CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

In the preceding chapters an attempt has been made to trace out the evolution of the municipal politics of Baranagar, to analyse the socio-economic background of the municipal commissioners, to explore the nature of citizen-commissioner interaction and the leadership style in the municipal board of 1986 and to highlight the level and extent of citizens' participation in the municipal politics of Baranagar. The aim of the present chapter is to review the analysis made in the foregoing chapters and to put forth the concluding observations.

Urbanization is a crucial problem of modern industrial civilization. In India, there is a long tradition of urbanization. But it is especially in the post-Independence era that the rapid pace of industrialization has made urban areas vital centres of national development and today the complexities of growing urban problems can hardly be ignored in the progress of our national life. The capability of any urban government to withstand urban problems and to foster rapid urban development requires competent and dynamic leadership.
But leaders alone cannot give life and substance to any form of democratic government. No self-government can achieve success without peoples' interest and participation. It is an intelligent and alert citizenry that keeps the government responsive to peoples' demands. The nature of urban political life would depend to a large extent on the interaction between the municipal leaders and the local citizens. It is in the context of this citizen-commissioner interaction that the present study seeks to analyse the nature of municipal politics in an urban area in West Bengal. The focus of study is the Municipality of Baranagar, one of the oldest urban areas in West Bengal.

Four hypotheses have been formulated for the study. Of these, two hypotheses have been supported by the researcher's data. One hypothesis is partially justified and one has been negatived.

The first hypothesis, 'The emergence and growth of leftist municipal politics in Baranagar have been in conformity with the leftist political trend in West Bengal' stands justified.
In chapter 3 an attempt has been made to analyse the evolution of municipal politics in Baranagar. The analysis has been divided into three broad periods, (1) politics in the early stage, (2) politics in the Congress period and (3) emergence and growth of leftist politics. The Municipality of Baranagar originated in the pre-Independence period during the British rule when there was no dominant pattern of party politics in the municipal board. Politics at that time was manifested in individual criticism and groupism among the commissioners on different issues of municipal administration.

The second phase of the municipal politics in Baranagar began with the Independence of the country. At that time, both the national as well as state politics in West Bengal was dominated by the Congress party. It was quite natural that municipal politics in Baranagar was also found to be marked by a definite bias to the Congress party at that time. From 1952 there was a sharp change in the political trend of the locality with its remarkable turn towards leftist politics. In the Assembly election of 1952, the leftist leader Jyoti Basu was elected to the West Bengal Legislative Assembly from the constituency of Baranagar. This leftist
The analysis of the origin and evolution of the leftist municipal politics in Baranagar establishes the hypothesis that the emergence and growth of the leftist municipal politics in Baranagar have been in conformity with the leftist political trend in West Bengal. In the municipal election of 1952, there emerged in the Municipal Board of Baranagar an organised opposition group, the United Citizens Committee (UCC) consisting of the left-minded citizens of Baranagar. The UCC in the Municipal Board of Baranagar played the role of an opposition group in the same manner as that of the leftist opposition in the State Legislature of West Bengal. This UCC was, in fact, a replica of the leftist opposition in the West Bengal State Legislature. It supported the leftist political movements in West Bengal and moved resolutions in the municipal board supporting the policies and actions of the leftist parties. Parallel to the increasing strength of the leftist parties in West Bengal State Legislature in the State Assembly elections, the strength of the leftist opposition group gradually increased in the municipal board.
as it succeeded in capturing larger number of seats in
the subsequent municipal elections. In course of time, the
Municipal Board of Baranagar came to be dominated by lef-
tist parties. Amidst the different changes that took place
in Indian national politics and in the state politics in
West Bengal, the Municipal Board of Baranagar always suppo-
rted the leftist parties which gradually proved their stre-
ngth in West Bengal state politics. When the Left-Front
Government was established in West Bengal, the Municipal
Board of Baranagar supported the policies of the Left-Front
Government. Thus the evolution of the municipal politics in
Baranagar was characterized by the gradual change from the
Congress-dominated politics to leftist politics and this
evolution was in conformity with the growth of leftist trend
in West Bengal. Prior to Independence, Baranagar was a
Congress-dominated urban area. After the partition of the
country in 1947, there was heavy influx of refugees in Bara-
nagar. This influx of refugees from East Bengal made the
political situation of Baranagar an explosive one. Thus the
urban area of Baranagar with thousands of refugees, indus-
trial workers and middle-class intelligentsia gave sponta-
neous support to the leftist leader Jyoti Basu who secured
increasingly larger number of votes in the State Assembly
elections. This growing support to leftism was reflected in
the municipal politics too and till now the municipal board continues to be dominated by leftist parties.

