while in the year 2019, 773 incidents of violence have been reported so far.

### **Unprecedented violence in Panchayat elections in 2018**

Whenever elections are held in any part of the country, the Central Election Commission and the state governments make efforts to ensure that elections are held peacefully. But West Bengal, one of the largest state in India, has become infamous for its atmosphere of political violence. The manner in which democratic norms are violated, the way in which violence and chaos prevails in the state, especially now under the Mamata Banerjee dispensation, it is as if the death knell of democracy in the state was being sounded. Alarmed and frustrated at the BJP's growing clout and support base in the state, Mamata Banerjee has unleashed a reign of oppression, intolerance and political violence. The entire country was witness to the attack on democracy that Mamata Banerjee's TMC had unleashed during the Panchayat elections in 2018. Unprecedented and continuous violence swept the state during that period. Opposition is but natural in politics, each party adopts strategies and tactics to defeat its opponents. Ruling parties strive to retain power by defeating opposition parties through various political activities and programmes, this is the natural flow and behaviour in a democracy. The only exception to this rule seems to be the TMC in West Bengal. In order to retain power at any cost, it stalls its political opponents, prevents and obstructs their activities, kills their workers and unleashes a cycle of political violence against them.

In the last Panchayat elections in 2018, the Trinamool Congress attempted to frighten the people by creating an atmosphere of violence and chaos. Having realized that the BJP's support base was expanding in the state, Mamata Banerjee and her party leaders resorted to violence in order to counter the BJP's growing popularity. The TMC rigged the elections on a large scale, violence, bombing, murders and knifing were rampant, and 34% seats were declared won by the TMC without a contest.

Contestants were not allowed to file their nominations by organised TMC gangs and yet in spite of this suppression and violence, the

BJP won more than 7000 seats in the Panchayat elections. It was a spectacular success.

- In 20,076 out of 58,692 seats, the winners of the Panchayat seats were decided without a single vote being cast. Massive violence took place during the nominations.
- More than 20 BJP workers were murdered during the Panchayat elections and around 1341 workers were injured.
- Nearly two crore voters were not allowed to exercise their right to vote.
- According to the figures released by the State Election Commission, in more than 34.6 percent of the seats, candidates were elected unopposed. According to the commission, in 16814 seats out of a total 48650 Gram Panchayat seats, except for TMC candidates, no other candidates filed nominations. Whereas in Panchayat Samitis in 3509 seats out of total 9217 seats, except for TMC candidates, no other candidates filed nominations.
- Similarly, in 203 out of 825 seats i.e. 24.6% seats of the District Council (Zilla Parishads), except for TMC candidates, no other nominee filed their nominations. Birbhum district had the highest number of such seats, where the candidates had won the election uncontested. In Birbhum, out of a total 2,427 panchayat seats, 1,967 seats were won uncontested, which is 88%.



## Trinamool Congress's Undignified Politics

Repeated use of expletives and objectionable comments by Trinamool Congress leaders including by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP President Amit Shah during elections exposed their frustration. With the growing influence of the BJP in West Bengal, an anxious and nervous Mamata and her TMC leaders and followers have given up all decency and propriety of language and political expression. In politics, the dignity and decency of language is essential and imperative, but Mamata Banerjee and her party leaders are neither concerned about the sanctity of politics nor are they bothered with the decency of language. They have repeatedly used derogatory language against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP national president Amit Shah.

- During the general elections Mamata Banerjee said that Modi should be thrown out of power and politics and his lips should be sealed with sealing tape.
- Without caring for the dignity of her constitutional post and the culture of Bengal, Mamata Banerjee yelled that she wanted to slap PM Modi. 'I haven't seen such a Prime Minister, who is a liar. When elections approach, he starts

***Without caring for the dignity of her constitutional post and the culture of Bengal, Mamata Banerjee yelled that she wanted to slap PM Modi. 'I haven't seen such a Prime Minister, who is a liar. When elections approach, he starts chanting Ram Ram.'***

chanting Ram Ram.'

