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The development of West Bengal: Contextualizing different strategies adopted by Mamata Banerjee's government

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Abstract

The study explores different schemes and strategies adopted by Trinamool Congress (TMC) government that enhanced the process of socio-economic and educational development in West Bengal. In this regard it has found that TMC supremo Mamta Banerjee played a significant role for the development of West Bengal through providing free rations and free healthcare facilities to the poor people. The government had focused on the development of women through supplying economic support to impoverished families. Mamta Banerjee led TMC government also launched many scholarship's schemes for the development women education in Bengal. Mamta Banerjee's different social-welfare agendas enabled people from economically deprived classes to reap all the benefits and enhance their standard of living with better subsidised education and health accessibility, grants for women for their empowerment, and economic development. The study attempts to examine how the strategies and schemes adopted by TMC government for the welfare of Bengal counter the existing discourses regarding development of West Bengal under the leadership of Mamta Banerjee.

Keywords: Strategies, trinamool congress, BJP, leadership, education, development etc.

Introduction

Mamata Banerjee's blazing persona rhetorically instituted revolutionary transformation in West Bengal's political hemisphere. Her brainchild, Trinamool Congress (TMC) the name carries her deep ideological perspective that symbolises Government servers are no more considered a monarchy rather they portray themselves as embodiments that value each one equally and is dedicated to bringing indisputable transformation across all social constituents. The Pro-BJP, Left, and Congress critics misrepresented the TMC administration, and they have less focused on the contribution of Mamata Banerjee's government's role in improving the socio-economic situation of West Bengal. Hence, the study encompasses a deep investigation and portrayal of Mamata Banerjee's political journey and her leadership skills that not only reincarnated a ray of hope across all strata but also earned global recognition setting instrumental examples for other leaders that struggled to make a positive change in their heterogeneous political space.

Mamata's indomitable fighting spirit brought stride in West Bengal democracy

Mamata's relentless spatial protest put an end to 34 years of tyranny and monarchy on the left front in 2011 and set examples of women's transformational leadership for the rest of the world. West Bengal patriarchy and male supremacies have been on the verge of extinction through the phenomenal reincarnation of a female leader appearing with a blazing spirit (Chaudhury, 2021) [3]. It distorted how society had perceived the socio-technical intercourse and political mechanism driven by the Left Front and their 34 years of stigmatised political practice. Democracy can alternatively be viewed as people's equitable opportunity to take part in political decision-making and give a qualitative opinion, express resentment, and contribute towards rhetorical formation as well as the reformation of government through casting votes (Dey, 2021) [5].

However, Bengal saw an array of hoisting and rigging all through the political regime of the Left Front, forcefully snatching the right of people that appeared to be opposing the left front to cast votes. The rhetorical demolishing of democracy across Bengal by intense tyranny and malpractice of the Left Front severely affected people's democratic rights and power as per the preamble and constitution of India.

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As argued by Chaudhury (2021) ^[3], the reincarnation of Mamata Banerjee capitalised upon a political idealism and strived to rebound mass faith in West Bengal's political system to make by ensuring individuals having voting rights without any spatial, non-spatial influence, or threats and thus how she aspired to established a stringent democracy, and a new era began, for West Bengal.

In the patriarchal society, for long 34 years, women had been downtrodden and discriminated against women in rural, and often used to be a victim of sexual assault, breach of modesty, and even got killed. However, contemporary mainstream media could not even cover it, and elicit the truth exposing, culprits, criminally minded cadres of Left Front. In many of the Indian territories, backward-minded orthodox political parties induced a higher prevalence of social discrimination against women keeping them in social inclusion in several spheres of life (Choudhury and Kumar, 2021) ^[4]. Perhaps these had been the sole reasons, women in UP, Bihar, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh were always living in social deprivation with fewer wages, less education, and very limited control over the means of production and capital when compared with their male counterparts.

Even in some cases not only in West Bengal but outside of it "new forms of female foeticide" has alarmingly jagged the ratio of child sex that indeed is disturbing to acknowledge for the people of a developing nation. In a time when India's "gender domestic deficit remains extensive" the reincarnation of the female leader to be at the socio-political forefront in an arguably stagnant political scenario of WB, reflected that the era of male oppression is going to be an end nationwide. Though West Bengal somewhere boasts of its prolonged history of women's participation in broader socio-political movements Mamata's blazing spirit rhetorically encouraged oppressed females across the nation to raise stern voices against enslavement and ignite the urge to develop a spatial protest and thus how the true meaning of democracy got manifested.

As argued by Van Drunen (2021) ^[14], media independence can be defined as an absence of external influence or control upon the institution where media by following their normative principle, strive to establish a high level of transparency and unbiasedness to make people aware of everyday occurrences. Contemporary media though we are not extremely vociferous and hyper investigative, outspoken like today about the malpractice of the Left front which as per Chatterjee and Basu (2020) ^[2], might be due to the fear of getting sabotaged by the left front "Harmad community" upon the attempt of exposition. However, the rise of Mamata Banerjee not only gave spines to all media houses but encouraged them to portray any anomalies witnessed from their side and also to fix internal infections and thus, how true democracy has been established.