The second hypothesis, 'The socio-economic background of the Municipal Board, 1986, shows upper class and elite dominance in municipal politics' also stands justified.

In chapter 4 an attempt has been made to highlight the socio-economic composition of the Municipal Board of Baranagar. The Board that was studied was elected in 1986.

It was a male-dominated Board. Out of twenty eight commissioners in the Board, there was only one female representative. The percentage of female representation in the municipal board was very much disproportionate.

Municipal leadership in Baranagar was associated with senior age-group. Commissioners belonging to the age-group between 41 and 60 years and above, constituted 85.71 per cent of the total number of commissioners. Predominance of senior age group may suggest lack of initiative on the part of the youths of the locality to take part in local administration.
The Municipal Board of Baranagar was a Hindu-dominated board. Whereas 96.40 per cent of the commissioners were Hindus, there was only one Muslim representative. However, in view of the total Hindu and Muslim population in the area, the picture was not an abnormal one.

Upper-caste domination was a remarkable feature of the municipal board. There was no representative from the Sudra caste. Representation from the Scheduled Castes was also not very encouraging.

Leadership in local municipal administration came mainly from persons belonging to the more educated section. Common people with minimum or no educational qualification had no direct participation in local municipal administration.

Occupational composition presents the picture of a municipal board dominated by elitist professional groups like teachers, lawyers, doctors, businessmen and other important service-holders. There was no representation from industrial labourers, unemployed persons, students and housewives.

So far as income and life style are concerned, leadership of the Board was associated with wealth and high economic
status. Fifty per cent of the commissioners belonged to upper-middle and high income groups. Most of them were owners of houses and landed property. On the other hand, the Board did not represent any single candidate from persons belonging to low income groups of the area.

It follows from the above analysis that judged by the socio-economic composition, the hypothesis that the Municipal Board of 1986 presents the picture of upper class and elite dominance stands justified.

So far as the organizational and political background of the commissioners were concerned, all the commissioners were members of different types of organizations like Trade Unions, cooperative societies, governing bodies of educational institutions, cultural organizations, sports bodies and youth organizations. As for political background, 96.43 per cent of the commissioners belonged to political parties, the leading one being the CPI(M). As regards motives behind joining politics the maximum number of commissioners said that the major factor behind their joining politics was the motive to serve society. The notable point is that less than half of the commissioners admitted that improvement of civic
amenities or participation in local self-government was the motive behind their joining politics. Regarding political aspiration of the commissioners, it may be assumed that participation in local government was not the ultimate aim with all of them. Some of them had higher political ambition.

The third hypothesis that 'Citizen-commissioner interaction of the Municipal Board presents a democratic style of leadership' is only partially justified.

Chapter 5 explains the nature of citizen-commissioner interaction and the leadership style in the Municipal Board of Baranagar. Leadership may assume different styles following the leader-follower relations. In a democratic style of leadership, adequate communication bridges the gap between the leader and followers and there is scope for general participation, group discussion and group action. The essence of the democratic style of leadership is the leader's capacity to realise the needs of the followers and his responsiveness to their expectations and demands.

Leadership style is largely determined by the means of contact between the leaders and the citizens. In Baranagar, most of the respondents from both the categories reported to
have direct contact through periodic visits of the commissioners in their respective wards. This indicates democratic leadership style where the leader thinks it to be his duty to keep direct contact with the people and to know their needs and problems. Another determinant of leadership style is frequency of contact. Most of the commissioners in Baranagar maintained contact with their constituents at a regular time-interval, mostly fortnightly. This was a democratic attitude on the part of the commissioners who thought it to be their positive duty to maintain frequent contact with the people. Leadership style depends to a great extent on the mutual attitudes of the leaders and followers. Most of the respondents and the commissioners reported their relations to be friendly. This friendly relation of the electors and their elected representatives is an important criterion of democratic style of leadership. Most of the commissioners had a democratic attitude of inviting public opinion regarding solution of civic problems. Most of them also preferred group discussion with the constituents in this respect. Most of the citizen-respondents said that the majority of the commissioners listened to the complaints of the constituents.

