

# Culture & Pluralism of Bengal Under Seize

## *State Patronage to Communalism*

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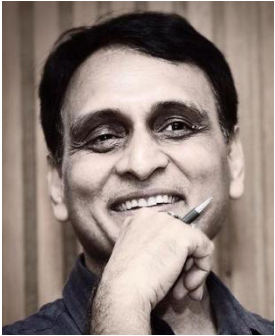
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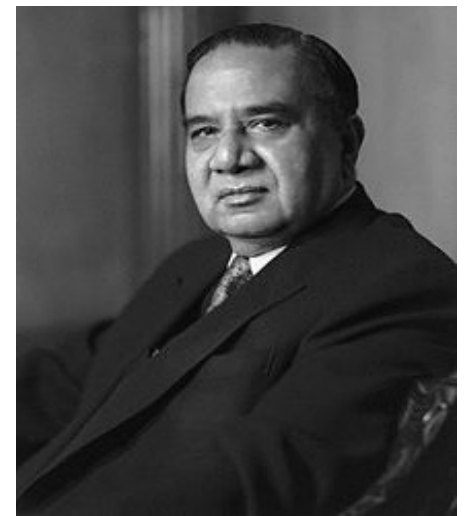
# Preface



## Situation in West Bengal a Warning for India

The decline of West Bengal is a clear indicator of the grim wages of political brinkmanship. The economy of the state is in shambles and society is fractured by communalism. This decadence marks a departure from the Bengal that was the depository of rich legacy in culture, science, spirituality and economy. Great sons of the land impacted the nation's destiny by their unmatched contributions. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna Parmahans, Swami Vivekananda, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra, Rabindranath Tagore, Subhash Chandra Bose, Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee and Trailokya Nath Chakravarty are a few names among many more who left an indelible mark on India's history. During the freedom struggle Bengal was a breeding ground of revolutionaries. Why does West Bengal present such a miserable picture now? Political brinkmanship is a major reason for its fall. Both Marxists and Mamata have destroyed it.

Punjab and Bengal suffered the most during Partition, with killings of innocents driven by religious frenzy becoming their horrifying narrative. Pro-Pakistan elements, realizing that mere propaganda was not enough to create Muslim mass support for Pakistan used conspiracy theories to convince Muslims that poverty, unemployment and illiteracy were the handiwork of Hindus; the colonial regime backed this propaganda by forming the one-man Hunter Committee to 'ascertain' the reasons of Muslim backwardness. William Wilson Hunter (ICS) manipulated data and 'concluded' that the Muslim decline was due to the Hindus. However, when the Director of Public Instructions suggested introducing modern education in the report, the propaganda mill against Hindus and their organizations and the Indian National Congress came a cropper. The tragedy of the state — under diarchic rule — is unique. It is dismaying to find a sinister figure like Maulana Nurul Rahman Barkati of the Tipu Sultan Mosque, notorious for issuing a fatwa for the murder of Bangladeshi novelist Taslima Nasreen, enjoying no less power than



*H.S. Suhrawardy*



*Mamata Banerjee*

Mamata Banerjee herself. This is sufficient indicator of decline of civilized polity. Mamata enjoys the company of an Islamist whose worldview is no different from Osama Bin Laden. Expecting the state to regain its past glory amidst such rank bigotry is a tall expectation indeed. Mamata, far from being a leader, is a victim of self-acquired traits of vendetta. People's hopes of relief after suffering Marxist rule for over three decades have been belied. Mamata has proved a disaster, and to conceal her failures, she has resorted to the communal card, a dangerous weapon that mangled Bengal even before Partition. H.S. Suhrawardy, united Bengal's interim Prime Minister (April 1946-August 1947) for his own survival fuelled a holocaust in Bengal. Jinnah's clamour for Direct Action on August 16, 1946 caused the massacres of the state's Hindus, with 5,016 people being killed and 13,320 were injured in four days of riots (a statement in the House of Commons). Suhrawardy's regime removed the police from duty, giving jihadi barbarians a free against the Hindus. In reality, more than ten thousand were killed and many thousands displaced. The Great Calcutta killing was followed by riots in Noakhali in October–November 1946. Mamata Banerjee shares Suhrawardy's temperament and communal outlook. Her regime patronizes communalists and the police have been crippled by her dictatorship. She turns a blind eye to Muslim communalists' mini-Direct Actions against the Hindus. What Francis Robinson wrote about colonial rulers' attitude is also true of Mamata: "As far as Muslims were concerned, politics comes first and administrative policy second. This was to have far-reaching consequences." Communalization of the state and Mamata's active sympathy for anti-national elements is gravely undermining the civil society of Bengal as it did before Partition.

The time is ripe for undoing communal politics and restoring the image of Bengal as thinking today what India would think tomorrow. This is not impossible for the soil that has been a cradle of spiritual savants, intellectual luminaries and fearless revolutionaries. Bengal must shed the politics of minorityism which will only be its nemesis. The India Policy Foundation has brought out an intervention paper to highlight the plight of West Bengal and create consciousness among people to undo the harm inflicted by the evil being perpetrated on it.

**March 10, 2017**

**— Prof. Rakesh Sinha**

## WEST BENGAL: THEN AND NOW

Bengal is a 4,000 year-old civilisation that thrived from the banks of Ganges to Brahmaputra and sustained itself with the riches of Gangetic Delta. Remnants of earliest cities in the state date back to the Vedic Period.<sup>1</sup> Bengal has always been the gateway to the eastern parts of the Indian subcontinent. Such a geographical advantage made Bengal a commercial hub that connected the sea to the famous Silk Route.

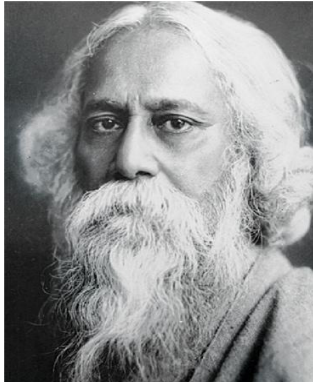
### British Invasion in Bengal

Being a gateway to India, a strong naval presence, a land full of riches and a weak ministerial cabinet, Bengal was invaded by the British. The Battle of Plassey (June 1757) which allowed the British to consolidate their hold in Bengal as rulers is often seen as the onset of the 200-year old British rule in India. After the fall of Mughal Empire, the focus of Indian culture and politics shifted from Delhi to Calcutta.<sup>2</sup> Bengal had seen two catastrophic famines in 1776 and 1943 and two partitions in 1905 and 1947 under the British Raj. The province endured three migrations in 1905, 1947 and 1971. Apart from the governance, the British Raj spelled doom for the native population of Bengal. Due to the first hand interaction and intimacy with the colonisers, the Bengali community became the most advanced in modern science and literature, which gave rise to the Bengal Renaissance.

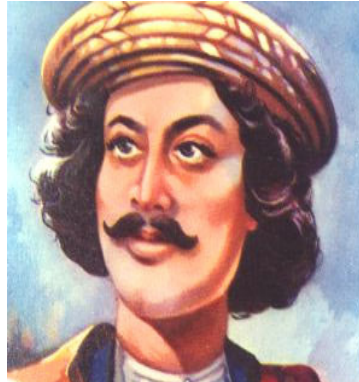
### Bengal Renaissance

The Bengal Renaissance saw the rise of extraordinary personalities and visionaries from Bengal in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> Free thinking was encouraged among students, caste discrimination was condemned and literature and science were seen as the agents of progress. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the ‘Father of Modern India’, was the pioneer of the Renaissance. Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Vivekananda, Jagadish Chandra Bose, Satyendra Nath Bose, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and Rabindranath Tagore propelled the movement forward and made Bengal the face of progress and culture in India.

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1. Krishanu Dutta, “History of Bengal: From Stone Age to Trinamool Congress”, India Today, May 20, 2016, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/education/story/history-of-bengal/1/673092.html> (Accessed Feb. 2, 2017).
  2. *ibid.*
  3. Subrata Dasgupta, “*Awakening: The Story of the Bengal Renaissance*”, August 1 2011, p. 501.(Accessed Feb. 6, 2017).



*Rabindranath Tagore*



*Raja Ram Mohan Roy*



*Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya*



*Swami Vivekananda*



*Ishwar Chandra Vidhyasagar*

## Partition of Bengal

The state of Bengal during that period stretched across 189,000 square miles. By this time, the Indian National Congress had begun to fight for Independence. Lord Curzon made a shrewd political move by dividing the Hindus and Muslims, which made it easier for the British to rule a partitioned Bengal and subjugate the Independence Movement. The First Partition of Bengal took place in October 1905 which resulted into a huge political crisis. The Muslims in East Bengal became receptive to the partition after initial opposition and formed various religious organisations.



Bengali Hindus, who held a strong foothold in business and in the rural areas, complained that the partition of Bengal would make them a minority in their own state. The *Swadeshi* movement had propagated a successful anti-partition movement. Chief architects of this movement were Aurobindo Ghosh, Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and V. O. Chidambaram Pillai. In 1911, Bengal was reunited keeping in mind the Bengali sentiment but this caused severe resentment among Bengali Muslims.<sup>4</sup>

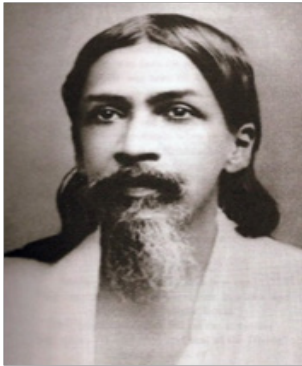
The partition of Bengal had a significant impact on the political climate of India and East Bengalis were left dissatisfied after the union of the state, which led to a strong political foresight among Bengali Muslims. Bengal was finally partitioned in 1947 along religious lines, as part of the Partition of India. East Bengal came to be known as East Pakistan, which later became the independent state of Bangladesh after the War of Independence with West Pakistan in 1971.<sup>5</sup>

## Freedom Movement

Bengal played a pivotal role in the Indian freedom movement. Bengal's considerable contribution in nationalist fervor during the freedom movement is an inspiring era and a memorable chapter in the history of our nationalism. It is the land which taught people how to sacrifice, to stand firm against ills of society and culture and fight with intense intellectual stamina, contributing to the national identity by producing both the National Song by Bankim Chandra and National Anthem by Rabindranath Tagore. Revolutionary units such as *Anushilan Samiti* and *Jugantar* gathered the youths of Bengal and trained them to fight against the foreign rulers. The writings, speeches and passion of Bengali intellectuals and reformists such as Rajnarayan Basu, Subhash Chandra Bose, Chittaranjan Das, Bipin Chandra Pal, Surendranath Banerjee, Prafulla Chaki, Jatindranath Mukherjee, Khudiram Bose, Sarojini Naidu, Aurobindo Ghosh, Rashbehari Bose, Syama Prasad Mookerjee and others have been important lessons in India's nationalist thoughts.

4. L. M. Bhole, "Essays on Gandhian Socio-Economic Thought", Shipra Publications, Delhi, 2000, (Accessed Feb.2017).

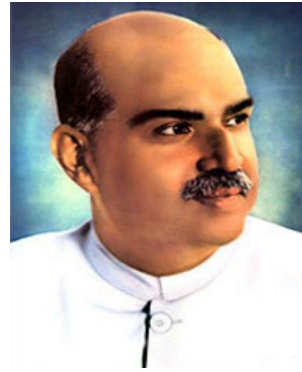
5. Thomas, Weber, "Gandhi, Deep Ecology, Peace Research and Buddhist Economics". *Journal of Peace Research*. 36 (3): 349–361, May 1999. doi:10.1177/0022343399036003007. (Accessed Feb. 21, 2017).



