

# MINI DIRECT ACTION IN WEST BENGAL

*Turning West Bengal into a Laboratory of Communalism*



भारत नीति प्रतिष्ठान  
INDIA POLICY FOUNDATION

# MINI DIRECT ACTION IN WEST BENGAL

Turning West Bengal into a Laboratory of Communalism

— Editors —

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॥ प्रदीप्येम जगत् सर्वम् ॥

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# Preface



## Tragedy of Post-Ideological Politics

There is an interesting ideological political development in Indian politics. A dominant stream of political class and political parties has entered a new era which can be characterised as ‘post-ideology’. From the Congress to Trinamul Congress (TMC) and RJD to JD(U) or even the Left or regional parties, all of them are using their unrevised ideological positions as a ritual. They lack a well-articulated social philosophy and economic perspectives that can address the contemporary situation. The goal of power has become the first and last objective. Such a state of politics is dangerous for civil society, as a shift from the politics of appropriateness to politics of opportunism is clearly visible in our political life. There are three elements in the political arena: ideas, individuals, identity. When ideas dominate, political discourse achieves a higher plank and pace of indoctrination gives the society dynamic consciousness. But when individualism combined with identity politics supersedes ideas, politics becomes divisive, intra-party discourse becomes bitter and uncivilized and competitive sycophancy ruins internal democracy. This also lessens parties’ potentialities to galvanize people and lead democratic struggles. In the absence of moral authority, leadership encourages mediocre, unprofessional and untrained people to proliferate.

In such a situation there is often repeated violation of the Constitution, use of undemocratic and fascist methods to suppress dissent and moreover, use of provocative sentiments to polarize people in one’s favour. Such leaders frequently resort to conspiracy theories, confrontationist modes and street politics to safeguard their forte. This is what is happening in West Bengal.

The land of Bankim, Tagore, Bipin Chandra Pal, Subhash Chandra Bose, Col U.N. Mukerji, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Dr. H.C. Mookerjee has been facing a crisis of leadership. For almost three decades, it remained a prisoner of Marxists who pushed the state to the brink of collapse. This gave an opportunity to Mamata Banerjee to emerge as a substitute.

People saw in her a hope for Bengal but this has been completely belied. Neither she has any solution, nor has she been making any honest effort to fight poverty and unemployment. The frequent corrective interventions of the Kolkata High Court expose an ineffective, prejudiced and vindictive state of West Bengal. Mamata has now begun using terror politics and the police to suppress criticism against her and her regime. Her government recently refused permission to an RSS rally in Kolkata. However, the High Court overruled her decision, which is a big slap on her face. She is an enemy of freedom of expression. Communalism is her only social philosophy for consolidating her political position. Frequent riots in West Bengal have created increasing fissures in the civil society of the state. The state machinery feels helpless because of her open encouragement to Muslim fundamentalists. The incidences of Malda and Dhulagarh are an eye opener. These were unprovoked attacks on Hindu households, shops and places of worship. Mohammad Ali Jinnah had called for Direct Action on August 16, 1946, which resulted in killings and maiming of thousands of the Hindus. Jinnah considered violence necessary to undo the fraternity of Bengali society, an evil project in which he succeeded. Mamata's policy is disastrous and Bengali Hindus have been witnessing multitudes of mini-Direct Actions. Politics for short-term gains does long-term damage to the society and nation. But those who crave political power, live and die only for it hardly care for the present and posterity. The only way is to wage a democratic struggle against Mamata to delegitimize her and eventually dislodge her from power.

Last but not the least, the communal riots in the West Bengal have left its victims politically orphaned too. No political leader from the state or of national eminence (except the BJP) has considered it to visit Malda and Dhulagarh. They otherwise leave no chance to rush to the homes of victims of communal riots, to meet victims of unprovoked riots. No one tweeted or spoke in favour of West Bengal's suffering Hindus. This selective sentiment and secularism has also damaged our secular fabric. It has also exposed politicians' hollow sentiments and votebank politics. This shows that there is another source of Mamata's power, which is political pseudo-secularism. This is the tragedy of post-ideological politics. How to end it is a challenge before the civil society of Bengal.

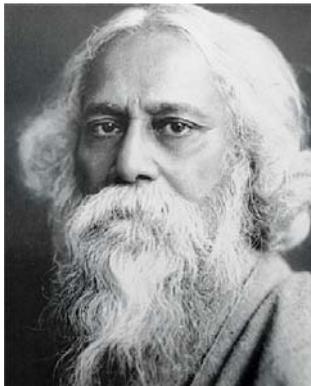
India Policy Foundation's intervention paper *Mini Direct Action in West Bengal* is an effort to highlight the crisis of governance in the state.

January 20, 2017

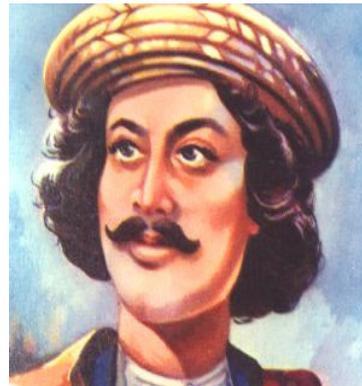
— Rakesh Sinha

## WEST BENGAL: Then and Now

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 fervor, giving the motherland its national identity by producing both the National song and National anthem.<sup>1</sup> The writings, speeches and passion of Bengali intellectuals and reformists such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Rajnarayan Basu, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Rabindranath Tagore, Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Bipin Chandra Pal etc. have been important lessons in India's nationalist thought.