All these are positive points indicating democratic style of leadership. Still, all the citizens were not satisfied
with the role performance of the commissioners. Whereas 78.57 per cent of the commissioners stated that they were fully conscious about their role, this statement was confirmed only by 44.50 per cent of the citizens. In the second place, according to the statements of a large number of citizens, all the commissioners were not fully aware of the problems of their wards. While 75.00 per cent of the commissioners said that they were very much aware of the problems of their wards, this has been supported only by 51.50 per cent of the citizens. Thirdly, according to the report of the citizen-respondents, most of the commissioners only sometimes discussed the problems of their wards with the citizens and this they did only with the selected influentials of the locality. Fourthly opinion also sharply varied between the commissioners and the citizens regarding the distribution of civic amenities. While 60.72 per cent of the commissioners claimed that civic amenities were enjoyed equally by all citizens, only 26.50 per cent of citizens agreed with this view. Disparity is also notable between the commissioners and the citizens regarding their perception of civic issues. The latter attached importance to the basic needs of civic life which means that these needs had not been properly met in some areas. But the commissioners gave priority to the more ambitious needs of civic life.
All these points taken together lead to the assumption that many among the commissioners have failed to realize the actual needs of the masses. Hence the hypothesis that the citizen-commissioner interaction reveals democratic style of leadership is only partially correct.

The character of a political system is determined by peoples' participation and interest in politics and administration. In a local government, peoples' participation is an invaluable asset. Chapter 6 analyses the nature and extent of citizens' participation in the municipal politics of Baranagar. Some interesting points emerge from this analysis.

Citizens in Baranagar were more or less interested in politics. But with the majority of the citizens, interest in politics meant interest in political elections only. Less than 50 per cent of the citizens were interested in politics apart from at election times. Male citizens were more interested in politics than the female ones.

So far as the question of interest in local municipal administration was concerned, the majority of the citizens
were interested in knowing about the working of the municipal government of the locality. But the degree of interest was not the same with all of them. Only 33.00 per cent of the respondents were very much interested in this respect as against the large majority of 56.50 per cent who were interested in local municipal administration to some extent only. Again, most of the citizens (54.50 per cent) only occasionally discussed municipal matters. Only 33.00 per cent of the citizens frequently discussed municipal administration with others. The number further decreased with regard to interest in commissioners' performance. Only 30.50 per cent of the citizens were very much interested in this respect. In all these cases, participation was very poor among the female citizens of the locality.

The majority of the citizens were conscious about their civic duty of casting votes in municipal elections. Caste and religion played no important role in influencing the voting behaviour of the electorate. The most important factor in this respect was the partisan outlook of the citizens. But the notable point is that most of the citizens refused to disclose their political identity and they answered mostly in the negative with regard to questions relating to political party.
Although a good number of citizens (51.50 per cent) were members of different socio-political organisations, the picture was a discouraging one with regard to membership of political parties. Only 25.00 per cent of the citizens had party membership. The picture was also discouraging regarding campaigning in municipal elections and attendance in political meetings. Only 19.50 per cent of the citizens participated in campaigning and only 41.00 per cent attended political meetings.

The large majority of citizens (61.00 percent) were not satisfied with the distribution of civic amenities. But only 28.50 per cent of the citizens frequently approached the municipal authorities to put forth their demands. It may be assumed from this analysis that the citizens in Baranagar did not possess a strong sense of political efficacy. Sense of political efficacy denotes a feeling that the individual can play a positive role in the political process in bringing about desired changes. But most of the citizens in Baranagar did not play any such role in the local governmental system. With most of them local political participation meant participation in municipal voting. It has been pointed out by Nie and Verba, 'though elections are a major means of
citizen control over government officials, they are rather blunt instruments of control. For the individual or for particular groups of citizens the most important political activities may be those in the between-elections period, when citizens try to influence government decisions in relation to specific problems that concern them. Very few among the citizens of Baranagar tried to influence decisions of local government. Municipal political participation with most of them was characterised by passivity and indifference to local administration. Particularly poor was the response of female citizens in this respect. This sort of participation falsifies the hypothesis that 'Active citizen-participation reflects a strong sense of political efficacy among the municipal voters.'

