

**BCC*&i***  
THE BENGAL CHAMBER

# Discover Bengal

**A Guidebook Of Business Prospects In West Bengal**



**May, 2016**

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## Bengal at a glance

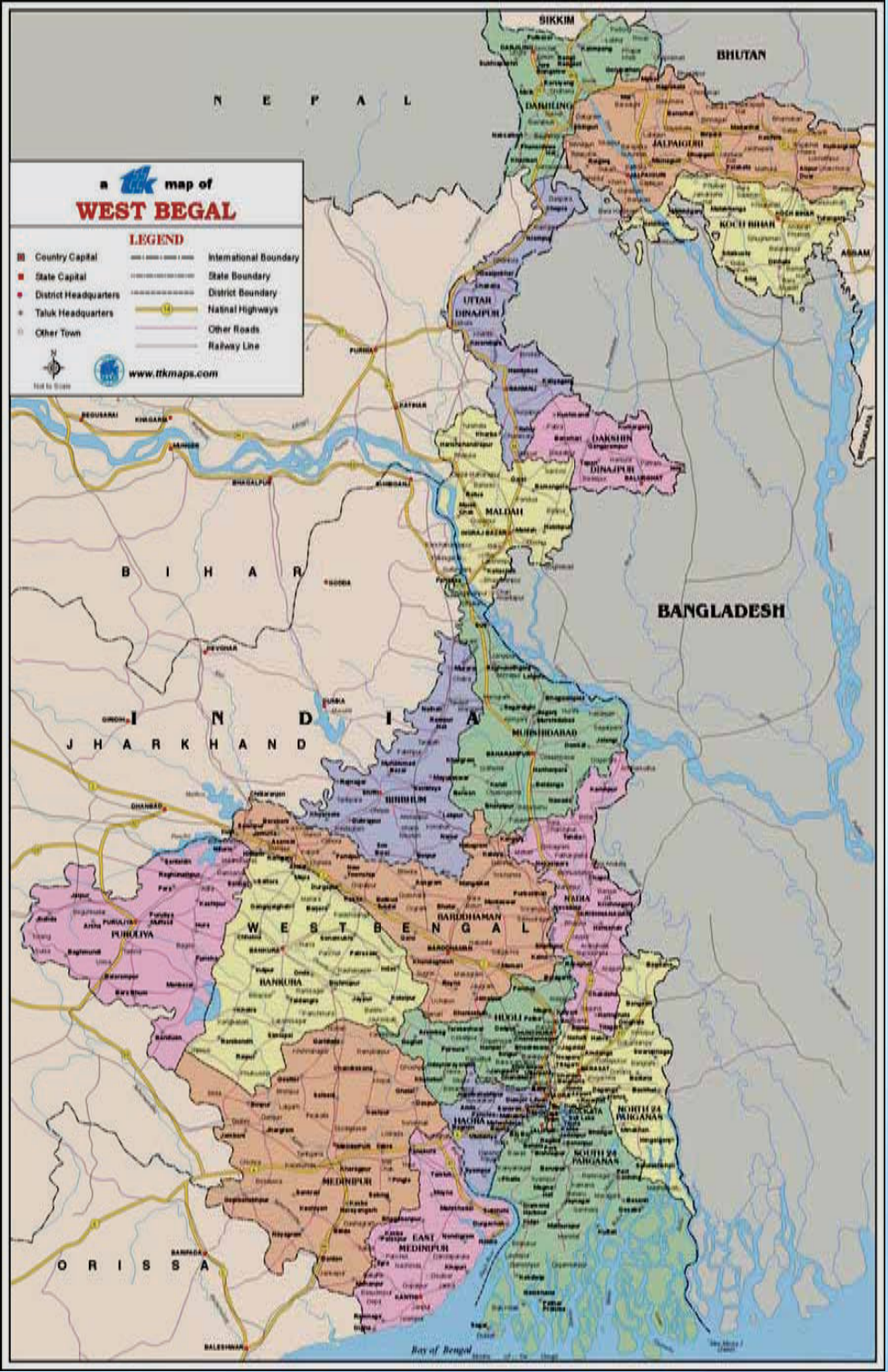
<b>Country</b>	India
<b>Region</b>	Eastern India
<b>Capital</b>	Kolkata
<b>Largest city / Largest metro</b>	Kolkata
<b>Districts</b>	20
<b>Government</b>	
• <b>Body</b>	Government of West Bengal
• <b>Governor</b>	Keshari Nath Tripathi
• <b>Chief Minister</b>	Mamata Banerjee
• <b>Legislature</b>	West Bengal Legislative Assembly (295 <sup>*</sup> seats)
• <b>High Court</b>	Calcutta High Court
<b>Area</b>	
• <b>Total</b>	88,752 km <sup>2</sup> (34,267 sq mi)
<b>Area rank</b>	14th
<b>Population (2011)</b>	
• <b>Total</b>	91,347,736
• <b>Rank</b>	4th
• <b>Density</b>	1,000/km <sup>2</sup> (2,700/sq mi)
<b>Time zone</b>	IST (UTC+05:30)
<b>ISO 3166 code</b>	IN-WB
<b>HDI</b>	0.492 (low)
<b>HDI rank</b>	13th (2007-08)
<b>Literacy</b>	77.08%
<b>Official language</b>	Bengali & English
<b>Website</b>	westbengal.gov.in

West Bengal is a state in eastern India, between the Himalayas and the Bay of Bengal. Its capital, Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), retains architectural and cultural remnants of its past as an East India Company trading post and the capital of the British Raj. The city's colonial landmarks include the government buildings around B.B.D. Bag square, and the iconic Victoria Memorial, dedicated to Britain's Queen Victoria.

