

**Rise of Chhatra Parishad as the Driving Force of the Congress
Politics in West Bengal (1954-1977) with Special Reference to the
Charismatic Leadership of
Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi**

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***Abstract:** The formation of Chhatra Parishad on 28th August, 1954 is an important epoch in the political history as well as the history of students' movement in West Bengal. As a newly formed State due to partition, West Bengal started its journey with number of serious problems like political unrest, economic stagnation, refugee issues, food crises, Naxalite activities, Indo-Chinese, Indo-Pak, and Liberation War of Bangladesh along with large scale unemployment. Under the circumstances, Chhatra Parishad took various constructive political measures for the cause of nation building. Not only that Chhatra Parishad under the leadership of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi made a timely and strong resistance against the mischievous activities of the CPI (M) that undoubtedly somehow relieved people of the State from the anxieties and uncertainties of unnecessary bloody politics. 'Students' concession in buses and trains' is one of the greatest achievements of Chhatra Parishad movement. The most remarkable achievement of Chhatra Parishad of that time was to pick up a bunch of potential students' leaders from the different strata of the society, who are now dominating the political atlas of West Bengal.*

***Key Words:** Azadi, Chhatra Parishad, Constructive, Charismatic, Mischievous, Violent etc.*

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Introduction

There was a fascinating outlook of Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India as well as one of the architects of modern India that during the post independent period students

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should not participate in the active politics of the country. As the students were not lag behind during the time of freedom movement for removing the chain of bondage which encircled our motherland, so after independence students should not participate in the sphere of active politics for attaining power on behalf of the political parties. In that case their role would be certainly different. That is why Pundit Nehru wanted complete involvement of the student communities in their education so that they would be able to become valuable citizen of the country and devote themselves for the upliftment and creation of their motherland.¹ So, Pundit Nehru wanted to consolidate the student community apolitically under the umbrella of 'National Students Union' (NSU) which would be absolutely free from active party or power politics. But the very necessary efforts of Pundit Nehru could not fulfill because all the political parties did not agree to accept the opinion of Pundit Nehru. In that pretext, the opposition parties particularly the name of the Communists parties deserve special mention.

Yea Azadi Jhuta Hai

In the post independent period, the communist party of India started uniting the students of colleges and universities under the banner of 'Students Federation'.² In West Bengal and Kerala, the 'Students Federation' established their influence among the students swiftly. The students under the banner of 'Students Federation' would participate in the students' union election in the various colleges, universities and after winning the election they would adopt some well planning programme for motivating the general students towards the doctrine of communism and subsequently the communists started using the students for winning general election in order to capture power in active politics. It is noteworthy that the communist leaders ignored the freedom with the slogan '*Yea Azadi Jhuta Hai*'³ what inspired the youth- students to hate freedom which was obtained by the country on 15th August, 1947 with great cost of partition and suspect the congress leaders as well as Gandhiji.⁴

Urging the Necessity of a Students' Wing of Congress Party and Birth of Chhatra Parishad (C.P)

There were so many students hailed from the congress families and believer of anti-imperialism as well as ideal of the congress party also tried their best to counter the Students Federation and urged the necessity to form a students' wing according to the ideal of Indian National Congress. In that circumstances, leaders like Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Prafulla Chandra Sen, Bijay Singh Nahar, Bijayananda Chattopadhyay assessing the situation and requested Atulya Ghosh, the then President of the West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee (WBPC) and one of the influential leaders of Congress Working Committee (CWC), the highest decision making body of the Congress party to take appropriate steps regarding the formation of a students' wing according to the vision of Indian National Congress. In spite of strong objection of Delhi

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Congress leaders particularly Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru as stated above, only as a result of the extraordinary dealing and influence of Atulya Ghosh with the central congress leadership and thereby considering the urgency of West Bengal and Kerala where the communists using the students for the interests of power politics, finally, the Central Congress leadership gave the approval for the formation of a students' organization in two states. In that context, on 27th and 28th August, 1954 some Congress leaders and workers of Students-Youth attended in a two days conference in Indian Association Hall, Kolkata, under the Chairmanship of Saila Kumar Mukherjee, the then Speaker of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly. In order to resist the gradual thriving of students' federation a proposal was accepted to form a students' organization on the basis of democratic philosophy. The name of 'Chhatra Parishad' was also accepted in that conference on 28th August, 1954. In that way 'Chhatra Parishad' was formed on 28th August, the 50th birthday of Atulya Ghosh in 1954. The Chhatra Parishad proposes the idea of student activism based on progressive thought, secular vision and democratic action.⁵ Besides, Atulya Ghosh, those respectable personalities remained present at the time of the birth of Chhatra Parishad were Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Prafulla Chandra Sen, Bijay Singh Nahar, Shri Bijayananda Chattopadhyay, Gyan Chandra Ghosh etc. It is noteworthy that Shri Bidhu Bhushan Ghosh became the first President of Chhatra Parishad of West Bengal.⁶