An analysis of the nature of municipal politics in Baranagar leads to the conclusion that the Municipal Board of Baranagar, during the period under study, did not represent all segments of the urban population. Rather, it represented only a few upper social strata. Municipal power was concentrated in the hands of a few influential persons of

higher caste, more wealth, higher education-level, dignified social status and white-collar jobs. This elite-dominance of the urban power-structure resulted in creating a gap between the municipal board and the common people of the locality. Most of the municipal leaders were not able to reach and touch the bottom of local expectations. Their perceptions of civic issues also differed from those of the people at large. The style of municipal leadership was only apparently democratic. Though the municipal leaders maintained rapport with their constituents, most of them did not take into account the opinion of the common people of the area. Rather they consulted only a few influential men of the locality. The result was that civic needs and demands of the common people remained unrealized in many cases and inequality prevailed in the distribution of the benefits of urban development. Bureaucratic rigidity on the part of the municipal government officials also prevented the acceleration of the developmental programmes. The picture was also not encouraging with regard to citizens' participation in municipal politics. Very few citizens had any real interest in active politics and municipal administration and only a very few of them tried to influence the decision-making process of the local power-structure. Women were utterly lacking in political participation. This lack of interest in politics and local administration on the part of the common people resulted in the
emergence of a monolithic urban power-structure dominated by higher socio-economic class and the municipal decision-making process was monopolised by a few elites.

Since municipal elections are fought on party lines, political parties can play a vital role in municipal politics in balancing the distribution of power at the local municipal level. By recruiting candidates from all categories of the urban population, political parties can make the municipal board a true representative of the urban community. But as it is evident from the analysis of the socio-economic composition of the municipal board of 1986, nomination by political parties at the local municipal level was still associated with traditional factors like male domination, senior age, higher caste, more wealth and higher social status. Nomination by local units of political parties did not embrace all categories of the urban people.

So far as peoples' political participation is concerned, it may be said that political consciousness is largely a result of political socialization which inspires an individual to play an active and positive role in the political system. So far as the urban area of Baranagar is concerned, peoples' lack of interest in local administration may suggest that
political socialization has not penetrated deep to the mass level. The major role in political socialization is played by political parties. It may be assumed that the local units of political parties have not yet been able to play a very successful role in this respect.

So far as women participation in politics was concerned Baranagar presented the picture of a male-dominated conservative society where the majority of both the male and female members could not overcome the orthodox outlook regarding the role and status of women in society.

Thus, the over-all picture that emerges is not an optimistic one regarding the composition of the municipal board, style of municipal leadership and participation of citizens in the municipal politics of Baranagar.

A municipal board, to be a true reflection of the urban community, should include representatives from all categories of urban population. Contesting elections as independent candidates involves the risk of huge monetary expenditure. Voters also prefer candidates backed by political parties because their accountability can be more easily ensured. So
the question of getting party nomination stands as the 
most important factor in contesting elections. It may be 
suggested that party nomination at the local level should 
embrace more common people of the locality. Proper repre-
sentation of the common people will have a positive influ-
ence in making the municipal council more responsive to the 
needs of the common people of the area and in bridging the 
elite-mass gap in the composition of the municipal board. At 
the same time, it may be said that the local units of politi-
cal parties should play a more active role in political 
socialization of the common people. An infant democracy like 
India requires extensive political education of the masses 
in making them politically conscious and getting them invol-
ved in active politics. Political parties are the most impor-
tant agent for providing such political education to the 
masses. At the local level, political parties should play 
more active role in spreading party ideology, in organising 
and integrating peoples' political participation and in rel-
lating it to the governmental decision-making. In this way, 
the hitherto untouched sections of the urban population can 
be linked to the political communication channel. Political 
participation not only makes an individual more alert and 
self-confident, it may also help the citizens to overcome 
traditional conservative outlooks and to hold more dynamic
views regarding life and its problems. It may be assumed that with greater political participation of the citizens their conservative view regarding the role of women in politics and society will also undergo some changes.

But citizens participatory activities are sometimes likely to be influenced by their socio-economic condition. In India, the vast majority of the population still live a poor and unstable social and economic life. Their degrading living condition is unlikely to inspire them to take an active part in politics and administration. This is true at all levels of government in our national life. Thus, unless there is a radical change in the socio-economic structure of the country, peoples' political involvement and participation will remain a far cry. Peoples' political participation at the local level is not an exception in this case.