Area:	88,752 km <sup>2</sup>
Founded:	November 1, 1956
Capital:	Kolkata
Population:	90.32 million (2012)

West Bengal is the nation's fourth-most populous state, with over 91 million inhabitants. Spread over 34,267 sq mi (88,750 km<sup>2</sup>), it is bordered by the three neighbouring countries of Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan, and the Indian states of Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar, Sikkim and Assam. The state capital is Kolkata. Together with the neighboring nation of Bangladesh, it makes up the ethno-linguistic region of Bengal.





# History

The origin of the name Bengal (known as Bangla and Bongo in Bengali language) is unknown. One theory suggests that the word derives from "Bang", a Dravidian tribe that settled the region around 1000 BC. The word might have been derived from the ancient kingdom of Vanga (or Banga). Although some early Sanskrit literature mentions the name, the region's early history is obscure. At the end of British Rule over the Indian subcontinent, the Bengal region was partitioned in 1947 along religious lines into east and west. The east came to be known as East Bengal and the west came to be known as West Bengal which remained as an Indian state. In 2011, the Government of West Bengal proposed a change in the official name for the state to Poschimbongo, which reflects the native name of the state, literally meaning western Bengal in the native Bengali language.

Ancient Bengal was the site of several major Janapadas (kingdoms). It was also part of large empires such as the Maurya Empire (second century BC) and Gupta Empire (fourth century AD); and part of the regional Buddhist Pala Empire (8th to 11th century) and Sena dynasty (11th–12th century). From the 13th century onward, the region was controlled by the Bengal Sultanate, Hindu kings and Baro-Bhuyan landlords under the suzerainty of the Mughal Empire, until the British East India company took control of the region from the Mughals in the late 18th century. The company consolidated their hold on the region following the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and Battle of Buxar in 1764 and by 1793 took complete control of the region. Kolkata (or Calcutta) served for many years as the capital of British controlled territories in India.

The early and prolonged exposure to British administration resulted in the expansion of Western education, culminating in development of science, institutional education, and social reforms in the region, including what became known as the Bengali renaissance. A hotbed of the Indian independence movement through the early 20th century, Bengal was divided during India's independence in 1947 along religious lines into two separate entities: West Bengal—a state of India—and East Bengal—a part of the newly created Dominion of Pakistan that later became the independent nation of Bangladesh in 1971.

# Modern Bengal

A major agricultural producer, West Bengal is the sixth-largest contributor to India's net domestic product. Noted for its political activism, the state was ruled by democratically elected communist governments for 34 years from 1977. It is noted for its cultural activities and the presence of cultural and educational institutions; the state capital Kolkata is known as the "cultural capital of India". The state's cultural heritage, besides varied folk traditions, ranges from stalwarts in literature including Nobel-laureate Rabindranath Tagore to scores of musicians, film-makers and artists. West Bengal is also distinct from most other Indian states in its appreciation and practice of playing Association football besides cricket, the national favourite sport.

The state's economic recovery gathered momentum in the mid-1990s with help from the central government, aided by the advent of information technology. Since mid-2000s, armed activists conducted minor terrorist attacks in some parts of the state, while clashes with the administration took place at several sensitive places over the issue of industrial land acquisition, which became a crucial reason behind the defeat of ruling Left Front government in 2011 assembly election. The state's GDP has risen significantly since the 1990s.



## Geography

West Bengal is on the eastern bottleneck of India, stretching from the Himalayas in the north, to the Bay of Bengal in the south. The state has a total area of 88,752 square kilometres (34,267 sq mi). The Darjeeling Himalayan hill region in the northern extreme of the state belongs to the eastern Himalaya. This region contains Sandakfu (3,636 m or 11,929 ft)—the highest peak of the state. The narrow Terai region separates this region from the North Bengal plains, which in turn transitions into the Ganges delta towards the south. The Rarh region intervenes between the Ganges delta in the east and the western plateau and high lands. A small coastal region is on the extreme south, while the Sundarbans mangrove forests form a geographical landmark at the Ganges delta.

The Ganges is the main river, which divides in West Bengal. One branch enters Bangladesh as the Padma or Pôdda, while the other flows through West Bengal as the Bhagirathi River and Hooghly River. The Farakka barrage over Ganges feeds the Hooghly branch of the river by a feeder canal, and its water flow management has been a source of lingering dispute between India and Bangladesh. The Teesta, Torsa, Jaldhaka and Mahananda rivers are in the northern hilly region. The western plateau region has rivers such as the Damodar, Ajay and Kangsabati. The Ganges delta and the Sundarbans area have numerous rivers and creeks. Pollution of the Ganges from indiscriminate waste dumped into the river is a major problem. Damodar, another tributary of the Ganges has several dams under the Damodar Valley Project. Nine districts in the state still suffer from arsenic contamination of groundwater, and work is in progress by the government and INGOs to address this problem..





