

# **CHAPTER – 7**

**CHALLENGES AND CHARISMA OF  
MASS LEADER MAMATA BANERJEE**

In Chapter 6 Data Analysis, we have proved statistically that ‘*Mamata Banerjee as truly a successful charismatic leader*’. Let us interpret the statement in the light of her activities having a look into history of her political career back to 1993.

### **7.1: Looking back at 21 July, 1993<sup>1</sup>**

Every year the 21 July Martyrs’ Day rally is organised by All India Trinamool Congress in remembrance of 13 people shot dead by Calcutta Police in Kolkata during a protest movement led by the leader of opposition Ms Mamata Banerjee on 21 July, 1993.

Ms Banerjee had organised *Writers’ Chalo Abhiyan* (March towards Writers’ Building) demanding that the voters’ identity card be made the only valid document to verify voters in order to put a stop to rampant ‘scientific rigging’.

#### **Bloody history**

The party workers gathered at five different points across the city on that fateful day. They began marching towards their destination along Brabourne Road and were stopped by a large contingent of police officials near the Tea Board office, barely few minutes away from the Writers’ Building. The police force started beating up the crowd mercilessly in order to drive them away from the vicinity of Writers’ Building.

The youth activists who were peacefully rallying refused to stop and walked ahead. Many rounds of teargas shells were fired but the supporters kept moving forward.

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<sup>1</sup>As per the information available from the official website of All India Trinamool Congress <http://aitcofficial.org/aitc/looking-back-at-21-july-1993-2/a> and other secondary data sources.

Despite Ms Banerjee's efforts to establish peace, the police went berserk in a spate of revenge and did not even spare her.

The place transformed into a battle zone. People started running across Curzon Park. The police opened fire, killing 13 supporters and leaving hundreds severely injured. Since then, an annual rally is held on this day every year, dedicated to the memory of these 13 martyrs.

### **Remembering martyrs**

On the political significance of this day, the Trinamool Congress Chairperson Ms Mamata Banerjee writes in her book 'My Unforgettable Memories':

"It is the day when we remember and offer our respect to the hundreds of people who are fighting death every day, whose lives are a living death, who have lost life and limb in this struggle. For us, it is a day of sorrow and shame."

"Ever since 1993, every year July 21 brings back excruciating pain and agony to our memory, of the barbaric act of violence and brutal firing meted out by the previous Left Front government," recalls the Trinamool Chairperson.

"The voice of democratic demand raised in a peaceful procession was stifled with bullets and violence... Every year, 21st July is dedicated to 'Shahid family' (martyrs family) belonging to different democratic movements," the Trinamool Congress Chairperson said.

"Let us bow our heads down, pay obeisance and remember their invaluable sacrifice and also take a pledge to rededicate ourselves to continue to fight for the cause of

‘Maa Mati Manush’ and build a harmonious, peaceful and prosperous Bengal,” she said.

## **7.2: The Singur Movement Undertaken Under the Leadership of Challenging Leader Mamata Banerjee**

The Singur movement, led by Ms. Mamata Banerjee has become a part of World-History. It was an exemplary struggle against State-sponsored tyranny and atrocities. The farmers of Singur, having their lands taken away forcibly by the then state government, found a sensitive Leader in Mamata Banerjee. Her will and her tenacity had influenced the farmers and their families to a great extent to start a world famous Land-Movement against the forcible acquisition of multi-crop land for industrialisation. She kept her promise within 26 days of becoming the Chief Minister of Government of West Bengal. On June 14, 2011, the historic Singur Land Rehabilitation and Development Bill was passed in Assembly by the Mmamata Banerjee-government which enabled the state government to return the 400 acres of land to the unwilling farmers of Singur.

### **The background**

Singur is in Hooghly district, around 40 kilometers west from the capital of the state Kolkata. Singur has four nearby rail stations. They are Singur, Kamarkundu, Balarambati and Madhusudanpur. The multi modal transport system is very conducive to have a manufacturing unit at Singur. Most of the land of Singur is multi-crop in nature. The previous government has earmarked a huge 997 acres of farmland for developing a car project on the side of NH-2. Moving towards Durgapur along the NH-2, it will be on the left side of the road just after crossing the Tarakeswar Road. Six

mouzas of Singur fell under this proposed car project. The mouzas are Gopalnagar, Beraberi, Bajemelia, Khaserbheri, Singherberi and Joymollarberi. They have taken this huge land which is mostly cultivated land. According to a Statistics 83% of the acquired land is irrigated and the crop density is 220%. It indicates that it is a multi-crop land. Crops like paddy, potato, green vegetables grow in this land. The farmers are mainly dependent on their lands to earn their livelihood.