*Aurobindo Ghosh*



*Subhash Chandra Bose*



*Syama Prasad Mookerjee*



*Bipin Chandra Pal*

## Post-Independence Bengal

While the onus of Indian politics became more and more north western, the fact that Bengal faced two back-to-back partitions and migrations in 1947 and 1971 did not attract adequate administrative attention. The Bangladesh Liberation War sparked ire among the youths of Bengal. In 1970-71, the state witnessed the terrorist revolution in the form of the Naxalite movement.<sup>6</sup> It was subsequently governed by the Communist Party of India (Marxist). For more than three decades, West Bengal had become a prisoner of Indian Stalinists who used their bookish Marxism to suppress socio-economic development, to create terror and use oppressive means against their political adversaries. West Bengal's present Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee fought against state sponsored hooliganism. This became the reason for her party, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) to be elected to power in 2011 and re-elected in 2016 with the hope and optimism that she would resurrect intellectual tradition, accelerate development of the state and restore democracy. But, she leaves us disappointed. Contrary to expectations, she used the tools of authoritarianism and communalism to establish control. In her rule there is law but no order, there is police but no administration. Her communal politics has given birth to tyranny of the majority in the state.<sup>7</sup>

6. "The division of British India into India and Pakistan, achieved in 1947". Oxford English Dictionary. 2005. (Accessed Feb 2017).

7. Krishanu Dutta, "History of Bengal: From Stone Age to Trinamool Congress", India Today, May 20, 2016, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/education/story/history-of-bengal/1/673092.html>. (Accessed Feb. 2, 2017).



## Present Day Bengal

Unfortunately, contemporary West Bengal gives a dismal picture. The history of world civilisation has revealed when a man without well thought out social philosophy and ideology, incisive vision comes into power due to the faults of others, such leaders not only become a burden on democracy but also become its enemy. Mamata Banerjee, a street fighter, has failed to be a competitive ruler as she lacks vision and agenda. Six years of Trinamool government and the grim picture it represents seems like Bengal has realised its grave mistake of being caught in a web in lieu of its obsession with change.

The apparent misrule of uneducated ministers, unrestrained communal violence in the state, the sinister motive of driving away Hindus from their hearth and homes with the intention of taking those who will increase her vote bank and further appreciate and promote her biased approach have turned West Bengal into hell. Grounded in her over ambitious task of projecting herself as a national-level politician who can overpower and put serious challenge to all other parties, Banerjee has neglected her most important and positional task of governing the state. West Bengal, is under the garb of Mamata's blatant and shameless pursuit of the policy of minority-appeasement which will continue to witness a polarisation on communal lines.

Mamata has been toeing the footprints of H.S.Suhrawardy, the Prime Minister of Bengal before Partition who had also polarised the society, protected and prompted communal elements to strengthen his political hold. Marxist–Mamata rulers, such as these and the forms of governance they espoused, resulted in unabated communal riots turning West Bengal, once known as the ‘renaissance’ capital of India, into a ‘corrupted–communalist’ capital of India.<sup>8</sup>

A despotic leader by nature, she betrayed democracy by following the oppressive tale of the CPM and is a habitual believer of various conspiracy theories. Recently in a Trinamool Congress gathering at Chandpara in North 24-Parganas district, Banerjee charged the Marxists for being hand-in-glove with Congress and BJP in plotting against her. Banerjee

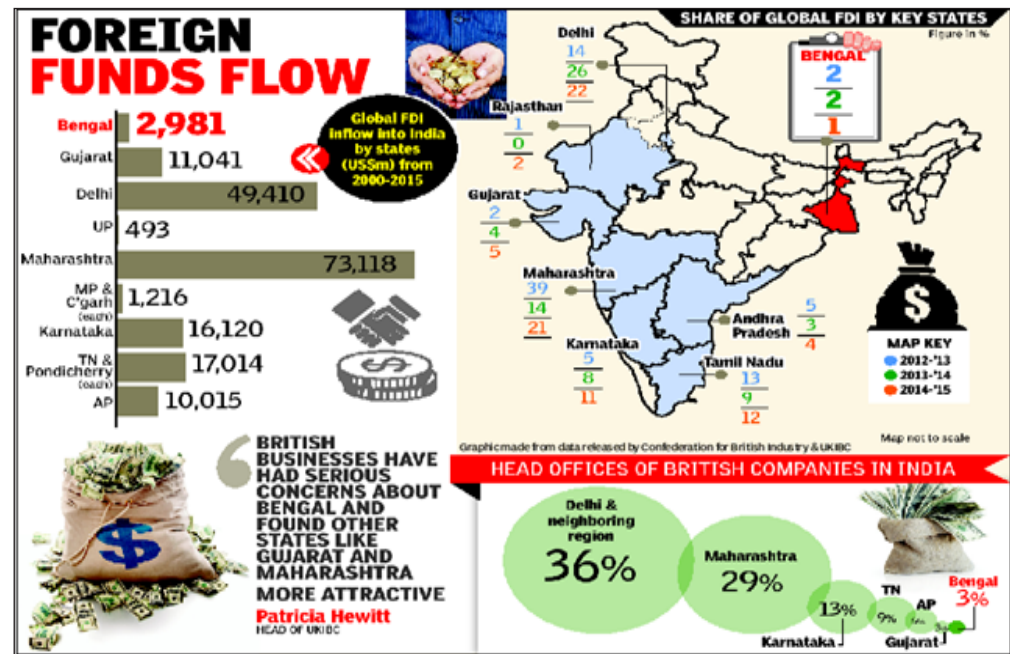
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8. “Mamata Banerjee Alleges Rivals’ Plot To Eliminate Her”, The Economic Times, June 20, 2013, <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/mamata-banerjee-alleges-rivals-plot-to-eliminate-her/articleshow/20672867>. (Accessed Feb. 23, 2017).

did not even spare the Indian Army as she linked the Army presence in the state to an attempted ‘*military coup*’.<sup>9</sup> Recently, army personnel were deployed at toll plazas for an annual exercise to collect road data for military movement in an emergency. One of the sites was near the multi-story state secretariat, a high-security zone.<sup>10</sup> In response, she stated that the army personnel were taking money from the vehicles which they were not supposed to do.<sup>11</sup>

## ECONOMY OF WEST BENGAL

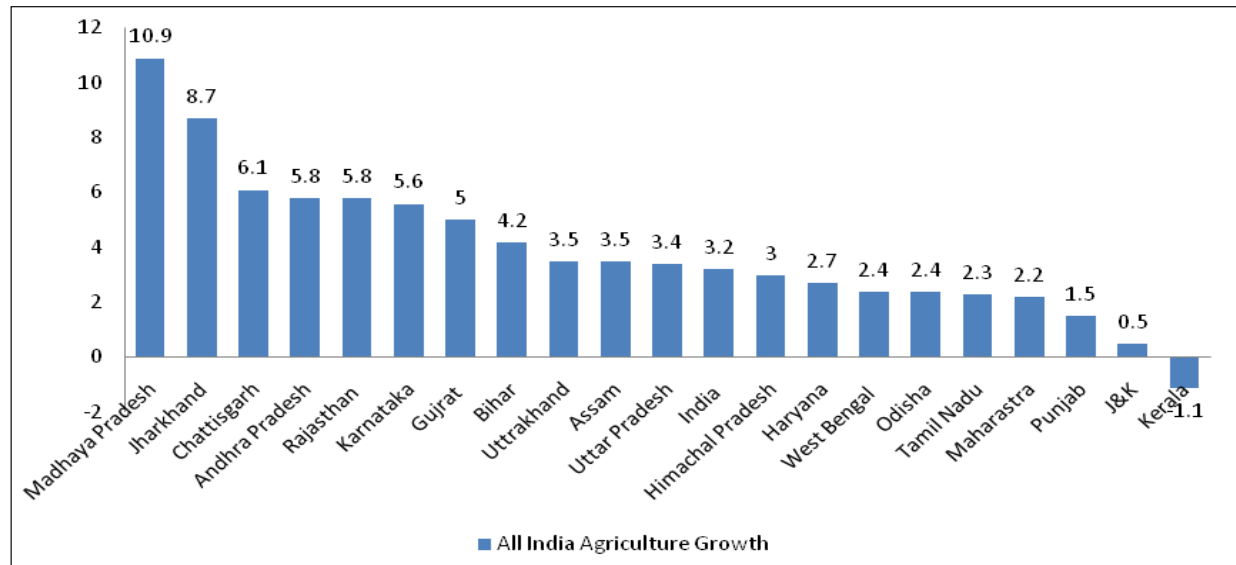
A glorious legacy of West Bengal sees its reflection in education, industry or any other fronts. Yet, the overall economic and social conditions of the state have declined since the 1960s. 34-year rule of the Communist Party has often been stated as one of the reasons for the stagnation in West Bengal’s economy and the people of the state voted for a change in 2011. After six years of Trinamool Congress rule, West Bengal’s statistics do not show much of a boost to economic development.<sup>12</sup> Economically, present day West Bengal accords a vividly stark picture. With the state’s overall Below Poverty Line Ratio being 26% and more



- Dibyangshu Sarkar, “I am vocal against demonetisation”, Scroll. In, Dec 2 2016, /i-am-vocal-against-demonetisation-and-thus-this-military-coup-says-mama-ta-banerjee. (Accessed Feb. 24, 2017).
- “Mamata To Protest ‘Undemocratic Actions’ Even As Army Rebutts Her Charges”, HT, Dec 3 2016, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/army-rebutts-mamata-charges-says-exercise-done-with-police-coordination/story-dxeVzqDfB0N6XuqAe5xnuM.html>. (Accessed Feb. 24, 2017).
- Aniruddha Ghoshal, “Mamata Banerjee Compares Situation In Bengal To ‘Military Coup’”, The Indian Express Dec. 2. 2016, <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/mamata-banerjee-army-deployment-nh-2-in-west-bengal-military-coup-4405871/>. (Accessed Feb.26. 2017).
- Laveesh Bhandari, Minakshi Chakraborty, ”Spatial poverty in West Bengal”, Live Mint, March 23, 2015, <http://www.livemint.com/Opinion/dXPv8bp492mKX-9rirXX0hK/Spatial-poverty-in-West-Bengal.html>. (Accessed Feb. 13, 2017).
- Ibid.

than 22% of the urban population living below poverty line, West Bengal stands 5<sup>th</sup> in the poverty chart. Further, in West Bengal, unemployment rates in 2015-16 stood at a mere 49 per cent (per 1000) with unemployment rate being higher in urban areas (56 per 1000) than the rural (47 per 1000).<sup>2</sup>

Despite promises of employment being made by the TMC during its protests against TATA land acquisition, it failed to create any in the last five years. Data released by the Confederation for British Industry (CBI) and the UK India Business Council (UKIBC) shows British business houses have been “wary about going to Bengal” and perceived the state as one “not friendly to business”.<sup>14</sup>



Source: *The Indian Express*<sup>15</sup>

West Bengal is the second-most densely populated state of India having 1,029 people a square kilometer. Due to such low land to population ratio, it is not possible to sustain growth and prosperity on agriculture alone. Thus Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) becomes a stark necessity which the state government has sadly not been able to inculcate leaving West Bengal gripped with the issues of high unemployment rates, poverty and rampant illegal immigration.

14. Kountey Sinhal, “Bengal Falls Behind in FDI Race”, *The Times of India*, Sep 4 2015, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Bengal-falls-behind-in-FDI-race/articleshow/48795936.cms> (Accessed Feb. 13, 2017).

15. Ashok Gulati, Ranjana Roy, “From Plate to Plough: its not about loan waivers”, *The Indian Express*, Feb. 27, 2017, <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/election-commission-upa-government-agriculture-from-plate-to-plough-its-not-about-loan-waivers-4545171/>. (Accessed Feb. 28, 2017).

