

The Changing Role of Politics: A Critical Analysis of the 21st Century Political Party System in West Bengal

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Abstract: *Political parties are crucial to the "representative democratic forms of government" that the majority of democracies have adopted in the modern era and act as a "link between the electorate and the elected." Comparing India to other nearby countries, one could say that its democracy has succeeded. Given that West Bengal is a state in India, it is safe to say that West Bengal is also a success story for democracy. In a democracy, the party system plays a crucial role. Democratic political systems are developed and remain stable as a result of party systems. West Bengal activists paved the way for India's freedom movement during the British era; in the post-independence era of the Indian party system, the people of West Bengal have maintained their own diversity with an agitation spirit, social reform, and contemporary thinking. In the 21st century, the role of the party system in West Bengal is changing in a variety of ways, and different variables play a role.*

Keywords: West Bengal, Political Party, Policy, Opposition, Movement

1. Introduction

Atul Kohli, in his book *Poverty Amid Plenty in the New India*, divides the Indian political system into three parts, namely: a. neopatrimonial; b. developmental; and c. social democratic. Neopatrimonial refers to states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The developmental political system refers to states like Gujarat and Maharashtra, and the social democratic system refers to the political system of states like Kerala and West Bengal. West Bengal is an Indian state so it is not possible to establish a party system in this state, which is completely different from the Indian party system. The regional characteristics of each Indian state are reflected in the respective state's party system. Therefore, although state-level party systems have similarities with national-level party systems, some state-specific characteristics may make state-level party systems unique. Compared to many other Indian states, West Bengal's politics can be considered unique. The existence of many parties in West Bengal has existed from the pre-independence period to the present day. At present, that party has disappeared and another new political party has emerged. Also, among the many parties in West Bengal politics, one party has dominated at different times. The Congress Party maintained its dominance from 1947 to 1967. West Bengal's political climate was unstable from 1967 to 1971. The congressional monopoly was re-established between 1971 and 1977. In 1977, the majority in Congress was challenged. Under the direction of the CPIM, the Left Front's hegemony over West Bengal politics was established for 34 years, from 1977 to 2011. West Bengal's political landscape changed in 2011. The left-front rule was abolished. In charge since 2011 is the Trinamool Congress Party, with her political and diplomatic intelligent, Mamata Banerjee has maintained her leadership since 2011. Currently, the role of the political party system in West Bengal is changing.

Objective

The major objectives of the present study are:

- To explain the role of political parties in West Bengal in 21st century.
- Assessing regional political party leadership in the context of support.
- To scrutinize the activities of the government and the activities of political parties.

2. Methodology

The study was carried out using the document review methodology in accordance with the qualitative research strategy. Secondary data from sources including books, scholarly journals, news articles, and various websites was used to complete it. The information gathered was subjected to a qualitative analysis. The purpose of this study is to thoroughly analyze how the party system currently operates in West Bengal's political system. Examine how West Bengal's current party politics are influencing any event or issue.

3. Discussion

Aspects of West Bengal Politics and Party System in the 21st Century:

According to Rajni Kothari, the Indian party system cannot be judged by any universal yardstick, and Indian democracy must be judged by Indian designs. Indian democracy is democratization on an Indian scale by Indian design, which cannot be explained on the scale of western democracy. The Indian party system is complex because the Indian social system has different classes, groups, castes, and religions whose interests are reflected in the current party system. The party system and politics of West Bengal are a little different from the political dynamics of India in modern times, where political instability has been observed in various states of India for the last two decades. Political stability has been observed in West Bengal since 1977, though between the 1960s and the late 1970s. The instability in the political

environment of West Bengal was widespread. A review of the governance of the Left Front government from 1977 to 2011 reveals that this government has helped improve the standard of living of the rural poor and made them aware of their self - esteem. Operation Berga has undoubtedly increased the number of sharecroppers; their financial security has increased manifold; and their dependence on the landlords has been reduced to a large extent. Besides, oppression and persecution of women, minorities, and Scheduled Castes and Tribes were relatively absent in this state during the Left era.

Like all - India politics, individual - centered politics can also be observed during the Left Front era in West Bengal. For example, CPIM leader Jyoti Basu became the chief minister in 1977 and remained in that position for 23 years until Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee took over as chief minister on November 6, 2000. Whether it is called democratic centrism or whatever, it cannot be denied that at that time the politics of the Left Front revolved around Jyoti Bose, who was the Chief Minister of West Bengal for 11 years until 2011. Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee. However, at that time, the opposition politics of the state revolved around only one person, Mamata Banerjee. In the fifteenth assembly elections held in 2011, the Trinamool Congress single - handedly formed the government by getting 184 seats. Even today, Mamata Banerjee's political acumen continues with her rule. His party name is the All India Trinamool Congress, which was founded on January 1, 1998.