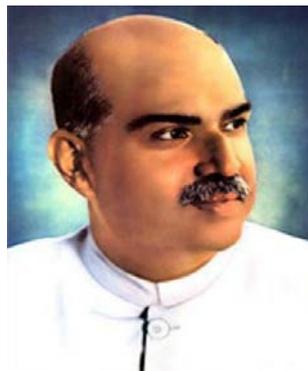
*Rabindranath Tagore*



*Raja Ram Mohan Roy*



*Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay*



*Syama Prasad Mookerjee*



*Bipin Chandra Pal*

- 
1. The National song *Vande Mataram*, composed in by poet-writer Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, was a source of inspiration to the people in their struggle for freedom. The national anthem, *Jana Gana Mana* was written, by Rabindranath Tagore.

However, contemporary West Bengal gives a contrary, dismal picture. 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, being elected to power, 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 they are no different from Trinamool Congress workers. Her communal politics has given birth to a tyranny of minority in the state.

Economically, present day West Bengal accords a vividly stark picture. With the state's overall Below Poverty Line Ratio being 26 per cent and more than 22 per cent of the urban population living below poverty line, West Bengal stands fifth in the poverty charts, just behind Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. 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> Such statistics gave development a negative connotation in Marxist dictionary resulting in unhesitant eulogizing of poverty and glorification of anti development narratives.

The history of world civilisation has revealed how 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. They justify their tyranny, oppressive, vindictive actions by citing their number in the legislatures and support from the masses. This is exactly what happened in West Bengal. Mamata Banerjee, a street fighter, has failed to be a competitive ruler as she lacks vision and agenda. A despotic leader by nature, she betrayed democracy by crossing the oppressive tale of the CPM and is a habitual believer of various conspiracy theories. Recently in Trinamool Congress gathering at Chandpara in North 24-Parganas district, Banerjee charged the Marxists for being hand-in-glove with Congress

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2. Govt of India: Ministry of Labour and Employment,. 2017. "Report On Fifth Annual Employment - Unemployment Survey". Accessed January 19. [http://labourbureau.new.gov.in/UserContent/EUS\\_5th\\_1.pdf](http://labourbureau.new.gov.in/UserContent/EUS_5th_1.pdf), pp. 120.

and BJP in plotting against her. ‘CPI (M) has realised now that it would be impossible for them to return to power in West Bengal and that is why the Marxists have joined hands with the Maoists to kill me to come back to power.’<sup>3</sup>

Banerjee did not even spare the Indian Army as she linked the Army presence in the state to an attempted ‘military coup’.<sup>4</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-storeyed state secretariat, a high-security zone.<sup>5</sup> In response, she stated that the army personnel were taking money from the vehicles which they were not supposed to do. ‘I am vocal against demonetisation and thus this coupe. I am for people. Why aren’t they doing this elsewhere. They are saying Manipur, Assam and Nagaland. Who has cross checked their claims. Manipur and Nagaland are troubled places. Army is already there. Assam it’s their own government. So who knows what the truth is’.<sup>6</sup>



*Indian Army*

Born and brought up in a poor family, investing a larger part of her life in political struggle, no one could ever imagine that her austerity would one day act as a mask to hide her corrupt practices. Various scams in West Bengal exposed the real

3. ET Bureau., 2013. “Mamata Banerjee Alleges Rivals’ Plot To Eliminate Her - The Economic Times”. *The Economic Times*. [http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/mamata-banerjee-alleges-rivals-plot-to-eliminate-her/articleshow/20672867.cms?utm\\_source=c%20ontentofinterest&utm\\_medium=-text&utm\\_campaign=cppst,%20visited%20on%2015-01-](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/mamata-banerjee-alleges-rivals-plot-to-eliminate-her/articleshow/20672867.cms?utm_source=c%20ontentofinterest&utm_medium=-text&utm_campaign=cppst,%20visited%20on%2015-01-)
4. Sarkar, Dibyangshu. 2016. “Cite A Website - Cite This For Me”. *Scroll.In*. <https://scroll.in/latest/823075/i-am-vocal-against-demonetisation-and-thus-this-military-coup-says-mamata-banerjee>.
5. HT Correspondent., 2016. “Mamata To Protest ‘Undemocratic Actions’ Even As Army Rebuts Her Charges”. *Http://Www.Hindustantimes.Com/*. <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/army-rebuts-mamata-charges-says-exercise-done-with-police-coordination/story-dxeVzqDfBON6XuqAe5xnuM.html>.
6. Ghosal, Aniruddha. 2016. “Mamata Banerjee Compares Situation In Bengal To ‘Military Coup’”. *The Indian Express*. <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/mamata-banerjee-army-deployment-nh-2-in-west-bengal-military-coup-4405871/>.

Mamata when her party leaders and members were found involved in scams cheating poor people.<sup>7</sup> In 2013, Trinamool Congress MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay was arrested in connection with INR 60,000 crores Rose Valley chit fund scam.<sup>8</sup> In the same year, Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha MP, Srinjoy Bose, Rajya Sabha MP, Kunal Ghosh, and Minister in State government, Madan Mitra were arrested in connection with INR 2,500 crores Saradha Group financial scandal.<sup>9</sup> In 2014, Enforcement Directorate, probing the Siliguri Jalpaiguri Development Authority (SJDA) scam, summoned Trinamool Minister Gautam Deb for malpractices.<sup>10</sup> As recently as 2016, a sting operation conducted in March revealed eleven leaders of the Trinamool Congress including State Ministers Subrata Mukherjee and Farhad Hakim being allegedly bribed to help a fictitious Chennai-based company get business in the state.<sup>11</sup>