Chinese Attack on India in 1962 and State Conferences of Chhatra Parishad at Malda, Wellington Squire, Midnapore, Mahajati Sadan

In the second day of the conference of West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee (WBPC) held at Malda in 1955, a students' conference was held with the representatives of the students. Notable personalities like U. N. Dhevar, Babu Jagjivan Ram, Atulya Ghosh and other provincial congress leaders were present there. The third state conference of the Chhatra Parishad was held at Wellington Squire, Calcutta in 1959. Shyamal Bhattacharya was elected as the State President of the Chhatra Parishad. It was decided to write a constitution of Chhatra Parishad and its Flag was also approved in that conference. At the same venue i. e. Wellington Squire the fourth state conference of the Chhatra Parishad took place in 1961 and again Shyamal Bhattacharya was elected the President. In the meantime, China attacked India in 1962 and one portion of the Communist party started spreading the rumor that not China rather it was India first attacked China. As a result of the ideological conflict the Communist Party of India divided into two parts. The pro-Chinese communist leadership formed the Marxist Communists party. Under the circumstances, nationalist students' society gradually started joining with the Chhatra Parishad on the basis of ideological ground and thereupon the domination of Chhatra Parishad over the various College units gradually established. On 3rd December, 1962 a gigantic students' conference was held under the banner of Chhatra Parishad as a protest against the Chinese attack on India. In that conference the nationalist students took oath for the protection of their country. In the fifth State Conference of the Chhatra Parishad

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that was held at Midnapore in 1964 and once again Shri Shyamal Bhattacharya was reelected President of Chhatra Parishad. The sixth State Conference of the Chhatra Parishad was taken place at Mahajati Sadan in Kolkata on 8th May in the year of 1968 under the Presidentship of Shri Indu Adhikari. From that conference in the presence of Bijayananda Chattopadhyay, Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munshi was elected as the President of Chhatra Parishad unanimously. Actually Chhatra Parishad under the leadership of Priya Ranjan Das Munshi got a new life and always considered as the turning point in the history of constructive political movement as well as life line of Chhatra Parishad.⁷

Civil Rights and Students' Movement

As in the decades of 60s in the field of the establishment of 'Civil Rights' the students of the Barkley University gave birth to the awakening throughout the country and shook the administration along with political set up of the United States of America; in the decades of 70s the revolution of French students vibrated the city of Parry; in the same way-the Naxalbari movement and the contemporary wave of nationalist students' movement particularly the activities of Chhatra Parishad brought the change of political and social atmosphere in West Bengal also.⁸

Role of Chhatra Parishad under the Leadership of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi during United Front Govt. and Anarchy of CPI (M)

In the meanwhile, as a result of the split of West Bengal Pradesh Congress and birth of Bangla Congress (1st May, 1966) under the leadership of Ajoy Kumar Mukherjee, emergence of United Front and the atrocities of some of its partners in the sphere of *gheraos* and its destructive politics along with gradual attack on opposition parties became day to day affairs; when the congress leaders were in a dilemma and frustrated then the students community came forward under the leadership of Chhatra Parishad in the form of protest against the foregoing activities of the left front particularly the CPI (M). In that context, Shri Nitya Gopal Dutta, a student of Birati College was brutally murdered by the Marxists cadres on 22nd April, in 1969. Chhatra Parishad under the leadership of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi made a strong protest against that brutal killing and launched a political march to the Mahakaran, the head administrative centre of the state of West Bengal on 23rd April along with the dead body of Nitya Gopal Dutta. It is mention worthy that at that moment of United Front Government; the CPI (M) was establishing its domination rapidly through the policy of occupancy and blood shedding in the one hand and the Congress party was wasting valuable time due to internal feud. Naturally, as a party Congress was losing its influence over the common people. In spite of all that Chhatra Parishad under the worthy leadership of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi stood against the misdeed of the left politics and showed his courageous political sagacity marching procession towards Mahakaran, with the activists of Chhatra Parishad as well as his followers.⁹

