



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

## Rethinking Inequality In West Bengal: Caste, Class, Reservation Policies, And Social Justice Under The Regime Of Mamata Banerjee

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Image-1.



Map of West Bengal with all districts.

**Abstract-**

This paper explores the growing landscape of caste, class, and social justice in West Bengal, focusing on the period under Mamata Banerjee's leadership. The state has long been a site of complex sociopolitical dynamics, with entrenched caste hierarchies and socioeconomic disparities shaping its political discourse. This study delves into the state's reservation policies and examines their role in addressing the needs of marginalized communities, including Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

Since 2011, West Bengal's approach to social justice has developed from class-based policies under the CPI (M) to a more caste-conscious framework under the Trinamool Congress (TMC). Mamata Banerjee's government has expanded reservation benefits for OBCs, especially Muslim communities, because of her political benefits in the election as there are no constitutional provisions for religious based reservation in India. A total of 97 Muslim castes were included in the list of OBCs in Categories A and B. The paper also highlights the legal complexities surrounding these policies, including the 2024 Calcutta High Court ruling that invalidated the OBC status of Muslim communities, which sparked intense political debate.

West Bengal's reservation system fosters inclusion; however, a new study reveals its limitations and contradictions, particularly the conflict between economic equality and caste-based justice. West Bengal's complex interplay of caste, political power, and social justice is further examined through key legal and political milestones.

The evolving trajectory of social justice in West Bengal, a product of political and legal influences, highlights valuable lessons on the intricate relationships between caste, class, and policy-making in modern India.

**Keywords:** Marginalized Castes, Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Social Justice, Reservation Policy, Politics, Muslims, Calcutta High Court, Supreme Court of India, Mandal Commission. Trinamool Congress (TMC), Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP), CPI(M), Indian National Congress (Indira).

**Introduction:**

West Bengal is in the eastern part of India. It shares its international borders with Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal. States such as Assam, Sikkim, Orissa, Jharkhand, and Bihar surround it. West Bengal comprises of 23 districts.

Caste in Bengal (West Bengal):

According to the Census of India of 1931, the Hindu population was 22,212,069, constituting 43.5 percent of the state's total population. Hindus were the majority in Western Bengal, comprising 82.9 percent of the population; in Central Bengal, 49.8 percent; in North Bengal, 36.4 percent; and in East Bengal, 27.37 percent. The Cultural Research Institute (Kolkata) estimated that the population of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in West Bengal was around 1.21 crore, based on the 1931 census.

The three higher castes Brahman, Vaidya and Kayastha formed 6 percent of total population of Bengal. Among these, 12.7 percent of Kayastha pursued clerical occupations, 16.6 percent of Brahmins engaged in traditional priest roles, and 18.8 percent of Vaidya followed the traditional occupation of medicine.

In Bengal the castes are divided into two main Groups<sup>1</sup>:

1. The Brahmins and 2. The Shudras. The Shudras are further divided into four sub-castes based on their status regarding food and water: (a) the Sat-Sudra group includes castes such as Kayastha and Nabashakh; (b) the Jalacharaniya-Sudras comprise castes that do not technically belong to the Nabashakh.

#### Reservation policy in West Bengal

The Government of West Bengal set up a committee for the Backward Classes on August 1, 1980, headed by Chhedi Lal Sathi. The Committee submitted its report on August 30, 1980. The committee recommended that poverty and low levels of living standards, rather than caste, should be the most important criteria for identifying backwardness". It also recommended the identification of occupational Groups as backwards and formulation of comprehensive programme for the economic developments and educational advancement of these Groups who are below the poverty---".<sup>2</sup> The committee was against the quotas in government services for backward classes, and the Government of West Bengal accepted it.

The Chief Minister of West Bengal Sri Jyoti Basu supported the reservation policy of the National Front Government as late as August 1990. In September, he changed his opinion regarding the reservation policy for OBCs and down heavily on Prime Minister Sri V.P. Singh Government and said "it should take a realistic view of the situation, instead of a hasty step for political gains."<sup>3</sup> He declared that "there were no Other backward Classes (OBCs) in West Bengal and the people in the State would be deprived under the new dispensation."<sup>4</sup>

Sri Jyoti Basu defended the reservation as he felt that even the constitutional safeguards for Schedule Castes and Scheduled Tribes had failed to erase their backwardness. He suggested land reforms, irrigation, provision of educational and medical facilities, and creation of more jobs for their upliftment. (Rupa 1991: 99).