It should be mentioned here that the researcher has only carried out a micro-study and she does not claim to have arrived at conclusions that have universal applicability. She, however, believes that she has been able to throw some new light on the nature of municipal politics in Baranagar. She thinks that the analysis may be relevant in studying municipal politics in other urban areas.
1. Which of the following factors inspired you in contesting the municipal election?
   a) Personal liking for politics
   b) Influence of elders
   c) Personal preference for social service
   d) To prevent corruption in municipal administration
   e) To participate in local self-government
   f) To improve civic amenities of the locality.

2. Did you previously contest in any election to Parliament/State Legislative Assembly/Municipal Board?
   Yes / No

3. Do you intend to contest in future any election to Parliament / State Legislative Assembly?
   Yes / No / No comment

4. Are you a member of any political party?
   Yes / No

5. (If yes), which is that party?
   Congress(I) / CPI(M) / CPI / RSP / Forward Bloc /
   Lok Dal / Muslim League.
6. Did you participate in any political movement?
   Yes / No

7. (If yes), which movement/movements?
   Quit India Movement of 1942 / Tebhaga Movement in 1946 /
   Any Trade Union movement, agricultural or industrial /
   Any leftist movement in West Bengal / Any other political
   movement.

8. To what extent do you have a clear perception of your role as a commissioner?
   Fully clear / Moderately clear / Not clear.

9. In which of the following ways do you maintain contact with your constituents?
   a) Through periodic visits in the wards.
   b) Through Party office
   c) Through social work
   d) Through association at festivals
   e) Road-side meetings

10. How frequently do you keep contact with your constituents?
    Daily / Weekly / Fortnightly / Monthly / Half-yearly /
    No regular time-interval / No time to keep contact.
11. How do you characterise the attitude of the constituents of your ward?

Friendly/ Non-cooperative/Indifferent

12. To what extent are you aware of the problems of your ward?

Very much aware/ Moderately aware/Not at all aware

13. How frequently do you hold discussion with your constituents regarding the problems of your wards?

Very often/Sometimes/Never

14. Do you think that the municipal authorities should approach the citizens regarding solution of civic problems?

Yes / No / No comment

15. Which of the following means of approaching the public do you prefer?

Public meetings/ Group discussion/Circulation of leaflets / Any other means

16. How frequently do your constituents approach you for lodging their complaints?

Frequently/ Sometimes/ Rarely/ Never.
17. Do you think that the enhancements of municipal taxes on the citizens are justified?

Justified / Not justified / No comment

18. Do you think that the civic amenities are enjoyed equally by all citizens?

Yes / No / No comment

19. Which of the following problems do you consider to be the main problems of your ward?

Water supply / Drainage / Road repairing / Education / Transport / Housing / Improvement of slum areas / Removal of garbage / Improvement of markets / Street lights / Medical facilities / Provision for parking / Improvement of burning ghats.

20. Have you been able to raise these problems in the meetings of the municipal board?

Yes / No

21. How far have you been successful in initiating and implementing policies regarding solution of these problems?

Very much / To a little extent / Not at all
22. If you are not successful, then which of the following factors stand in your way of achieving success?

1. You belong to a political party other than that party which is in majority in the municipal board.

2. You belong to a religion other than that one which is dominant in the municipal board.

3. Non-cooperation of the municipal officials.

23. Is your relation with the Government officials of the municipality satisfactory?

Satisfactory / Not satisfactory / No comment

24. If the relation is not satisfactory, which of the following factors is responsible for such unsatisfactory relation?

a) High-handedness of the Government officials
b) Over-procedural approach
c) Party affiliations

25. Is your relation with the municipal employees satisfactory?

Satisfactory / Not satisfactory / No comment

26. Do you think that the commissioners should consult the Municipal Employees' Union in the matter of taking any decision affecting the employees?

Yes / No / No comment
27. To what extent do your professional obligations affect your role performance as a municipal leader?

- To a great extent
- To some extent
- Not at all

28. How much time do you devote fortnightly to each of the following items of work?

- a) Attendance in the meetings of the municipal council
  - No time
  - One hour
  - Two hours
  - Three hours
  - More than three hours

- b) Attendance in the meetings of the municipal committees
  - No time
  - One hour
  - Two hours
  - Three hours
  - More than three hours

- c) Contact with Government Officials
  - No time
  - One hour
  - Two hours
  - Three hours
  - More than three hours

- d) Informal meetings with the municipal staff
  - No time
  - One hour
  - Two hours
  - Three hours
  - More than three hours

- e) Other field works concerned with your role as a commissioner
  - No time
  - One hour
  - Two hours
  - Three hours
  - More than three hours

29. Is there any machinery for coordination of work of the party and that of the municipality?

- Yes
- No
- No comment
30. What is the nature of the work of the co-ordination machinery?
   a. Holding party meetings preparatory to the meetings of the municipal board.
   b. Issuing policy directives.
   c. Selection of party candidates to contest the municipal election.
   d. Nomination of party candidates to the office of the chairman of the municipality and the chairman of the committees.
   e. Any other (please specify).