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Days of Lawlessness and Destructive Politics of Fear and Bloodshed of the CPI (M) and Justice in '*Gana Adalat*' by Chhatra Parishad

During the period of First and Second United Front Government, the atrocities of the CPI (M) was so high that even Shri Ajoy Mukherjee, the Chief Minister of West Bengal was assaulted by the non-Gazetted employees affiliated to the Left CPI(M) at Writers' Buildings. Not only that intra-party clashes in open platform along with many provocative comments made by the CPI (M) leaders deteriorated the Law and order situation of West Bengal to the worst level and thereby Ajoy Mukherjee, the sitting Chief Minister was forced to launch his Satyagraha movement at Curzon Park on and from 1st December, 1969, on Gandhian line in order to put an end of the politics of violence and murder sponsored by the CPI (M), one of his Front partners. It is noteworthy that in the 2nd United Front Government CPI (M) leader Jyoti Basu was the Deputy Chief Minister along with Home Department. The mischievous activities of the CPI (M) under the protection of Home Department of its leader Jyoti Basu was so naked that even they attacked the fasting camp of the Chief Minister with shouting and slogan.¹⁰ A group of violent demonstrators rushed to the camp and smashed chairs and tables, cut telephone lines and threw shows. Chief Minister Ajoy Mukherjee himself was sustained injuries on his forehead and chest. Assessing the gravity of the situation, at the time of addressing a mammoth gathering, Ajoy Mukherjee said, "If the people of West Bengal feel that the present state of lawlessness should continue, we shall silently bid them farewell. Don't be silent; he warned the people against the lawlessness, otherwise a catastrophe would overtake the country".¹¹ At that moment of Lawlessness and politics of murder, Chhatra Parishad arranged an open '*Gana Adalat*' i.e. 'Public Court of Justice' in front of Mahakaran on 15th January, 1970. In that '*Gana Adalat*' after hearing the inhuman charges against the offenders, the '*Gana Adalat*' in its verdict abrogating the citizenship of Jyoti Basu, Hare Krishna Konger, Satya Priya Roy, Pravas Roy and Ram Chatterjee, there were exiled out of India. The significant event was that the Justice of that '*Gana Adalat*' was Chhatra Parishad leader Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi.¹²

Role of Chhatra Parishad against the Destructive Politics of Fear and Bloodshed of the Naxalites

At that moment of peril, the Naxalite violence reached its extreme level. On 24th February, 1970, the campus of Calcutta University was attacked by 30 Naxalites and rampant bombs and stones were thrown towards the students' union rooms. The offices were ransacked and furniture's were destroyed. On 3rd March, 1970 as many as seven cinema halls were attacked by Naxalites with bombs and fire were also set on one.¹³ The numbers of bomb were hurled on 13th April, 1970 in the room of the Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University and in the house of Siddhartha Shankar Ray. Books of the university library were set on fire and ransacked the properties of the university. Shri Bipul Roy, a Chhatra Parishad worker was murdered on the

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footpath of Amherst Street, Calcutta on 2nd May in 1970 at the time of public gathering addressed by Promode Das Gupta, CPI (M) leader in the Shradhananda Park. A procession was organized by Chhatra Parishad along with the dead body of Bipul Roy from Medical College to Writers' Buildings on 4th May, 1970. Priya Ranjan Das Munshi published a death list of 22 Chhatra Parishad workers on that day. A Chhatra Parishad worker named Shuvankar Ojha was shot death pulling him from the bus in Purulia on 23rd June, 1970. There was a black day in the history of Naxalite violence when the statue of Sir Ashutosh Mookherjee was broken and College Street became bloodshed. Shri Gopal Sen, the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of Jadavpur University was murdered on 30th December, 1970. Hemanta Kumar Basu, once colleague of Netaji Subhas Chandra Basu, one of the most popular leaders of that time earned the epithet of 'enemy less Hero' and Assembly candidate of Forward Bloc from the Shyambazar Constituency was also murdered by the extremists on 20th February, 1971. Bijayananda Chattopadhyay, one of the architects of Chhatra Parishad as well as head master of Akshay Educational Institution and the then Adi Congress leader of Howra was brutally killed on the way from Congress office to his home on 5th March, 1971.¹⁴