- During the election campaign she not only dismissed Modi's prospects of becoming Prime Minister, but also called him a donkey.
- TMC leader and Lok Sabha MP Kalyan Banerjee had used objectionable words against Prime Minister Narendra Modi while protesting against demonetization. While addressing a rally, he had said that a large movement would be launched from Kolkata, and Modi would run away to Gujarat like a 'mousekin'. Apart from this, Kalyan Banerjee had described Prime Minister Modi as a 'rubbish Prime Minister'.
- While addressing a rally in Raniganj, Mamata Banerjee had expressed her wish to gift Modi with rasagullas filled with stones. She had said 'Modi is coming to West Bengal as he needs votes, but he will get only rasagullas made from soil and stones, he will break his teeth after tasting these'. It is noteworthy that this comment of Mamata Banerjee was made in the context of Prime Minister Modi's statement during a non-political interview taken by Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar where PM Modi, while describing courtesies extended by political leaders, had said that 'Mamata Didi' sends him kurtas and sweets every year. In response to Modi, a livid Mamata made the crass offer of mud rasagullas. So possessed is she with her own ego and arrogance that Mamata is unable to react in a dignified manner to a positive statement.
- After the 'Bangal ko Kangal kar diya' (Bengal has been made bankrupt) remark by BJP President Amit Shah, TMC's Rajya Sabha member Derek O'Brien, throwing all sense of decency

***During the general elections Mamata Banerjee said that Modi should be thrown out of power and politics and his lips should be sealed with sealing tape.***

to the winds, described him as a 'puke-worthy' and a 'low life'. While Shah supported his remark with hard facts of how the State's potential and resources were depleted over the years, and how it was necessary to work for a Sonar Bangla once more, the TMC, instead of responding with facts, got down to hurling expletives. However, Shah's expressions caught the imagination of the people of West Bengal.

- After the election results, Mamata Banerjee went into seclusion. When she emerged after a few days, she again displayed her intolerant spirit, raised questions at the impartiality of the election process and claimed that money power is influencing democracy in India. How is it possible that the opposition has not got a single seat in so many states, she asked. She also said that the election results were influenced by foreign powers and that perhaps she had done more than was required for the people. She displayed a brazen disregard for the democratic mandate conferred on PM Modi by the people.
- After the results of the Lok Sabha elections, Mamata Banerjee confessed in a Press Conference on May 25 2019, that, 'I appease Muslims and will do it 100 times as there is no harm in taking kicks from a cow that gives you milk.' This press conference exposed her discomposure and her overweening arrogance and her addiction to the politics of appeasement and vote-bank.

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## Politics of Appeasement

### **Hindus were denied voting in West Bengal**

- In the last Lok Sabha elections, Hindu voters were prevented from voting in the Raiganj Lok Sabha constituency. Earlier too, efforts were made to frighten Hindus in this area. Hindu voters of a particular village were told that votes had already been cast when they reached the polling station. The TMC thus ensured that the 600 Hindu voters of this Muslim dominated village could not vote.
- In the Satgachia assembly segment under the Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha constituency, on 13th May, Hindus were forced to flee even before voting. All the houses were forcibly evacuated there. The name of TMC leader Soukat Mullah cropped up in this case.
- Mamata Banerjee described Shahjehan Sheikh of Sandeshkhali as a social worker knowing well that investigations have revealed that Shahjehan Sheikh is the biggest dealer of cut money in his area. Sheikh also carries out a number of illegal operations in the area such as smuggling of gold, trafficking of women, smuggling of expensive drugs across to Bangladesh. Shahjehan Sheikh is also accused of engineering riots and killing and terrorizing Hindus of the region. Three BJP workers Sukanto Mandal, Pradeep Mandal and Shankar Mandal were shot dead in Sandeshkhali. Shahjehan Sheikh is the main accused in this case. After he was described by Mamata Banerjee, who is also Home Minister of West Bengal, as a 'social worker whom she trusts because of his grassroots connections with the locals and that Sheikh was not a criminal, Shahjehan Sheikh said he was happy to work for the TMC and its 'grassroots projects.' It is a strange phenomenon where one sees West Bengal's Chief Minister and Home Minister endorse the services of a certified criminal with a record of oppressing and terrorizing Hindus in his area.