A few issues can be discussed behind the Trinamool Congress coming to the government in West Bengal, such as the left - front government taking over the land for the Tata Nano factory in Singur. From the time when the land encirclement started in 2006, Mamata Banerjee led the movement to demand the return of the land to the unwilling. I can also talk about Nandigram violence. In 2007, Nandigram, a chemical hub in West Bengal, India, acquired land for a project undertaken by the CPIM - led government of West Bengal, implying violence. This policy led to a state of emergency in the region, and 14 people were killed in police firings. This movement was led by Mamata Banerjee. For example, the Trinamool Congress gained political advantage and subsequently came to power. First Program After coming to power, the Mamata government passed the Singur Land Rehabilitation and Development Bill in the Legislative Assembly in June 2011.

The employment situation is currently West Bengal's biggest issue. Residents of the state are forced to move to other states in search of work due to a lack of employment opportunities. Industrial conferences are held despite government efforts to promote industrial employment. However, in that regard, major industrialists do not appear interested in making investments. If we investigate the reasons for the lack of interest, we find that one of the biggest industrial conglomerates, Tata Company, has encountered difficulties and losses when it comes to investments. Large corporations are therefore not expressing a desire or interest.

The Gorkhaland separatist movement is a current issue in West Bengal politics in the 21st century. A political party

called Gorkha Janmukti Morcha is leading this movement. This movement is not today but a long time ago. This party was formed in 2007 in the hilly areas of Darjeeling district. The main goal of this party is to leave North Bengal and establish an independent Gorkhaland. The chairperson of this party is Bimal Gurung, and the secretary general is Roshan Giri. In 2007, the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha, led by Bimal Gurung, started a movement based on three demands. These three demands are:

- 1) The Gorkha Janmukti Morcha demanded that Subhash Ghisingh be removed from the post of administrator, as Subhash Ghisingh remained as administrator despite the expiry of his term of office with the Gorkha Hill Council
- 2) The Sixth schedule Amendment Bill should be repealed.
- 3) West Bengal should be broken up and a separate GorkhaLand State should be created and Tarai, dooars and Siliguri should be included in it.

Incidentally, there is a qualitative difference between the movement launched by the GNLFF in 1985 and the movement launched by the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha in 2007 to demand the establishment of Gorkhaland. In the state of 2011, the turn changed. The cabinet was formed under the of Mrs. Mamata Banerjee. Bilateral talks followed the formation of the cabinet, followed by a tripartite agreement on July 18, 2011. The Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) was created as a semi - autonomous body. Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong, and Siliguri sub - divisions are in charge. On September 2, 2011, the GTA Bill with 54 amendments was introduced in the Assembly and passed. On March 7, the president approved. In December 2011, the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha again demanded a separate state. Currently, the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha is a strong party in the hills. In the 2011 assembly elections, three candidates of the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha were elected to the assembly. As a result, the BJP candidate won the Lok Sabha seat from Darjeeling constituency.

Recently, there has been a Trinamool Congress - led government in West Bengal. Some of the public welfare policies adopted by this government have brought light to the politics of West Bengal and India. After the Trinamool Congress came to power, the Kanyashree scheme was launched by Mamata Banerjee on March 8, 2013, which has garnered international attention and awards. The mission of this project is: Kanyashree is an initiative taken by the West Bengal government to improve the lives and conditions of girls through cash assistance to economically backward families. So that families do not arrange marriages for their daughters before the age of 18 due to financial problems. The objective of this initiative is to improve those girls who cannot pursue higher studies due to poor families and thus difficult economic conditions. It is internationally recognised by the United Nations Department for International Development and UNICEF. The Sabuj Sathi Scheme is a scheme of the West Bengal government that distributes bicycles to students studying in classes IX to XII. Government - aided schools and madrasas under this scheme were launched in September 2015. The Trinamool Congress again launched a groundbreaking scheme known as Duare

Sarkar to return to power. As a result, the complexity of government offices is reduced a lot. The purpose of this project is to launch it for the purpose of providing facilities in different departments of the government in one place. The activities that are carried out under the Duar Sarkar are: Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (receipt, process, and issue of sanctions against individual applications); KCC (Agriculture); Krishak Bandhu; Registration and approval of financial assistance for drip and sprinkler irrigation systems under the Bangla Krishi Sech Yojana (BKSY), KCC (ARD), and Caste Certificates to SC, ST, and OBCs Medhashree, Sikshashree, Taposhili Bandhu, Banking - related activities, including the opening of bank accounts and linking of bank accounts, Matsyajeebi Credit Card, Registration of Fishermen, Khadya Sathi, Applications for Disability Certificates, Swasthya Sathi, Student Credit Card, AADHAAR Related, Bina Mulya Samajik Suraksha Yojna, Registration of Migrant Workers, Application for Patta, Mutation of agricultural land and minor land, land reforms, correction of land records, Aikyashree, Bhabishyat Credit Card, Enlistment of Artisans and Weavers, Registration in the Udyam Portal, SHG Credit Linkage, New Connections, Partial waiver of old dues, Jai Johar, Kanyashree, Lakshmir Bhandar, Manabik, Old Age, Pension Rupashree, widow, and pension The Trinamool government is maintaining its influence among the people through this popular scheme, which is reflected in the legislative assembly and Lok Sabha elections.