## UNDEMOCRATIC AND OPPRESSIVE ACTIONS:

- Bapi Pal (25) 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>12</sup>

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7. TOI Correspondent,. 2014. “Saradha Chit Fund Scam: Trinamool MP Srinjoy Bose Held - Times Of India”. *The Times Of India*. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Saradha-chit-fund-scam-Trinamool-MP-Srinjoy-Bose-held/articleshow/45235915.cms>. and Correspondent, Special. 2017. “Rose Valley Scam Unfolds After SC Directive”. *The Hindu*. <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/Rose-Valley-scam-unfolds-after-SC-directive/article16984163.ece>. and Agencies, TNN and Rose Bandyopadhyay. 2017. “Rose Valley Chit Fund Scam: CBI Arrests Trinamool Congress MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay; Mamata Banerjee Furious - Times Of India”. *The Times Of India*. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/rose-valley-chit-fund-scam-cbi-arrests-trinamool-congress-mp-sudip-bandyopadhyay/articleshow/56311500.cms>.
  8. Agencies, TNN and Rose Bandyopadhyay. 2017. “Rose Valley Chit Fund Scam: CBI Arrests Trinamool Congress MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay; Mamata Banerjee Furious - Times Of India”. *The Times Of India*. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/rose-valley-chit-fund-scam-cbi-arrests-trinamool-congress-mp-sudip-bandyopadhyay/articleshow/56311500.cms>.
  9. Das, Madhuparna. 2014. “Saradha Scam: Rajya Sabha MP Srinjoy Bose Arrested By CBI”. *The Indian Express*. <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/tmc-rajya-sabha-mp-srinjay-bose-arrested-in-saradha-case/>. and Ghosh, Deepshikha. 2014. “Mamata Banerjee’s Minister Madan Mitra Arrested In Saradha Chit Fund Scam”. *NDTV.Com*. <http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/mamata-banerjees-minister-madan-mitra-arrested-in-saradha-chit-fund-scam-712241>.
  10. Bhattacharya, Pinak Priya and Rohit Khanna. 2014. “ED Probe Heat On IAS Officer In SJDA Project Scam - Times Of India”. *The Times Of India*. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/ED-probe-heat-on-IAS-officer-in-SJDA-project-scam/articleshow/37733159.cms>.
  11. TOI Correspondent,. 2016. “Sting Shows Mamata Banerjee’S Top Leaders ‘Taking Cash To Help Fictitious Firm’”. *The Indian Express*. <http://indianexpress.com/article/elections-2016/india/india-news-india/sting-operation-tmc-ministers-caught-on-camera-accepting-bribes-opposition-asks-mamata-banerjee-to-go/>.
  12. DNA,. 2014. “Youth Arrested For Making Anti-Mamata Banerjee Remark On Facebook | Latest News & Updates At Daily News & Analysis”. *Dna*. <http://www.dna-india.com/india/report-youth-arrested-for-making-anti-mamata-banerjee-remark-on-facebook-2026496>.

- 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. The cartoon depicted the chief minister and the railway minister exchanging dialogues from popular Bengali film ‘Sonar Kella’, a detective thriller by Satyajit Ray, which alluded to the replacement of Trivedi by Roy as Railway Minister.<sup>13</sup>
- Former Union Railway Minister Dinesh Trivedi was forced to resign by Mamata Banerjee as he had hiked passenger fare in the Rail Budget sighting reasons of safety along with network expansion and modernisation. Banerjee contended how she was not asked before this fare hike so she would not allow this to happen.<sup>14</sup> This is an example of undemocratic decision making in the party which led leaders of vision and independent thinking to be thrown out.
- 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 etc. of the Left Front, the Congress and the BJP.<sup>15</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>16</sup> ‘Our workers, who got injured in the initial attack, have still not been shifted to the hospital. Trinamool is trying to terrorise us, but their tactics would not work,’<sup>17</sup> Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) National Secretary Rahul Sinha said.
- 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>18</sup> ‘They thought TMC is on soft mud so let’s uproot them. When the mud’s soft,

13. PTI,. 2014. “Youth Arrested For Making Anti-Mamata Remark On Facebook”. *Indiatoday.Intoday.In*. <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/mamata-banerjee-youth-arrested-facebook-anti-remark/1396020.html>.

14. Gupta, Smita. 2012. “Mamata Has Her Way, Trivedi To Quit”. *The Hindu*. <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/mamata-has-her-way-trivedi-to-quit/article3009524.ece>.

15. Indian Asian News Service,. 2017. <http://www.thefrustratedindian.com/news/trinamool-mp-arrest-bjp-office-attacked-crpf-raf-deployed-lead/>.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Trinamool Congress MP Kalyan Banerjee said: ‘Modi’s supporters call him a lion. But I say time is not far when Modi will have to return to his hole in Gujarat...’, (Mukhopadhyay, Sougata. 2017. “With Rude Remarks Against PM, TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee Hits New Low”. *News18*. <http://www.news18.com/news/india/trinamool-congress-mp-kalyan-banerjee-hits-a-new-political-low-note-1334436.html>.) and Kundu, Indrajit. 2017. “TMC MP Abusing PM Modi, As Close To Having A Heart Attack As It Gets!”. *Indiatoday.Intoday.In*. <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/tmc-mp-kalyan-banerjee-narendra-modi-mamata-banerjee-saradha-scam/1/854740.html>.



Dr Mohan Rao Bhagwat addressing a rally in Kolkata

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>19</sup>

- Mamata also criticized Chief Minister Nitish Kumar without naming him in a derogatory manner. She said:

*'Gaddari karne walon ko nahi chodenge. Jo sath hai to acchha hai, jo nahin hai to dukh lagta hai (betrayers will not be spared). ... Hum Kisi ka naam nahin lenge. Yeh Janata ki baat hai.'*<sup>20</sup>

- 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>21</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 based on her whims and fancies. Such instances remind us of the days of the Emergency when Mrs. Indira Gandhi banned RSS for supporting the JP movement against her authoritarian rule.
- Cancellation of Kashmir Discussion: 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

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19. Ibid.