## RISING BURDEN

Outstanding debt of West Bengal (₹ crore)

2010-11 (RE)	1,85,660.47	
2011-12 (RE)	2,08,382.58	
2012-13 (RE)	2,26,193.37	
2013-14 (RE)	2,50,837.70	
2014-15 (RE)	2,74,800.12	
2015-16 (RE)	3,04,940.58	
2016-17 (BE)	3,34,608.29	

\*RE: Revised estimates; BE: Budget estimates  
Source: West Bengal Budget documents

West Bengal's outstanding debt increased 64% in the past six years. Data from the Bengal government Budget document show the outstanding debt of the state was close to Rs 1.86 lakh crore in 2010-11, which increased to Rs 3.05 lakh crore in 2015-16, a growth of 64%.<sup>16</sup>

The Muslim community which is largely uneducated in West Bengal also suffers from lack of job opportunities with 55% of rural and 60% of urban population. The findings, published in the report "*Living Reality of Muslims in West*

*Bengal*", throw light on the community's dismal state and counters Chief Minister claimed that a lot had been done by her government to alleviate the condition of Muslims who account for 27% of the state's population.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the high levels of poverty, only 31.8% of the rural households own BPL cards and only 39.5% have MGNREGA job cards. Corruption and illiteracy have rendered a large portion of the Muslim community inaccessible to government schemes such as Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme, Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme, Integrated Child Development Services Scheme, Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana and Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana. The lack of employment opportunities and access to benefits has also resulted in 17% of the Muslim population migrating to other states in search for work.

16. Namrata Acharya, "West Bengal's debt burden rises 64% six years", Business Standard, April 26, 2016, [http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/west-bengal-s-debt-burden-rises-64-in-six-years-116042600053\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/west-bengal-s-debt-burden-rises-64-in-six-years-116042600053_1.html). (Accessed Feb. 26, 2017).

17. Esha Roy, "All Half of West Bengal Muslims do not have a job", The Indian Express, Feb. 29, 2016, <http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/kolkata/over-half-of-west-bengal-muslims-do-not-have-a-job/>. (Accessed Jan. 28, 2017).

## A STATE OF SCAMS

West Bengal has recently emerged as the state of scams where, some corrupt political leaders are the biggest advocates of corruption. Various scams in West Bengal exposed the real Mamata when her party leaders and members were found involved in scams cheating poor people. Some of the prominent scams are given in the table below:<sup>18</sup>

Scams	Amount (in Crore)	Alleged Involvement of TMC Members
Saradha Scam (2008-2013)	30,000	Madan Mitra, Srinjoy Bose, Mithun Chakroborty, Kunal Ghose
Rose Valley (2013)	10,000	Sudip Bandyopadhyay, Tapas Pal
Narada Sting (2016)	NA	Mukul Roy, Sultan Ahmed, Sougata Roy, Suwendu Adhikari, Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, Subrata Mukherjee, Firhad Hakim, Sovan Chatterjee
Silliguri Jalpaiguri Development Authority (SIDA, 2014)	NA	Gautam Deb, Subrata Mukherjee, Farhad Hakim and others

## PLIGHT OF WOMEN IN WEST BENGAL

Once called the ‘land of gold’, West Bengal in the present times is marred with the status of being a state having one of the highest crime rates against women though the state is headed by a woman Chief Minister.<sup>19</sup> “*Are all women in the state being raped?*” was the counter question posed by Mamata Banerjee when Kolkata was ranked as the third

18. Shreekumar Roy,, “Corporate scams and its impact on Indian Economy: A Case on ‘Saradha Chit Fund’. Global Journal for Research Analysis, 3(11), 33-35,2014, (Accessed Feb. 24, 2017).

19. Suvojit Bagchi, “No law and order in West Bengal: Sonia”, The Hindu, April 13, 2016, <http://www.thehindu.com/elections/westbengal2016/sonia-gandhi-slams-mamata-banerjee-government/article8471649.ece>. (Accessed Feb. 13, 2017)



most unsafe metropolis for women in the country. The **Park Street rape case**, the **gruesome Kamdhuni gang rape**, **hiked human trafficking** and murder cases – are all appalling reminders of apathetic attitude of the CM and her almost juvenile platitudes on sexual crimes that she conveniently labels as staged encounters, aka ‘*shajano ghotona*’.<sup>20</sup> Her vote bank politics crossed all ghastly level as she did not spare the rape victims and denied them justice as the accused ostensibly belonged to the minority class.

**Kamdhuni rape case** is a burning example of Mamata’s denial of justice and power politics moves which do not spare anyone and denial of justice. A young girl, barely 20, was abducted, gang-raped and brutally murdered when she was returning home after giving university exam. The decision of registration of case against the accused was delayed in this case as six of the eight accused were from the minority community.<sup>21</sup> Mamata also made sure that the accused are released merely for her pettifogging political goals as the main accused was a relative of a TMC Pradhan and belonged to her minority vote bank community.<sup>22</sup> Strong links with political party leaders is an



*Social activists protest outside the Court following the judgement in the Kamdhuni rape and murder case<sup>23</sup>*

20. Soudhriti Bhabani, “Mamta Banaerjee’s Minority Appeasement Draws Flak from Right, Left and Centre”, India Today, Jan. 28, 2016, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/mamata-banerjees-minority-appeasement-draws-flak-from-right-left-and-centre/1/581364.html> ( Accessed Feb. 15, 2017)

21. Ibid.

22. “No Women is safe in West Bengal today”, Rediff.com, July 27, 2013, <http://www.rediff.com/news/column/no-woman-is-safe-in-west-bengal-today/20130727.htm>. (Accessed Feb. 17, 2017).

23. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/indiahome/indianews/article-3424646/Justice-Bengal-s-Nirbhaya-Three-brutal-Kamdhuni-gang-rape-convicts-death-sentence-life-term.html>

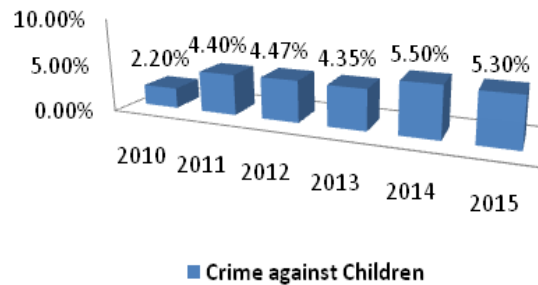


established route to escape crime against women in the present West Bengal Government.<sup>24</sup> Major atrocities are done by Minority class as they exploit the privilege of being the vote bank for Banerjee and are aware that they can get away with murder.

An eleven-year old Hindu girl-child of Ramna village under Raghunathganj police station in Murshidabad district was gang-raped by a gang of Islamists (Motahar Sheikh, Bapan Sheikh and Pande Sheikh), all residents of Bahadidanga village. Police has not been able to arrest any of these culprits. When the angry villagers ransacked the house of one of the Muslim culprits, police intervened and stopped the angry public. A fifteen-year old girl of Schedule Caste community was gang raped by Osman Mollah and his five goons in Jhupkhali village of Sandeshkhali, Dist. North 24 Parganas. Before raping her, the Muslim miscreants looted Rs 20,000 cash, gold ornaments and other expensive items.<sup>25</sup>

**“Are all women in the state being raped?”**

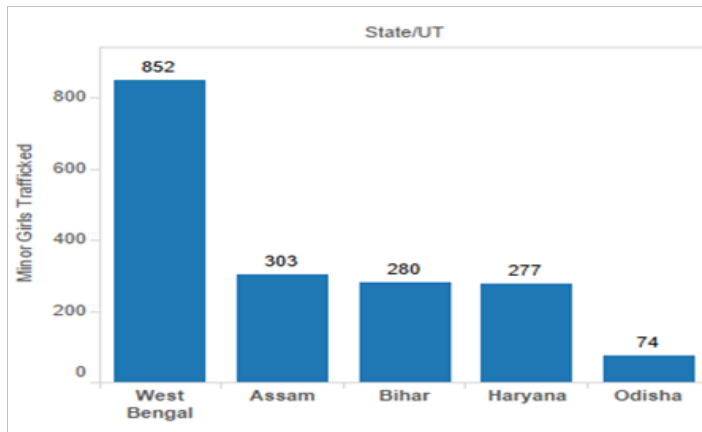
—Mamata Banerjee



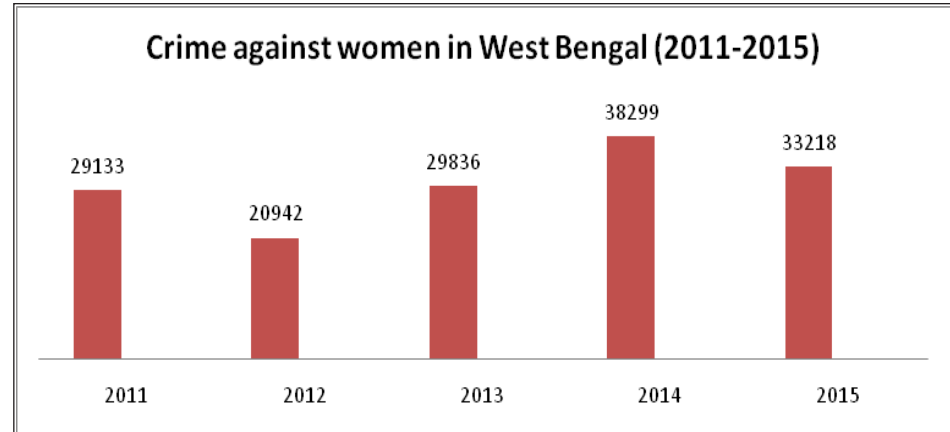
■ Crime against Children  
*Crime against children have been on a rise in West Bengal between 2010-2015<sup>28</sup>*

Freedom of women is under threat in West Bengal where Trinamool Congress government has supported the demand of Maulvis to take action against women who play football in Malda district. Subjugating to their demand of girls playing football as unethical, TMC cancelled the scheduled football match.<sup>26</sup> It has been reported that Trinamool Congress MLA and Minister Sanitri Mitra supported the ban and the match was labeled as cancelled “in consultation with the district magistrate following apprehensions of communal tension”.<sup>27</sup>

24. “Newlywed gang-raped”, The Times of India, May 22, 2014, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/Newlywed-gang-raped/articleshow/35450986.cms?cfmid=2000000>. (Accessed Feb. 18, 2017).
25. “Ground Report: The State of Hindus in West Bengal”, Indiafacts, June 6, 2014, <http://indiafacts.org/ground-report-state-hindus-west-bengal/>. (Accessed Feb. 22, 2017).
26. “Mamta Banerjee’s men stop women’s football match on demand from muslim clerics”, DNA, March 17, 2015, <http://www.dnaindia.com/sport/report-mamata-banerjee-s-men-stop-women-s-football-match-on-demand-from-muslim-clerics-2069503>. (Accessed Feb. 14, 2017)
27. “WB: Hardliners ban women’s football match as jerseys are ‘too tight’”, Hindustan Times, March 16, 2015, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india/wb-hardliners-ban-women-s-football-match-as-jerseys-are-too-tight/story-S8NZACR8vyWt2CUhq3krlM.html>. (Accessed Feb. 17, 2017)
28. Himadri Ghosh, “West Bengal, Epicentre Of India’s Boom In Sexual Slavery”, Indiaspend, April 23, 2016, <http://www.indiaspend.com/cover-story/west-bengal-epicentre-of-indias-boom-in-sexual-slavery-43863>. (Accessed Feb. 22, 2017).



*Trafficking of Minor Girls was highest in West Bengal in 2014*



*Statistical Record of Criminal Activities against Women in West Bengal year wise<sup>29</sup>*

## UNDEMOCRATIC AND OPPRESSIVE ACTIONS

Democratic values take a beating when a state is directly involved in denying incidents of real violence and supporting their perpetrators. Constitutional and moral values are eroded when brutality has the blessings of the ruling regime as in the case of West Bengal.