Mamata's agendas to revolutionize socio-economic interplay for the People of Bengal

Mamata Banerjee has been touched by the economic hardship and West Bengal faces low standard of living caused by the incoherent practice and nonchalance of the Left Front that made no progress for West Bengal but exploited it for many years. In order to bring radical strides as a part of their socio-political strategy, she induced multitudes of philanthropic agendas for people of all strata (West Bengal Mulling to Introduce PPP Model in School

Education, 2022). The Chief Minister rightly understood that it becomes extremely imperative for people to have access to proper education as thus perhaps the only way to get away to a prosperous life and see visible growth.

To bolster the West Bengal education system, she urged reinforcing the PPP model whereby by the public, through private partnership, students can experience positive changes in education delivery, accessibility, quality of education, and affordability (2022). A rhetorical implementation of Mid-day meals aimed to reduce the number of school dropouts whilst allowing kids to have nutritious meals aiding their physical and mental health development, and lessen the economic burden for their parents living below the threshold economic line. Not only that, as a part of the educational empowerment drive, she also ensured many of the primary schools upgraded to higher secondary schools, arranged for a scholarship for up to 10 lakhs, to prevail a high level of convenience encouraging more young children, adolescents to be self-independent and be employable and catch the ray of light.

Another remarkable social agenda has been "Swasthya Sathi" by which Mamata Banerjee and her party strived to hedge the health risk of families by allocating 5 lacks for each family per annum. The paperless Smartcard indeed helped many families irrespective of their social status to take advantage of it and disdain their worry of meeting urgent medical expenses that have skyrocketed these days. As the premium is entirely borne by the government, it has immensely been beneficial for the low to mid-social class to meet medical expenses even from private health care and save them from going bankrupt. The previous government did nothing significant to bring a positive change enabling citizens to have access to superior healthcare affordably (swasthyasathi, 2022) ^[13].

Kanyashree is another initiative undertaken by the transformational leadership in order to enhance "the life and status of girls by aiding economically backward families with cash so that their families do not arrange an early marriage for the girls before they turn eighteen due to several hardships". Girls through the "prakalpa" can benefit from the privilege of paying only 50% of the cost of admission, zero cost of the form of government job examination. A wide range of women's scholarship schemes, reservations in education, and privileges in taking education loans are some of the parks Kanyashree Prakalpa extends that truly expedite girls' education, stopping the tenacity of early marriage (wbkanyashree, 2022) ^[15].

Employment generation has always been an overly sensitive issue, and people began being vociferous once there was a sheer surge of literate unemployed striving to secure a source of income. State government undertook pursuits in employment creation for promising youth by encouraging them to develop an entrepreneurial mindset rather than struggle to get a job and be self-dependent. The government, through its "Kama sathi prakalpa" injects financial assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs who intend to form their own business and each of the beneficiaries can take a loan for 2 lacks whilst enabling them with a provision of subsidy for taking up new projects from the government (Kama Sathi, 2022) ^[9].

The transformational leadership skills of Mamata Banerjee

Mamata has been against the approach of the BJP that as per

Shivaprasad (2021) ^[12], has done nothing but polarise Indian citizens based on caste and religion ever since its inception, which even turned into a bigger threat to India's sovereignty. Furthermore, Mamata also spatially stratified aggressive protests condemning recent CAA and NRC movements by which BJP intended to discard people unable to show their birth credentials. Mamata protested by saying it was not only illogical but tremendously unethical, inhumane, megalomaniac, and contrary to the Indian constitution, and human rights. Not only that, but Mamata also raised her voice brutally condemning the demonetisation movement, explaining it to be an unparliamentary, unstructured, and irrational act, strengthening anti-BJP slogan movements across India.

A Series of proactive confrontations with BJP indeed sparked an incredible political tussle between BJP and TMC, provoking BJP to adapt to a non-transparent, fascist, dictatorial approach to stigmatise her embodiment, belittling her philanthropic schemes, and its impact. BJP's regional party in West Bengal severely attacked her ideology, and heat also went beyond control several times. BJP also uses central agencies like CBI, muscle power intended to prevail acute disturbance in West Bengal's political regime to negatively influence its people to go against TMC and accept BJP rule (Nag, 2022) ^[11].

However, Mamata, with her indomitable fighting spirit, singularly shouldered all criticism, and personal attacks, and remained gloriously focused on how the parliamentary could she withstand all these distractions and keep on achieving new milestones in the socio-political sphere. Mamata's tactful political strategy embarks upon the ideology of "more focus on Mamata, less on attacking the BJP ". In 2019, a majority of the TMC leaders referred to her as "Maa" or mother, despite her extremely popular nomenclature as "Didi" (Nag, 2022) ^[11]. This slogan strategy ideally conducted Mamata's position as Daughter of Bengal " launching the official slogan like "Bangla Nijer Maa Kei Chay " which ideally denotes "Bengal wants her daughter". Similarly, the party seemed to switch its political strategy and tactics on the way it represented itself in the election.

