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Mamata at his side, Prime Minister rolls out 3 bigticket social schemes

Modi said 80-90 per cent people in the country neither have insurance cover nor any possibility of pension.

By Express News Service | • Written by Madhuparna Das | • Kolkata | Updated: May 10, 2015 9:35:13 am

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While the three schemes will come into effect from June 1, Modi said that in the first seven days of the trial run, banks have enrolled 5.05 crore people, including 42 lakh from West Bengal. (Source: PTI)

Sharing the stage with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for the first time since assuming office, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday launched three major social security schemes in Kolkata.

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Calling himself the "pradhan sevak", Modi said that the social security schemes he was launching — the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and the Atal Pension Yojana — were not meant to reap any political benefits. "There are several small-time politicians who launch certain schemes to win the next election. But today, I am present here as the pradhan sevak of the country. The schemes would benefit people when they are 60 years old. At that time, they will remember this programme in Kolkata and remember Modiji."

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Invoking Rabindranath Tagore, he added, "We are launching these schemes because Gurudev said poor do not need support, they need power. And we are trying to give power to them."

While the three schemes will come into effect from June 1, Modi said that in the first seven days of the trial run, banks have enrolled 5.05 crore people, including 42 lakh from West Bengal.

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Addressing the crowd, Banerjee said that many schemes launched with hype do not eventually reach those in need, prompting the PM to respond.

"The banking sector and LIC are doing good, but their efforts do not reach the people. I request you to take the schemes to the door of the underprivileged. When we came to power in the state, we saw that 1,000 out of 3,005 gram panchayats do not have a bank," said the CM.

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Modi responded, "The Bengal CM has given data on banks in gram panchayats. But this is the account of the last 60 years. I can understand her pain. I know she is bringing this to my notice because she has faith in me. She knows that if anybody can change the situation, that person is me."

He then seemed to reach out to Banerjee, saying, "We know that what Bengal thinks today, India thinks tomorrow. Our history states the same. Everything that started in Bengal prospered. This is the land of Gurudev and Swami ji (Swami Vivekananda). They have taught us to serve the

poor. The people of this land worship Durga. But they have blessings of both Saraswati and Lakshmi. So, I believe the launch of these schemes from Bengal will surely yield results."

Giving an account of the schemes launched by her government, Banerjee said, "The country flourishes when the Centre and the state work shoulder to shoulder for the development of people. We started the kanyashree scheme much earlier than the Centre did... The Centre allocated Rs 100 crore for the beti padhao scheme. Our PM would be happy to know that we did it much earlier."

Mamata Banerjee

Narendra Modi

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