## Climate

West Bengal's climate varies from tropical savanna in the southern portions to humid subtropical in the north. The main seasons are summer, rainy season, a short autumn, and winter. While the summer in the delta region is noted for excessive humidity, the western highlands experience a dry summer like northern India, with the highest day temperature ranging from 38 °C (100 °F) to 45 °C (113 °F). At nights, a cool southerly breeze carries moisture from the Bay of Bengal. In early summer brief squalls and thunderstorms known as Kalbaisakhi, or Nor'westers, often occur. West Bengal receives the Bay of Bengal branch of the Indian ocean monsoon that moves in a northwest direction. Monsoons bring rain to the whole state from June to September. Heavy rainfall of above 250 cm is observed in the Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar district. During the arrival of the monsoons, low pressure in the Bay of Bengal region often leads to the occurrence of storms in the coastal areas. Winter (December–January) is mild over the plains with average minimum temperatures of 15 °C (59 °F). A cold and dry northern wind blows in the winter, substantially lowering the humidity level. The Darjeeling Himalayan Hill region experiences a harsh winter, with occasional snowfall at places.

# Demography

According to the provisional results of the 2011 national census, West Bengal is the fourth most populous state in India with a population of 91,347,736 (7.55% of India's population). Bengali Hindus comprise the majority of the population. The Marwaris, Biharis and minorities are scattered throughout the state; various indigenous ethnic Buddhist communities such as the Sherpas, the Bhutias, the Lepchas, the Tamangs, the Yolmos and the ethnic Tibetans can be found in the Darjeeling Himalayan hill region. The Darjeeling district also has a large number of Nepali immigrant population, making Nepali a widely-spoken language in this region. West Bengal is home to indigenous tribal Adivasis such as Santhal, Kol, and Toto tribe.

There are a small number of ethnic communities primarily in the state capital, including Chinese, Tamils, Gujaratis, Anglo-Indians, Armenians, Punjabis, and Parsis. The official language is Bengali and English. Nepali language also has an official status in the three subdivisions of Darjeeling district. As of 2001, in decreasing order of number of speakers, the languages of the state are: Bengali, Hindi, Santali, Urdu and Nepali. West Bengal is religiously diverse, with region wise cultural and religious specificities. As of 2011, Hinduism is the largest religion followed by 70.53% of the total population, while Muslims comprise 27.01% of the total population, being the second-largest community as also the largest minority group. Sikhism, Christianity, Buddhism and other religions make up the remainder. Buddhism remains a prominent religion in the Himalayan region of the Darjeeling hills, and almost the entirety of West Bengal's Buddhist population is from this region.

The state's 2001–2011 decennial growth rate was 13.93%, lower than 1991–2001 growth rate of 17.8%, and also lower than the national rate of 17.64%. The gender ratio is 947 females per 1000 males. As of 2011, West Bengal has a population density of 1,029 inhabitants per square km (2,670/sq mi) making it the second-most densely populated state in India, . The literacy rate is 77.08%, higher than the national rate of 74.04%. Data of 1995–1999 showed the life expectancy in the state was 63.4 years, higher than the national value of 61.7 years. About 72% of people live in rural areas. The citizens living below the poverty line in 1999–2000 was 31.9%. Scheduled Castes and Tribes form 28.6% and 5.8% of the population respectively in rural areas, and 19.9% and 1.5% respectively in urban areas.

## Culture

The culture of West Bengal is ethnic Indian Culture manifesting in Bengali literature, music, fine arts, drama and cinema. People of West Bengal share their cultural heritage with the neighbouring Bangladesh (erstwhile known as East Bengal). West Bengal and Bangladesh together form the historical and geographical region of Bengal, with common linguistic and ethnic backgrounds. Besides the common cultural characteristics, different geographic regions of West Bengal have subtle as well as more pronounced variations between each other, with Darjeeling Himalayan hill region showing particularly different cultural aspect. West Bengal's capital Kolkata—as the former capital of India—was the birthplace of modern Indian literary and artistic thought, and is referred to as the "cultural capital of India". The presence of paras, which are neighbourhoods that possess a strong sense of community, is characteristic of West Bengal. Typically, each para has its own community club and, on occasion, a playing field. Residents engage in addas, or leisurely chats, that often take the form of freestyle intellectual conversation. West Bengal has a long tradition of popular literature, music and drama largely based on Bengali folklore and Hindu epics and Puranas.





Religion, specially Hinduism, the principal and dominant religion at 70.5% of the total population, plays a vital role in the culture of West Bengal. Durga Puja, a five-day annual autumnal celebration of Hindu goddess Durga's victory over Mahishasura, a Minotaur-like demon, is the biggest festival of the state. The Kali Puja, celebrating the guardian deity of Bengal, is also celebrated with great enthusiasm. Other important festivals include Vijayadashami, Rathayatra, Holi, Janmashtami, Saraswati Puja, Makar Sankranti, the seasonal festivals introduced by Rabindranath Tagore, book fairs, film and drama festivals and traditional village fairs etc.