- Bapi Pal of Janakinagar village, who worked as a Civic Police volunteer, was arrested after a Trinamool Congress supporter filed a complaint at Harishchandrapur police station for making a “derogatory remark” against Mamata Banerjee on Facebook.<sup>30</sup>
- A professor of Jadavpur University was arrested in April 2012, for posting a cartoon on Facebook featuring Banerjee with the then railway minister Mukul Roy and his predecessor Dinesh Trivedi.<sup>31</sup>
- There have been a series of violent attacks by the Trinamool Congress on individuals such as Ashok Bhattacharya, Sudarshan Ray Chowdhury, Abdur Rezzak Mollah, Bipin Chaudhary and others of the Left Front,

29. National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Crime in India ,Compendium (2011-2015), (Accessed Feb. 22, 2017).

30. “Youth Arrested For Making Anti-Mamata Banerjee Remark On Facebook”, TOI, Oct. 15, 2014, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/Youth-arrested-for-making-anti-Mamata-remark-on-Facebook/articleshow/44828692.cms> . (Accessed Feb. 21, 2017).

31. Ibid.

the Congress and the BJP.<sup>32</sup> Recently, Central Reserve Police Force personnel were posted in large numbers near the BJP state headquarters as an agitation and stone pelting by enraged Trinamool Congress activists continued for over three hours over the arrest of party MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay.<sup>33</sup> Mamata Banerjee further endorsed her MP's comments against the PM as she too used the "rat" analogy to slam the Narendra Modi government.<sup>34</sup> "They thought TMC is on soft mud so let's uproot them. When the mud's soft, even rats try pushing through. But remember, Trinamool Congress stands firm on fertile soil, we don't get rattled by rats. We fight against tigers," Mamata said.<sup>35</sup>



Source: The Indian Express<sup>36</sup>

32. "Trinamool MP Arrest: BJP office attacked, CRPF-RAF deployed", Web India 123, Jan 3, 2017, <http://news.webindia123.com/news/Articles/India/20170103/3026072.html>. (Accessed Feb. 21, 2017).

33. Ibid.

34. Sougata Mukhopadhyay, "With Rude Remarks Against PM, TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee Hits New Low", Battle of the States, Jan. 11, 2017, <http://www.news18.com/news/india/trinamool-congress-mp-kalyan-banerjee-hits-a-new-political-low-note-1334436.html>. (Accessed Feb. 24, 2017).

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

- Her undemocratic temperament and oppressive nature finally came into light with her government annihilating constitutional guarantees such as freedom of speech by banning the holding of meetings and organising rallies. Despite the fact that no threat was apprehended, RSS was denied permission to organise the rally on bleak grounds, that was expected to be addressed by Sarsanghchalak Dr. Mohan Rao Bhagwat.<sup>37</sup> The rally was held only after the intervention of Kolkata High Court. The simple fact that she was the Chief Minister of the state, led her to believe, that she could dictate anything based on her whims and fancies.
- A seminar ‘The Saga of Balochistan and Kashmir’ has been denied permission by the reputed Calcutta Club due to alleged pressures from the West Bengal state administration and the Kolkata Police. The event which was scheduled for January 7, 2017 at the Calcutta Club was scrapped at the last moment by the club authorities citing ‘unavoidable circumstances’.<sup>38</sup> Criticising the West Bengal government for the ban on the event, author Tarek Fatah wrote on Twitter, “*Afraid of Islamists, Mamata government forces cancellation of Tarek Fatah’s talk on Balochistan.*”<sup>39</sup>
- Holding of ‘*Sansad Mela*’ for issuing Adhaar card, passport and other administrative documents for the common people by Babul Supriyo, Union Home Minister was denied by the Mayor of Asansol Municipal Corporation on insignificant grounds but later cleared by Kolkata High Court.<sup>40</sup>

## APPEASEMENT POLICY

Pro-Muslim approach of Mamata’s government in these six years brings into purview the large scale violence and destruction. The instigation of riots by Muslim minority in six years with due support of Banerjee has further transformed West Bengal into a ‘Waste-Bengal’ by infesting the state with Islamic fundamentalists which can only have a draconian

37. Arkamoy Majumdar, “RSS Not Opposed To Other Faiths, Says Mohan Bhagwat At Kolkata Rally”, Livemint, Jan. 15, 2017, <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/kqkoEZcJX2qZ8Oc15U7KDL/RSS-not-%20opposed-to-%20other-faiths-%20says-Mohan-%20Bhagwat-at-%20Kolka.html>. (Accessed Feb. 2, 2017).

38. Indrajit Kindu, “Kashmir Event Banned At Prestigious Calcutta Club Due To Kolkata Police Pressure”, India Today, Jan. 5, 2017, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/exclusive-kashmir-event-banned-calcutta-club-kolkata-police/1/850009.html>. (Accessed Feb. 9, 2017).

39. Ibid.

40. Manogiya Loiwal, “Asansol Mayor Denies Babul Supriyo Permission To Hold Sansad Mela Fearing Stampede”, India Today, Jan. 11, 2017, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/asansol-mayor-babul-supriyo-sansad-mela-calcutta-high-court-stampede-fear/1/855283.html>. (Accessed Feb. 9, 2017).



effect on Bengal.<sup>41</sup> Her vote bank politics has turned Bengal into a center of anti-national activities. West Bengal is a reminder to the entire nation that appeasement politics results in only one outcome – rise of Islamic radicalism, separatism and complete break-down of law and order.

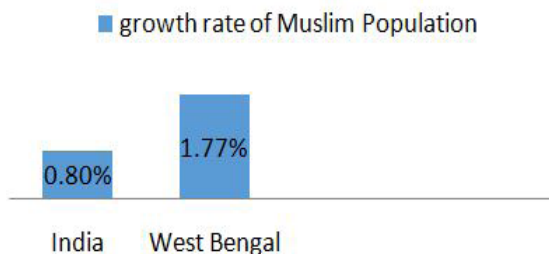
Tracing the years of Banerjee’s government will bring into forefront her pro-minority actions as per her appeasement policy and not due to any genuine approach towards them.

According to the 2011 census, the 2.4 crore Muslims of West Bengal constitute 27.01 % of the state’s population. The alarming fact is that while during the same period the Muslim population across the country increased by 0.8%, in West Bengal the growth rate of Muslims was much higher at 1.77%.<sup>42</sup>



*Mamta Banerjee offering Namaz*

## Growth Rate of Muslim Population



*Source: Census 2011*

In many districts of Bengal, Hindus constitute a minority as in Murshidabad, Hindus only make up with 33.21 % of the population.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, in Malda, Hindus constitute 47.99 % of the population and 49.31 % in North Dinajpur making the asymmetrical spread of Bengal’s population by religion, the only thing constant in West Bengal.<sup>28</sup> Mamata made her communal politics the agenda of the state. Fascist ideology tied with communal politics made her a unique communal figurehead betraying democratic principles and secular politics. Tracing years of Banerjee’s government will bring into forefront her

41. Suvrajyoti Gupta, “Can Hindutva Re-establish itself in West Bengal politics?”, Swarajya, Dec. 30, 2016, <https://swarajyamag.com/politics/can-hindutva-re-establish-itself-in-west-bengal-politics>. (Accessed Feb. 10, 2017).

42. <http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-common/CensusDataSummary.html> (Accessed Feb. 7, 2017).

43. Govt of India, “WBSMB : Population Details” 2017, Wbagrimarketingboard.Gov.In. [http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population\\_murshidabad.htm](http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population_murshidabad.htm). (Accessed Feb. 7, 2017).

pro-minority actions as per her appeasement policy and not due to any genuine approach towards them. Some of the glaring instances of her appeasement policy are as follows:

- Taslima Nasreen, a Bangladeshi born novelist, was not allowed to enter in West Bengal to appease Muslim fundamentalists. Mamata banned publication of Tasleema Nasreen's book for her anti-Muslim approach. A victim of vote bank politics, she also stopped the broadcast of Taslima's TV serial to appease Muslims fundamentalists.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, Mamata has shared dais with the fundamentalist, Maulana Nurur Rehman Barkati, cleric of Tipu Sultan Mosque, who is known for his anti-secular activities and speeches and had issued a fatwa to kill Taslima Narseen.



*Mamata Banerjee with Nurur Rahman Barkati*

44. "Mamta Banerjee turned out harsher than Left in my case", The Indian Express, Jan. 22, 2017, <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/mamata-banerjee-turned-out-harsher-than-left-in-my-case-taslima-nasreen-4486028/> (Accessed Feb 18, 2017).



- The same cleric, Syed Mohammad Nurur Rahman Barkati, issued a fatwa against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing him of ‘bluffing’ the people through demonetisation. Barkati delivered a speech at a meeting, chaired by the ruling TMC MP, Idris Ali, in the Kolkata Press Club. A follower of Osama Bin Laden, Barkati, called PM Modi ‘communal’ and Mamata Banerjee, the figure of ‘Communal Harmony’<sup>45</sup>.



*TMC MP, Idris Ali with Barkati, at meeting in the Kolkata Press Club*

- For four consecutive years, 300 Hindu families of a village in the Birbhum district were denied permission to organise Durga puja by her government just because 25-odd Muslim families in that village would be offended!<sup>46</sup> What other rights of majority

### *Fatwa by Barkati:*

**“CUT OFF PM NARENDRA MODI’S BEARD, SHAVE HIS HEAD, & SMEAR HIM WITH BLACK INK”.**

- can be sustained when right to worship their deities, which is an integral part of their fundamental right to practice their religion, has been denied to them.
- The recent incident in Birbhum district where Muslims destroyed Hanuman temple and the idol was thrown outside in Bengal is an instance of Muslim fundamentalists’ intention of turning Bengal into

45. “Muslim Cleric Close To TMC Issues Fatwa Against Narendra Modi”, The Hindu Business Line, Jan. 7, 2017, <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/muslim-cleric-close-to-tmc-issue-fatwa/article9466268.ece>. (Accessed Feb. 9, 2017).

46. Jaideep Majumdar, “West Bengal is turning into communal tinder box, thanks to Mamata Banerjee”, Swarajya, Dec. 22, 2016, <https://swarajyamag.com/politics/west-bengal-is-turning-into-a-communal-tinderbox-thanks-to-mamata-banerjee>. (Accessed Feb. 21, 2017).

an Islamic ghetto. Law took a beating when police in Mayureswar Police Station refused to register an FIR, falling prey to Mamata's minority appeasement.<sup>47</sup> The ruling party, local administration and police are working jointly according to Islamist dictums under the incredible Islamic indulgence and appeasement by West Bengal government.<sup>48</sup>

Hindus whether alive or dead, are threatened all through their earthly existence in West Bengal. In Arjunpur, Hindu families faced opposition for cremating dead Biren Pal and were not allowed to use 300-year-old crematorium. They were threatened by bombs to stop proceedings. As one resident claims *"After 300 years, we are told cremations will not be allowed, local authorities propose a cremation ground 15 km away. Police also scared to give back land to Hindus."*<sup>49</sup>

- West Bengal is being Islamised at breakneck speed under Mamata Banerjee. The new appeasement propensity sabotages the core of Bengali culture and civilisation by targeting the state's education system. The original Bengali word for rainbow, 'Ramdhonu' (Bow of Ram) has been replaced with 'Rangdhonu' (Bow of Colours) by Government of West Bengal in Standard VII Bengali language school textbooks on 'Environment and Science', as 'Ram' is



*Hanuman idol thrown on road side after destroying the temple at Birbhum<sup>50</sup>*

47. Anand, "Hanuman Temple destroyed", Satyavijayi, May 16, 2016, <https://satyavijayi.com/hanuman-temple-destroyed-idol-thrown-road-bengal-no-fir-registered/> (Accessed Feb. 24, 2017).