Movement of Chhatra Parishad for Students' Concession in Buses and Trains' and 'Free Education up to Class VIII' Under Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi

It is noteworthy that Chhatra Parishad under the charismatic leadership of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi got a new momentum in the political history of the then doldrums' situation in West Bengal. In that context, after Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi becoming the President of Yuba Congress, Subrata Mukherjee, a young energetic and selection of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi took the responsibility of the President of Chhatra Parishad. The famous 'Priya-Subrata' duo in West Bengal Politics adopted some effective measures for the interest of the students' community through their dynamic and pro-people political movement. One of such important movements in the name of Chhatra Parishad under the leadership of 'Priya-Subrata' duo was started movement for consolidating public opinion in favour of the 'students' concession in buses and trains' on and from 12th June, 1971. Not only that, at the same time, they also demanded introduction of 'free education up to class VIII' in Government and Government aided schools in West Bengal. It is an undeniable fact that due to the vigorous movement launched by the Chhatra Parishad under the leadership of Priya-Subrata duo and finally Siddhartha Shankar Ray, the then West Bengal Affairs Minister approved the demand of students' concession in buses and trains on 8th July, 1971.¹⁵ It should be remembered that the present generation of the students' community those who are enjoying 'concession in buses and trains' are the outcome of the movement under the leadership of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi.

Resistance of Chhatra Parishad against Bloody Politics under Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi

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It has already been mentioned that at the time of United Front Government the left parties particularly the CPI (M) unleashing the violent politics throughout the state and after becoming disgusted about the politics of murder and bloodshed of Marxist party, Ajoy Mukherjee, the then Chief Minister of United Front Government tendered his resignation and observed fasting Satyagraha as a mark of protest against the bloodshed during his Chief Ministership. In that period of peril, the puzzled congress leaders became confuse and unable to make a strong resistance against the ongoing atrocities. Under the circumstances, the Chhatra Parishad under the dynamic leadership of Priya Ranjan Das Munshi and a branch of youth leaders like Subrata Mukherjee, Somen Mitra, Sudip Bandopadhyay, Kumud Bhattacharyay, Pradip Bhattacharya, Nurul Islam, Jayanta Bhattacharya, Ashok Dev, Sougata Roy, Debaprasad Roy, Goutam Chakraborty, Laxmi Kanta Basu, etc. taking all type of life risk made in such a strong resistance for the protection of West Bengal from the blood bath of Naxalites and left CPI that people of West Bengal considered them as their protector. Observing political tactics and sagacity in Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi, Siddhartha Sankar Ray, West Bengal Affairs Minister and latter on Chief Minister of West Bengal gave him the title of 'Second Netaji'.¹⁶ Considering the bold leadership as well as life and death struggle of Chhatra Parishad leaders the people of West Bengal as if found the reflection of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in Priya Ranjan Das Munshi and gave their love to him generously which ultimately led to the congress party in power partially in 1971 and overwhelmingly in 1972.¹⁷ During the time of Chhatra Parishad movement against the violent politics of CPI (M) and Naxalites, it got proper cooperation and timely assistance from Siddhartha Shankar Ray which also considered as one of the important causes behind the success of the congress party in West Bengal in 1972 general election. Some eye witnesses of those turbulent political scenarios considered Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi as the helmsman of coming power of Congress party in 1972.¹⁸

Chhatra Parishad: Steersmen of Congress Victory in 1972

In the election of 1972, breaking the traditional system in distribution of party tickets, young leaders from Yuba Congress and Chhatra Parishad were given the priority for fighting the electoral battle. It is a fact that the most of the old and reputed congressmen were remained under the fold of Congress (O) while the leaders of the new generations particularly the Yuba Congress and Chhatra Parishad were amalgamated themselves with the Congress (R) which was known as Indira Congress or Naba Congress. It was also impossible to deny that the leaders of the Chhatra Parishad and Yuba Congress played a very crucial role in the victory of the Congress (R). They became as if the main driving force of the Congress (R) and got success in the electoral battle of 1972. It was observed by Somen Mitra who was given the party tickets from Sealdah constituency instead of sitting MLA, Binay Banerjee due to the endeavour of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi,¹⁹ the then All India Youth Congress President, that "as many as 80 MLAs of the 216 of the Congress (R) in 1972 whose average age groups were not above 30. If Siddhartha Babu would be able to utilize the youth force of the party properly in a united