### **Ban on immersion of Durga Idols after Durga Puja**

In 2017, the Mamata government had issued 'a notification prohibiting Durga idol immersion between September 30 and October 1 on account of Muharram, observed by Muslims as a day of mourning.' The immersion, it noted, could continue on October 2. Due to Moharram being on the day after Durga Puja concluded, Mamata Banerjee decided to ban the immersion of idols. She had said that because of Muharram, Visarjan of Durga Pratimas will be not be allowed. The TMC government prohibited Visarjan on the auspicious day of Dashami and one day after that. Mamata's dictate was that either the immersions should be done by 6.00 pm on September 30 or would have to wait for two days. The Calcutta High Court castigated her partisan stand, and observed, 'Why can't two communities celebrate together? When you (state government) are firm there is communal harmony in the state, why are you creating communal distinction between the two? Let them live in harmony. Do not create a line between them. Let them live together.'

In 2016 too, Mamata Banerjee was pulled up for overplaying her appeasement politics during Durga Puja, one of the most anticipated and sacred festival of Hindus. Sometime in early August that year, Mamata announced that there would be no idol immersion post 4 pm on Bijoya Dashami, the day of the Durga idol immersion.

Justice Dipankar Dutta of the Calcutta High Court had then reprimanded the state government on its stand. Justice Dutta had said that this was a very dangerous step taken by the Mamata Government, in which she is infusing religion into politics. The result will be that the fissure between the two communities will widen further. Justice Dutta, unequivocally observed that, "There has been a clear endeavour on the part of the state government to pamper and appease the minority section of the public at the cost of the majority section without there being any plausible justification. The reason therefore is, however, not far to seek. The administration has failed to take note of the fact that Muharram is also not the most important

festival of people having faith in Islam... To put it curtly, the state government has been irresponsibly brazen in its conduct of being partial to one community, thereby infringing upon the fundamental rights of people worshipping Maa Durga,”

### **Saraswati puja**

In 2017 schools across West Bengal were threatened and bullied by Islamist groups into cancelling Saraswati Pujas. The Islamists groups demanded that the birthday of Prophet Muhammad (Nabi Dibas) should also be celebrated by all schools first. The Imam Council of Rajarhat, which is the centre of the New Town, just 10 km from Kolkata, had put forward this demand. Schools had to be closed in Tehatta village of Uluberia in Howrah district, due to this Islamist threat. When students protested and demanded that they be allowed to celebrate Saraswati Puja, the police lathi charged them. Similarly, schools around Jangipara in Hooghly also complained that they have not been allowed to celebrate Saraswati Puja for the last few years due to threats from Islamic radicals. TMC leaders feigned ignorance and leaders like Sougata Roy and Sukhendu Sekhar Roy refused to even acknowledge that such a problem existed. Mamata Banerjee remained silent on the issue and no action was taken to thwart the Islamists.

### **Ram Navami**

Sri Ram is central and defining to our faith. Ram Shobha Yatra and rallies are organized all over the country every year on Ram Navami, but West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is opposed to holding Ram Rath Yatras or Ram Navami processions. She has openly criticized Ram Navami Shobha Yatras many times. Each year, at the time of Ram Navami celebrations, Hindus face a violent back-clash across West Bengal from Islamists and TMC goons. Mamata Banerjee's Government does not give permission for Ram Navami's processions. The Trinamool government has always tried to obstruct Ram Navami festivals.

Ram Navami processions were supposed to be organized on 13th

and 14th April this year (2019), but the Kolkata Police did not allow the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) to hold the processions. The VHP's bike rally was prohibited by the Kolkata Police even before it could start. The Mamata administration has never been proactive in trying to arrange for proper security cover for Ram Navami processions, thus displaying its openly discriminatory attitude towards the Hindus of West Bengal.

Last year (2018), there was large scale violence on Ram Navami in Asansol, provoked by Islamist groups and TMC cadres. In 2018 three people were killed and more than 10 people were injured in violent incidents during the Ram Navami processions at different places including Purulia, Murshidabad, Bardhaman West and Raniganj.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who is also the Home Minister, failed to provide security to participants of Ram Shobha Yatras, and described Ram devotees – Ram Bhakts – as 'Goondas.'