In May 2006, the then State Government decided to acquire 997 acres (initially 1013 acres were asked for) for a small car factory of Tata Motors at Singur in Hooghly district. Because of this action taken by the government around 6000 families of Singur lost their land. Many of the marginal farmers and agricultural labourers also lost their jobs due to this action of the government. The marginal farmers, the landless farmers indirectly dependent on this land, unrecorded bargadars were not given a single rupee as compensation. All most all the farmland owners of Singur rejected the compensation-money. From the day one they had opposed this forceful acquisition of their farmland to have an industrial project. None of these farmers was consulted before the acquisition of the land. They expressed their unwillingness from the very beginning but the then leaders in power ignored them totally. Oppression and suppression started from the 1<sup>st</sup> day itself. The farmers of Singur ran from the pillars to the posts with their kind appeals but all had fallen on deaf ears.

The Tata Project: The only official document publicly available on the project was the Gazette Notification under sec 4(1) of the Land Acquisition Act 1894 between 19th and 24th July states that the “land as mentioned in the schedule below is likely to be needed to be taken by the Government/ Government undertakings/ Development Authorities, at the public expense for a public purpose viz., employment generation

and the socio economic development of the area by setting up a Tata Small Car project”.

### **Year 2006**

**18 May:** The then Chief Minister of West Bengal had a joint press conference with the Tata Group Chairman Sri Ratan Tata. They jointly announced that Tata Motors had decided to locate 1 Lakh Small Car Project at Singur in Hooghly. For the first time, Tata revealed that the project, to be spread over 700 acres with another 300 kept aside for ancillary production

**25 May:** The struggle of a substantial number of the people of Singur against the land acquisition began from day one when the Tata company representatives and the officials went to see the land. People refused to let them reach their fields and blocked their way and the Tata team had to be rescued by the police.

**26 May:** Angry farmers of Singur demand that the then chief minister should assure them of jobs in it. If their demand is not fulfilled, they will continue their agitation and not let the government take their land.

**30 May:** The then state commerce and industries minister was greeted with black flags in Singur today by organization of farmers and labourers of Singur.

**1 June:** About 5,000 villagers from different villages of Singur demonstrated under the leadership of Becharam Manna and Rabindranath Bhattacharjee in front of the Singur BDO office against the government’s move to acquire farmland for the Tata Motors project.

**17 July:** Work on acquisition of land for Tata Motors’ factory for producing small cars at Singur begins with the West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation submitting

its proposals to Hooghly DM. The state government was to acquire a little more than 1,000 acres through the WBIDC for transfer to the Tatas. Farmers led by the Trinamool Congress' MLA from Singur, Robindranath Bhattacharjee, lodged protests protesting that the state government was trying to remove them from land they owned. The farmers also submit a memorandum saying they would fight “with all their might” any effort to acquire land.

**19-24 July:**the state government did not listen to farmers. Without understanding the gravity of the situation, they issued 13 notices within a period of five days under Section 9 (1) of the Land Acquisition Act of 1894 to the affected farmers.

**24 July:** The Durgapur Expressway blocked as a protest.

**8 August:** Meanwhile, nearly 5,000 locals who had gathered from several villages of Singur demonstrated in front of the Gopalnagar gram panchayat office protesting against the state government's decision to acquire land at Singur for Tata's small car project.

**18 August:** Government issues notice under Section 9 (1) of the Land Acquisition Act of 1894; demonstration held by the farmers of Singur protesting the wrongful acquisition.

**22 August:** Around 5,000 Singur farmers demonstrate around the block development officer's office and boycott the hearing.

**September 27:** the land department is to hand over to the West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation all the 1,013 acres Tata Motors needs at Singur in Hooghly district to put up its small-car plant.



**1 September:** More than 100 villagers from Santoshimatola in Singur prevent officials from entering their villages to serve notice to acquire land. Women lead from the forefront in Bajemelia as district authorities flee—work of issuing notices is abandoned.