There are 64 castes that benefit from the reservation policy. Earlier, there was only a 5 percent reservation for OBCs in government jobs, but it has now increased to 7 percent. According to government officials, the OBC population in the state is 15 percent, with 7.5 percent falling under the creamy layer. Other Backward Classes (OBCs) have been identified by both state and central governments. In the state, OBCs also receive benefits from educational institutions, although they were previously excluded from higher education benefits. Until the 12th standard, OBC students are eligible to receive these benefits. Certain castes have been identified as OBCs by both state and central governments. There are 54 OBCs recognized by the central government and 64 by the state government.

<sup>1</sup> Shah, Ghanshyam (eds.) (2002), *Caste and Democratic Politics in India*, New Delhi: Permanent Black. P.44, 55.

<sup>2</sup> *Government of India*, (1980), Report on The Backward Classes Commission, First Part, Vol- 1&2.

<sup>3</sup> Rupa, C. (1991), *Reservation Policy: Mandal Commission and After*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Ltd. P.99.

<sup>4</sup> Rupa, C. (1991), *Reservation Policy: Mandal Commission and After*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Ltd. P.98.

Ms. Mamata Banerjee defeated the Left Front government, led by Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, in the 2011 West Bengal Legislative Assembly Election. She became the eighth Chief Minister of West Bengal and has been serving this role since May 20, 2011. Ms. Banerjee is the founder of the All India Trinamool Congress (AITMC) and has been leading the party since 1998. She was born on January 5, 1955, in Calcutta (now Kolkata), West Bengal.

Ms. Mamata Banerjee was the youngest parliamentarian ever elected to the Lok Sabha, winning the Jadavpur seat in the 1984 general election as a member of the Indian National Congress (Indira).

From 1999 to 2000 and again from 2009 to 2011, Ms. Mamata Banerjee served as the Railway Minister, making her the first woman to hold this position. In 2011, she resigned from her post as the Railway Minister and became the Chief Minister of West Bengal.

In the 2021 West Bengal Assembly elections, Ms. Banerjee faced setbacks when she lost the Nandigram seat to Suwendu Adhikari of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP).

### **Lok Sabha Election 2024:**

In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in West Bengal, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) won 29 seats, while the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) secured 12 seats. This victory was crucial for establishing Ms. Mamata Banerjee as a prominent leader in West Bengal. Known for her outspoken nature and strong commitment to social causes, Ms. Banerjee earned the nickname "Didi" (elder sister) among her supporters.

### **Political Landscape and Demographics of West Bengal:**

West Bengal, with a population of over 90 million, has a diverse socio-political landscape, encompassing various castes and community groups. The state's Legislative Assembly consists of 294 seats, a significant portion of which is reserved for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). The reservation policy in West Bengal aims to ensure an adequate representation of these communities in both the political and administrative spheres.

Seat Distribution in the Legislative Assembly (2021):

All India Trinamool Congress (AITC): 215 seats

General: 159

SCs: 71

STs: 4

Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP): 77 seats

General: 55

SCs: 22

STs: 0

Indian Secular Front (ISF): 1 seat

Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM): 1 seat

This seat distribution reflects the significant role of backward communities in the state's political ecosystem, where SCs, STs, and OBCs hold a substantial share of reserved seats, ensuring that they benefit from the targeted affirmative action policies.

Reservation Policy in West Bengal under Mamata Banerjee's regime

The reservation policy for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in West Bengal plays a crucial role in promoting social justice, equality, and representation of historically marginalized communities. This policy aims to address socioeconomic disadvantages by providing reserved seats in government jobs, educational institutions, and local governance bodies.

In 2012, the West Bengal government enacted the *West Bengal Backward Classes (Other than SCs and STs) (Reservation of Vacancies in Services and Posts) Act*. Since 1995, only 5 percent of the posts were reserved for OBCs, which increased to 7 percent in 1999 and further increased to 17 percent in 2010. The current Act provides a 17 percent reservation for OBCs, divided into two categories: 10 percent for OBCs in Category A and 7 percent for OBCs in Category B.