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manner instead of taking every possible step to divide them, the future of the congress party in West Bengal as well as political carrier of Siddhartha Babu himself would not have to face difficulties.”²⁰

Estimate of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi as a Leader of the Leaders of West Bengal

A versatile genius, Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi was born on 13th November, 1945 at Chiribandar in East Dinajpur (presently Bangladesh) of undivided India.²¹ Emergence of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi in politics was in 1960s through Chhatra Parishad. He was an M.A., L.L.B. and alumni of Raiganj College and Calcutta University. Priya Ranjan was able to establish his political career starting from Chhatra Parishad – Youth Congress – Pradesh Congress Committee and thereupon in All India Congress Committee in 1970’s by dint of his extraordinary organizational capacity, attractive personality and of course oratory skill. He was elected as Member of Parliament as many as five times from West Bengal and Minister-in-charge of four important portfolios of the Government of India in two phases. At the time of performing his responsibility as a high profile political personality in state and national level, side by side he was the President of All India Football Federation for 20 years continuously. Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi was a man who had come out from the ‘feudalistic’ political character of the Congress party and wearing *dhuti- shirt* and taking hand-mike in hand, he stood against the bloody politics of the Communists and constructed solid organizational support base. As a result of class-character, the Congress party had lost its lower class vote bank, but, by dint of his courageous leadership and extraordinary skill to understand the nerve of common people, Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi was able to bring back common peoples’ confidence to the Congress party. He inducted a bunch of young-energetic leaders from the very middle class and lower middle families into the Congress politics in West Bengal. Priya Ranjan was the first Congress leader who showed that even the Congress party could also do ‘rebellious politics’ and they had also a ‘fighting face’ for fighting against the bloody politics of the left communist. In addition to that as a politician he had brought a ‘new style of political speech’ which he learnt from the speeches of great political speakers of that time like Atulya Ghosh and Somenath Lahiri. His style of delivering speech used to attract the common people like magnate. As Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi himself came in mainstream politics from the Chhatra Parishad, that’s why he had picked up leaders from the platform of Chhatra Parishad and Congress as a party have immensely benefitted and revitalized from that course of action of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi.²²

Assessment of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi after His Death by Some Renowned Politicians

After the death of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi, Subrata Mukherjee, once close associate of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi and the then Minister of the Government of West Bengal, said that, “I have accepted leadership of Priya Da from the core of my heart. My inspiration to enter into students’ politics i.e. Chhatra Parishad was Priya Da. In 1960s the political condition of the Congress

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party in West Bengal was very poor. Following the directives of Priya Da, I had to deliver speech on behalf of the Chhatra Parishad. The strength of Chhatra Parishad was so negligible that in the name of Chhatra Parishad, the general students used to call dog, cat, frog etc. Due to shyness, I had the tendency to escape delivering speech. But, the advice of Priya Da was that don't bother who are hearing or not hearing you, your only duty is to propagate your ideas regularly which is the essence of forming organization. He had the rarest quality to make something from starting zero. He was a dedicated politician."²³ Subrata Mukherjee further stated that "Indira Gandhi wanted I shall work in state politics and Priya Da will involve in national politics. Accordingly I became Member of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly and Priya Da became the Member of Parliament in 1971. It was due to Priya Da, I became Minister in 1972. He was the only man who could understand my mind to see body language. After the death of Priya Da there is no one in Congress party to understand nerve of the Congress worker. Whether he was in power or not he had his own followers from Cooch Behar to Kakdeep which is considered as his great success in group politics within the Congress party".²⁴ Shri Biman Bose, Chairman of the Left Front commented that "we had relation in student movement. Personally, I have nothing to say against him".²⁵

Smt. Mamata Banerjee, Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal in her reminiscence stated that "When I was Chhatra Parishad worker at Jogmaya Devi College, Priya Da would not know me. Thereafter, I was introduced with Priya Da in a conference of Chhatra-Yuba Congress at South Kolkata with the help of Partha Roy Chowdhury, President of the then District Yuba Congress. Priya Da was an established politician prior to enter into my politics. In the election of 1971, defeating Ganesh Ghosh, leftist candidate, first time Priya Da became the Member of Parliament. The banner headline of Ananda Bazar Patrika in regard to his election victory was 'winning by 26 thousand votes at the age of 26'. Reading the news, I was impressed to Priya Da and after some days I had worked in students' politics under his leadership".²⁶