**4 September:** An international Fact Finding Mission (FFM) held in Singur to look into the looming eviction of farming communities as a result of the construction of Tata Corporation of a facility in the area. As a result of this FFM, a report on the situation of the community is drafted. Moreover, an online petition letter addressed to the government of West Bengal and to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights is posted in the PCFS website. The letter urges these offices to look into the planned eviction of the farming communities in Singur, West Bengal.

#### **A Black Day in the History of Singur-Movement:**

**25 September:** Singur Land forcefully acquired. The Left Front Government was determined to go to any extent to acquire the land, evict them from their own farmlands. The then state government was ready to use their force to hand over the entire land immediately to the company. But the farmers and thousands of common public of Singur were demonstrating peacefully at the BDO office at Singur. During this peaceful demonstration more than four hundred people including several women and children are brutally assaulted and about 78 activists are arrested which includes 27 women, MP Mamata Bannerjee, MLA Rabindranath Bhattacharya, Becharam Manna, Sulekha Mallik, Manik Das etc. At around 1:40 am in the night the RAF and the police attacks a few thousand men-women-children who had been protesting peacefully all day. Few hundred persons are injured. The assembled villagers at BDO Singur were upset that their voice had not been given a platform and that the

Government was unilaterally working on this project. About 5,000 people including about 2000 women workers had peacefully demonstrated at the Block Development Office at Singur against the distribution of cheques to the farmers. The protest was an all night one. The dissenting farmers wanted the administration to carry out mutation for their land titles too. However, they were told that only if they gave their consent letters would it be carried out.

The struggle of the people nevertheless continued in a democratic and peaceful fashion the next few months. Marches, rallies, public hearings got organized in Singur and Kolkata. They were joined by several organizations and eminent people like Professors from Jadavpur University, Calcutta University, Human Rights and other social action groups, trade unions and all political parties other than those of the left front from all over W. Bengal. Former Chief Justices of the Supreme Court and former Prime Minister VP Singh all urged the Government, met the Governor and wrote to the PM and President and Central Government to not evict the people and give the TATA's alternative land.

Ms. Mamata Banerjee announces a 24-hour "general strike on 9 October in protest against land acquisition at Singur.

**27 September:** As a sign of civil disobedience, other political parties like the Socialist Unity Centre of India calls for a 12 hour bandh in Singur on 27 September. Moreover, a meeting of the NGO's/ CSO's held on the same date protesting against the attack of the police on the peasants of Singur, particularly on the peasant women.

Sonia Gandhi's Congress supports Mamata Banerjee in her bid to get Tata to relocate the project.

**Switching of Light as a Mark of Protest:**

**1 October:** On the day of Bijoy Doshumi night vigil is observed in the affected moujas of Singur. Under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee all the villagers in all the villages of Singur switched off the lights in their houses in the evening as a mark of protest. This united effort had stunned the entire country. Former Chief justices of the Honourable Supreme Court Judges J. S. Verma, Rajendra Babu and retired judge M. N. Rao wrote letters to Ratan Tata, the Chairman of Tata Group to abandon Singur project.

**3 October:** The people protested by refusing to cook in thousands of village houses in Singur. This is to protest against the police atrocities and as a part of non-violent peaceful movement.

**9 October:** A 24-hour statewide bandh or general strike is observed by various political parties to protest the eviction of the peasants. The Committee to Assist the Struggle of Singur Peasants against Eviction also supports the general strike. 6211 Bandh supporters arrested.

**27 October:** Social activist Ms Medha Patkar warns the state government of a law and order breakdown in Singur if force was exerted to acquire farm land while the well-known litterateur and social activist, Mrs Mahasweta Devi, said CPI(M) workers have no right to call themselves Marxists because they have been “systematically hoodwinking people.” They were addressing a rally organized by farmers at Bajemelia hospital ground.

Public Hearings organized, chaired by Medha Patkar and with Mahashweta Devi, Justice Malay Sengupta and Dipankar Sengupta as members, which are creative and democratic ways of giving a platform to the voices challenging the acquisition.

**30 October:** Former chief minister Jyoti Basu sounds a note of caution for acquiring multi-crop land by the Left Front government in West Bengal for setting up industries..

**5 November – The Day of Giving Ultimatum to the State Government and**

**Tata:** On 5<sup>th</sup> of November Mamata Banerjee asked the Tata Group to shift their proposed small car project from the multi-crop farmland of Singur and gave a 12-day ultimatum to the then Government of West Bengal to announce that industries would not come up on agricultural land of Singur.

**25 November:** Teachers of various universities and premier academic institutes stage protest in Kolkata against the acquisition of multi-crop agricultural land for industrialization.