31. Which of the following newspapers do you read?

32. Do you support the 59th amendment of the Indian Constitution?
   Yes/ No/ No comment

33. Are you satisfied with the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission regarding the devolution of financial powers to the states?
   Yes/ No/ No comment

34. Do you think that Glastnost and Perestroika are proper ideals for the communist countries?
   Yes/ No/ No comment
Background Data

1. Sex
2. Age
3. Religion
4. Caste
5. Are you or your ancestors permanent residents of West Bengal/Coming from Bangladesh/Or do you by birth belong to any other state?
6. What is your level of education?
   Illiterate / Below Matric, School Final / Matric, School Final, IA, ISC, ICOM, PU, Higher Secondary/ Bachelor's Degree/ Master's Degree / M.B.B.S/ L.L.B.
7. Are you a member of any organization, like Trade Union, cooperative society, governing board of any educational institution, cultural organization, sporting club, youth organization etc?
7a). (If yes), of how many organizations?
8. Are you employed, unemployed, house wife, retired person, student?
9. What is your primary occupation?
10. What is your monthly income?
11. Do you possess any house, landed property, motor car, telephone, television, refrigerator?
INTerview SChedule for Citizens

1. To what extent are you interested in politics?
   Very much interested/ To some extent interested/
   Not at all interested.

2. Are you interested in politics apart from at election times?
   Yes / No

3. To what extent are you interested to know about the municipal administration of your locality?
   Very much interested / To some extent interested /
   Not at all interested.

4. How often do you discuss about municipal administration with others?
   Frequently / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

5. Which of the following problems do you consider to be most crucial in your locality?
   a) Water supply, (b) Drainage (c) Road-repairing
   d) Removal of garbage, (e) Improvement of markets,
   f) Improvement of slum areas, (g) Housing, (h) Education, (i) Transport facilities (j) Cultural amenities,
k) Provision for parks, (l) Medical facilities,
m) Street lights, (n) Improvement of burning ghats,
any other problem (please specify).

6. To what extent does your ward commissioner have a
clear perception of his role?

   Very much clear / Moderately clear / Not at all clear.

7. How often does he visit your ward?

   Frequently / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

8. To what extent is he aware about the problems of your
wards?

   Very much aware / Moderately aware / Not at all aware

9. How frequently does he discuss these problems with you?

   Very often / Sometimes / Never.

10. How far are you interested to know whether your ward
    commissioner raises these problems in the municipal
    board?

   Very much interested / To some extent interested / Not interested.
11. How do you communicate to the commissioner the problems of your ward?
   a) At the time of his periodic visit in the ward
   b) By meeting at roadside.
   c) Through association at festivals
   d) Through social work
   e) Through party office
   f) Any other means (please specify).

12. How far is he responsive to your complaints?
    Very much responsive / To some extent responsive / Not at all responsive.

13. How will you define his attitudes towards the citizens of the ward and their problems?
    Friendly / Indifferent / Non-cooperative.

14. To what extent are you satisfied with the policies of the municipal board?
    Very much satisfied / Moderately satisfied / Not satisfied.

15. How often do you complain to your commissioner against municipal policies?
    Very often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never.
16. Have you ever created pressure on the municipal administrative authorities to take decision regarding any particular problem?
   Yes / No

17. How often do you approach the Chairman/Secretary of the municipality to let them know your demands?
   Very often / Sometimes / Rarely / Never

18. How do you approach them?
   Personally / In a group

19. Do you think that the civic amenities are distributed and enjoyed equally by all citizens/Or do they satisfy the needs of only the well-to-do and the influential persons of the area?
   Civic amenities are distributed and enjoyed equally by all citizens /
   Civic amenities serve the needs of only the well-to-do and the influential persons of the area.