**Table-1.**

**List of Other Backward Classes (O.B.C.) - Category wise Recognized by Government of West Bengal**

Sl.	(Category-A) More Backward Classes (10 percent Reservations)	Sl.	(Category-B) Backward Classes (7 percent Reservation)
1	Abdal (Muslim)*	1	Baishya Kapali
2	Baidya Muslim*	2	Bansi Barman
3	Basni / Bosni (Muslim)*	3	Barujibi
4	Beldar Muslim*	4	Betkar (Bentkar)
5	Bepari / Byapari Muslim*	5	Bhar
6	Bhatia Muslim*	6	Bharbhujia
7	Muslim Bhatiyara*	7	Bhujel
8	Chowduli (Muslim)*	8	Bungchheng
9	Muslim Chutor Mistri*	9	Chasatti (Chasa)
10	Muslim Dafadar*	10	Chitrakar
11	Dhukre (Muslim)*	11	Scheduled Castes converts to Christianity and their progeny
12	Dhunias*	12	Devanga
13	Fakir, Sain*	13	Dewan
14	Gayen (Muslim)*	14	Dhimal
15	Ghosi (Muslim)*	15	Gangot
16	Hajjam (Muslim)*	16	Goala, Gope (Pallav Gope, Ballav Gope, Yadav Gope, Gope, Ahir and Yadav)
17	Hawari, Dhobi (other than those included in the list of Scheduled Castes)*	17	Hele / Halia / Chasi-Kaibartta, Das Kaibartta
18	Muslim Jamadar*	18	Kahar
19	Jolah (Ansari-Momin)*	19	Kansari
20	Muslim Kalandar*	20	Kapali
21	Kan (Muslim)*	21	Karani
22	Kasai*	22	Karmakar
23	Khotta Muslim*	23	Keori / Koiri
24	Muslim Laskar*	24	Khen (Non-Bania category)
25	Mahaldar (Muslim)*	25	Kumbhakar
26	Majhi / Patni Muslim*	26	Kurmi
27	Mal Muslim*	27	Malakar
28	Mallick*	28	Mangar
29	Midde*	29	Moirra (Halwai), Modak (Halwai)
30	Muslim Molla*	30	Nagar

31	Muchi / Chamar Muslim*	31	Napit
32	Muslim Barujibi / Barui*	32	Nembang
33	Muslim Biswas*	33	Newar
34	Muslim Haldar*	34	Rai (including Chamling)
35	Muslim Mali, Faraji (Muslim)*	35	Raju
36	Muslim Mandal*	36	Sampang
37	Muslim Piyada*	37	Sarak
38	Muslim Sanpui/Sapui*	38	Satchasi
39	Nashya-Sekh*	39	Shankakar
40	Muslim Nehariya*	40	Sunuwar
41	Nikari (Muslim)*	41	Sutradhar
42	Patidar*	42	Swarnakar
43	Muslim Penchi*	43	Tamboli / Tamali
44	Muslim Rajmistri, Raj (Muslim)*	44	Tanti, Tantubaya
45	Rayeen (Kunjra)*	45	Teli, Kolu
46	Muslim Sardar*	46	Thami
47	Shershabadia*	47	Turha
48	Siuli (Muslim)*	48	Yogi, Nath
49	Tutia (Muslim)*	49	Muslim Darji / Ostagar / Idrishi*
50	Dhanuk	50	Dhali (Muslim)*
51	Jogi	51	Pahadia Muslim*
52	Khandait	52	Tal-Pakha Benia*
53	Kosta / Kostha	53	Adaldar (Muslim)*
54	Lakhera/Laahera	54	Akunji/Akan/Akhan (Muslim)*
55	Roniwar/Rauniyar	55	Bag (Muslim)*
56	Sukli	56	Chaprashi (Muslim)*
57	Bhangi (Muslim)*	57	Churihar*
58	Dhatri/Dai/Dhaity (Muslim)*	58	Daptari (Muslim)*
59	Gharami (Muslim)*	59	Dewan (Muslim)*
60	Ghorkhan*	60	Dhabak (Muslim)*
61	Goldar/Golder (Muslim)*	61	Gazi (Muslim), Par (Muslim)*
62	Halsana (Muslim)*	62	Khan (Muslim)*
63	Kayal (Muslim)*	63	Sadhukhan (Muslim)*
64	Naiya (Muslim)*	64	Majhi
65	Shikari/Sikari (Muslim)*	65	Malita/Malitha/Malitya (Muslim)*
66	Sekh/Seikh*	66	Mistri (Muslim)*
67	Bayen (Muslim)*	67	Paik (Muslim)*
68	Bhuiya/Bhunya (Muslim)*	68	Pailan (Muslim)*
69	Borah / Bara / Bora (Muslim)*	69	Purkait (Muslim)*
70	Gorey (Muslim)*	70	Sana (Muslim)*
71	Hati (Muslim)*	71	Sareng (Muslim)*
72	Jatuya (Muslim)*	72	Sarkar (Muslim)*
73	Khondekar/Khonkar (Muslim)*	73	Shah (Shah/Sahaji)*
74	Pahar (Muslim)*	74	Tarafdar (Muslim)*
75	Raptan (Muslim)*	75	Gavara
76	Kalwar	76	Mouli (Muslim)*
77	Atta (Muslim)*	77	Sepai (Muslim)*
78	Khansama*	78	Baradi (Muslim)*
79	Hawaikar (Muslim)*	79	Dalal (Muslim)*
80	Khajonkriya / Khajankriya (Muslim)*	80	Hoseni Goyala (Muslim)*
81	Hazari (Muslim)*	81	Khalashi (Muslim)*
		82	Kichni (Muslim)*
		83	Mukti/Mufti (Muslim)*
		84	Kalal/Iraqi*