48. Upendra Bharti, "Bajrangbali Temple Destroyed By Muslims near Mayureswar", Struggle for Hindu Existence, May 14, 2016, <https://hinduexistence.org/2016/05/14/bajrangbali-temple-destroyed-by-muslims-near-mayureswar-hindus-protesting-in-birbhum-wb/>. (Accessed Feb. 29, 2017).

49. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBkHZOQjN1o>. (Accessed Feb. 23, 2017).

50. <https://hinduexistence.org/2016/05/14/bajrangbali-temple-destroyed-by-muslims-near-mayureswar-hindus-protesting-in-birbhum-wb/html>

## SEMINAR ON WEST BENGAL: AN INITIATIVE BY INDIA POLICY FOUNDATION

India Policy Foundation (IPF) had organised a National Seminar on West Bengal, ‘Democracy, Violence and the State’, at the Constitutional Club, New Delhi on January 21, 2017. In the seminar, the eminent speakers were Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Sh. Kiren Rijiju, Lok Sabha MP from New Delhi Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi, Col. Diptanshu Chaudhury and senior journalist Sh. Ashok Malik. In that seminar, many victims of communal riots in West Bengal were also present to share their horrible experiences of those riots. On this occasion, the eminent guests also released a booklet, “Mini Direct Action in Bengal” prepared by India Policy Foundation. This research work was basically focused on unconstitutional, undemocratic and appeasement policies of Mamta Banerjee government in West Bengal and its growing anti-Hindu tendency.

### MINI DIRECT ACTION IN WEST BENGAL

*Turning West Bengal into a Laboratory of Communalism*



भारत नीति प्रतिष्ठान  
INDIA POLICY FOUNDATION





*Victims of the Communal riots (Front row) in West Bengal at the Seminar organised by IPF*

Speaking on the occasion honorary director of IPF Prof. Rakesh Sinha made a point that when ideological politics took a back seat, politics of personality (cult) and politics of identity took over and exactly that was what was happening in West Bengal. There was a deterioration on ideological politics after 1970-1980, politics of cult and identity became important. Prof. Rakesh Sinha further stated that Mamata Banerjee had been able to win election in West Bengal but she did not have any road map for the state and its people and she was adopting the policies of Hitler and Mussolini. Prof. Sinha recollected that at the time of the great Kolkata killing that was instigated by M.A. Jinnah, neither J.L. Nehru nor M.K. Gandhiji was bothered to visit the victims and West Bengal had been facing similar environment presently where Hindus were threatened.

Speaking on that occasion, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Sh. Kiren Rijiju said that situation was very sensitive and alarming in West Bengal. He opined that where ever Left Front government ruled, democracy was erased from there

be it Kerala, West Bengal and even Tripura. He mentioned that the problem was not only that the country was impacted from outside but also from inside as successive governments in those states encouraged such elements. He quoted a few people who told him that India would be an Islamic nation in future. He said that our weakness is within us which we need to overcome. According to him, the country would not allow Mamata government to appease one community at the cost of all others and all such designs would be foiled. He claimed that the misinformation about the country was propagated and if the country and Hindus were so intolerant why refugees from across the world were coming to India for shelter which India was giving to them.



*Sh. Kiran Rijju addressing the Seminar*



*Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi with a Victim of the riot at the seminar*

Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi asserted that Bengal is not only of Bengalis but it belongs to the whole country and the present scenario suggests as if it is not a part of India. She talked about demographic change, intolerance, Islamisation, jihadism, infiltration and genocide which called for action. The demographic change which altered population of one community further changed thought process and the root cause behind this was Jihadism as she asserted “the problem is not Islamisation, but jihadism.”

Col. Diptanshu Chaudhury said that things in the state were going out of hand. Unofficially, Muslim population in the state was somewhere 34% while as per 2011 census



*Sh. Ashok Malik addressing the Seminar*

it was somewhere 27%. There was 14% increase in minority population in West Bengal. More than 4 crore Muslim infiltrators were living in India while official number was just 2 crores.

Senior journalist Sh. Ashok Malik said that the number of Jihadi elements crossing over to border was due to Bangladesh government acting tough on Jihadies but the same thing was not happening in India rather Jihadies in West Bengal were pampered. Ghulam Ali was not allowed by the Shiv Sena to perform in India but Mamata Banerjee government organised his programme from minority department's expenses which was alarming.

Total six victims from West Bengal were present in the seminar. One out of six victims narrated the grim picture of

horrifying oppression they faced in Bengal. To our utter shock, the victim brought into notice how they were not allowed to come to Delhi because of the fear that they would narrate their agonising story and world would come to know about the mis-happenings taking place in the state. He also said that media was under Banerjee's effect as they came to record incidents, but nothing was shown in television, thus further shattering their hopes. The riot victims were given cheques amounting to Rs 35000, but the cheques were distributed only among Muslims. He further added how after riots, Hindu girls including minors were taken away for exploitation and returned back only after few hours. He also stated that the mob was hoisting Pakistan's flag and recited slogan in its favour. The whole incident told by him and other victims were horrifying.

In conclusion, all speakers on the occasion were of the view that the problem of West Bengal was not the problem of the Bengalis only but it was the problem of the entire country. It was also agreed upon that due to certain internal weakness such kinds of problems were emerging in the country.



claimed to upset Muslims.<sup>51</sup> Further, one of the colours of ‘*Rongdhenu*’, ‘*Aakash*’, meaning sky blue, has been replaced with ‘*Aasmani*’, an Urdu word.<sup>52</sup>

- To hinder the celebrations of Saraswati puja in schools, Muslims sought permission to celebrate Nabi Diwas in schools. Without any prior permission, Islamic fundamental groups and students from Howrah district forcefully entered the school campus and celebrated “Nabi Diwas” on the school premises to mark the birth of Prophet Mohammad. Muslim students forcibly set up a stage inside the school premises and vitiated the atmosphere. The school was then shut down by the District Inspector of Schools (Secondary Education) in Howrah, who cited an “ongoing administrative problem” as the cause. School has remained under lockdown for the last few months and Saraswati Puja celebrations had not been allowed.<sup>53</sup>



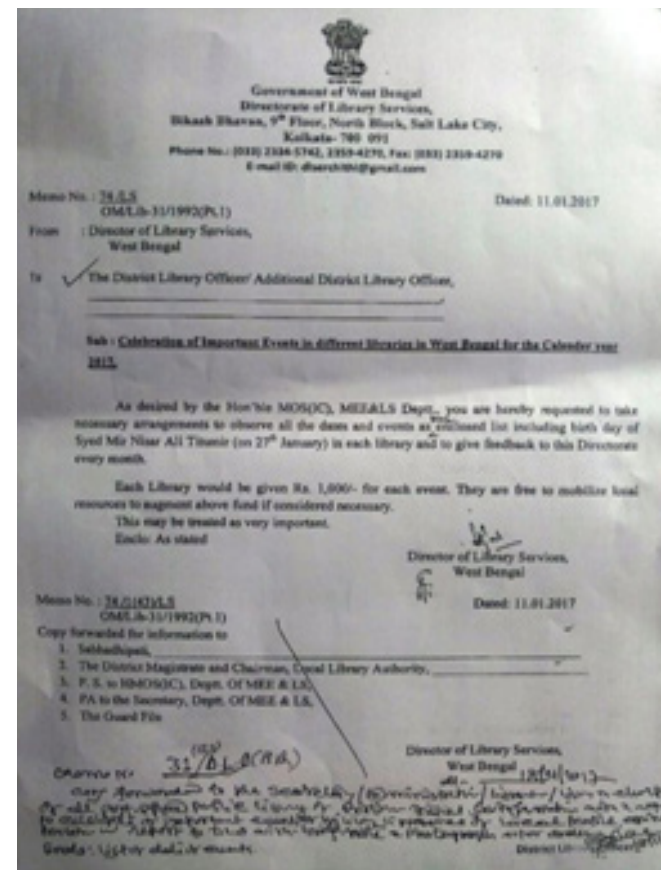
*Media Reporting a crematorium being used as graveyard (Source: News X)*



*The Tehatta High School was closed on Nov 29.  
Source: Subham Dutta/Indian Express*

51. “Islamisation of Education shows where West Bengal is headed”, Hindupost, Jan. 13, 2017, <http://www.hindupost.in/news/islamization-education-shows-west-bengal-headed/> (Accessed Feb. 24, 2017).
52. Manas Gupta, “Did Bengal Government Change Name Of Ram In Bengali Word For Rainbow From School Textbooks?”, Topyaps, Jan. 12, 2017 <http://topyaps.com/bengal-government-ramdhonu>. (Accessed Feb. 17 2017).
53. “School closed Bengal”, Swarajya, Feb. 1, 2017, <https://swarajyamag.com/insta/school-closed-in-bengal-after-islamists-forcefully-celebrate-nabi-diwass-on-premises-vandalise-property> (Accessed Feb. 17, 2017).

- Without taking any action against the communal flare, Banerjee more recently on 11 January, 2017 gave order to celebrate Nabi Diwas in libraries. She made it mandatory for government libraries across the state to celebrate the day.<sup>54</sup>
- Her new vision for appeasement is to introduce Urdu language, establish more Muslim Universities and Colleges, implementation of the recommendation of Sachar Committee, special budgetary provision for technical education to madrasas.<sup>55</sup> She has made Urdu the second official language in 12 districts of the state which have 10% of the Muslim population. During her regime, Kolkata-based Aalia Madarsa has been given status of Arabic and Persian University. West Bengal is the only state in the country where over 2 lakh Imams and Muazzims are given Rs 7000 to Rs 10000 as salary from the government exchequer.
- The budget passed for the fiscal year 2017-18 by government of Mamata Banerjee has decided to allocate larger amount of money to minority affairs and madrasa education. It accounts for sum of Rs 2,815 crore which is more than its combined expenditure on large industries, small and medium enterprises, Tourism and Information Technology sector which accounts for much lower at Rs 2,154 crore for the 2017-18 fiscal year. The policy of accommodating and pleasing the Muslim vote bank is slowly pushing West Bengal into dangerous lacuna of satanic *salafi-jihadism*. The large amount public funding of madrasas is leading to the proliferation of Mullahs who have created their mini Islamic states within Bengal and have turned the Hindu



Government order to celebrate birthday of Syed Mir Nisar Ali Titumir in Govt. libraries of the state

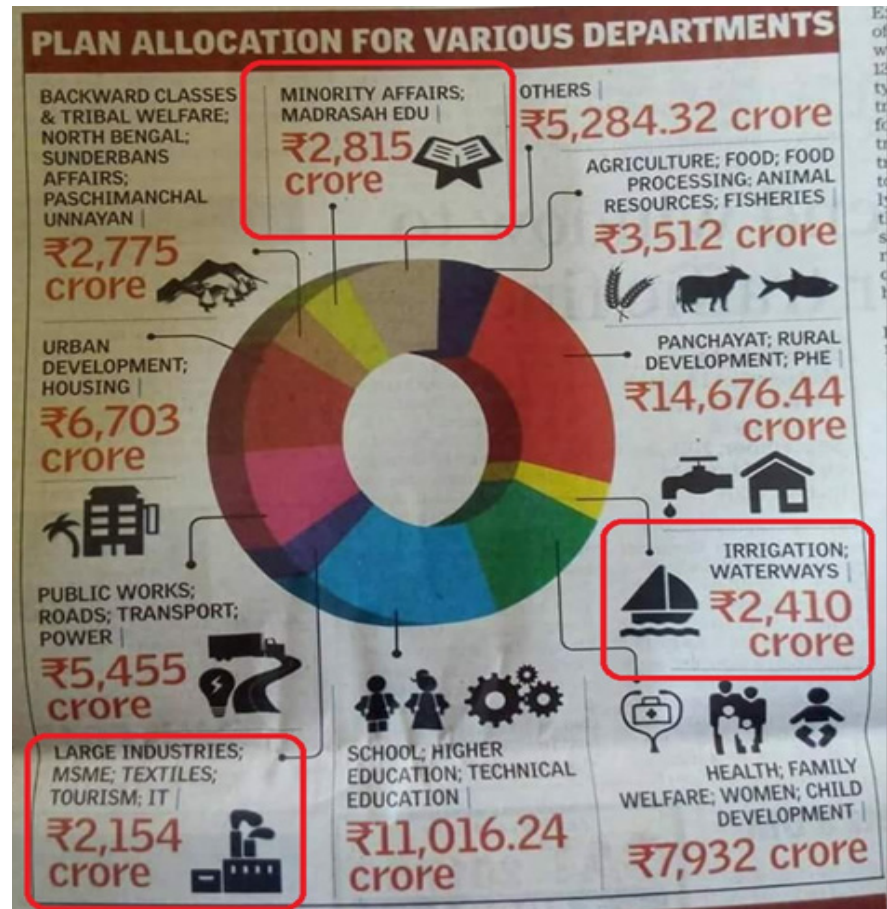
54. Indrajit Kundu, “New controversy in West Bengal...”, India Today, Feb. 15, 2017, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/controversy-west-bengal-govt-order-nabi-diwas-libraries/1/883762.html>. (Accessed Feb. 19, 2017).