### **Allowances for Imams – extreme appeasement politics**

The Muslim population in West Bengal is approximately 27 percent. In order to appease this section and treat them as a vote bank, in order to pander to the radical groups among these, Mamata Banerjee announced allowance – Imam Bhata – for Imams early in her first term as Chief Minister. In April 2012, she had announced a monthly allowance of Rs 2,500 for Imams, and followed it up by announcing a monthly allowance of Rs 1500 for Muezzins. The West Bengal unit of the BJP had challenged the decision in the Calcutta High Court, and in 2013 the High Court declared the allowance scheme as unconstitutional as it was violative of the right to equality under Article 14 of the Constitution. Not to be cowed down or obstructed in her politics of appeasement, Mamata found out an indirect route. She arranged for the allowances to be paid through the State's Wakf Board which was made allocations by her government. She completely ignored the Hindu priests and pampered to the Imams and Maulvis in the State.

### **A 'special' community playing with law & order**

There is no fear or respect for the law among members of a particular community in West Bengal. Repeated attacks on Hindu homes, villages, shops, markets across the state and the Mamata Banerjee government's brazen attempts to hush these up or to justify them, is exacerbating the people. In the past she has allowed and encouraged the likes of Imam Barkati, once her mascot for appeasement, to abuse Prime Minister Modi. It was Barkati who had issued a fatwa against Prime Minister Modi after demonetization saying that he was 'bluffing' the people and had no right to continue as Prime Minister. The TMC and Mamata kept silent at this insult to the Prime Minister. The sight of Muslim youth driving two-wheelers without helmet, with the police looking the other way, while imposing a fine on Hindus who even as much as go slightly astray of traffic rules, is generating great resentment among people across the state

### **Mamata Government's Failure on Security**

- A massive explosion took place in the local Meghdoot club on the night of June 29 in Mallarpur in Birbhum district of West Bengal. The club's iron gates were mangled, while surrounding houses suffered damages.. Apart from this, the surrounding houses also suffered heavy losses. How did the explosion occur in the club? Who placed these bombs there? The police has remained tight lipped on it.
- The TMC's record of tackling terror and violence has been dismal. Ever since the Kagrargh blasts in October 2014, West Bengal has been on the brink as far as terror modules and their operations are concerned. During the Khagrargh blasts Mamata Banerjee had ludicrously accused the Central Agencies of engineering them. Modules of the banned terrorist outfit Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) remain active in the state. In Khagrargh, the blasts took in place in a house that belonged to a local TMC leader who had rented it out to the operatives. The state agencies were tardy in their investigation and in cooperating with the



Central agencies. Despite being briefed by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval on the gravity of the threat from JMB to the West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee irrationally and in order to score political brownie points blamed the Centre for engineering these blasts. In short, she did not take the terror threat seriously or rather felt that it would affect her political vote-bank if she took a strong stand against terror. As late as June-July 2019, two blasts shook Birbhum, 112 bombs were recovered from across Birbhum alone. When Amit Shah says that the only factory that seems to be thriving in West Bengal is the 'bomb manufacturing factory', he seems to be bang on the target.

- Webs of local operatives, local level TMC leaders and their networks have been further muddying the internal security situation in the State.

### **Mamata government's Budget of appeasement**

- Mamata Banerjee is so engrossed in the politics of appeasement that she does not hesitate in impeding the growth of modern education for the sake of her vote-bank.
- According to the TMC government's 2019-20 Budget, the Trinamool Congress government has allocated more funds for minority affairs and development of madrasas than for higher education.
- The Mamata Banerjee government has allocated a budget of Rs 3,964 crore for higher education. While a budget of Rs 4,016 crore has been allocated for the development and expansion of a chain of madrasas. A budget allocation of merely Rs 5,336 crore has been made for PWD, the backbone of infrastructure building in any state.
- In the budget of 2018-19, the Mamata government has made a budgetary provision of Rs 3,713 crore for higher education. Last year Rs 3,258 crore was allocated for the development of madrasas and minority affairs. While this year's budget allocated Rs 4,016 crore for madrasas, which is an increase of 23%.

- Likewise, Mamata Banerjee's government had allocated more funds to minority affairs and madrasas in the budget of 2017-18 than the combined budget of large, small and medium industries, tourism and information technology sectors.
- In the financial year 2017-18 the Trinamool government released a sum of Rs 2,815 crore for minority affairs and madrasas, while an amount of Rs 2,154 crore was allocated for industries and information technology etc.
- Allocation of Rs 2,775 crore for the development of backward classes, tribal welfare and Rs 2,410 crore for irrigation and waterways is pittance compared to the budget for minorities planned by the TMC government.