**26 November:** Ms Banerjee says she would lead an agitation in Singur to sow potatoes. Around 6,000 additional policemen are deployed to withhold Mamata Banerjee to sow potato seeds on the plots.

**30 November:** Assault on Ms. Mamata Banerjee who is barred by police from proceeding to Singur The government prohibits all assemblies in the Singur area, displaying its Fascist face.

1 December: AITMC calls 12-hour strike in protest of police atrocities

**2 December:** A memorandum seeking to stop this “persecution” would be given to the governor and if it continues a three-day long bandh would be called as the last resort,

Mr Subrata Mukherjee, senior AITMC leader and a spokesman of the Krishi Jami Bachao Committee says in a Press conference.

Farmers of Khaserbheri, Bera Beri and Gopalnagar gather to resist the fencing off of the proposed project land. Severe police force is used against them, several people injured and more than 60 people were arrested. Among them, Jhuma Patra, daughter of Sri Ashok Patra of Khaserbheri, 12 year old, class-V student of Naraharipara Primary School and Soma Dhara, daughter of Sanyasi Dhara of Khaserbheri were arrested by police. Several women tell that the police not only beat up people at the project site, but had chased them into their villages and dragged them out of their houses and beat them. Verbal sexual abuse was used against the women, and at least one young woman, Deepali Moitra says that she was dragged by her hair from under a bed in Kasherberi where she was hiding. Medha Patkar who went in solidarity is not allowed to enter the affected villages by the officials and her citizen rights of movement in the area were curtailed. All through this turbulent time Mamata Banerjee was there always with them.

**4 December:** The Singur agitation intensifies with Ms Mamata Banerjee going on an indefinite hunger-strike. Miss Banerjee began the hunger-strike at Esplanade in central Kolkata after the state government had rejected her demand for stopping fencing work at Singur and withdrawal of police forces from the area. Fifteen farmers, including five elderly women, began a fast-unto-death at Singur in protest against police excesses and land acquisition. Miss Banerjee declared that her party would block roads all over the state for two hours from 12 noon on 6 December and march to Singur on 7 December, “come what may”. West Bengal and Kolkata witnesses an unprecedented assembly of lakhs of people from every walk of life during the 25 day fasting of

Mamata Banerjee, Abhash Munsii, Vijay Upadhyaya. The mass gathering shakes the rulers countrywide. The people were highly motivated by the spirited presence and speeches, songs, recitations by eminent personalities.

The Singur issue rocked Parliament also.

**8 December:** People spontaneously shuts down shops and takes out procession of about 500 people when the police forcibly takes away Rabindra Bhattacharya, MLA and 4 others from the Bajemelliya-Santoshimatala hunger strike camp.

**10 December:** The Singur farmers have a press conference in Beraberia, Purba para and presents signed letters from farmers where the farmers declared that “We have not and will not give our Land to Tata Motors”.

14 women starts a fast-unto-death near Beraberi Purbapara in Singur in protest against alleged “police excesses” and the state government’s “false claims”.

**28 December:** Letters from President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and former Prime Minister Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee persuades Mamata Banerjee to end the 25 days of persistent fasting.

**29 December:** Mamata Banerjee’s decision to end her ‘indefinite’ fast on the Singur issue after 25 days of brings considerable relief to West Bengal and beyond.

### **Year 2007**

**3 January:** Trinamool Congress leadership and members of Singur Krishi Jomi Raksha Committee points out discrepancies in the status report that was published by the state government on 22 December and 2 January and gives a 72- hour ultimatum to

the state government to publish the list of farmers who have given their consent for land acquisition.

**7 January:** Farmers of Singur complains that the government has stopped releasing water from 30 deep and the mini tube-wells which fall inside the fenced-off area. Because of this inhuman decision of the government agriculture in almost 743 acres of land in Bajemelia, Singherveri, Khaserveri, Beraberi and Gopalnagar, has been badly hit because of the dearth of irrigation water. There are three deep tube-wells and 27 mini tube-wells in the area, which supply irrigation water to almost 1600 acres of agricultural land.

**24 January:** Intellectuals, academicians and students join the protests against the state government's policy of land acquisition in Singur and Nandigram with a sit-in demonstration at Esplanade.

**5 February:** Prohibitory order under Section 144 CRPC was re-imposed at the Tata Motors small car project site in Singur

**7 February:** Police fires teargas shells to chase away activists of Trinamool Congress-led Krishi Jami Raksha Committee.