20. Do you think that the enhancement of taxes is justified as compared to the provisions for civic amenities?
   Justified / Not justified
21. How do you evaluate the performance of the present municipal board?

Very good/ Moderately good/ Poor / Very poor

22. Do you think that the municipal authorities should approach the citizens regarding the solution of civic issues faced by municipal administration?

Yes / No

23. (If yes), which of the following means of approach do you consider to be most desirable?

a) Through general public meeting
b) Through elected representatives of the area
c) Through circulation of leaflets.

24. Is it desirable that the same candidate should be elected as commissioner or should new candidate be elected?

Same candidate/ New candidate

25. What, according to you, should be the age of the candidate in municipal election?

Below 30 years/ Between 31 and 40 years /
Between 41 and 50 years / Above 50 years.
26. Did you cast vote in the last municipal election?
   Yes / No

27. Which of the following factor/factors was/were most important to you in casting your vote in the last municipal election?
   a) candidate's party, b) caste c) education, d) economic condition, e) personal character, f) popularity, g) previous performance, h) inefficiency of the rival candidates, i) inefficiency of rival parties j) religion k) sex, l) any other factor (Please specify).

28. If you did not cast your vote, then for which of the following reason/reasons did you not cast your vote?
   a) illness b) disturbances in the polling booths, c) your name was not enlisted in the voter list, d) there was no suitable candidate, e) any other reason (Please specify).

29. In the matter of casting votes, did you take the decision by yourself or did you act according to others' advice?
   Myself took the decision / Acted according to others' advice.

30. Did you participate in campaigning in the last municipal election?
   Yes / No
31. (If yes), in which of the following ways did you participate?
   a) Did you engage yourself in door-to-door campaigning for any party or candidate?
   b) Did you help to get voters to the polling stations?
   c) Did you help to raise any money for a candidate or for a party?
   d) Did you join in any procession or demonstration?
   e) Did you help to organize any electoral meeting in your area?
   f) Did you participate in any other way? (Please specify),

32a) Would you say whether you did these things for the candidate or for the party?

   For the candidate/For the party.

   b) Which party / Candidate?

33. How many electoral meetings organised by the candidate or by the party did you attend?

   Many/ Some/ None

34. Do you have any family member interested in politics?

   Yes / No
35. (If yes), who is/are he, she/they?

Your wife/Husband/Father/Father-in-law/Mother/
Mother-in-law/Son/Daughter/Sister/Sister-in-law/
Brother/Brother-in-law.

36. Do you think that the female members should be guided by the male members of the family in matter of casting votes or they should cast votes according to their own choice?

Should be guided by male members/
Should act according to their choice.

37. Which of the following newspapers do you read?


38. Are you a member of any political party?

Yes/No

39. (If yes), which party?

Congress(I)/CPI(M)/CPI/RSP/Forward Bloc/
Forward Bloc (Marxist)/SUCI/Janata/Muslim League/Lok Dal.

40a. If you are not a member of any political party, do you feel close to the ideology of any political party?

Yes/No
b) (If yes), which party?

4la) Is there any political party you will never vote for?

Yes / No

b) (If yes), which party?

42. Do you think that women should join in active politics?

Yes / No.

BACKGROUND DATA

1. Sex (Male / Female)

2. Age in years (25-35/ 36-45/ 46-55/ above 55)

3. Mother tongue (Bengali / Hindi/English/Urdu/any other language)

4. Religion (Hindu/Muslim/Christian/Buddhist/Jain/ any other religion)

5. Caste (Brahmin/Kayastha/Vaidya/Vaishya/Shudra/Schedule Caste)

6. Are you a retired man/unemployed/Employed/Housewife/ Student?

7. What is your primary occupation?
8. What is your average monthly income?
   Below Rs. 1000/-
   Between Rs. 1001/- and Rs. 2000/-
   Between Rs. 2001/- and Rs. 3000/-
   Between Rs. 3001/- and Rs. 4000/-
   Between Rs. 4001/- and Rs. 5000/-
   Above Rs. 5000/-

9. Will you please specify your level of education?
   Illiterate/Primary/Secondary/Graduate/Post-Graduate.

10. Are you a member of any of the following organisations?
    Trade union, Cooperative society, Governing Board of educational institution, Sporting club, Youth organisation, Cultural organisation, any other organisation.

11. Are you a permanent resident of West Bengal/Coming from Bangladesh/ Or do you by birth belong to any other State?