The TMC government ignores the main challenges facing the State and instead indulges in vote-bank politics giving rise to the politics of appeasement. Mamata Banerjee has consistently increased the allocation for madrasas in its budgets and has thus deprived the state and its people – the Bengalis – by cutting down allocation in areas like infrastructure, education, water, irrigation, information technology and tourism. Since the Muslim vote-bank had deserted the Left Front in 2011 and had shifted to the TMC, Mamata Banerjee, in a public quid pro quo, has decided to ignore the overall development of West Bengal and is determined to cater only to the nearly 30 percent Muslim vote-bank. In this way she has perpetrated injustice on the tribals, the scheduled castes and the other marginalized populations of the state. It does not matter to the TMC that the higher education sector, the MSME sector, the health sector etc are deprived and are not infused with sufficient capital and resources and thus stagnate. For Mamata Banerjee's budget the only thing that really matters is the sops it can give to only one particular community!

## **Mamata Banerjee's attack on India's federal structure**

- NRC is linked to the security of the country. The Modi government wants to implement it across the country. This exasperated Mamata Banerjee, because she feels that it would affect her vote bank and core constituency which is also bolstered by infiltrators. She has thus threatened, very dangerously, that the implementation of the NRC would see bloodshed throughout the country leading to a civil war. It was astounding to see an elected Chief Minister call for bloodshed and threaten civil war.
- Ironically in 2005, the same Mamata Banerjee had argued in Parliament that infiltration was a major threat to the country and when she was not allowed to speak on the issue in Parliament she hurled papers and had created a huge ruckus.
- The manner in which Mamata Banerjee ordered her police to manhandle CBI officials who had reached Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajiv Kumar's residence – described earlier in the document – demonstrated her determination to tamper with the federal spirit of the country.
- It may be recalled that in December 2016, during a routine exercise undertaken by the Indian Army to assess the volume of traffic that passes through tolls along major highways across the country, Mamata Banerjee had locked herself up in her secretariat, Nabanna, for over 36 hours, vocally alleging that the Indian Army was plotting a coup to overthrow her. The Modi Government had planned this coup she had then alleged. The Chief Minister of West Bengal has repeatedly refused to participate in meetings of the NITI Aayog. She has displayed scant respect for these structures, for the functioning of our federal polity and for effective policy implementations at all levels. When she was invited to attend the

NITI Aayog meetings she shot back saying that the NITI Aayog had no powers, no rights and no financial powers and therefore it was a waste of time and its meetings were ‘fruitless.’ Mamata has shown that she is still not out of the election mindset and her refusal to attend these meetings has deprived West Bengal of a number of opportunities and occasion to make its voice heard at the national level.

- In an unprecedented display of disdain for our federal structure, Mamata Banerjee refused to return Prime Minister Modi’s calls, and denied and ignored his repeated requests for review meetings during the period when Cyclone Fani was about make a landfall and in its aftermath.
- Mamata Banerjee does not seem to be concerned about constitutional and federal values. Whenever the Union government seeks any information from the state government, Mamata gets upset and refuses to share them.
- As mentioned earlier, most of the time she does not respond when the Governor seeks to meet her or talk to her over phone.
- The Union government’s flagship scheme Ayushman Bharat has also not been implemented in the state.

### **Mamata Banerjee humiliated Indian Army**

- Central security forces were posted in West Bengal to ensure peaceful voting during the 2019 general elections but Mamata Banerjee repeatedly described them as agents of the BJP.
- On February 14, 2019, in Jammu and Kashmir’s Pulwama, suicide bombers targeted a CRPF convoy, in which 40 jawans were martyred. After this, as a response to the cowardly assault, on the night of 26-27 Feb 2019, the Indian Air Force crossed Pakistan’s border and conducted pointed intelligence led air strikes on terrorist camps in Balakot. In a brazen insult of the India Airforce’s daring operation Mamata Banerjee raised doubts about its striking capability and publicly questioned it on the number of terrorists it had killed in this action.