**16 February:** Ms. Mamata Banerjee to address a rally near Kamarkundu station, 5 km from the Tata Motors plot and 50 km from Calcutta. It would be the first Opposition rally in Singur in over two months as she was stopped on her way on November 30 because Section 144 was in force there. The order was in force for 60 days from November 30 and was extended twice till the midnight of February 14.

**12 March:** Haradhan Bag, a farmer of Singur committs suicide on 11 March. He, according to his family members, refused to part with his land for the Tatas' small car project.

**13 March:** Trinamool Congress legislators stage a walkout after the Speaker refuses to allot more time during the Question Hour to raise the issue of Haradhan Bag's suicide at Singur.

**27 March:** The West Bengal government admits that its Advocate General made an "erroneous submission" to the Calcutta High Court on the compensation for farmers whose land was acquired for the Tata Motors' car plant in Singur.

**2 May:** The High Court says the affidavit submitted by the government on the Singur land acquisition process was "incomplete."

**25 May:** The state Forward Bloc secretary admits lack of homework before the all-party meeting and says he would meet Mamata Banerjee soon to fix an agenda for the next round of talks. Prasanta Das chose death over compensation. A 45-year-old farmer from Khaserveri mouza in Singur, Prasanto Das, who had refused to part with his land for the Tata Motor small car factory, committed suicide..

**31 May:** Speaking at the convention, "No to SEZ" – organized by the All India People's Convention on Nandigram, Narmada Bachao Andolon leader Medha Patkar criticizes the Left Front government.

**4 June:** Jyoti Basu rings up Mamata Banerjee inviting her home to thrash out a solution to the Nandigram-Singur standoff.

**25 November:** More than 1,500 farmers, including hundreds of women, took part in a rally in Singur this afternoon to protest against the forcible acquisition of their farm



land by the state government and the alleged “mass killing” in Nandigram by the CPI(M) cadres.

### **Year 2008**

**21 May:** The seventh Panchayat poll results displayed the confidence in Trinamool Congress and its fight against land acquisition. The left parties were shown the door in many a Panchayets across the state.

**28 May:** The Trinamool Congress chairperson Mamata Banerjee said that she had no objection to the Tata Motors project at Singur if the government returned the 400 acres of land to those farmers who did not accept compensation. “Time and again I have been saying that we are not against industry. It is of vital importance to us. Some people might have sold their land at Singur because they needed money. I have nothing to say regarding this. But I want the government to return the land to other farmers. If that happens the factory may come up,” said Ms Banerjee.

**14 June:** Trinamool Congress chairperson Mamata Banerjee addressed a rally with the newly elected panchayat representatives of her party today and announced total non-cooperation with the Tatas. Mamata Banerjee also announced a deadline for the government, failing which she threatened to launch an indefinite stir in Singur block. “I mean it. The government should return the land by August 20.” said Mamata Banerjee

**October 3:** The Tata Group declared their final decision to shift the Nano Project from West Bengal to other state.

### **Year 2011**

**March 28:** Ms. Mamata Banerjee announces before Assembly Election that she her prime agenda is to return 400 acres of land in Singur to the unwilling farmers.

**20 May:** Trinamool-led Government takes oath with Ms. Mamata Banerjee as Chief Minister

**14 June:** AITMC-led government places the historic Singur Land Rehabilitation and Development Bill which is passed in Assembly.

**20 June:** Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal signs the Singur Land and Rehabilitation and Development Bill, 2011, making it an Act.

**26 June:** Land Return Forms distributed in Singur.

### **7.3: Life and Activities of Mass Leader Mamata Banerjee towards Cause of Mass with Her Charisma**

*Mass leader Mamata Banerjee an ever uncompromising and upright personality*

#### **7.3.1 The leader at her early age:**

Mamata Banerjee is someone who possesses a personality and characteristics which is something to be self made in nature and is generated out of prolong and continuous struggle against all not desired and not “should be” situations and environments both in personal life and social and political life. Always she had to undergo relentless fight against all the odds. She had always taken her charisma and struggling characteristics in her personal life and social life.

She lost her father in 1972 at her very early age just before her getting admission to college education after doing her school level education with distinction .She was a

brilliant student during her school and college days and because of her merit and devotion she had come over all adversities and odds of life to reach the level of attainment of highest level of education.