20. Singh, Santosh. 2016. "Mamata Banerjee Targets Nitish Kumar: Won'T Spare Those Who Betray". *The Indian Express*. <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/mamata-banerjee-targets-nitish-kumar-wont-spare-those-who-betray-4403771/>.

21. Majumdar, Arkamoy. 2017. "RSS Not Opposed To Other Faiths, Says Mohan Bhagwat At Kolkata Rally". <http://www.Livemint.Com/>. <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/kqkoEZcJX2qZ8Oc15U7KDL/RSS-not-%20opposed-to-%20other-faiths-%20says-Mohan-%20Bhagwat-at-%20Kolka.html>.

# Victory of Constitutionalism

**संघ किसी समुदाय के खिलाफ नहीं**

**हिंदुओं को संगठित करना व सशक्त बनाना ही**

**शुगल**

खबरें कागज...

कलकत्ता, शिलिगुड़ी, शिलांग, गुवाहाटी & डिब्रुगढ़

JUGASANKHA, KOLKATA, SUNDAY, 15 JANUARY, 2017, 22 Pages • कलकत्ता, शिलिगुड़ी, शिलांग, गुवाहाटी & डिब्रुगढ़

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Website: www.daimijugasankha.in

**A wrong too man**

**Turning Bengali into medium of destructi**

Shahidullah and Dharendra Nath Dutta openly opposed the government, students went on rampaging protest and many were killed on February 21, 1952, in police firing, making 'Ekushey February' a day that still unites Bengalis all over the world.

For all her astonishing political savvy, Mamata Banerjee is playing with fire. Her actions and decisions are sowing the seeds of Hindu anger and Hindu politics.

Paraganas, Maida and Dhulagang Hindus by fundam... Nadia's Juran... Hanskhali on... arm the... infla...

**RSS NOT AGAINST ANYBODY, SAYS SARSANGHCHALAK AT BRIGADE PA...**

**Bhagwat for boosting Hindu u**

statesman news service

KOLKATA, 14 JAN: Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat today called for empowerment of Hindus all over the country towards achieving the goal of a Hindu rashtra and said that his organisation was not against any body.

"RSS is for empowerment of the Hindus who, regrettably, do not enjoy the status the community deserves in an independent India, but we are not working against anybody," Mr Bhagwat said at a rally at the Brigade parade ground.

Armed with Calcutta High Court's conditional hold...

**ब्रिगेडे शक्तिशाली कर्मी संगठन**

**गठनेर आह्वान मोहन भागवते**

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**संघ कारो सभय सभाय वार्ता**

स्टाफ रिपोर्टर : सलते पाकानो छिल। तेल-पिदिमेरओ आयोजन छिल। किञ्च तार परओ यावतीय-बितर्क वा राजनैतिक मन्तव्य थेके दुरे द्वाडिये 'हिन्दुत्व'-एर गन्ठिर मधोई निजेके सीमाबद्ध राखलें संघप्रधान मोहन भागवत। शनिवार कलकत्तार निज प्यारेड मयदाने। एवं तार...

एह शहर

**विरोध छाड़ाई एकजोड हन: भागवत**

ब्रिगेडें सभय मकर संक्रान्ति

**NOT OPPOSED TO ANYBODY: BHAGWAT**

Kamalendu Bhadra

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat

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**विरोध छाड़ाई एकजोड हन: भागवत**

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एह शहर

**विरोध छाड़ाई एकजोड हन: भागवत**

ब्रिगेडें सभय मकर संक्रान्ति

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>22</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>23</sup>

- Holding of ‘*Sansad Mela*’ was denied by the Mayor but cleared by Kolkata High Court. Babul Supriyo, Union Minister had proposed a three day Sansad Mela for issuing Adhaar card, passport and other administrative documents for the common people. But Asansol Mayor, Jitendra Tiwari denied permission on insignificant grounds.<sup>24</sup> However, the Kolkata High Court ordered the Asansol Municipal Corporation to give clearance to the Union Minister to hold the ‘*Sansad Mela*’ in the divisional railway stadium (Loco ground) in Burdwan district.<sup>25</sup>

A popular leader when fails to maintain the citadel of popular support, by rightful action and governance or pro-people policies and is unable to prove the worth of leadership, uses identity politics of the worst kind. The centrality of Mamata Banerjee’s politics has been using naked terror, seductive sentiments and conspiracy theories to suppress democratic movements. She has been toeing the footprints of Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, the Prime Minister of Bengal before the Partition. He too 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



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

22. Kindu, Indrajit. 2017. “Kashmir Event Banned At Prestigious Calcutta Club Due To Kolkata Police Pressure”. *Indiatoday.Intoday.In*. <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/exclusive-kashmir-event-banned-calcutta-club-kolkata-police/1/850009.html>.

23. Ibid.

24. Loiwal, Manogiya. 2017. “Asansol Mayor Denies Babul Supriyo Permission To Hold Sansad Mela Fearing Stampede”. *Indiatoday.Intoday.In*. <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/asansol-mayor-babul-supriyo-sansad-mela-calcutta-high-court-stampede-fear/1/855283.html>.

25. Rajaram, Prema. 2017. “Calcutta Club’s Cancellation Of Kashmir Discussion Sparks Anger”. *News18*. <http://www.news18.com/news/india/calcutta-clubs-last-minute-cancellation-of-kashmir-discussion-sparks-anger-1331892.html>.

Bengal, once known as the ‘renaissance’ capital of India, into a ‘corrupted–communalist’ capital of India. Mamata engaged herself with communal politics of Bengal, in fact became its political patron, to ensure the votes of the Muslim community, which constituted 27 per cent of the total population of the state.