		85	Sarala/Sarwala (Muslim)*
		86	# Omitted (Notification no-762-BCW/MR-116/12 dated 01-03-2013)
		87	Bagani (Muslim)*
		88	Bhandari (Muslim)*
		89	Katha (Muslim)*
		90	Mudi / Mehedi (Muslim)*
		91	Sahana (Muslim)*
		92	Kazi/Kaji/Quazi/Quaji (Muslim)*
		93	Kotal (Muslim)*
		94	Gurung
		95	Layek (Muslim)*
		96	Khas
		97	Shikder/Shikdar/Sikder/Sikdar (Muslim) *
		98	Chowdhury/Chowdhuri (Muslim) *
		99	Bairagi/Baishnab

**Source:** Backward Classes Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal.

\*Indicate Muslim communities amongst the OBCs

### Reservation Policy for OBCs in West Bengal:

West Bengal follows a 17% reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs), in line with the Mandal Commission's recommendations, which provide 27% reservations (following the Supreme Court verdict) for socially and educationally backward communities as OBCs in India.

OBCs that fall under the 'Creamy Layer' are excluded from receiving any benefits in government jobs and educational institutions. This categorization was based on relative backwardness, as determined by a survey conducted by the University of Calcutta and the Cultural Research Institute in West Bengal. A total of 180 castes were included in the OBC category.

As of March 31, 2013, 81 of these castes were included in OBC Category A, and 99 castes were placed in OBC Category B. Category A is identified as "More Backward Classes," while Category B is recognized as "Backward Classes." Notably, most Muslim communities in West Bengal were included in OBC Categories A and B. There were 56 castes in OBC Category A and 41 castes in OBC Category B in the state. The total number of Muslim castes on the OBC list of West Bengal was 97.

In addition to the 17% reservation for OBCs, Scheduled Castes (SCs) are allocated 22% of the seats, while Scheduled Tribes (STs) receive 6% of the total seats in government jobs and educational institutions. The general category, which consists mainly of upper-caste communities, occupies the remaining seats in public services and educational institutions.

### Court Interventions and Key Legal Decisions

The Calcutta High Court recently cancelled all Other Backward Classes (OBC) certificates issued in West Bengal after 2010, terming the OBC list prepared after 2010 as "illegal".<sup>5</sup> The court directed the West Bengal Commission for Backward Classes to prepare a new list of OBCs based on the West Bengal Commission for the Backward Classes Act of 1993.

<sup>5</sup> Times of India, May 23, 2024.

The court's decision was made in response to public interest litigation (PIL), challenging the process of granting OBC certificates. The PIL claimed that the OBC certificates issued after 2010 bypassed the 1993 Act, depriving them truly from the backward classes of their due certificates.

This decision, delivered during ongoing general elections, has sparked political controversy. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee rejected the ruling, while Union Home Minister Amit Shah accused the state government of appeasing Muslims.

This judgment, which affects approximately 500,000 people, prohibits the appointment of individuals from these communities based on invalidated OBC certificates, although those already appointed will not be affected. The court criticized the selection of these Muslim communities as OBCs, stating that they were driven by political motives and violated constitutional norms, as no data were provided to show their socioeconomic disadvantage in government services.

West Bengal's OBC reservation, which is 17% (10% for OBC-A and 7% for OBC-B), has been a subject of contention. The court noted that the inclusion of many communities, particularly Muslims, lacked a proper evaluation of their socioeconomic status and was done without legislative approval.