West Bengal is home to two of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites (Sundarban National Park and Darjeeling Himalayan Railway).





# Education

West Bengal schools are run by the state government or by private organisations, including religious institutions. Instruction is mainly in English or Bengali, though Urdu is also used. The secondary schools are affiliated with the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE), the National Institute of Open School (NIOS) or the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education.

Under the 10+2+3 plan, after completing secondary school, students typically enroll in schools with a higher secondary facility affiliated with the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education or any other board. Students choose from one of three streams: humanities, commerce or science. There is also provision for vocational education and coursework at the higher secondary level. Upon completing the required coursework, students may enroll in general or professional degree programs.

There are many renowned schools in the city, including The Hindu, Hare, Ballygunge Government, St. James, Pratt Memorial, La Martiniere, St. Xavier's Collegiate School, and Loreto House - which consistently rank amongst the best schools in the country. Many of the schools in Kolkata and Darjeeling are renowned colonial-era establishments and boast of fantastic neo-classical architecture. The famous schools of Darjeeling include St. Paul's, St. Joseph's North Point, Goethals Memorial and Dow Hill in Kurseong.

West Bengal has 18 universities. Kolkata has played a pioneering role in the development of the modern education system in India. It is the gateway to the revolution of European education.

The state has several higher education institutes of national importance including Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (the first IIM), Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Kolkata, Indian Statistical Institute, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (the first IIT), Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology, Shibpur (the first IEST), National Institute of Technology, Durgapur and West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences.



There are a number of research institutes in Kolkata. The Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science is the first research institute in Asia. Dr .C. V. Raman got the Nobel Prize for his discovery (Raman Effect) done in the IACS. The Bose Institute, Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, S.N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences, Indian Institute of Chemical Biology, Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute, Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre are most prominent.

Notable scholars who were born, worked or studied in the geographic area of the state include physicists Satyendra Nath Bose, Meghnad Saha, and Jagadish Chandra Bose; chemist Prafulla Chandra Roy, statisticians Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis and Anil Kumar Gain; physician Upendranath Brahmachari; educator Ashutosh Mukherjee; and Nobel laureates Rabindranath Tagore, C. V. Raman, and Amartya Sen.

# Sports

Cricket and soccer are popular sports in the State. Kolkata is also famous for golf courses and its race course. West Bengal, unlike most other states of India, is noted for its passion and patronage of football. Kolkata is one of the major centres for football in India and houses top national clubs such as East Bengal, Mohun Bagan and Mohammedan Sporting Club.

West Bengal has several large stadiums—The Eden Gardens is one of only two 100,000-seat cricket amphitheaters in the world, although renovations will reduce this figure. Calcutta Cricket and Football Club is the second-oldest cricket club in the world.

Notable sports personalities from West Bengal include former Indian national cricket captain Sourav Ganguly, Pankaj Roy Olympic tennis bronze medallist Leander Paes, and chess grand master Dibyendu Barua.



# Transport

As of 2011, the total length of surface road in West Bengal is over 92,023 km (57,180 mi); national highways comprise 2,578 km (1,602 mi) and state highways 2,393 km (1,487 mi). As of 2006, the road density of the state is 103.69 km per 100 km<sup>2</sup> (166.92 mi per 100 sq mi), higher than the national average of 74.7 km per 100 km<sup>2</sup> (120 mi per 100 sq mi). Average speed on state highways varies between 40–50 km/h (25–31 mi/h); in villages and towns, speeds are as low as 20–25 km/h (12–16 mi/h) due to the difference in quality of road constructions and maintenance. In the present administration, this scenario has been greatly remedied. As of 2011, the total railway route length is around 4,481 km (2,784 mi). Kolkata is the headquarters of three zones of the Indian Railways — Eastern Railway, South Eastern Railway and the Kolkata Metro which is the newly formed 17th Zone of the Indian Railways. The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) plies in the northern parts of the state. Kolkata metro is the country's first underground railway. The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, part of NFR, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport at Dum Dum, Kolkata, is the state's biggest airport. Bagdogra Airport near Siliguri is a customs airport that has international services to Bhutan and Thailand besides regular domestic services. Kazi Nazrul Islam Airport, India's first private sector airport, serves the twin cities of Asansol-Durgapur at Andal, Bardhaman.

Kolkata is a major river-port in eastern India. The Kolkata Port Trust manages the Kolkata and the Haldia docks. There is passenger service to Port Blair on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and cargo ship service to ports in India and abroad, operated by the Shipping Corporation of India. Ferry is the principal mode of transport in the southern part of the state, especially in the Sundarbans area. Kolkata is the only city in India to have trams as a mode of transport and these are operated by the Calcutta Tramways Company.



*Metro Railways, Kolkata*

Several government-owned organisations operate bus services in the state, including the Calcutta State Transport Corporation, the North Bengal State Transport Corporation, the South Bengal State Transport Corporation, the West Bengal Surface Transport Corporation, and the Calcutta Tramways Company. There are also private bus companies. The railway system is a nationalised service without any private investment. Hired forms of transport include metered taxis and auto rickshaws which often ply specific routes in cities. In most of the state, cycle rickshaws, and in Kolkata, hand-pulled rickshaws, are used for short-distance travel. Recent changes in urban transportation has seen extensive networks of deluxe cab services like Ola and Uber, and inter-city travel has luxury services like double deckered fully operational heavy buses like Volvos.