According to the 2011 census, the 2.4 crore Muslims of West Bengal constitute 27.01 percent of the state’s population. But the alarming fact is that while during the same period the Muslim population across the country increased by 0.8 percent, in Bengal the growth rate of Muslims was much higher as it stood at 1.77 percent.<sup>26</sup> In many districts of Bengal, Hindus constitute a minority as in Murshidabad, Hindus only make up with 33.21 percent of the population.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, in Malda, Hindus constitute 47.99 percent of the population and 49.31 percent in North Dinajpur making the asymmetrical spread of Bengal’s population by religion, the only thing constant in West Bengal.<sup>28</sup>



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

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:

- Taslima Nasreen, a Bangladeshi born novelist, was not allowed to reside in West Bengal to appease fundamentalists. 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 issued a fatwa to kill Taslima Narseen.

26. Senl, Saibal. 2015. “Bengal Beats India In Muslim Growth Rate - Times Of India”. *The Times Of India*. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Bengal-beats-India-in-Muslim-growth-rate/articleshow/48675987.cms>.

27. Govt of India,. 2017. “WBSMB : Population Details”. *Wbagrmarketingboard.Gov.In*. [http://www.wbagrmarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population\\_murshidabad.htm](http://www.wbagrmarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population_murshidabad.htm).

28. Senl, Saibal. 2015. “Bengal Beats India In Muslim Growth Rate - Times Of India”. *The Times Of India*. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Bengal-beats-India-in-Muslim-growth-rate/articleshow/48675987.cms>.



Mamata Banerjee with Nurur Rahman Barkati

- 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>29</sup>

- Mamata made no efforts to imbibe any progressive or secular policy in her governance. Mamata Banerjee allied with Islamic organisations such as, Jamiat Ulema-e- Hind and endorsed a hard core student’s Islamic movement by providing subsidies to Imams, encouraging the use of *Burqa* and gave legitimacy to Shariat Courts and Haj towers.<sup>30</sup> In 2012, she started giving stipends of Rs. 2,500 and Rs 1,000 to imams and muezzins of the 32,000 mosques in the state of West Bengal.<sup>31</sup>

### *Fatwa by Barkati:*

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

29. Bureau, Our. 2017. “Muslim Cleric Close To TMC Issues Fatwa Against Narendra Modi”. *The Hindu Business Line*. <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/muslim-cleric-close-to-tmc-issue-fatwa/article9466268.ece>.

30. SFHE,. 2017. “Mamata Banerjee Nominates Rajya Sabha Seat In WB”. *Struggle For Hindu Existence*. <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/>.

31. Mazumdar, Jaideep. 2017. “Bengal Turns Communal Tinderbox,”. *Dna*. <http://www.dnaindia.com/lifestyle/report-bengal-turns-communal-tinderbox-thanks-to-cm-mamata-banerjee-2286480>.

- The Kolkata High Court in *Bharatiya Janata Party & Anr. vs. The State of West Bengal & Ors.* on 2 September, 2013 declared that the monthly allowances given to imams and muezzins by the West Bengal government was unconstitutional. It said, ‘it is well settled that the State can not 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>32</sup>



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

- 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’. Introducing social welfare legislations such as these, targeting a specific community is peculiar to the State of West Bengal.
- The Government of West Bengal under Mamata Banerjee, the original Bengali word for rainbow, ‘*Ramdhonu*’ (Bow of Ram), has been replaced with ‘*Rangdhonu*’ (Bow of Colours) in Standard VII Bengali language school textbooks on ‘Environment and Science’. Further, one of the colours of ‘*Rongdhenu*’, ‘*Aakashhi*’, meaning sky blue, has been replaced with ‘*Aasmani*’, which is Urdu.<sup>33</sup>

32. First Post., 2013. “Mamata’s Allowance To Imams Unconstitutional, Rules Calcutta HC”. *Firstpost*. <http://www.firstpost.com/politics/mamatas-allowance-to-imams-unconstitutional-rules-calcutta-hc-1080409.html>.

33. Gupta, Manas. 2017. “Did Bengal Government Change Name Of Ram In Bengali Word For Rainbow From School Textbooks?”. *Topyaps*. <http://topyaps.com/bengal-government-ramdhonu>.



*Mamata Banerjee offering Namaz*



*Mamata Banerjee with Ahmed Hassan Imran*

- In June 2014, Mamata made a highly questionable appointment to the Rajya Sabha, at the Upper House of the Indian Parliament. Despite multiple warnings from the District Intelligence Bureau that had red-flagged him for instigating violence against Hindus, including alleged participation in the Kolkata and Canning riots and sheltering known terrorists, she selected Pakistani Hassan Imran to serve as MP.<sup>34</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 unrecognized Saudi-funded and controlled madrasas, honorariums for imams and an exclusively

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34. Ibid.

Islamic township.<sup>35</sup> Banerjee called for the establishment of Muslim medical, technical and nursing schools with special subsidies for Muslim students, as well as Muslim-only hospitals.<sup>36</sup> She has favored Muslims to the extent of distributing free bicycles and rail passes to female Muslim students and laptops to Muslim boys.<sup>37</sup>



*Kazi Masum Akhtar*

- 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>38</sup>
- For four consecutive years now, Banerjee’s government has been denying permission to 300 Hindu families of a village in the state’s Birbhum district to organise a Durga Puja because 25-odd Muslim families in that village would be offended.<sup>39</sup>

## COMMUNAL RIOTS

The history of Mamata Banerjee’s rule is the history 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. Following riots have taken place in past years of Mamata Banerjee’s tenure as a Chief Minister of West Bengal.

35. Levy, Janet. 2015. “Articles: The Muslim Takeover Of West Bengal”. *Americanthinker.Com*. [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).

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. PTI,. 2017. “Madrasa Headmaster Thrashed For Teaching His Students The National Anthem”. *Indiatvnews.Com*. <http://www.indiatvnews.com/news/india/madrasa-headmaster-beaten-up-for-national-anthem-56824.html>.