- Mamata Banerjee asked the Narendra Modi government for proof of the air strikes. She said that she had read in the New York Times that no one was killed in this operation and that a few trees were burnt and few crows had been killed. Hence government should reveal complete information. It is to be noted that complete information regarding such operations are never made public. Even when the villagers round Balakot were claiming heavy casualties for the terrorist training camps, Mamata Banerjee kept challenging the Modi government insisting that it should reveal the entire details of the strikes. She was doing this knowing full well that she was trying to compromise India's national security. The Chiefs of the three forces declared in a press conference that the evidences of the airstrike would be made publicly available if there arose a need to do so. It is beyond anyone's understanding why Mamata has no faith in our forces and their leadership. It was a strange situation when the entire country was united against the enemy, Mamata persisted with questioning the valour of our armed forces for her petty political gains.

### **Mamata's attack on the Central Election Commission**

- Mamata Banerjee has repeatedly defamed our autonomous institutions during the elections. She was consistently attacking the autonomy and independence of these institutions. TMC Rajya Sabha MP Derek O'Brien called the Election Commission a useless body. It is astonishing that on one hand the CEC was being appreciated by the entire world for successfully completing such a mega election process of the world's largest democracy, while on the other hand there were some politicians making unsubstantiated allegations against it.
- Mamata was repeatedly sloganeering for the need to save democracy, but she herself was insulting democracy & India's democratic institutions. She alleged, during Lok Sabha elections, that the Election Commission is acting in a partisan manner. It is noteworthy that in view of the political violence in West Bengal

in 2019, the CEC took action against West Bengal Home Secretary Atri Bhattacharya and ADG (CID) Rajiv Kumar. A ban on the campaign for the final phase was enforced. A furious Mamata Banerjee responded by saying that, “There is no problem in law and order, the Election Commission is being run by the RSS. Election Commission is working on the instructions of Modi-Shah duo. This decision of the Commission is

unconstitutional, unethical and politically motivated. I have never seen or heard of such an Election Commission. This decision is not of the Election Commission but of Modi-Shah.”

- On the decision of the CEC to ban campaigning Mamata Banerjee accused Amit Shah of coming to West Bengal with for the intent of rioting and asked for action to be taken against him. Apart from this, she also accused Amit Shah of threatening the CEC. She brazenly accused Prime Minister Modi of hijacking all institutions through muscle power.
- During the election, Mamata Banerjee was repeatedly seen inciting the people of West Bengal against the CEC. She was totally upset with the CEC and with every decision that it took.
- Even after her defeat in the Lok Sabha elections, Mamata Banerjee has continued with her conspiracy theories regarding the EVMs. During a press conference, she said that the opposition parties should come together to demand elections through ballot papers.
- Insulting the people’s support for the BJP in the Lok Sabha election, Mamata said that she does not accept this mandate.

***Ironically in 2005, the same Mamata Banerjee had argued in Parliament that infiltration was major threat to the country and when she was not allowed to speak on the issue in Parliament she hurled papers and had created a huge ruckus.***

## **Benefits to West Bengal from Central Government Schemes**

### **Mamata Banerjee's false narrative on Central Schemes**

Mamata Banerjee has been an impediment to the implementation of most of the central schemes in West Bengal. She has refused to implement the Modi government's flagship Ayushman Bharat scheme of Central government which provides for free health insurance upto five lakh rupees to the poor people. Under this scheme, there is a provision of 60 percent expenditure to be borne by the center and 40 percent by the state government. By making this arrangement an issue, Mamata Banerjee announced her decision to pull out of this scheme and refused to bear the expenses of state's share. Health is a subject in the state's list and therefore, without the co-operation of the state government, Center cannot do much. Mamata has adopted a similarly obstructive stance on the 'Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana', in which the Union government incurs the entire expenditure. The role of the states in the Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana is only limited to sending a list of farmers from their respective states who are eligible for this amount. But despite repeated requests by the Modi government, the list has not been sent from West Bengal so far, due to which the farmers of this state are being deprived of the benefits of this scheme. In all the provisions in the Constitution regarding the relations of Centre and States, it is expected that both of them will work for the progress of the country and the people with mutual coordination and understanding, But the attitude of the West Bengal government is exactly the opposite in utter disregard to the constitutional ethos.