## Political Overview



*Writers' Building, Kolkata*

West Bengal is governed through a parliamentary system of representative democracy, a feature the state shares with other Indian states. Universal suffrage is granted to residents. There are two branches of government. The legislature, the West Bengal Legislative Assembly, consists of elected members and special office bearers such as the Speaker and Deputy Speaker that are elected by the members. Assembly meetings are presided over by the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker in the Speaker's absence.

The judiciary is composed of the Calcutta High Court and a system of lower courts. Executive authority is vested in the Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister, although the titular head of government is the Governor. The Governor is the head of state appointed by the President of India. The leader of the party or coalition with a majority in the Legislative Assembly is appointed as the Chief Minister by the Governor, and the Council of Ministers are appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister.

The Council of Ministers reports to the Legislative Assembly. The Assembly is unicameral with 295 Members of the Legislative Assembly, or MLAs, including one nominated from the Anglo-Indian community. Terms of office run for 5 years, unless the Assembly is dissolved prior to the completion of the term. Auxiliary authorities known as panchayats, for which local body elections are regularly held, govern local affairs. The state contributes 42 seats to the Lok Sabha (Lower House) and 16 seats to the Rajya Sabha (Upper House) of the Indian Parliament.

The main players in the regional politics are the All India Trinamool Congress, the Indian National Congress, and the Left Front alliance (led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) or CPI(M).



*Calcutta High Court*

# Economic Overview

In 2009–10, the tertiary sector of the economy (service industries) was the largest contributor to the gross domestic product of the state, contributing 57.8% of the state domestic product compared to 24% from primary sector (agriculture, forestry, mining) and 18.2% from secondary sector (industrial and manufacturing). Agriculture is the leading occupation in West Bengal. Rice is the state's principal food crop. Rice, potato, jute, sugarcane and wheat are the top five crops of the state. Tea is produced commercially in northern districts; the region is well known for Darjeeling and other high quality teas.

State industries are localised in the Kolkata region, the mineral-rich western highlands, and Haldia port region. The Durgapur–Asansol colliery belt is home to a number of major steel plants. Manufacturing industries playing an important economic role are engineering products, electronics, electrical equipment, cables, steel, leather, textiles, jewellery, frigates, automobiles, railway coaches, and wagons. The Durgapur centre has established a number of industries in the areas of tea, sugar, chemicals and fertilisers. Natural resources like tea and jute in and nearby parts has made West Bengal a major centre for the jute and tea industries.

Years after independence, West Bengal was still dependent on the central government for meeting its demands for food; food production remained stagnant and the Indian green revolution bypassed the state. However, there has been a significant spurt in food production since the 1980s, and the state now has a surplus of grains. The state's share of total industrial output in India was 9.8% in 1980–81, declining to 5% by 1997–98. However, the service sector has grown at a rate higher than the national rate.

In terms net state domestic product (NSDP), West Bengal has the sixth largest economy (2009–2010) in India, with an NSDP of 3663 billion Indian rupees, behind Maharashtra (8179 billion), Uttar Pradesh (4530 billion), Andhra Pradesh (4268 billion), Tamil Nadu (4177 billion), and Gujarat (3704 billion).



The state's per capita GSDP at current prices in 2009–10 was US\$ 956.4, improved from US\$553.7 in 2004–05. The state's total financial debt stood at 1918350 million (US\$29 billion) as of 2011.

The state has promoted foreign direct investment, which has mostly come in the software and electronics fields; Kolkata is becoming a major hub for the Information technology (IT) industry.. NASSCOM–Gartner ranks West Bengal power infrastructure the best in the country.

Notably, many corporate companies and PSEs are now headquartered in Kolkata include ITC Limited, India Government Mint, Kolkata, Haldia Petrochemicals, Exide Industries, Hindustan Motors, Britannia Industries, Bata India, Birla Corporation, CESC Limited, Coal India Limited, Damodar Valley Corporation, PwC India, Peerless Group, United Bank of India, UCO Bank and Allahabad Bank.