The controversy dates back to 2010, when the Left Front government introduced a 10% reservation for Muslim OBCs, based on recommendations from a national commission. After Mamata Banerjee assumed power in 2011, more Muslim communities were included in the OBC list. Banerjee vowed to continue the OBC reservation policy, asserting that it was based on a house-to-house survey and hinted at appealing to the verdict in a higher court (Hindustan Times May 23, 2024).

Over the years, the Supreme Court and Calcutta High Court have played pivotal roles in the interpretation and enforcement of the OBC reservation policy in West Bengal. Several landmark rulings have clarified various aspects of the reservation process, including community categorization, exclusion of the creamy layer, and reservation of seats in local governance.

### **1. Reservation in Local Body Elections (2019):**

In 2019, the Calcutta High Court upheld the reservation of OBCs seats in the Panchayat elections. The court ruled that the state's decision to reserve seats for OBCs in both rural and urban bodies was valid and constitutional. This decision reaffirmed the state's responsibility to empower OBCs by ensuring their representation in the local governance.

### **2. OBC Creamy Layer Issue:**

In 2015, the Calcutta High Court ruled that the West Bengal government must adhere to the "creamy layer" criteria, ensuring that individuals who exceeded the prescribed income threshold were excluded from reservations. This ruling sought to prevent the misuse of affirmative action by ensuring that only the truly disadvantaged within the OBC category benefited from the reservation policy.

### **3. OBC Categorization and Eligibility:**

The High Court has been proactive in scrutinizing the eligibility of communities for the OBC classification. In 2017, the court struck down the inclusion of certain Muslim castes in the OBC list, asserting that the state failed to conduct a proper review to determine whether these communities met the criteria for social and economic backwardness. This ruling emphasized the importance of a thorough and transparent process for classifying communities as OBCs, highlighting the need for objective evidence of backwardness.

#### **4. Reservation in Promotions:**

In 2020, the Calcutta High Court addressed the issue of promotion-based reservations in government services. While the court acknowledged the need for affirmative action in recruitment, it stressed that promotion-based reservations should be reviewed to ensure fairness and prevent any compromise on merit. This rule sparked a debate on the balance between affirmative action and merit-based criteria, particularly in public sector promotions.

#### **5. Implementation of OBC Reservations in Education:**

The High Court also played a crucial role in ensuring the proper implementation of OBC reservations in educational institutions. In 2020, the court directed the West Bengal University of Technology (WBUT) and other universities to strictly follow the prescribed reservation percentages in admissions, particularly for professional courses such as engineering and medical colleges. This decision underscored the need for transparency and accountability in the admission process, ensuring that reservations are properly implemented, and that qualified candidates from OBC communities receive their due representation in higher education.

Last but not the least, the dynamics of caste, political power, and the quest for social justice in West Bengal present complex and evolving narratives. Historically, caste-based inequalities have played a pivotal role in shaping the state's social fabric, with marginalized communities often left at the periphery of economic, educational, and political power. While West Bengal has made significant strides in addressing these disparities through affirmative action policies, such as reservations in education, government jobs, and political representation, the road to true equality remains fraught with challenges.

The journey of reservation policy in West Bengal, shaped by the state's unique caste dynamics and political power structures, offers a complex lens through which we can understand the interplay between social justice, caste-based inequality, and political agendas. Over the decades, the state has witnessed significant shifts in how caste and social justice have been approached, especially through the policies of different ruling parties, such as the CPI(M) and the Trinamool Congress (TMC). Both have left distinct marks on the reservation system, with contrasting ideologies and strategies that have had profound implications for the marginalized communities they aimed to uplift.

The Trinamool Congress (TMC), under Mamata Banerjee since 2011, has adopted a more cautious approach to reservations. The TMC has taken affirmative action for OBCs, especially Muslim OBCs, a cornerstone of its policy platform. While this has led to an expansion of reservation benefits, it has also given rise to criticisms of vote-bank politics, with the TMC accused of using Muslim community-based mobilization to strengthen its political base. The inclusion of the Muslim community in OBCs has affected historically backward Hindu OBCs, who have been marginalized for centuries. The TMC has pushed for greater representation of Muslim OBCs in government jobs and educational institutions, which is against the constitutional norm, and the Judge of the Calcutta High Court stated that it was illegal. Ms Mamata Banerjee included the Muslims in OBCS for her political benefits because Muslims are approx. 30 percent of total population of the West Bengal. The TMC is still in favor of providing reservations to OBCs Muslims in the state. West Bengal continues to grapple

with the legacies of its political past and the ongoing need for social equality and social justice in historically marginalized sections of society.