TMC government changes names of Modi government schemes – some samples:

- 'Ajeevika Yojna' changed to 'Anandadhara'.
- Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojna changed to Banglar Gramin Sadak Yojana.
- 'Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana' changed to 'Banglar Griha Prakalpa'.
- 'Swachh Bharat Mission' changed to 'Mission Nirmal Banglaa'.

### **Benefits to West Bengal from Central Government Schemes**

- Under the Swachh Bharat campaign 61,58,112 lakh toilets have been constructed in the rural areas of West Bengal. Before 2015, none of the districts in West Bengal was ODF, but now 19 districts have become free from open defecation. 2158 villages of West Bengal along the Ganges have been declared ODF under the Namami Ganga Abhiyan. By August 2019, all the districts of Bengal will be declared ODF.
- Till January 30, 2019, under the National Mission for Clean Ganga, 24 Ghats and crematorium projects in West Bengal have been completed at a cost of rupees 180.16 crores. This crematoriums and Ghats, have been built at Kolkata, Bansberia, Howrah, Serampore, Khardah, Naihati, Chandannagar, Badyabati, Panihati, Kamarhati, Bally, Titagarh, Mahestala, North Barrackpore, Hooghly-Chinsura, Halisahar, Budge, etc. Apart from this, 7 more projects of Ghats and crematoriums have been approved under entry level activities, in which restoration and development of 15 ghats and 4 electric crematoriums at a cost of 48.47 crores is included.
- The Central Government has established National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) as a Public Private Partnership (PPP) unit to establish skill development centers across the country and promote private training providers. A total of 10,711 female candidates have already been trained under Kaushal Vikas Yojna in West Bengal and 4,196 have got placements.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas scheme, the number of nominated candidates is 63,378 till July 6, 2019, out of which 975



candidates are being trained. So far currently 43,597 candidates have already been given placements, and training of the total 62,403 candidates has been completed.

- Under the Ujjwala scheme, in the West Bengal, a total of 81,24,194 lakh women have been given free LPG gas connections till July 4, 2019, which is much higher than other States.
- Electricity has been provided to 7.32 lakh households under the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har-Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya), which has resulted in 100% electrification of West Bengal.
- Under the Ujala scheme, 92,28,789 LED bulbs have been distributed till July 6, 2019.
- Under the Sagarmala Project, 14,268 crore rupees have been already invested in the development of ports in West Bengal. The development of 2 dry ports in Khidirpore and South 24 Parganas, Sonapur is in progress. The construction of the 206 km long National Waterway in Sunderbans and Swarupnagar has been completed. The development work of the National Waterways in the Ajoy and Ichamati rivers is in progress. In addition, a new harbour is being developed in Tajpur. The third railway line is being constructed from Narayanganj in West Bengal to Bhadrak in Odisha, which costs Rs 1,866 crore. The work on this rail line is likely to be completed by 2023-24.
- National Highway Bridge - A new Four Lane Highway is being constructed at a cost of Rs 1,938 crore in the Phalakata-Salsalabari section of NH-31A.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojna, 55.91 lakh beneficiaries have been registered till March 31, 2018 in West Bengal.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Jandhan Yojana, till January 30, 2019, a total of 3.4 crore accounts have been opened and 2.8 crore RuPay Cards have been issued in West Bengal.
- 7 lakh beneficiaries are receiving benefits under Atal Pension Yojna till 31st January, 2019, out of which 46% are women.

- 12.51 lakh beneficiaries have been registered till June 26, 2019, Pradhan Mantri Jivan Jyoti Bima Yojna.
- Under the National Food Security Mission, 18 out of 19 districts of West Bengal have been covered till January 30, 2019.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna, till January 30, 2019, 1,02,895 homes have been constructed.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna, 10.21 lakh hectare of Kharif crop land and 10.01 lakh hectare Rabi crop land have been insured till January 30, 2019.
- Under the Padhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojna, 15,365.44 hectares of land has been covered till January 30, 2019.
- Till January 30, 2019 nearly 64 lakh Soil Health Cards have been distributed to the farmers of West Bengal.
- Under the Poshan Abhiyan, 61, 896 anganwadis have been covered till January 30, 2019 in the state. Approximately 5.4 million children and 1.14 lakh pregnant women have been benefitted under Mission Indradhanush.
- Till March 31, 2019, a total of 1063 start-ups have been recognized in West Bengal.
- 34.27 lakh applications have been certified till the academic year 2018-19 under the National Scholarship Mission.
- Broadband service of BharatNet has been made available to 2,123 village panchayats of West Bengal till January 30, 2019.
- Till 30 January 2019, 100 Atal Tinkering Labs are operating under the Atal Innovation Mission in the state.
- About 1.5 crore rupees have been allocated in West Bengal as Mudra loan till January 30, 2019.