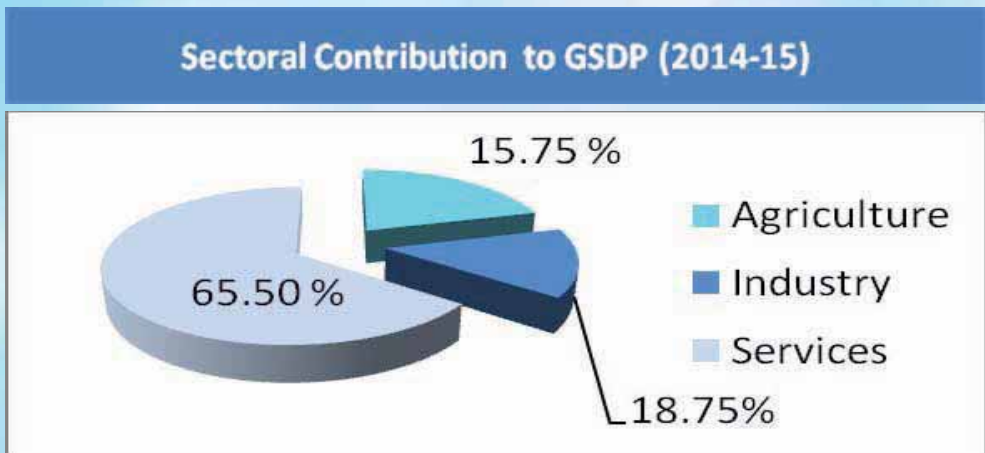
In 2010s, events such as adoption of "Look East" policy by the government of India, opening of the Nathu La Pass in Sikkim as a border trade-route with China and immense interest in the South East Asian countries to enter the Indian market and invest have put Kolkata in an advantageous position for development in future, particularly with likes of Myanmar.

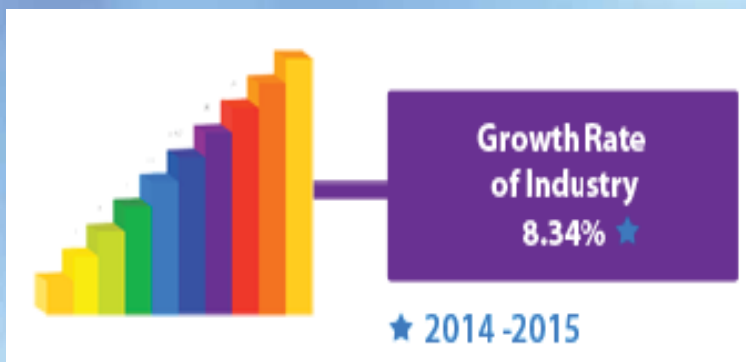


*Financial Hub, Kolkata*

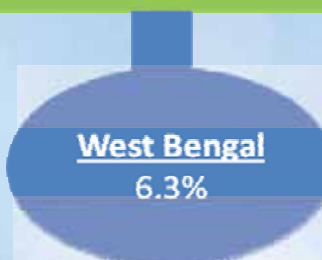
## Economy at a glance







### Growth in % of Index of Industrial Production (IIP)-2013-14



WEST BENGAL	2010-11	2014-15	Growth%
State Plan Expenditure Growth Between	\$2.13 Billion	\$6.64 Billion	311%
Social Infrastructure Expenditure Growth Between	\$1.03 Billion	\$ 3.11 Billion	301%
Agri,Agri-Allied & Rural Development Expenditure Growth Between	\$0.45 Billion	\$2.5Billion	547%
Physical Infrastructure Expenditure Growth Between	\$0.26 Billion	\$0.88 Billion	330%
Capital Expenditure Growth Between	\$0.34Billion	\$2.01 Billion	601%

PER CAPITA INCOME	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Growth at Constant Prices %	West Bengal	West Bengal	West Bengal
	9.47	12.38	12.84

# Advantages of Bengal

West Bengal enjoys following strategic advantages:

- Bengal is at the top in all India rankings in Human development index, social sector, women empowerment.
- Bengal ranks number one in India's power distribution.
- The State is strategically situated. Bengal is the gateway to South-East Asia and North-Eastern India. Closely situated and well connected to the booming business hubs of Asia such as Singapore, Bangkok, Thailand, Hongkong and Malaysia.
- It shares international boundaries with Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan.
- Its international connectivity includes airports, seaports and road network.
- It is a hinterland that comprises mineral-rich states such as Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha.
- It has a larger consumer market: Market size in India at GBP 75.96 billion in 2011; anticipated to touch GBP 270.33 billion by 2022. Bengal's 91 million population constitutes 7.5% of the total Indian consumer market.
- Bengal ranks second in tea production after Assam, the land of famous Darjeeling Tea.
- Bengal ranks number one in bank credit flow to SME sector: GBP 7.4 billion in the last 4 years.
- Bengal is naturally beautiful. The Himalayas, the Dooars, the Delta of the Sunderbans and beaches; Indo-British heritage. Huge focus on tourism.
- Bengal has abundant natural and human resource.

# Government Policies

The major Industrial policies of the State are as follows:

- Policy on Co-generation and Generation of Electricity from Renewable Sources of Energy, 2012
- MSME Policy 2013-18
- Textile Policy 2013-18
- West Bengal Incentive Scheme, 2015 for Tourism Units
- West Bengal Fisheries Investment
- Policy 2015 for MSMLEs in Fisheries Sector
- West Bengal Investment & Industrial Policy 2013 West Bengal State Support for Industries Scheme, 2013
- Policy on Information & Communication Technology, 2012
- ICT Incentive Scheme 2012
- State Policy on Public Private partnership (PPP) 2012
- Food Processing Policy 2011

## Incentives & Other Reforms

### **Incentives for large-scale industries:**

- Industrial Promotion Assistance – Reimbursement of 80%-90% of VAT paid for a period ranging from 8-15 years,
- Reimbursement of CST Paid for a period of 3 years,
- Waiver of Electricity Duty,
- Incentive linked with employment,
- Stamp Duty Exemption,
- Waiver of Land Conversion Fee,
- Anchor Unit Subsidy,
- Financial assistance towards Patent registration,
- Tax Holidays,
- Electricity duty exemption,
- Customized packages to mega projects for the ease of industrialization, etc.