55. Bijoy Menon, “Mamta’s Token of .....gain”, Panorama, Jan. 2016, <http://www.easternpanorama.in/index.php/music/155-2016/january-2016/3179-january-2016-politics-4> (Accessed Feb. 27, 2017)



population into second class citizens. The Hindus, minority class in real sense, are the ordinary citizens who do not have the luxury of living in their own paradise-turned into hell.<sup>56</sup>

- Mamata Banerjee has been adopting every mean to woo Muslims in the state. She gave reservation to Muslims by implementing Rangnath Mishra Commission report which recommended 10% reservation for Muslims and 5% for other minorities in government jobs.
- Her pro-minority stand has further taken series of her pretensions of development drives to uplift the minority community in Bengal. In 2012, Banerjee blatantly boasted that West Bengal scores highest in granting scholarship to minority Muslims in the country. Interestingly, scholarship grant included offering honorarium of Rs 2,500 for mosque imams and Rs 1,000 for muezzins of the 32,000 mosques through the state Waqf Board<sup>58</sup>. The grant was later stopped after the Calcutta High Court intervened in *Bharatiya Janata Party & Anr. vs. The State of West Bengal & Ors*, on 2 September, 2013 by declaring



Plan Allocation for various department in West Bengal  
Source: thelotpot.com

56. "Health Ministry takes a progressive...health", Swarajya, Feb. 21, 2017, <https://swarajyamag.com/insta/health-ministry-takes-a-progressive-view-in-its-resource-material-on-adolescent-health>. (Accessed Feb. 22, 2017).

57. "Shocking Muslim Appeasement", Thelotpot, Feb. 13, 2017, <http://www.thelotpot.com/shocking-muslim-appeasement-by-mamata-banerjee-see-what-she-did-in-the-budget/html> (Accessed Feb. 25, 2017).

58. Jaideep Mazumdar, "West Bengal is turning into communal tinder box, thanks to Mamta Banerjee", Swarajya, Dec. 22, 2016, <https://swarajyamag.com/politics/west-bengal-is-turning-into-a-communal-tinderbox-thanks-to-mamata-banerjee>. (Accessed Feb. 21, 2017).

that the monthly allowances given to imams and muezzins by the West Bengal government was unconstitutional<sup>59</sup>. It said, “*it is well settled that the State cannot patronise or favour any particular religion. Secularism is part of the basic structure of our Constitution. The State, therefore, cannot identify itself with or favour any particular religion. The State is under an obligation to offer equal treatment to members of all the religions.*”<sup>60</sup>

- The divisive potential of the appeasement policy of the Mamata Banerjee government has reflected clearly in its educational policy. West Bengal agriculture minister Moly Ghatak announced in Asansol to give special aid to Muslim schools. Primary schools would get Rs 4.25 lakh each and high schools would get Rs 11 lakh each. How this policy of discrimination among children is going to strengthen secularism?



*Student activists shouting slogan against the state during a protest rally<sup>61</sup>*

- Her government further announced that nearly Rs. 82 crores will be given as loan and another Rs. 122 crores as stipend to meritorious minority students. Loans and stipend will be provided through the West Bengal Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (WBMDFC).<sup>62</sup>

59. Soudhriti Bhabani, “Mamta Bnaerjee’s Minority Appeasement Draws Flak from Right, Left and Centre”, India Today, Jan 28, 2016, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/mamata-banerjees-minority-appeasement-draws-flak-from-right-left-and-centre/1/581364.html> ( Accessed Feb. 15, 2017).

60. “Mamata’s Allowance to Imams Unconstitutional, Rules Calcutta HC”. Firstpost, Sept. 3, 2013, <http://www.firstpost.com/politics/mamatas-allowance-to-imams-unconstitutional-rules-calcutta-hc-1080409.html> (Accessed Feb. 11, 2017).

61. <http://www.gettyimages.in/detail/news-photo/student-activists-of-akhil-bharatiya-vidyarthi-parishad-the-news-photo/181911912#student-activists-of-akhil-bharatiya-vidyarthi-parishad-the-student-picture-id181911912>

62. “Mamta announces slew of sops for minorities”, The Hindu, July 30, 2011, <http://www.easternpanorama.in/index.php/music/155-2016/january-2016/3179-january-2016-politics-4> .(Accessed Feb. 26, 2017)

- In her desperate need for votes, since 2011 Banerjee has given scholarship to 40 lakh minority students amounting to Rs 2,350 crore. Apart from taking pseudo stand in improvement of minority education, she also disbursed loans to 4.99 lakh unemployed youths amounting to Rs 880 crores since 2011. Her hypocritical moves for the sake of development have left half of the Bengal in state of stiffness. With this waywardness in progress, in last five years more than 3000 boundary walls of public graveyard have been constructed. With the objective to focus more on development of minorities in Hill Region, ‘The West Bengal Paharia Minorities Development Board’ has been established and Haj centres have been opened in every district of the state.
- West Bengal is gripped with the issues of high unemployment rates, poverty and rampant illegal immigration. But Mamata Banerjee has her own bizarre way of handling it. At a time when normal employment exchanges are unable to provide job opportunities to the people, her government has introduced ‘Minority Employment Exchange’ targeting a specific community for vote politics only.
- Under her scheme, Nijo Griha Nijo Bhumi Prakalpa, which aims at giving free land to landless and homeless families in the rural Bengal, her government also started giving free land to ‘homeless, landless imams’ so as to appease them to increase her votes. According to the Chief Minister, the Kolkata Municipal Corporation – city civic body - will build 5,000 homes for minorities while the State Government will initiate steps to build 50,000 homes for minorities.<sup>63</sup>



*Mamata Banerjee with Siddiquillah Chowdhury, State General Secretary of Jamiat-Ulema-e-Hind*

63. Ibid.



- Mamata made no efforts to imbibe any progressive or secular policy in her governance. Banerjee's alliance with the Jamiat-Ulema-e-Hind, giving subsidies to Imams, a general encouragement to burqa, Shariat Courts, Haj towers and other inducements to Islamist politics clearly gives hollow picture of her ulterior motives.<sup>64</sup>
- Turning a blind eye to her own faults cannot neglect the omission of her administration. The documentary evidence of TMC's Rajya Sabha member Ahmed Hassan Imran proves his direct role in the communal violence that took place in Canning, South 24 Parganas district in 2013. Despite being aware of this information, Mamata Banerjee nominated Ahmed Hassan Imran, who is also one of the founders of the banned SIMI to Rajya Sabha in Feb 2014.<sup>65</sup>
- Islamist mobs have been humiliating and assaulting the already demoralised state police. The mobs do not have fear of the police, BSF, and definitely not of the Government. The mob of Muslims 'torched two police jeeps, assaulted cops, vandalised and laid siege to a police station in Birbhum's Mayureswar, prompting officers to flee.' Anyone who does not adhere to Banerjee's politics has to pay for it which otherwise can take a toll on their lives. In the past years, the police have come under attack several times in Birbhum, causing the death of one officer in 2014. District police sources said



*Mamata Banerjee with Ahmed Hassan Imran*

64. Upananda Bramachari, "Mamata Banerjee Nominates Rajya Sabha Seat In WB", Struggle For Hindu Existence, Jan. 22, 2014, <https://hinduexistence.org/2014/01/23/mamata-banerjee-nominates-a-hard-core-simi-man-and-fundamental-editor-for-a-rajya-sabha-seat-in-wb-tmc-is-too-dangerous-for-the-existence-of-hindus-in-west-bengal/html>. (Accessed Feb. 28, 2017).

65. "Mamta Banerjee has West Bengal", Hindupost, Jan. 18, 2016, <http://www.hindupost.in/news/mamta-banerjee-has-given-free-reign-to-islamists-in-west-bengal/> (Accessed Feb. 25, 2017).

the force had lost its morale because of alleged political backing enjoyed by the attackers and resistance to action.<sup>66</sup>

- West Bengal has also become a safe haven for extremists from Bangladesh. The land has now become a wasteland, accommodating hundreds of Jamiat-e-Islami leaders and activists who are accused of heinous crimes like killings of secularists who want to topple the Government in neighboring Bangladesh and carve out a “Greater” Bangladesh by annexing part of West Bengal. Bloggers have also taken shelter in West Bengal.<sup>67</sup>
- In another instance, a Madrasa headmaster, Kazi Masum Akhtar, was thrashed and banned from entering the premises of Talpukur Aara High Madrasa for teaching the National Anthem to his Muslim students.<sup>68</sup>
- Banerjee has gone so far in her Muslim appeasement that she publicly recited the *Kalima Shahadat*, the Islamic conversion prayer, in front of an audience of *imams*. She approved and validated the academic degrees of 10,000 previously unrecognised Saudi-funded and controlled madrasas, honorariums for imams and an exclusive Islamic township. Banerjee called for the establishment of Muslim medical, technical and nursing schools with special subsidies for Muslim students, as well as Muslim-only hospitals. She has favored Muslims to the extent of distributing free bicycles, rail passes to female Muslim students and laptops to Muslim boys.<sup>69</sup>



*Bobby Hakim, Minister for Municipal Affairs described his own constituency area as “Mini Pakistan” (Dawn, April 29, 2016)*



*Kazi Masum Akhtar*

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

68. “Madrasa Headmaster Thrashed For Teaching His Students The National Anthem”, Indiatvnews, Jan. 4, 2016, <http://www.indiatvnews.com/news/india/madrasa-headmaster-beaten-up-for-national-anthem-56824.html>. (Accessed Feb. 27, 2017).

69. Janet Levy, “The Muslim Takeover Of West Bengal”, American thinker, Feb. 22, 2015, [http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2015/02/the\\_muslim\\_takeover\\_of\\_west\\_bengal](http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2015/02/the_muslim_takeover_of_west_bengal). (Accessed Feb. 28, 2017).

## RIOTS IN WEST BENGAL DURING MAMATA BANERJEE REGIME

The history of Mamata Banerjee's rule is the narrative of anti-Hindu communal riots with the state playing the role of pro-rioters. Her empathy for communalists made anti-social elements fearless, increasing the intensity and occurrences of communal violence and riots associated with them. West Bengal has seen nearly 40 massive communal riots that have taken place after Mamata Banerjee became Chief Minister of West Bengal. The attacks on Hindus have been mostly unprovoked ones and with the sinister motive of driving away Hindus from their hearth and homes with the intention of taking their livelihoods.<sup>70</sup>



*Mamata Banerjee offering prayer along with Muslim clerics<sup>71</sup>*

70. Jaideep Mazumdar, "West Bengal is turning into communal tinder box, thanks to Mamata Banerjee", Swarajya, Dec. 22, 2016, <https://swarajyamag.com/politics/west-bengal-is-turning-into-a-communal-tinderbox-thanks-to-mamata-banerjee>.(Accessed Feb. 21, 2017).