The journey towards social justice in West Bengal is far from complete. It requires an ongoing reflection on how caste-based exclusion, class-based oppression, and political power intersect, and how reservation policies can be continuously refined to meet the changing needs of a diverse and evolving society. Although divergent in their approach, CPI (M) and TMC provide critical lessons on how reservations can be a tool for empowerment and how it can also be co-opted for political gain. As we rethink inequality in West Bengal, it is clear that caste, political power, and the quest for social justice remain central to the state's future trajectory. In this evolving landscape, inclusive policies that not only distribute resources but also address historical injustices, caste-based discrimination, and empowering marginalized groups will be key to achieving a truly just society in West Bengal. The legal landscape, especially through decisions by the Calcutta High Court and Supreme Court, has played a crucial role in ensuring the implementation of affirmative action. Despite these challenges, the quest for social justice in West Bengal continues to be an essential part of state political discourse. For true social transformation, it is crucial to rethink not only reservation policies but also the underlying social structures that perpetuate caste-based inequality. West Bengal can move closer to realising a society where economic opportunity, political representation, and social dignity are accessible to all, regardless of caste.

Ultimately, rethinking inequality requires a commitment to both structural reform and a deeper understanding of how caste-based disparities continue to shape individuals' lives. As the state continues its journey toward inclusive growth and equity, it must balance the need for affirmative action with efforts to transcend caste-based divisions and foster a more just and unified society.

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**Appendix-1**

Here's a breakdown of the population by district in West Bengal, categorized by SCs, STs, OBCs, General, and Muslims:

**District-wise Population (2011 Census)**

District	SCs	STs	OBCs	General Caste	Muslims
<b>1. Alipurduar</b>	23.6%	23.3%	34.4%	18.7%	4.4%
<b>2. Bankura</b>	24.6%	6.7%	40.6%	28.1%	6.2%
<b>3. Paschim Bardhaman</b>	24.7%	5.5%	36.4%	33.4%	10.4%
<b>4. Purba Bardhaman</b>	23.1%	4.3%	39.1%	33.5%	12.3%
<b>5. Birbhum</b>	24.4%	6.6%	37.2%	31.8%	18.1%
<b>6. Cooch Behar</b>	20.4%	12.3%	33.5%	33.8%	10.3%
<b>7. Darjeeling</b>	13.4%	23.9%	26.1%	36.6%	4.1%
<b>8. Dakshin Dinajpur</b>	24.1%	8.4%	36.3%	31.2%	14.1%
<b>9. Hooghly</b>	23.4%	4.6%	38.4%	33.6%	14.2%
<b>10. Howrah</b>	20.6%	4.4%	35.6%	39.4%	15.4%
<b>11. Jalpaiguri</b>	22.1%	18.1%	33.5%	26.3%	8.2%
<b>12. Jhargram</b>	24.5%	16.4%	35.6%	23.5%	5.1%
<b>13. Kalimpong</b>	14.1%	24.6%	26.4%	34.9%	3.3%
<b>14. Kolkata</b>	12.7%	2.5%	26.6%	58.2%	21.5%
<b>15. Malda</b>	16.2%	4.3%	30.3%	49.2%	51.5%
<b>16. Murshidabad</b>	17.4%	2.4%	31.4%	48.8%	66.2%
<b>17. Nadia</b>	23.6%	2.8%	36.3%	37.3%	27.4%
<b>18. North Parganas</b>	21.5%	2.2%	34.5%	41.8%	26.7%
<b>19. Paschim Medinipur</b>	24.9%	7%	43%	32%	25%

**Appedix-2.****Land Holding Patterns (2011 Agricultural Census)****Scheduled Castes (SCs):**

- Average land holding size: 0.44 hectares
- Marginal farmers (less than 1 hectare): 71.4%
- Small farmers (1-2 hectares): 16.3%
- Semi-medium farmers (2-4 hectares): 8.5%
- Medium farmers (4-10 hectares): 3.4%
- Large farmers (above 10 hectares): 0.4%

**Scheduled Tribes (STs):**

- Average land holding size: 0.63 hectares
- Marginal farmers: 63.2%
- Small farmers: 20.5%
- Semi-medium farmers: 11.2%
- Medium farmers: 4.5%
- Large farmers: 0.6%

**Other Backward Classes (OBCs):**

- Average land holding size: 0.61 hectares
- Marginal farmers: 65.1%
- Small farmers: 21.4%