Conclusion

It is found that the formation of Chhatra Parishad in 1954 was the greatest political sagacity of the then farsighted politicians of West Bengal. In democracy the voice of the opposition is always very important to success it. When one sided political brutalities and propagandas were going on, the rise of protestant voice of Chhatra Parishad somehow was able to balance the political atmosphere of West Bengal. The courage and organizational capacities what Chhatra Parishad had shown at that moment of peril under the leadership of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi might be considered as the source of inspiration of coming generations in the history of the students' movement. It is needless to say that today's high profile politicians who are dominating West Bengal politics from the forefront, most of them even from Smt. Mamata Banerjee to Sougata Roy, Sudip Bandyopadhyay, Tapas Roy, Debaprasad Roy, Abdul Mannan and from Goutam Deb to Mohit Sengupta, Sandip Biswas were closely associated with Chhatra Parishad and picked up by Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi.

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Notes and References

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2. Note: At the time of Thiruvananthapuram Conference held on 27th December to 30th December, 1970, the AISF was broken and emerged a new students' wing of the CPIM named Students' Federation of India (SFI). The First President of SFI was C. Bhaskaran from Kerala State and General Secretary was Biman Bose from West Bengal. See, Debasish Bhattacharya, *Sei Tirish Bachhar* (in Bengali), J. B. Prakashani, Kolkata, 2018, p. 146.
3. Note: Government was formed in independent India under the leadership of the Congress Party. At that moment the new party line of the Communist Party of India was that the Government led by the Congress was not completely free. This Government is running with the understanding of the imperialism in one hand and feudalism along with capitalism on the other. Therefore, this independence is meaningless until and unless the Government of India is free from the unholy understanding that means the freedom which is enjoying by the people of India is fake. See, Manikuntala Sen, *Janajagarane Narijagarane* (in Bengali), Theema, Kolkata, 2010, p. 170; also see, Atulya Ghosh, *Kasta Kalpita*, Ananda Publishers, Calcutta, 1980, pp.189-190 and 228.
4. *Atiter Kichhu Katha*, a Bengali article by Priyaranjan Das Munshi in *Swaranika*, Chhatra Parishad Golden Jubilee Celebration and Reunion Festival, Impression, New Buligunj Road, Kolkata, 2004, p.69.
5. Atulya Ghosh, *op. cit.*, p.329; also see, Babulal Bala, *op. cit.*, p. 308.
6. Personal interview with Kumud Bhattacharya, former state President of the Chhatra Parishad from 1973 to 1977, on 4th February 2017; also see *Amader Itikatha*, a Bengali article by Samir Roy in *Swaranika*, Chhatra Parishad Golden Jubilee Celebration and Reunion Festival, Impression, New Bulygunj Road, Kolkata, 2004, p.13.
7. *Amader Itikatha*, a Bengali article by Samir Roy in *Swaranika*, Chhatra Parishad Golden Jubilee Celebration and Reunion Festival, Impression, New Bulygunj Road, Kolkata, 2004, p.15.
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16. *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 21st November, 2017, page. 4.
17. *Hathat Chhatra Parishader Janya*, a Bengali article by Dr. Partha Chattopadhyay in *Swaranika*, Chhatra Parishad Golden Jubilee Celebration and Reunion Festival; Impression, New Bulygunj Road, Kolkata, 2004, p.58; also see *Chhatra Andolon - Chhatra Parishad O Amader Samay*, a Bengali article by Sougata Roy in *Swaranika*, Chhatra Parishad Golden Jubilee Celebration and Reunion Festival, Impression, New Bulygunj Road, Kolkata, 2004. p.79.
18. *Uttar Banga Sambad*, 21st Nov'ember, 2017, p.11.
19. Debaprasad Ray, *Duars Theke Delhi*, Ekhan Duars, Jalpaiguri, 2017, p.57.

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20. Personal interview with Somen Mitra, a veteran Congress leader, former President of WBPCC, first Yuba Congress President of West Bengal and AICC member, on 20th February 2017.

21. *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 21st November, 2017, p. 4.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Subrata Mukherjee's Statement after the death of Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi in *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 21st November, 2017.