71. <https://hinduexistence.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/what-is-in-her-islamic-mind.jpg>.



Following riots have taken place in the recent years of Mamata Banerjee's tenure as a Chief Minister of West Bengal:

## **DHULAGARH RIOTS, 2016**

Communal riot broke out in a village at Howrah's Dhulagarh area in December 2016 when Muslims in lieu of celebrating Eid-e-Milad (the birthday of Prophet Mohammed) came out with a procession along with loudspeakers blaring Hindi film music on 13 December. The procession on 13th of December was a deliberate attempt to sabotage the Margashirsha Purnima which Hindus were celebrating whereas Prophet's Birthday was on 12<sup>th</sup> of December.<sup>72</sup>

The riot began when Hindus at the village requested those in the procession to lower the volume of the loudspeaker since the music was interfering with some rituals. This instigated a section of those in the procession and they started attacking Hindu homes and shops. According to official estimates, rioting continued for three to four more days, resulting in



*Dhulagarh Riots*

72. Ibid.



hundreds of houses and shops being completely or partially damaged or gutted.<sup>73</sup> According to a report in the DNA newspaper, local residents claim that they had to flee with their children and elderly family members as soon as the mob hurled country-made bombs at their houses.<sup>74</sup>

Mamata Banerjee chided the media for asking questions regarding any such attacks in the Howrah district. The state government imposed a non-bailable offence against three employees of the TV channel Zee News under Section 153A (promoting enmity) of the Indian Penal Code.<sup>75,76</sup> As many as 150 locals were killed in the attack with several others being injured.<sup>77</sup> While the Hindus remain homeless and in suffering, the State Government denies the occurrence of any incident of violence.



*People's houses were targeted in Dhulagarh.*

*Image courtesy: Twitter/@Leopard212*

Despite frantic cries of help from the victims of the riots, no defensive or administrative assistance came from Kolkata. It was difficult to say whether the administrative lapse was an offence of commission or omission as they remained quiet for a considerable period of time, throwing the village into a state of anarchy.<sup>78</sup> The state government barred the entry of

73. Swati Sengupta, "The Truth Behind The Riots In Bengal That The Media Doesn't Report", Huffington Post, Dec. 27, 2016, India. <http://www.huffingtonpost.in/2016/12/26/the-truth-behind-the-riots-in-bengal-that-the-media-doesnt-repo/>. (Accessed Feb. 13, 2017).

74. "Dhulagarh Riots: West Bengal Town On The Boil After Communal Violence", Firstpost, Dec. 20, 2016, <http://www.firstpost.com/india/dhulagarh-riots-west-bengaltown-on-the-boil-after-communal-violence-3177608.html>. (Accessed Feb. 22, 2017).

75. Ibid.

76. "Mamata Banerjee Denies Riot In Dhulagarh, Blames Social Media", The Indian Express, Dec. 30, 2016, <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/mamata-banerjee-denies-riot-in-dhulagarh-blames-social-media-4451970/>. (Accessed Feb. 19, 2017).

77. Animesh Pandey, "Dhulagarh Riots: Because When Hindus Are Killed, Riots Aren't Riots", RightLog.in, Dec. 22, 2016, <http://www.thefrustratedindian.com/2016/12/mamata-burning-bengal-dhulagarh-riots/>. (Accessed Feb. 26, 2017).

78. "BJP Team Stopped By WB Police From Entering Violence-Hit Area", PTI, Dec. 26, 2016, [http://www.ptinews.com/news/8220521\\_BJP-team-stopped-by-WB-police-from-entering-violence-hit-area](http://www.ptinews.com/news/8220521_BJP-team-stopped-by-WB-police-from-entering-violence-hit-area). (Accessed Feb. 26, 2017).

opposing political parties and media into the riot affected region which professed that the demography of the miscreants was being favoured by the ruling party for its vote bank.

A senior government official said that strict actions have been taken against those involved in the Dhulagarh incident and a process of giving a compensation of Rs 35,000/- has started.<sup>79</sup> But the pertinent question still looms in the darkness. Why compensation, of course meagre, has been given if no riots had taken place? If the state executive, administration and police had taken appropriate measures, violence of this immense nature could have been avoided.

## KATWA RIOTS, 2016

Lying approximately 165 km from Calcutta, Katwa is a town in the Bardhaman district of West Bengal with Muslims constituting 22.72% of the population.<sup>80</sup> Violence erupted in Katwa in December when a piece of beef had been thrown in the temple of Shani Maharaj. When the villagers reached the Police Station (P.S.) to file an FIR, the police refused to register it by claiming that the dispute was beyond their jurisdiction. Later a minor belonging to the Scheduled Tribe community was beaten up mercilessly for unintentionally entering the burial ground. Katwa Bandh was organised by Hindu Jagaran Manch to protest against these atrocities. The bandh was successful till a planned attack was unleashed on the protestors from a “Beef Meat Shop” which aroused uncontrollable anger among the locals and ensued violence.<sup>81</sup>



*Burnt House in Katwa Riots*

79. “Mob Chanting ‘Pakistan Zindabad’ Burnt My Home: Dhulagarh Riots Victim”, Opindia.Com, Dec. 28, 2016, <http://www.opindia.com/2016/12/mob-chanting-pakistan-zindabad-burnt-my-home-dhulagarh-riots-victim/>. ( Accessed Feb. 26, 2017).

80. Govt of India, “WBSMB : Population Details”. Wbagrimarketingboard.Gov.In., 2017,[http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population\\_murshidabad.htm](http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population_murshidabad.htm). (Accessed Feb. 26, 2017).

81. Upendra Bharti, “Islamists In Bengal Are Attacking Hindus”, Struggle For Hindu Existence, Dec. 15, 2016, <https://hinduexistence.org/2016/12/16/islamists-in-bengal-are-attacking-hindus-in-slightest-chance-courtesy-mamata-banerjee/>. (Accessed Feb. 26, 2017).



## UNPRECEDENTED RESTRICTIONS ON MAA DURGA MURTI IMMERSION, 2016



*Maa Durga Murti Immersion*

West Bengal marred by Mamata's governance and her pro-Muslim approach that finds no way out has resulted in the communal riots during Hindu festivals. Communal riots broke out on October 11 and 12 in 2016 across West Bengal during the Durga Puja and Muharram Tazia procession in 12 places all over the state. With the ulterior motive of creating trouble and intruding the peaceful immersion of Maa Durga, Muslims taking part in Muharram processions attacked Durga Puja Mandaps. In no time, burst of firecrackers were considered as bomb attacks and as a result, swords, daggers, choppers and lathis came out to attack Hindu homes, shops and temples.<sup>82</sup>

The seed was sown by Mamata Banerjee herself when she put a ban on immersion of Goddess Durga idols on Dashami and day after that. The only reason for this interruption was her dirty vote bank politics which let her snatch right of her own people to worship according to rituals. Just because immersion processions would coincide with Muharram procession she wanted immersions to take place before 4 pm on the day of Dashami or two days after that.

The Calcutta High Court intervened and criticised the government and said 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 state government has been irresponsibly brazen in its conduct of being partial to one community, thereby infringing on the fundamental rights of people*

82. “Atleast 12 Communal riots”, Hindu Post, Oct. 14, 2016, <http://www.hindupost.in/news/atleast-12-communal-riots-west-bengal-muharram-durga-puja-tensions/>. (Accessed Feb. 23, 2017).

*worshipping Ma Durga.*” The High Court further warned the state not to mix politics with religion. The intervention took a backseat as the damage was done till then and Mamata’s fatal decision ignited Hindus with anger and discontent which further instigated communal tension between the two communities and resulted in attacks at all the places of processions.<sup>83</sup>

## HAZINAGAR RIOT, 2016

Hazinagar and Halisahar are municipalities in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal constituting a Muslim population of approximately 24.2%.<sup>84</sup> Just as other similar riots, this one was also triggered because of clashes during simultaneous occurrence of two important religious events - Durga puja and Muharram. The minor clashes soon escalated into large-scale communal ones. Communal clashes that broke out in the region resulted in almost 30 houses and numerous shops being



*Hazinagar Riot*

burnt down, as many as four vehicles being set ablaze, resulting in several people being injured, forcing many more to flee their homes. The communal attack was an outcome of a low intensity bomb being allegedly thrown in a Muharram procession, resulting in violence against the Hindus. The clash as a result spread from small area to whole of Hazinagar creating large scale violence including burning and destroying property belonging to each other. The opponent of Hindus defended it by arguing how, the riot were an outcome of the government’s order to stop the immersion of Durga idol as

83. Jaideep Mazumdar, “West Bengal is turning into communal tinder box, thanks to Mamta Banerjee”, *Swarajya*, Dec 22 ,2016, <https://swarajyamag.com/politics/west-bengal-is-turning-into-a-communal-tinderbox-thanks-to-mamata-banerjee>. (Accessed Feb. 21, 2017).

84. Govt of India, “WBSMB : Population Details”. *Wbagrimarketingboard.Gov.In.2017*, [http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population\\_murshidabad.htm](http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population_murshidabad.htm). (Accessed Feb. 22, 2017).



it was coincided with Muharram.<sup>85</sup>The TMC's silence on the riots and the resultant lack of clarity on the part of the state police and administrative officials has further energised the communal elements in both communities.

## ILLUMBAZAR RIOTS, 2016

Clashes between members of the Muslim community and the police broke out in Illumbazar area of Birbhum's district in West Bengal constituting a Muslim population of 45 percent.<sup>86</sup> A controversial Facebook post made by a man against the Prophet after India beat Pakistan in the Asia Cup has sparked communal violence in March 2016, for which he was arrested. The demand to release the accused from police station resulted in ransacking and killing of one person in police firing.<sup>87</sup>

The growing number of mobs attacked the police station and damaged the vehicles forcing the cops to take action against them. The mob apart from damaging police and public vehicles also put up a road blockade at NH-60. According to the police, shots were fired to disperse the unruly mob and one protester named Rezaul Islam, who had been a part of the road blockade, was allegedly hit on the head and died on the spot.<sup>88</sup> In a bid to secure her



*Illumbazar Police Station*

85. Aniruddha Ghoshal, "Homes Ransacked In Communal Violence in Bengal, People Flee", The Indian Express, Oct. 17, 2016, <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/communal-clash-bengal-hazinagar-district-3086824/html>. (Accessed Feb. 20, 2017).

86. Govt of India, "WBSMB : Population Details", Wbagrimarketingboard.Gov.In, 2017, [http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population\\_murshidabad.htm](http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population_murshidabad.htm) (Accessed Feb. 19, 2017).

87. Ayub Dawood, "Facebook Post over.....Match", Scoopwhoop, March 3, 2016, <https://www.scoopwhoop.com/One-Killed-As-Mob-Clashes-With-Police-In-West-Bengals-Birbhum-Over-Facebook-Post/#.czboa76hg>. (Accessed Feb. 23, 2017).

88. Sanjay Pandey, "After Malda....Illumbazar", FirstPost, March 4, 2016, <http://www.firstpost.com/india/after-malda-now-illumbazar-why-police-are-a-soft-target-in-mamata-banerjees-bengal-2656932.html>. (Accessed Feb. 25, 2017).

vote bank, Mamata Banerjee, critiqued the attack by instilling fear in the minds of general public. What has encouraged such huge amount of riot is the lack of administrative actions and state government's lust for power and vote. Had those responsible for the previous violence been promptly and firmly dealt with, the attacks may not have repeated with such alarming frequency.<sup>89</sup>

## KALIACHAK (MALDA) RIOTS, 2016

Kaliachak (Malda) violence brings into account the bigger picture of Islamisation of West Bengal. On January 3, 2016, a fierce riot broke out in Kaliachak, Malda district of West Bengal where Muslims are in majority making up more than 89% of the entire population.<sup>90</sup> The revolt broke out in the last week of December 2015, when Kamlesh Tiwari alleged derogatory comment about Prophet Muhammad as a homosexual.

