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Volume 30, 2020 - Issue 1

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# Understanding peoples' participation in urban local government in West Bengal

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Pages 68-79 | Received 09 Jul 2018, Accepted 14 Feb 2019, Published online: 21 Jun 2019

“ Cite this article  <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2019.1630368>

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## ABSTRACT

In light of the potential of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act to reinforce participatory practices in Indian cities, this paper, based on field observation from two municipalities of West Bengal, examines the nature of peoples' participation and identifies the socio-economic factors determining effective participation. It finds that in West Bengal, municipalities' failures to set up ward committees, the highly partisan nature of the ward committee, and non-occurrence of ward committee meetings made the general population disinterested in utilising these available democratic forum. Elected representatives became the only link between citizens and the