Since the time of the Left Front government, we have not seen that kind of relationship between the West Bengal government and the governor. Because of this, the constitution has created the post of governor as the agent of the center. As a result, the existence or power of the anti - central political party can be seen during the Left Front government, and the position of the opposition political party of the Trinamool Congress can be seen in the central politics. As a result, the conflict between the governor and the government has reached an extreme level, which is tearing down the federal structure of India. To overcome this conflict, the complexities of the Constitution require amendment.

If we review the political position of the opposition parties during the All-India Trinamool Congress government in West Bengal, it can be seen that the Congress, CPI, CPI (M), and BJP are playing a special role. Trinamool Congress came to power with the support of Congress when the Left Front government was ousted in 2011. The Left Front continued to play the role of the opposition party. Narendra Modi's victory across the country in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections began to have an impact on the political system of West Bengal. As a result, the BJP's vote share increased to 17.02 percent. The vote percentage of cpi and cpim (m) parties continues to decrease. Subsequently, the results of the 2016 assembly elections showed that the Trinamool won 211 seats, increasing the strength of the Congress's single - member power. The decline in strength of the Left Front alliance is seen to be happening more. The Congress party lacks strong leadership. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Narendra Modi once again captured power in the Indian parliament. In this election, the BJP increased its strength as a communal political party in West Bengal, winning 18 out

of 42 seats under the leadership of Dilip Ghosh. During this time, C. A. A., NRC, and religious issues worked. Communal or caste - based political parties in West Bengal politics did not gain a role in that sense earlier, but recently the influence of religious politics in West Bengal politics has increased, and we can see the proof of this in the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections and the 2021 Assembly Elections. The existential crisis is worth noting. The National Register of Citizens, 1951, is a register prepared after the conduct of the Census of 1951 in respect of each village, showing the houses or holdings in a serial order and indicating against each house or holding the number and names of persons staying therein. The NRC was published only once, in 1951. The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of 2019 was passed to provide Indian citizenship to the illegal migrants who entered India on or before December 31, 2014. The Act was passed for migrants of six different religions, such as Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians, from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. As a result of the passing of this law by the Centre, the majority of the minority votes fell in favour of the Trinamool Congress and the Hindu votes gained by both the BJP and the Trinamool parties, but the secular and other parties that once ruled West Bengal, such as the Congress, CPI, and CPI (M), could not influence the 2021 elections in that way. Also, ahead of the 2021 assembly elections, a political party called ISF was formed with the ideology of protecting minority rights. In the 2021 West Bengal Assembly elections, it contested 34 seats and won one seat. The party contested the election using the symbol of the Rashtriya Secular Majlis Party, a political party in Bihar.

In the 2021 Assembly elections in West Bengal, the Trinamool Congress is seeing success in bringing Muslim and female votes to its side, targeting the Hindu - Muslim political divide. Various schemes, including Lakshmi Bhandar and Swasthya Sathi, can be cited as the reasons women's votes came in favour of the Trinamool Congress. On the eve of these elections, the Congress, CPI (M), and ISF formed an alliance, and the BJP emerged as the second - largest opposition party in West Bengal politics.

The Trinamool Congress party's first batch of political leaders has been accused of various types of corruption in government work and recruitment of government employees, such as saroda, teacher recruitment corruption, government employee recruitment corruption, cow smuggling, coal corruption, etc. Party work continues opposition work as well as making people aware of government work.

4. Conclusion

Western theorists have pointed out that the reliable conditions for democracy are a class - based population, an industrial economy, a high level of education, and urban culture, which are discussed in the party politics of West Bengal. At present, in the party system of West Bengal, a lack of consensus can be observed between different parties and between different groups within the same party. Which leads to the process of delegitimizing the party system. Both party politics are blamed for perverse politics and the abandonment of long - standing national interests for

personal interests. But all in all, it is to be seen how much the political parties can make the people active in the politics of West Bengal and how much the ruling party can hold power and accumulate political power with its diplomatic and public welfare projects in the future. What impact can Indian elections have on politics, including the ruling party in West Bengal? Along with this, it is also a matter of seeing how much power the opposition political parties of West Bengal can accumulate and the diversity of the constitution can continue to protect democracy, secularism, equality, fraternity, justice and liberty.

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