In 2019, ahead of the poll of Lok Sabha, TMC patronised by Mamata Banarjee portrayed itself as the main critic of the BJP highlighting Narendra Modi. As a consequence, BJP has been the main target across all the speeches. As per Bhattacharya (2021) ^[11], it was prudent to nullify the non-spatial existence of other parties such as CPIM and Congress which were evolving protests against TMC. Afterward Mamata, in line with its social endeavour, as a political campaign strategy, started to exhibit and flaunt how she has positively radicalised the socio-economic landscape of west Bengal in 10 previous years. In place of tarnishing and exposing malpractice pointing to the BJP and Modi government, TMC leaders as per their political strategy centred their emphasis on highlighting the good work that Mamata did for 10 years of its governance (Bhattacharya, 2021) ^[11].

In 2019, Mamata to counter BJP also attacked the centre's version of what happened in Pulwama and Balakot, Seldom TMC brought the Central government's inefficiency in dealing with the China issue, raising controversy upon broader conflicts to strategically corner BJP. Mamata's one remarkable political strategy to counter BJP's overindulgence in Hindutva was her consolidating approach

to secularism without committing a direct attack on the hidden sense of Hindutva (Ganguly and Jha, 2019) ^[8]. For instance, in 2019, the more BJP promoted an orthodox approach towards Hindutva, Mamata tactfully began pitching the sense of secularism which also had a parliamentary and constitutional backup, unlike the BJP; by this how, Mamata tried to imply that they would not let any party "mix religion with politics". Mamata was widely appreciated across Bengal, and beyond for their firm and independent stance of viewing religion and politics as separate matters.

Mamata's political, and social welfare agendas in consolidating her regime

Mamata Banerjee and her party adopted a tactical blend of their social welfare and political strategy to consolidate their place in the next polls. She showcased her blessing on children, testifying their significance in shaping future of India, enabling her to pledge to initiate "Sabuj Shree and Shishu sathi prakalpa", which is already in action and vastly implemented (timesofindia, 2022). Despite excelling in many areas, TMC got criticised by BJP and other opposition parties due to its lesser emphasis and action-driven strategy to augment employment drive across Bengal. Hence to attract new industries, and make West Bengal a major industrial hub, her relentless diligence was visible when she has been seemed to host several job festivals, seminars, and conferences with the presence of leading Indian as well as abroad industrialists that were seeking expansion in West Bengal's market.

She also pledges to initiate multitudes of welfare schemes for the rural people helping them live a sound and prosperous life' (Dutt, 2021) ^[6]. In the budget 2021, she allocated the highest amount for panchayat and rural development where she pledged to build two million pucca houses for ST, and SC will be built over the next five years. She also pledged to initiate a new philanthropic scheme named "Matri Bandana", under which the government assured to build 10 lakhs new SGH for poor women, and for that, a separate 25000 budget has also been passed. In order to ensure Industrialists choose rural sides for their expansion project, in line with "pathashree Scheme" she vowed to build a 46000 km road and communication infrastructure within the next 5 years (Dutt, 2021) ^[6].

Trinamool supremo Mamata Banerjee in her last social agendas announced to host social welfare schemes in her manifesto where she assured to make Bengal the fifth largest economy with over 500000 jobs to be generated. Not only that she announced the scheme of "students credit card" where students aspiring for higher studies are subjected to getting a loan of up to 1000000 at 4% per annum interest (LAW, 2021) ^[10].

In a countermeasure of BJP's rampant anti-TMC political campaign, as per Trinamool Supremo's new strategy, she aspires to extend her base even outside Bengal where she aspires to unite with anti-BJP community headed by Kejriwal and Mulayam Singh Yadav and vast peasant communities of Haryana and Gujarat. She also strived to make an axis and collaborate with all anti-BJP sentiment to form a great political retaliation towards BJP to eradicate (Zeenews, 2022) ^[16]. As per her future political strategy, she intends her voice and campaigns to be telecasted among those anti-BJP communities across BJP or Non-BJP government to ignite holistic protest against BJP. Along

with Asam, Meghalaya, Tripura, GOA, and Delhi, she would ensure her blazing spirit touches deprived people in UP also. TMC's strategy seems to be capitalising on the ideology of "Attacking is the best defense" and since other anti-BJP nationalists structured their way of discarding BJP, it blew the oxygen for TMC to reframe their political game for the next poll (zeenews, 2022) ^[16].

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be argued that TMC government, led by Mamata Banerjee, pursued a variety of socio-political and economic policies for West Bengal's growth. Her administration puts an emphasis on women's development and education. To facilitate good healthcare for the common man, "Sasthasathi" scheme was launched, which supplied free medical treatment to the common man. Mamata's government has also aided the ordinary and impoverished people by offering low-cost and free rations. Thus, Mamata Banerjee was perhaps the only contemporary regional political leader that got international respect and regards for her indomitable fighting spirit and the indelible urge to bring radical transformation for people of all social strata. Despite devouring intense criticism from opposition parties and a handful of people she never stopped pouring her emotions upon the Bengal and going good for its people to thrive. As per her recent strategic choices, and agendas, to corner BJP, she stepped out of Bengal and strived to build a collaborative effort to accumulate communities that follows anti-BJP idealism.

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