24. *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 21st November, 2017.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*

It may be noted here that the Chhatra Parishad, Students wing of the Indian National Congress, was formed on 28th August 1954,¹³³(133. Atulya Ghosh, *op. cit.*, p. 329.) for the first time in 1957 election, addressed street corner meeting which were the monopoly of the left parties since long days. The activists of the Chhatra Parishad were able to draw the attention of the press and the public by their activities and they were given charge of a difficult area of Bow Bazar constituency of Dr. B. C. Roy, over which Communist influence was ever dominant. One of the notable incidents of that election was the Chief Minister Dr. B. C. Roy's contesting with Md. Ismail, the Communist candidate.¹³⁴(134. "*Bidhan Chandra Karnadhar, Tabu Khandita Banglar Navishas*" – '*50 Dashak- Ebar Natun Pathe, Natun Laxer Dike*', A Bengali Article by Amalendu Dey in *Saat Dashak Samokal O Ananda Bazar*, Ananda Publishers, Kolkata, 2013, p. 101. Bow Bazar is situated in the heart of the city, the Chief Minister's constituency and it had a cosmopolitan character. It is basically a Muslim influential area because out of 63,229 votes about 29,000 were Muslims. Besides, there were Englishmen, French, a good number of Chinese and people from many other countries of the world in this constituency. Excepting B.C. Roy, four other persons filed nomination papers for the Bow Bazar constituency including Md. Ismail, the communist candidate, a Hindu Mahasabha candidate and two independent. See, Saroj Chakrabarty, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-228.) After campaign all over the State along with State Congress Chief Atulya Ghosh, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy lastly begun to tour his constituency on foot. He entered every bustee, met every shop-keeper and small trader, particularly Muslims, who were the balancing factor by virtue of their number. Two days prior to the date of polling, he went to the Nakhoda Mosque, located in a predominantly Muslim locality. The Imam came to receive him and escorted him upstairs. But unfortunately in his team there was a person named Gopal Mukhopadhyay¹³⁵(135. Sandip Bandyopadhyay, *Bikshubdha Bangla - Pashimbanger Birodhi Rajniti 1947-2007*, (in Bengali), Radical Impression Kolkata, 2014, p.54.) who had earned notoriety in the Calcutta Killings. His presence in the Mosque was a great tactical blunder which displeased Muslim voters in general.¹³⁶ (136. Saroj Chakrabarty, *op. cit.*, pp. 231-232.) It is important to note here that the situation during the general election of 1957 was so exciting that with the end of the polling, there was a big victory procession was came out even before the votes were counted under the leadership of Md. Ismail and the same was passed in front of the house of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy. At that time, one of the Chhatra Parishad leaders told to Mr. Saroj Chakraborty, P. A. to the chief minister in confidentially that the communalism and violence became so predominant that "If Mohammad Ismail becomes elected he would automatically be the Chief Minister, and if he becomes Chief Minister Calcutta would go to Pakistan as half of Kashmir had already gone."¹³⁷ (137. 136. Saroj Chakrabarty, *op. cit.*, pp. pp. 232-235). Secret police report revealed that Pakistani agents were active in Chief Minister's constituency and foreign currency on a large scale was spent to bring about his defeat. This was repeated by the Chief Minister on the floor of the Assembly on the 18th of March, 1957. Though, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy was elected after strong fight only by 440 votes.¹³⁸(138. "*Bidhan Chandra Karnadhar, Tabu Khandita Banglar Navishas*" – '*50 Dashak- Ebar Natun Pathe, Natun Laxer Dike*', A Bengali Article by Amalendu Dey in *Saat Dashak Samokal O Ananda Bazar*, Ananda Publishers, Kolkata, 2013, p. 101.) After the win of Dr. B. C. Roy, one of the leftist trade union leaders named Biren Roy, remarked that "Md. Ismail defeated, but Calcutta saved". There was news to them that with the defeat of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy communal riot again would start, as because the notorious Gopal Mukhopadhyay and his team were

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ready to do so.¹³⁹ (139. Sandip Bandyopadhyay, *op. cit.*, p. 54.) However, in 1957 general election Congress was voted to power in West Bengal. In a house of 252 elective seats, including 11 from Purulia of which General Seats were 194, Scheduled Castes 43 and Scheduled Tribes 15; Congress captured 152 seats. Side by side after a strong fight the opposition parties increased their representation from 88 to 100.¹⁴⁰ (140. Dilip Banerjee, *op. cit.*, pp. 972-973.)