At the behest of Islamic fundamentalists, a large number of Muslims gathered near Kaliachak taxi stand on January 3, 2016 where they started making provocative speeches so as to instigate the mob. Soon Muslim mobs blocked the national highway and violence took many forms with protesters vandalising public property, torching BSF and public vehicles and attacked Kaliachak police station injuring as many as 30 policemen.<sup>91</sup>



*Fire during Kaliachak Riots*

89. Ibid.

90. Govt of India, "WBSMB : Population Details". Wbagrimarketingboard.Gov.In.2017, [http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population\\_murshidabad.htm](http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population_murshidabad.htm). (Accessed Feb. 17, 2017).

91. Soudhriti Bhabani, "48 hours after riots", India Today, Jan. 6, 2016, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/kaliachak-in-malda-turns-ghost-town-48-hrs-after-violence/1/563443.html> (Accessed Feb. 28, 2017).





*A mob comprising members of the minority community had gone on the rampage in Bengal's Malda district on January 3, which caused large-scale violence*



*Aftermath of Malda riots. (Photo: Twitter)*

The Muslim mob turned towards properties belonging to Hindus and attacked Hindu houses and shops, damaged their properties, looted their belongings, molested Hindu women. Absolute lawlessness loomed all over the area for several hours until huge police force along with RAF were called from district headquarters and deployed in the area. Despite such a large-scale attack on public properties and people in general, Mamata Banerjee maintained silence for days.

Even after West Bengal was seen burning in the riot and slogans like “*Islam Zindabad*”, “*Nara-e-Takbeer*”, and “*Hang Kamlesh Tiwari*” occupied the roads, the incident was declared ‘not-communal’ by state government. Anandabazar Patrika covered the whole incident and described a town silenced by fear as Trinamool Congress workers clashed among themselves, even 24 hours after the violence.<sup>92</sup>

## **NADIA RIOTS, 2015**

Nadia riots were large scale communal riots that broke out in the Kaliganj Block, Nadia district of West Bengal, with Muslims making up 25.5% of the entire population in the district. Four people were killed and as many as eight sustained

92. “Why did Media ...riots”, Scroll.in, Jan. 6, 2016, <https://scroll.in/article/801459/it-was-localised-violence-in-a-crime-prone-area-why-some-newspapers-were-low-key-on-the-malda-violence>. (Accessed Feb. 25, 2017).

injuries during the communal riot between Hindus and Muslims belonging to two villages named Nadia and Juranpur under Kaliganj PS. These riots were the result of communal tensions that were aroused, when a procession was attacked at Juranpur village in Nadia. The attack took place at the annual Dharamraj Mela procession where Hindu community participates as a part of their traditional festival. Under the patronage of ruling TMC party, the violent Muslim mob of the locality attacked at around 3 pm when Hindu devotees passed by a mosque in Juranpur village on their way back. The warring factions fired at each other and even bombs were hurled. Eyewitnesses claimed that the police were very slow and did not take any defensive actions to prevent the riots. The state administration of West Bengal had nothing to say in this regard. TMC as usual maintained its legacy of silence, ostensibly for ‘communal harmony’. Major Bengali media organisations, with few exceptions, have not reported it. This conspiracy of silence has a past.<sup>93</sup>

## USTHI RIOTS, 2015

Violence also erupted in the Usthi village located in the Tehsil of South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal where Muslims make up 56 % of the entire population.<sup>94</sup> Massive attacks were carried out against Bengali Hindus at several places under the jurisdiction of Usthi PS, Mandirbazar PS and Diamond Harbour PS in West Bengal in January 2015.<sup>95</sup> Muslim mobs assaulted Hindus, looted their houses and shops in the alleged presence of State Minister of Minority Affairs Giasuddin Molla who was leading the anti-Hindu mayhem. Moreover, Muslims were being instigated and asked to join the rioting through Masjid loudspeakers.

Giasuddin Molla, the Minority Affairs Minister, WB and TMC leader of the area was certainly responsible for such destruction as he was allegedly guarding all Muslim areas with his pet goons and restraining police to enter into the Muslim villages where anti-socials have already taken position. Police, being mere puppets of the state government started random searching and torturing in Hindu villages.<sup>96</sup>

93. “5 killed...injured”, Struggle For Hindu Existence, May 5, 2015, <https://hinduexistence.org/2015/05/05/5-killed-over-8-injured-in-communal-clashes-in-nadia-district-west-bengal/html> (Accessed Feb. 23, 2017).

94. Abhi Mitra, “Muslims Vandalized Hindu Areas And Business At Usthi In West Bengal With The Help Of State Minister”, Bengalspotlight, Jan. 29, 2015, <http://bengalspotlight.blogspot.in/2015/01/muslims-vandalized-hindu-areas-and.html>. (Accessed Feb. 23, 2017).

95. Govt of India, “WBSMB : Population Details”. Wbagrimarketingboard.Gov.In. 2017 [http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population\\_murshidabad.htm](http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population_murshidabad.htm) (Accessed Feb. 18, 2017).

96. Saswati Sarkar, “Ban on Durga puja”, Bengalspotlight, Nov. 27, 2015, <http://bengalspotlight.blogspot.in/2015/01/muslims-vandalized-hindu-areas-and.html> (Accessed Feb. 28, 2017).



## BURDWAN BLAST CASE, 2014



*Aftermath of Burdwan Blast*

several documents and evidences could be burned and set apart. On arrest, the police recovered some incriminating evidence from the house such as 55 IEDs along with wrist watch dials, SIM cards and tools, which were used to prepare explosive devices. Security agency presupposed that assembling of IEDs indicated a plan to hit an Indian city in a few days.<sup>97</sup> Taliban training videos, maps and books in Arabic, containing communalist propaganda were also discovered. Mamata Banerjee in order to maintain her decorum of playing blame game politics says: *“They (Centre) first said illegal immigrants should be thrown out. Now the Burdwan incident seems a little bit related. When did the man rent the house at Khagragarh? In July, after the Modi government came to power. You let them in, found them a house, allowed them to make explosives and tried to start a riot during the Pujas.”*<sup>99</sup>

In October 2014, a blast occurred in a building in the Khagragarh locality of Burdwan, a district of West Bengal where Muslims made up more than 20 percent of the population.<sup>97</sup> The building was owned by Nurul Hasan Chowdhury, a leader of the Trinumool Congress, with the ground floor of the building being used as a Trinumool Congress party office. When the police officers reached the location, they were prevented from entering the place by two women who threatened to blow up the place. They also tried to delay the invasion so that

97. Govt of India, “WBSMB : Population Details”. Wbagrimarketingboard.Gov.In. 2017, [http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population\\_murshidabad.html](http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population_murshidabad.html). (Accessed Feb. 26, 2017).

98. Debajyoti Chakroborty, “IM men killed making IEDs”, TOI, Oct. 5, 2014, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/IM-men-killed-making-IEDs-in-Trinamool-leaders-house/articleshow/44369811.cms>. (Accessed Feb. 26, 2017).

99. “Burdwanblastcase”, TOI, Nov. 26, 2014, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Burdwan-blast-case-Mamata-Banerjee-sniffs-plot-her-cops-claim-NIAs-terror-reward/articleshow/45278274.cms> (Accessed Feb. 24, 2017)

## CANNING RIOTS, 2013

Canning is the headquarter of Canning subdivision and a town in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal. Muslims in the town make up a majority as they constitute more than 62% of the population of the district.<sup>100</sup> In February 2013, a Muslim Imam returning from a religious ceremony in Jamlata, along with his colleague were intercepted and killed by a gang of way layers in the middle of the night in Naliakhali. According to police sources, the cleric was



*Violence upon Hindus after murder of a Imam by unidentified persons at Canning*

looted of his Rs 1,150,000 in cash and later shot by the unidentified gunmen. As the news of the Imam's death spread, thousands of Muslim mourners gathered around the body assaulting the police officers and the constables who were sent to recover the body. Over 200 Hindu homes were looted and firebombed, hundreds of temples and idols destroyed in the neighbouring villages amid shouts of “*Allah-hu Akbar*”.<sup>101</sup> The terror in villages of Naliakhali, Herobhanga, Gopalpur and Goladogra resulted in the displacement of more than 2,000 people. Incidents of violence were reported from Canning, Jaynagar, Kultali and Basanti police station areas. The Organiser, called the attack ‘a well-organized and

100. Govt of India, “WBSMB : Population Details”. Wbagrimarketingboard.Gov.In.2017 [http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population\\_murshidabad.htm](http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population_murshidabad.htm). (Accessed Feb. 25, 2017).

101. Janet Levy, “The Muslim Takeover Of West Bengal”, *Americanthinker*, Feb. 22, 2015, [http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2015/02/the\\_muslim\\_takeover\\_of\\_west\\_bengal.html](http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2015/02/the_muslim_takeover_of_west_bengal.html). (Accessed Feb. 28, 2017).

meticulously planned attack on Hindus'. In response, Banerjee simply appealed for peace and promised a special probe into the murder case. She also assured necessary actions against the culprits, yet no such steps were taken as it would have alienated her precious Muslim's vote bank.<sup>102</sup>

## LAPSE OF GOVERNANCE IN WEST BENGAL

2011 marked a new era of hope for Bengal with the rise of Trinamool Congress in power with a thumping victory after 34 years of 'Left rule' in Bengal. Mamata Banerjee promised people *poriborton* (change). But to their utter disappointment; all hopes for progress and development have been shattered by Mamata Banerjee and her government. The constitutional machinery in the state has completely broken down due to vote bank appeasement policy of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. The centrality of Mamata Banerjee's politics has been using naked terror, seductive sentiments and conspiracy theories to suppress democratic movements.

The instances of communal aggression and conflict point towards one thing — the administration has completely failed to protect the life and property of its people. The Constitution proudly celebrates liberty, equality and secularism as its key principles but the intellectuals in the country practice selective secularism. Dividing the country into groups of 'majority' and 'minority' based on their religion has become a new trend and the idea of secularism has been associated with minority centric rights due to ulterior political motives. Thus, in the political discourse, the concept of secularism has lost substance and symbolism. The silence of Trinamool Congress on the riots and the resultant lack of clarity on the part of the state police and administrative officials have further instigated the communal elements.<sup>103</sup>

Further, Mamata's approach of handling the media is confounding to say the least. Using the state institutions and machinery to manhandle or threaten the media is tyrannical in character. A democracy should feel ashamed and disgusted

102. "BJP Urges didi ...silence", Indian Express, Dec. 28, 2016, <http://gulfnews.com/news/asia/india/communal-violence-returns-to-haunt-bengal-1.1150036>. (Accessed Feb. 24, 2017).

103. Ajoy Mahaprashasta, "Communal Rioting Lays Bare Volatile Political Ground In Bengal", The Wire, Oct. 20, 2016, <https://thewire.in/74385/communal-rioting-lays-bare-volatile-political-ground-in-bengal/html>. (Accessed Feb. 26, 2017).



at the use of such arbitrary power to curb free voices and opinions. The route taken by the State Government to block the media from its natural domain is autocratic and unwarranted. Attempts to hinder the functioning of media, denying allegations and misusing the state machinery are a few methods employed by the State supremo to obliterate various riots from the memory of the people of West Bengal.

The next question worth reckoning is where does the buck stop? Has the political-executive given full authority to the bureaucrats and the police officials and the lapse is on their end or, has the political executive of West Bengal headed by Mamata Banerjee contained the entire tumbler of power to themselves? How long the persecution of Hindus will take place in their own country? These questions need immediate answers or else the fire of sectarian violence in the state of Bengal shall keep burning.

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