After her father's death she had really to face the struggle of life to continue her education and support the day to day struggle of existence of the undivided joint family of which she was a decision-making member along with her brothers. Along with her struggle of survival at that early age in absence of her father she had to undergo relentless fight against the existing odds of social life and adverse undesired systems being in existence in environment at that period.

She always possessed a personality to be outspoken in nature and could not tolerate or succumb to any situation to compromise with truth, justice and honesty in her personal issues and also political issues. Her such unique nature and attitude had been in several situations cause of her embarrassment which used to be entertained always by her with her uncompromising attitude.

### **7.3.2 The mass leader in the vortex of turbulence of social and political system:**

In coming to her political life following the footsteps of her just and upright father, she had enjoyed the blessings of her mother. She, at the beginning of her education in Jogmaya Debi College was involved in student movement and had initiated the 'Chatra Parishad' wing. With her charismatic ability even at that early age overcoming strong existing political odds created by the left parties and also the Naxalites during the days of seventies and afterwards she was seen to be very popular and acceptable student leader and consequently selected as the founder president of that unit. She was elected in that position for consecutively three successive terms being uncontested.

Consequently during those periods being stretched in between early or mid seventies to even nineties, there were periods of all uncertainties, atrocities, violence etc. in political and social system in Kolkata to such an extent that the charismatic mass leader Mamata Banerjee had been very badly in the midst of the vortex created out of such turbulence and all these odds. The situation as was developed during those days of Marxist rule was such adverse that even her existence as an individual in social service or a beloved charismatic mass leader was in utter threat. The event of 16<sup>th</sup> August, 1990 falls short any language to state the extent of heinous practice adopted against her.

### **7.3.3 Mass leader in provocations and prejudices:**

The mass leader had to meet several provocations and threats to get deviated from her path of justness and honesty. In several situations, when she was student leader at her early age, she was asked to join the political activities belonging to the then ruling party and enrich that by her rare available charisma and also in several situations subjected to be threatened thereof. But her steadfastness kept her away from all these prejudices and she in no way had deviated from her principle and struggle of justice. The different situations and events that she faced during those days justify these and also the Parliament election debacle of 1989 that she faced is an outcome of such situation.

### **7.3.4. Mass leader in recognition and blessings from mass:**

Mass leader Mamata Banerjee along with enjoying the adversities and atrocities of society in her growth track has also been immensely showered with love, affection, blessings and support of people of all class and sections of society.

Her election victory at her early age in Jadavpur (Kolkata) Parliament constituency election in 1984 is still remembered as an exemplary achievement of Charismatic quality and her availability of blessing of mass of all sections of society. Since beginning of her life in social and political activities she has enjoyed the blessings, love and support of several great personalities of India. She enjoyed the enviable scope and privilege of appreciation, admiration and recognition of different great personalities – personalities of national and international eminence. Apart from these possibly other than very few leaders from country and abroad no one had enjoyed such mass support and recognition. These all justify abundantly her charismatic ability.

#### **76.3.5. The mass leader is creative and genius:**

Other than all these the mass leader Mamata Banerjee has another place – the place absolutely owned by her and she is very silently mediating in her own area out of her mountainous volume of activities and responsibilities.

Instead of being in the premises where she is having her name and fame, had she been in the premises where she is absolutely silent of her activities, she could have well achieved a global name and reputation for her proficiency of her own creation.

She has authored about 50 books to her credit in different areas and most these had earned high accreditation and recognition from the intelligentsia level of country and abroad. The different books contain different fundamental aspects of different scholarly contents.

Also she deserves credit for her creative work on painting. She has plenty of original work in this area and she is regularly involved in cartoon of these rare artistic activities. .

Also she is an exponent singer in Tagore songs and has real mastery in Tagore literature. She has studied Tagore literature along with different other literatures etc and she has a unique passion over Tagore literature.

#### **7.4: Mass leader a passionate one to be always by side of oppressed and distressed**

The mass leader since the early days of her life had been by the toiling people who are really helpless and remain uncared. In her early life she took an obscure job in a milk dairy for the purpose of providing financial support to her family in absence of her father. She at that phase of life had proactively come forward to safeguard the cause of the people who had been with her and till present day in her present position also she encourages “*Didike Balo*” (emphasizes even the most obscure people to approach her in their need and consequently to look to the problems of these people) There are several instances when people of the lowest hierarchy of the society had directly come to her Kalighat residence under difficult situations like difficulties to get medical treatment from public hospitals even at mid-night and she actively helped them and rescued from the problem.