39. Mazumdar, Jaideep. 2017. “Bengal Turns Communal Tinderbox,”. *Dna*. <http://www.dnaindia.com/lifestyle/report-bengal-turns-communal-tinderbox-thanks-to-cm-mamata-banerjee-2286480>. and PTI,. 2016. “Atleast 12 Communal Riots In West Bengal Over Muharram-Durga Puja Tensions -”. *Hindupost.In*. <http://www.hindupost.in/news/atleast-12-communal-riots-west-bengal-muharram-durga-puja-tensions/>.

## ***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 percent of the population.<sup>40</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 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>41</sup>



*Burnt House in Katwa Riots*

## ***Hazinagar Riots, 2016***

Hazinagar and Halisahar are municipalities in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal constituting a Muslim population of approximately 24.2 per cent.<sup>42</sup> Communal clashes that broke out in the region resulted in almost 30 houses and numerous shops being 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



*Hazinagar Riots*

40. Govt of India., 2017. “WBSMB : Population Details”. *Wbagrimarketingboard.Gov.In.* [http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population\\_murshidabad.htm](http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population_murshidabad.htm).
41. SFHE., 2017. “Islamists In Bengal Are Attacking Hindus”. *Struggle For Hindu Existence.* <https://hinduexistence.org/2016/12/16/islamists-in-bengal-are-attacking-hindus-in-slightest-chance-courtesy-mamata-banerjee/>.
42. Govt of India., 2017. “WBSMB : Population Details”. *Wbagrimarketingboard.Gov.In.* [http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population\\_murshidabad.htm](http://www.wbagrimarketingboard.gov.in/MinorityPopulation/Population_murshidabad.htm).

outcome of a low intensity bomb being allegedly thrown in a Muharram procession, resulting in violence against the Hindus. The opposition defended itself arguing how, the riot were an outcome of the government's order to stop the immersion of Durga idol as it was coincided with Muharram.<sup>43</sup>

### ***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>44</sup> The tension stemmed from an alleged objectionable post against Prophet Mohammed. The demand to release the accused from Illumbazar police station resulted in its ransacking and targeting of mosques during the police crackdown. Rezaul Islam, a Muslim, was allegedly killed when police fired shots to disperse the unruly mob. In a bid to secure her vote bank, Mamata Banerjee, criticized the attack by instilling fear in the minds of general public.



*Illumbazar Police Station*

### ***Kaliachak Riots, 2016***

In January 2016, a fierce riot broke out in Kaliachak, Malda district of West Bengal where Muslims are in great majority making up more than 89 percent of the entire population.<sup>45</sup> Thousands of Muslims attending a rally, protesting against Hindu Mahasabha leader Kamlesh Tiwari, turned violent. Violence took many forms with protesters vandalising public property, propagating sturdy anti-Hindu sentiments, public vehicles being incinerated and the Kaliachak

43. Ghosal, Aniruddha. 2016. "Homes Ransacked In Communal Violence In Bengal, People Flee". *The Indian Express*. <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/communal-clash-bengal-hazinagar-district-3086824/>.

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

45. Ibid.

police station being attacked, injuring as many as 30 policemen. Main reason for the riots was the activities associated with the trade of Fake India Currency Notes. A list of suspects was prepared by the local police and BSF Personnel targeting the racket in the border belt, infuriating a group of Muslims, allegedly involved in such anti-national activities. Banerjee in her response to such dealings, called it a 'small trouble' and accused the BJP of trying to turn it into a 'riot'. As many as ten people were arrested in connection with the violence with additional forces being deployed in a violence hit areas.



*Fire during Kaliachak Riots*

### ***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 percent of the entire population in the district. Four people were killed and as many as eight were injured during the riots. These riots were the result of communal tensions that were aroused, when a procession was attacked at Juranpur village in Nadia. The warring factions fired at each other and even bombs were hurled. Eyewitnesses claimed that the police was 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.

## ***Usthi Riots Case, 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 percent of the entire population.<sup>46</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>47</sup> Muslims mobs assaulted Hindus, looted their houses and shops in the alleged presence of State Minister of Minority Affairs Giyasuddin Molla who was leading the anti-Hindu mayhem. Moreover, Muslims were being instigated and asked to join the rioting through Masjid loudspeakers.

## ***Burdwan Blast Case, 2014***

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>48</sup> The building was owned by Nurul Hasan Chowdhury, a leader of the Trinamool Congress, with the ground floor of the building being used as a Trinamool 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. On arrest, the police recovered some incriminating evidence from the house such as wrist watch dials, SIM cards and tools, which were used to prepare explosive devices. Taliban training videos, maps and books in Arabic, containing communalist propaganda were also discovered.



*Burdwan Blast*

46. Ibid.

47. Mitra, Abhi. 2015. "Muslims Vandalized Hindu Areas And Business At Usthi In West Bengal With The Help Of State Minister." *Bengalspotlight.Blogspot.In*. <http://bengalspotlight.blogspot.in/2015/01/muslims-vandalized-hindu-areas-and.html>.

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

## ***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 percent of the population of the district<sup>49</sup>. In February 2013, a Muslim Imam returning from a religious ceremony in Jamlata, along with his colleague were intercepted by a gang of way layers in the middle of the night in Naliakhali and shot. According to police sources, the cleric was looted of his 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 of Naliakhali, Herobhanga, Gopalpur and Goladogra resulting 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 meticulously planned attack on Hindus'.<sup>50</sup> In response, Banerjee simply appealed for peace and promised a special probe into the murder case.