### **Incentives for MSME:**

- State Capital Investment Subsidy,
- Interest Subsidy on Term Loan,
- Waiver of Electricity Duty, Power Subsidy,
- Subsidy for Energy Efficiency,

- Subsidy on Stamp Duty and Registration Fee,
- Refund of Entry Tax,
- Refund of Value-Added Tax (VAT),
- Refund of Central Sales Tax (CST),
- Subsidy for Water Conservation/ Environment Compliance,
- Subsidy for Standard Quality Compliance,
- Workforce Welfare Assistance,
- Subsidy for Patent Registration, etc.

### **Incentives for IT industries:**

- A very attractive Incentive Scheme consisting of
- Capital Investment Subsidy,
- Interest Subsidy,
- Training Subsidy,
- Employment Generation Subsidy,
- Reimbursement of Stamp Duty & Registration Charges,
- Electricity Duty Exemption, etc., with a bouquet of additional incentive for startup companies.

West Bengal offers very competitive Incentive Policy which on certain parameters is better off compared to the other States in the East. For extending financial support to large & medium scale industrial units, the state of West Bengal has notified a scheme namely 'The West Bengal State Support for Industries Scheme 2013' (WBSSIS 2013) which is an investor's delight when compared to policies and incentives available in the States of Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha and certain other states across India. Further the state has been coming up with various online reform process and various initiatives for ease of doing business in Bengal. The following reform processes and incentive packages are already in place or in the process.

### **PPP Policy**

West Bengal is the only state which has introduced a State Policy on Public Private Partnership (PPP) to facilitate private investment in infrastructure including physical and social infrastructure to enhance the quality of life of the people of the state by providing better and efficient public services.

### **Initiatives of State Government for Ease of doing business**

For Ease of Doing Business in West Bengal, the following reforms have been initiated:



**1. ShilpaSathi – Single Window Services for large industries:** ShilpaSathi comprising representatives of various Departments/Directorates of Government at West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation (WBIDC)’s office provides single window application services to the entrepreneur for doing business. Representatives from the departments of Labour, Fire & Emergency Service, Power, Irrigation & Waterways, Pollution Control Board & Kolkata Municipal Corporation attend the Single Window Cell office. The Cell facilitates expeditious disposal of matters relating to clearances of various Government Departments/Authorities for setting up industrial units in the State.

**2. Online application for clearances under ShilpaSathi:** Online application through Common Application Form for clearances through ShilpaSathi web portal is underway.

**3. Time bound clearances under the ShilpaSathi Single Window Services.**

Clearances	Timeline
Registration, license and its renewal under the Factories Act 1948	65 days
Permit for ground water	DLA: 30 days SLA: 21 days HLIDC: 15 days
Permit for surface water	SLA: 21 days HLIDC: 21 days
Bulk power supply	up to 125 KVA: 15 days
Fire license	60 days



Clearances	Timeline
Mutation of land	21 days
Conversion of land	30 days
Consent to establish from WBPCB	Red: 60 days Orange: 30 days Green: 15 days
Consent to operate from WBPCB	Red: 60 days Orange: 30 days Green: 15 days

**4. Task Force to follow up with departments concerned:** A Task Force under ShilpaSathi closely monitors the progress of applications with participation from the departments concerned. It meets every week to expedite project clearances and address specific problems received from industry.

**5. Relationship Managers and Business Synergy Centre for proposal facilitation:** Senior Relationship Managers are provided for all major projects. They are responsible for day-to-day monitoring of the progress and also to address bottlenecks in government departments.

**6. Pricing policy of land goes online:** Pricing of all industrial parks are available on the official website of WBIDC to ensure transparency.

**7. Online Terms and conditions for Allotment of Land / Module in Industrial Parks:** Detailed terms and conditions of allotment of land / module in various industrial parks of WBIDC has been uploaded on the official website of WBIDC to ensure transparency.

**8. Online Appraisal of Proposals for Allotment of Land/Module in Industrial Parks:** Detailed terms and conditions of allotment of land/module in various industrial parks of WBIDC has been uploaded on the official website of WBIDC to ensure transparency.

**9. Online monitoring of applications for 14Y land clearance and allotment:** WBIDC's official website has an online monitoring system to check the status of applications for 14Y land ceiling clearances and applications for the allotments of land/modules in industrial parks. Applicants can know the status of their applications through WBIDC's e-service. Time frame for processing of cases u/s 14Y of WBLR Act is 90 days of submitting completed application.

**10. Disbursement of Incentives monitored online:** The application and disbursements of incentives that are provided to medium and large scale industries in accordance with the Industrial Policy of Government of West Bengal are monitored and their statuses tracked online. Time frame for disposal of application under State Capital Investment Subsidy by WBIDC is 30 days.

**11. Registration to get incentives for new large-scale industries simplified:** The number of documents required for Registration Certificate (Part-I) has been reduced to 7 from 20 earlier. The number of documents required for Registration Certificate (Part-II) has also been reduced to 8 from 16 earlier.