## West Bengal on the path of change

**I**n a sense, West Bengal became the epicenter of the Lok Sabha election of 2019. It was for the first time since the founding of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) in 1951, and the formation of BJP in 1980, that the party won 18 Lok Sabha seats and secured over 40 per cent of the vote share in the State. The people of West Bengal have overwhelmingly expressed their confidence in the BJP and in Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

It was also for the first time in India's electoral history that the eastern region of India was in focus. Indeed the results were a turning point and will impart a new direction and momentum to politics in the eastern part of the country.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's massive popularity, BJP national president Amit Shah's astute electoral strategy and the effort and sacrifice of BJP workers of West Bengal, who have shown enormous resilience and courage to withstand violent onslaughts, paved the way for this historic victory.

The electoral battle for West Bengal was a formidable battle. It was a struggle between the dictatorship of the Trinamool Congress government and the aspirations of the people of the state. Moreover, the electoral battle in the state was fought in an atmosphere of unrelenting intimidation and violence. It was a herculean task to challenge and defeat a ruling dispensation like the TMC which was hell-bent on defying all norms, all democratic principles and rules to win the election.

Since all electoral victories are the results of an effective strategy and the hard work and persistence of workers on the ground, the BJP leadership worked to ignite that courage and tenacity in the minds of their workers by leading from the front. Prime Minister

Modi's determination to make the Lotus bloom in West Bengal and BJP national president Amit Shah's tenacious perseverance for effectively implementing the strategy on the ground altered the atmosphere in the state. Both led from the front in the battle for West Bengal. The violence perpetrated on BJP workers by the TMC's harmad (armed groups which unleash violence and lead attacks) gangs failed to prevent the Lotus from blooming in West Bengal. The sacrifice of our workers for their party and their ideology has not been in vain.

One of the symbolic and significant outcomes of the elections for West Bengal is that the state is now free from the clutches of a narrow minded and confined regionalism as perpetuated by the TMC. Mamata Banerjee's mindset was to promote a sense of emotional separatism among the people of West Bengal and to pull the state away from the federal structure and spirit of India as a whole. The BJP's resounding success in the state has blocked that mindless and dangerous attempt. The icons of Bengal have again been reinstated in the national pantheon, beyond the confines of the State and India as a whole has now taken cognizance of the state of affairs in West Bengal, its history, its present travails and realises how important it is to work for state's renaissance for realising the dream of a New India.

The fact that the political party, established by Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee, one of the most illustrious sons of India and Bengal, and driven by the

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ideology and ideals of cultural nationalism, has been able to make such huge inroads into the psyche and sentiment of the common people of West Bengal, is in itself a historic turning point and achievement. The effects of this success will be far-reaching and multi-dimensional.

In the context of the politics of West Bengal, this election and its result is a clear warning to those who indulge in nepotism, syndicalism, corruption and in the suppression of the spirit of democracy. This is the victory of democracy over the politics of violence. This victory is also

a triumph over all those who wish to and insist on keeping West Bengal confined to a narrow perspective and plan and work to limit the aspiration of its people and to prevent them from moving towards a prosperous and opportunity filled collective existence.

Through their decisive mandate the people of West Bengal have clearly demonstrated that they are determined to stand with and rally behind Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP, that they support good governance, development, democracy and nationalism.

This election has also negated all those skeptics who doubted the BJP's ability to succeed in the electoral arena of West Bengal. BJP national president Amit Shah had once said that, 'The golden period for the BJP will be ushered in when it will have its governments in states like West Bengal and Kerala.' West Bengal today has certainly and unhesitatingly taken a decisive step in that direction.

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