## **CURRENT SCENARIO: THE TRUTH BEHIND STATUS QUO**

### ***Dhulagarh Riots, 2016***

Geeta, a young girl of 12 years is homeless. Behind her innocent smile, she carries a huge weight of sadness. Her home has been destroyed by fire, toys and books have been reduced to ashes. Her family has nowhere to go. Her teacher in school taught her that police officers have the duty to stop such acts of violence in the society. But that did not happen for her

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49. Ibid.

50. Levy, Janet. 2015. "Articles: The Muslim Takeover Of West Bengal". *Americanthinker.Com*. [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).



*Dhulagarh Riots*

and her family on December 14, 2016. This account of Geeta's family has become the status quo for thousands of Bengali Hindus in the village of Dhulagarh.

In the second week of December, violent communal attack broke out in Howrah's Dhulagarh area, about 28 kilometers to the west of Kolkata. According to sources, violence broke out when a Muslim procession came out with loudspeakers blaring Hindi film music to celebrate Eid-e-Milad. The festival celebrating Prophet Mohammed's birthday in fact fell on December 12, which was declared a public holiday but festivities related to it the following day, disrupted the rituals associated with the Hindu festival, Margashirsha Purnima. Request made by the Hindus of the village to

lower the volume as it interfered with some rituals resulted in violent clashes with Hindu homes and shops being set ablaze and looted. *Zee News* report noted how, ‘police who reached the village were attacked by bombs and prevented from stopping the rioters,’<sup>51</sup> According to official estimates, rioting continued for three to four more days, resulting in a hundred houses and shops being completely or partially damaged or gutted.<sup>52</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>53</sup> ‘There was a stand-off between the police and rioters from both communities. They were carrying bombs. We (the police) used tear gas shells. Finally, we had to call in reinforcements to bring the situation under control’, a Police officer recalled.<sup>54</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*, including editor Sudhir Chaudhary, West Bengal correspondent Pooja Mehta and camera person Tanmay Mukherjee under Section 153A (promoting enmity) of the Indian Penal Code.<sup>55</sup> She questioned the ethics and responsibility of the media when she said: ‘In order to break a news, one must not act irresponsibly. If something has really happened, then you (media) have every right to report but I think a field survey must be conducted’.<sup>56</sup> As many as 150 locals were killed in the attack with several others being injured.<sup>57</sup> While the Hindus remain homeless and in suffering, the State Government denies the occurrence of any such incident of violence at all.

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51. Merchant, Minhaz. 2016. “How Mamata Banerjee Has Converted West Bengal Into A Communal Cauldron”. *Dailyo.In*. <http://www.dailyo.in/politics/dhulagarh-riots-west-bengal-muslims-hindus-mamata-banerjee-eid-milad/story/1/14783.html>.
  52. Sengupta, Swati. 2016. “The Truth Behind The Riots In Bengal That The Media Doesn’t Report”. *Huffington Post India*. <http://www.huffingtonpost.in/2016/12/26/the-truth-behind-the-riots-in-bengal-that-the-media-doesnt-repo/>.
  53. PTI. 2016. “Dhulagarh Riots: West Bengal Town On The Boil After Communal Violence”. *Firstpost*. <http://www.firstpost.com/india/dhulagarh-riots-west-bengal-town-on-the-boil-after-communal-violence-3177608.html>.
  54. Ibid.
  55. Ibid.
  56. PTI. 2016. “Mamata Banerjee Denies Riot In Dhulagarh, Blames Social Media”. *The Indian Express*. <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/mamata-banerjee-denies-riot-in-dhulagarh-blames-social-media-4451970/>.
  57. Pandey, Animesh. 2016. “Dhulagarh Riots: Because When Hindus Are Killed, Riots Aren’T Riots”. <http://www.thefrustratedindian.com/2016/12/mamata-burning-bengal-dhulagarh-riots/>.

In contrast to the reaction of Mamata Banerjee, the sufferers of the incident loom in fear. ‘We can’t live here anymore. We have taken shelter in our relatives places’ said Rampada Manna, as his wife Seema struggled to gather whatever belonging was left after the riots.<sup>58</sup> This reaction aptly depicts the plight of many Hindus in the village who fear further violence and are homeless. Manna, a barber who runs a family of three was at home when a violent mob broke open his gate and vandalized his house. ‘We are very poor. We somehow managed to buy a laptop for our son but they took it away.’ ‘They also stole Rs. 65,000 we had kept for LIC’, says Seema.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, the apathy of the police officers in this incident is baffling. As a victim recounts the episode, he says that rather than protecting them, the Bengal Police remained indifferent to the actions of the violent mob. ‘When the police came, we were told to leave our houses in two minutes! They didn’t even stop the mob from vandalizing our homes. They kept looting and burning as the police stood as silent spectators’ he says.<sup>60</sup>

The irony of the situation is that, Dhulagarh is not located far from the city of Kolkata. Despite frantic cries of help from the victims of the riots, no defensive or administrative assistance came from Kolkata. Whether the administrative lapse was an offence of commission or omission, it is difficult to say. But they did remain quiet for a considerable period of time, throwing the village into a state of anarchy. What encouraged such an indifferent behaviour on the part of the administration in the State? Was it the lack of political will to take strict actions against the miscreants? Or, was it the fact that the demography of the miscreants creates a considerable vote bank for the Trinamool Congress?<sup>61</sup>

The administration and executives should have taken effective steps to curb such streaks of violence. But all they did was take steps to cover the tracks. Barring entry of opposing political parties and media into the area raises eyebrows on

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58. Kundu, Indrajit. 2016. “Dhulagarh Riot Victims Claim Bengal Government Is Covering It Up”. *Mail Online*. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/indiahome/indianews/article-4074336/We-t-live-anymore-Terrified-Dhulagarh-riot-victims-suffered-mob-violence-claim-Mamta-Banerjee-government-trying-cover-up.html>.