**12. Business Process Reengineering:** This reform would lead to a Simplified Tax Regime and e-Governance for increasing the tax base and towards improved service delivery. This would result in having a tax system simple, fair, transparent and predictable to attract various investors and also for expansion of existing business.

**13. Mandatory E-registration:** West Bengal is the only state in the country to have made e-registration mandatory along with introduction of dematerialized Registration Certificate.

**14. Single Tax ID -** West Bengal is one of the three States in the country, where single Tax ID (Registration number) is allotted to cover the registration under various tax laws such as VAT, CST, and Professional Tax, which makes it easier to file taxes and also enables greater integration of tax payment and filing systems, thus reducing the cost of doing business.

**15. E-Way Bill:** Introduction of on-line generation of a single document dematerialized waybill for smooth movement of goods and such facility has also been extended to unregistered dealers as well.

**16. Simplification of regulatory burden initiated for environmental procedures:**

Different inspection regimes for different categories of pollution has been introduced to simplify the regulatory burden and different reforms like, shifting from mandatory inspection to need based inspection, reducing the frequency of inspections, etc. and thereby facilitating the ease of doing business.

**17. Clear timelines for connections of basic utilities defined:** Clear timelines for connection of electricity, water and sewage have been defined.

**18. Quick disposal of VAT refund:** The Commercial tax department of West Bengal is working very closely for quick disbursement of VAT refund.

**19. E-filing Service center and Helpline number:** West Bengal has introduced an E-filing service centers and a helpline number can be an effective mechanism to assist tax payers to make the transition from manual filing and payment.

**20. E-Sales Tax Deduction at Source (TDS) Service:** Government of West Bengal has introduced e-STDS services to simplify the STDS procedure.

# Industrial Infrastructure

The Government of West Bengal has initiated time bound steps to modernize infrastructure facilities and also to create new clusters and growth centers. Since infrastructure creation involves considerable investments, the state welcomes private participation in this area and has already made considerable progress in laying the groundwork for state-of-the-art industrial facilities to attract entrepreneurs.

## Industrial Park

The West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation is developing sector specific and multi product industrial parks in the State keeping in mind the GoWB roadmap for rapid industrial growth.

## Growth Centres

The government has encouraged the development of Growth Centres through the West Bengal Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (WBIIDC). The infrastructure facilities provided in these Growth Centres include developed land, industrial shed, water supply, power supply, street lighting, internal drainage & sewerage system. Other facilities such as telephone, banks, post offices, fire stations, police outposts, shopping centers, centre for recreational facilities are also being contemplated for the new Growth Centres. Till date WBIIDC has established 15 Growth centers in different locations of the state such as Kalyani (Phase I, II, III), Falta (Phase I, II), Uluberia, Bishnupur, Raninagar, Coochbehar, Malda (Phase I, II), Dabgram, Haldia, Kharagpur and Bolpur. WBIIDC is also keen to develop industrial parks through the PPP model involving collaboration with industry. 2 industrial parks are at present being developed under PPP model – Integrated Industrial hub at Jalpaiguri and industrial auto park at Jhargram.

## Intelligent Parks

There are a number of Intelligent Parks being set up in the State which is now the centre of action for IT and ITeS companies. With more and more software companies moving into Kolkata for software development & BPO operations to drive down costs, several private entrepreneurs & realtors have entered the fray. They are setting up the state-of-the-art intelligent buildings & IT Parks to provide 'intelligent space' to IT & ITeS companies. As the Salt Lake Electronics Complex is almost saturated, IT facilities in and around Salt Lake or at New Town, Rajarhat are being set up.

**Special Economic Zones**

With a view to generate employment, the State Government recognizes the growth of SEZ in selected sectors. The GoWB has also initiated creation of industrial infrastructure in the form of Special Economic Zones which are specially delineated enclaves entitled to several fiscal concessions and incentives. At the moment, there are five functional SEZs operating in the State - Falta SEZ (multi product zone), Manikanchan at Salt lake (Gems & Jewellery), Wipro at Salt lake (IT/ ITes), Dalmiya and Co Ltd at Bantala (IT/ ITes) and Unitech Hightech at Rajarhat (IT/ ITes). The export through the functional SEZs increased to Rs. 5931.67 crore during 2009-10, an increase of 30%.

**Township Projects**

The Government of West Bengal proposes to develop six new Township Projects on Government land. The townships have been selected by the Government based on its strategic importance, feasibility factors and availability of land.

<div>Asansol (Agnibina)</div> <div></div> <div>Industrial Township</div>	<div>Baruipur (Uttam City)</div> <div></div> <div>Geriatic and Wellness Township</div>
<div>Dumurjala (Sports City)</div> <div></div> <div>Sports City</div>	<div>Bolpur (Gitabitan)</div> <div></div> <div>Culture Hub</div>
<div>Dabgram (Teesta)</div> <div></div> <div>Health and Education City</div>	<div>Kalyani (Samriddhi)</div> <div></div> <div>Analytics City</div>

Please refer to official website of HIDCO [www.wbhidcoltd.com](http://www.wbhidcoltd.com) for further details.



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