Didi Ke Bolo’ has been initiated by the Leader of the Mass Mamata Banerjee to address and redress the grievances of one and all. It also addresses other social issues. This campaign is launched to reach out to the mass with an eye to the next assembly elections in the state in 2021.

The Chief Minister of the West Bengal and the Trinmool Congress (TMC) supremo announced that more than 1,000 party workers would be visiting the different villages in next 100 days to know the local issues. She also said that party will further decide who will go to which village and when. While launching this public campaign, Mamata Banerjee also started a party helpline number and a website to reach out to the common people. It is a foresighted step of a leader to understand and motivate the common public.

#### **About 'Didi Ke Bolo' campaign:**

- In this initiative every citizen of West Bengal can directly contact chief minister. People can reach out to Mamata Banerjee by dialing a specific number.
- Mamata Banerjee launched a phone number – 9137091370 and a website – [www.didikebolo.com](http://www.didikebolo.com).
- One can drop his/her message, issue etc. on website or call the given phone number with their suggestions or problems. Assistance would be provided as quickly as possible.
- Mamata Banerjee said that with this platform she is just a call away from every citizen of West Bengal.

#### **Objectives of Campaign**

Main objective of this campaign is to improve citizen's participation and engagement by providing a platform. With the help of this campaign anybody residing in West Bengal or coming to West Bengal can share problems and give suggestions. The required actions would be taken immediately. The state government under the

leadership of Mamata Banerjee aims to reach out to about 80 percent of households in the West Bengal with Didi Ke Bolo.

### **7.5: Bangler Garbo Mamata (Mamata Banerjee is Pride of Bengal)**

The charismatic leader Mamata Banerjee with her charisma and mass leadership abilities has fascinated the mass of Bengal. To people of Bengal Mamata Banerji is an image and representation of their glory and pride. People at large feel pride that they have a leader like Mamata Banerjee who is by their side in their distress, in their pain and in pleasure. She is absolutely their own and they are absolutely belonging to her. They are carried over by the charismatic abilities of Mamata Banerjee to that extent they in many cases they paste the photograph of the charismatic leader in the windscreen of their cars, at their door steps etc.

To the people whom she leads thus turn to be a symbol of the Bengali term *Garba or pride*. People are heard to raise the occasional slogan “*Bangler Garbo Mamata*”. Also content of this slogan “*Bngler Garba Mamata*” is written on the photographs seen to be pasted in their doorsteps etc. as mentioned above.

The media reports that “*Banglar Gorbo Mamata*” campaign would create a “*personality cult*” and would be effective in enriching the Brand which assumes greater significance in the perspective of political marketing (Kotler & Levy, 1969).

The leadership qualities of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee have been acknowledge by the media, political leaders and the world at large. Former Union Finance Minister Yashant Sinha observed that she possesses all the qualities in order to qualify as the ‘face of a coalition’ - that can be constituted at the national level<sup>2</sup>. By dint of her

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<sup>2</sup><https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/mamata-banerjee-has-all-traits-to-become-a-good-pm-yashwant-sinha/321453>



unique leadership qualities, she is well accepted among the majority of the political circles at the national level.

Mamata Banerjee's unique leadership qualities are continuously acknowledged in the media as well. As per the India Today (July 16, 2018), her credential and consistency have led to her emergence and acceptance as a national leader and she has been aptly regarded as "THE CHALLENGER". In her recent handling of the COVID-19 crisis, one news medium reports: "In this process, she is reinforcing the goodwill of her admirers and receiving praise from her detractors...what lends special interest to Mamata's leadership is her transformed personality in a leadership role"<sup>3</sup>.

Mamata Banerjee's leadership credentials have been acknowledged at the international level as well. Recently, she has been invited at The Oxford Union Debate in UK, which is an important platform at the international level and she is the first Indian woman leader to be invited to deliver lecture.

### **7.6: Conclusion on Hypothesis 1**

Let us conclude finally for the hypothesis 1 made earlier. Having made the above discussions on the challenges faced by mass leader Mamata Banerjee and her achievements we can boldly conclude that -

*Mamata Banerjee is truly a successful charismatic leader.*

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<sup>3</sup><https://thewire.in/politics/mamata-banerjees-turnabout-moment-as-she-leads-from-the-front-in-the-battle-against-covid-19>