59. Kundu, Indrajit. 2016. “Rather Than Protecting, Bengal Police Gave Us 2 Minutes To Flee Our Own Homes: Dhulagarh Riot Victims Tell India Today”. *Indiatoday*. *Intoday.In*. <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/dhulagarh-riots-howrah-kolkata-mamata-banerjee-milad-ul-nabi/1/844203.html>.

60. Ibid.

61. Sharan, Vipul, Chitrangi Sharma, and Aditi Sinha. 2016. “Dhulagarh Riot: A Riot Is No Riot If Only Hindus Are Killed - The Voice Raiser”. *The Voice Raiser*. <http://www.thevoiceraiser.com/dhulagarh-riot-riot-no-riot-hindus-killed/>.

the State Government's denial of the occurrence of any such violent incident. If the State Executive is confident that the incident never took place, then why ward off opposition?

A BJP central team was stopped by the West Bengal police from entering the violence-hit area in Dhulagarh. MP Jagdambika Pal said the government was following 'appeasement politics towards a particular community'<sup>62</sup> He also alleged that the government had transferred the Howrah (Rural) Superintendent of Police Sabyasachi Raman Mishra for arresting 65 people in connection with the violence at Dhulagarh.<sup>63</sup> BJP has professed how the minority wing of the ruling Trinamool Congress has targeted Hindus in the area in Howrah district for their support to the saffron party.<sup>64</sup>

Such measures taken by the State Government is a blatant violation of the ideals of the Constitution of India. Article 21 of the Constitution provides for the protection of the life and liberty of the citizens/people of the nation. If the administration, voluntarily abstains from its duties, it infringes on the rights of the people. The aggrieved citizens in such a scenario should be provided with remedies. Trinamool Congress is paying Rs. 35,000 as compensation to each household that was damaged in the incident.<sup>65</sup> A senior government official said that strict actions have been taken against those involved in the Dhulagarh incident and the process of giving compensation has started.<sup>66</sup> But the pertinent questions still loom in the darkness. Why compensation, of course meagre, has been given if no riots had taken place? Is the mere compensation of Rs. 35,000 enough? Can the amount ever compensate the loss of livelihood and home for many Bengali Hindus? Can the money bring back the lives lost in an incident which could have been effectively prevented? If the State executive, administration or police had taken appropriate measures, would violence scale to this level?

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62. PTI., 2016. "BJP Team Stopped By WB Police From Entering Violence-Hit Area". *Ptinews.Com*. [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).

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. OpIndia., 2016. "Mob Chanting 'Pakistan Zindabad' Burnt My Home: Dhulagarh Riots Victim". *Opindia.Com*. <http://www.opindia.com/2016/12/mob-chanting-pakistan-zindabad-burnt-my-home-dhulagarh-riots-victim/>.

66. PTI., 2016. "Mamata Banerjee Denies Riot In Dhulagarh, Blames Social Media". *The Indian Express*. <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/mamata-banerjee-denies-riot-in-dhulagarh-blames-social-media-4451970/>.

Amid these political issues, the victims of the communal clashes remain unheard. The populace of such volatile districts remains in constant fear. The right of a dignified life of these individuals has been denied to them. They have nowhere to go and no one to seek justice from. What is the use of a democratic institution when the citizens cannot be protected or sheltered against the violent nature of the society?

## **LAPSE OF GOVERNANCE IN WEST BENGAL**

These instances of communal aggression and conflict point towards one thing — the administration has completely failed to protect the life and property of its subjects. 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.

What is the purpose of the State machinery and institutions? It is created to defend the weak from the mighty. If the State fails in doing so or becomes a puppet in the hands of the powerful, it ends up abusing the power granted to it by the Constitution. The Trinamool Congress’s silence on the riots and the resultant lack of clarity on the part of the state’s police and administrative officials has further instigated the communal elements.<sup>67</sup>

The quick reaction of administration is a pre-requisite in restraining such spates of communally charged clashes but the Government completely denies the occurrence of many of the riots. This is equivalent to the Orwellian concept of doublespeak.

Further, Mamata Banerjee’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 its character. A democracy should feel ashamed and disgusted at the use of such arbitrary power to curb free voices and opinions. The route taken by the State Government to

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67. Mahaprashasta, Ajoy. 2016. “Communal Rioting Lays Bare Volatile Political Ground In Bengal”. *The Wire*. <https://thewire.in/74385/communal-rioting-lays-bare-volatile-political-ground-in-bengal/>.

block the media from its natural domain is autocratic and unwarranted. Attempts to hinder the functioning of the media, denying allegations and misusing the state machinery are a few methods employed by the State supremo to obliterate the Dhulagarh 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?

These questions need immediate answers or else the fire of sectarian violence in the State of Bengal shall keep burning.





The land of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Rabindranath Tagore, Bipin Chandra Pal, Subhash Chandra Bose, Col U.N. Mukerji, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Dr. H.C. Mookerjee has been facing a crisis of leadership. For almost three decades, Bengal remained a prisoner of Marxists who pushed the state to the brink of collapse. This gave an opportunity to Mamata Banerjee to emerge as a substitute. People saw in her a hope for Bengal but this has been completely belied. Neither she has any solution, nor has she been making any honest effort to fight poverty and unemployment. The frequent corrective interventions of the Kolkata High Court expose an ineffective, prejudiced and vindictive state of West Bengal. Mamata has now begun using terror politics and the police to suppress criticism against her and her regime. Her government recently refused permission to an RSS rally in Kolkata. However, the High Court overruled her decision, which is a big slap on her face. She is an enemy of freedom of expression. Communalism is her only social philosophy for consolidating her political position. Riots after riots in West Bengal have created increasing fissures in the state's civil society. The state machinery feels helpless because of her open encouragement to Muslim fundamentalists. The incidences of Malda and Dhulagarh are an eye opener.



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