Sachindralal Singh, the first Chief Minister of Tripura, was a highly popular leader of Tripura. He was fondly called “Sachin-da” and was highly admired for his simplicity and amiable nature. His father who hailed from Bihar, served in the military establishment of the Maharaja of Tripura and settled at Agartala permanently. Sachin-da started his political activities from his school days as a member of “Bhatri Sangh”, an organisation of youths of Agartala. The members of the Sangh had political link with the Jugantar Party of Bengal from the year 1920 or there about.

There was no Congress organisation in the Princely States before India achieved independence. An organisation in the name of Gana Parishad used to work in Hill Tripura as a substitute of Congress. It may be noted that in the pre-independent India Princely Tripura was known as “Hill Tripura” and there was also a Tipperah District of the then Bengal province adjacent to it. The people of Hill Tripura were also involved in freedom movement of the country and had close relations with their counterparts in British India. There was, however, no political agitation against the Maharaja of Tripura. From 1946 Sachin-da extensively toured the Hills and dales of Tripura for organisational work. He had special love and care for the hills’ people. Sometime in 1950 he organised a Tribal Conference, inviting tribal leaders from all parts of Tripura at village Bagafa in Belonia sub-division, which was inaugurated by the then Chief Commissioner, Mr. K K Hazra, ICS. About 200 Tribal people attended the conference. In 1953, at Sachin-da’s
In 1953, while he was an advisor to the Advisory Council of the Government of Tripura, Tripura welfare work was taken up by the Government. A Special Officer for Tribal Welfare was appointed and necessary fund allotted for the purpose. When he became the 1st Chief Minister of Tripura, he made special endeavour to upgrade the Tribal Welfare Office and give more attention to Tribal Jhumia Settlement and other tribal welfare work.

In the General Election held in 1952 he was elected as a Member of Tripura Electoral College. In 1956 he was elected as a Member of Tripura Territorial Council and became its 1st Chairman. He was elected as a member of Tripura Territorial Council for the 2nd time in 1967, which was subsequently converted into a Territorial Assembly to form the 1st government in Tripura. He was elected leader of the Congress party which was in majority in the Territorial Assembly, and formed the first democratically elected government in Tripura.

In the Government as an Advisor, as Chairman of the Territorial Council and as Chief Minister he worked with great devotion for the development of Tripura in agriculture, education, road communication and welfare of the people in general and Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and OBC in particular. He took care of the refugees from East Pakistan for their rehabilitation. It was due to his endeavour that a large number of refugees got rehabilitated. Sachin-da is rightly called the architect of democratic Tripura.

He was the 1st Chairman of Tripura Khadi & Village Industries Board, the Harijan Sevak Sangh, Tripura Board, Kamraj Memorial Trust, New Delhi and Vice-Chairman of Freedom Fighters Committee of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs etc.

In the last phase of his life, the circumstances compelled him to leave the Tripura State Congress which he had formed, and he joined the “Congress For Democracy” of Babu Jagjivan Ram. In 1972 General Election he was elected Member of the Lok Sabha from Tripura West Parliamentary Constituency as a candidate of CFD. But later on he joined Indian National Congress again.

Since 1972 he was living in New Delhi with his wife and children, and breathed his last there on 9th December, 2002. His body was brought to Agartala by the Government and cremated at Dashami Ghat cremation ground, Agartala, with full State Honour.

The writer is also the ex-secretary, Tripura State Congress Committee, Agartala