

CONTRIBUTION OF THE REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS (SABHA-SAMITI) IN THE FIELD OF SOCIO-CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH BENGAL UPTO 1969

6.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter we have clearly explained about the contribution of the Regional vernacular press and the Associations in the freedom movement within the framework of our study. More specifically it can be said that in chapter 5 we have tried to give some highlights on the role of the Associations in the course of freedom movement in this region (North Bengal). Within the course of this study we found some very clear and categorical evidences, which have already been focused, in our discussion. It is evident that the local or the Regional Associations of North Bengal were closely related with the process of Socio-cultural development of North Bengal. In our study about Press and Associations we have found that the rural press most of which were vernacular constitutes one of the most important print media for reaching out to the hundred of million people in all parts of our country. Similarly we get a link between the Press and the Associations sometimes which becomes a component to each other in imparting certain programme or interaction. In the context of this study we can say, during the last few decades it is found that several Associations or Organizations from global position to National, Regional, even in sub-Regional levels have been playing special attention towards different type of problems, prospects and development in all respect.¹ In the regional level particularly in Bengal we see that during the Nineteenth century a good number of Associations in different field emerged and achieved a lot for the cause of socio-cultural and political developments. In this context it is not possible to deny the contribution of the Associations (SABHA-SAMITI) in the process of socio-cultural progress. So, it is found that the Associations are now increasingly recognized as an important platform for the promotion of social awareness and development.

6.2. POSITION OF NORTH BENGAL BEFORE AND AFTER 1947

When we are going to have a discussion about the contribution of the Associations or the organizations in the Socio-cultural development of North Bengal, let us have a categorical set up of the subject. We will attempt to make a study on the topic within the period 1869-to 1969, the scenario of one hundred years. But at the same time it has to be mentioned that before and after 1947 the idea or the area of North Bengal was not same. Though our study is concerned with the area of the five districts of North Bengal, (which was defined as Northern part of West Bengal after 1947, and subsequently known as present North Bengal), but we have to keep it in our mind that the cultural developments or cultural regeneration of present North Bengal (the area of our study) was started from the North Bengal of undivided Bengal viz., before 1947, some parts of which are presently lying with Bangladesh. So to present a picture about our study we will have two phases, which is concerned before and after 1947. Without explaining the position of North Bengal before 1947, it is absolutely impossible to understand the position of cultural development or cultural regeneration of present North Bengal. So, in our present context we will have to look into the subject giving proper attention on North Bengal into two phases, which is the core area of our discussion.

In our present study it is interestingly noticed that the Calcutta based scholars and institutions-though they did not remain aloof from the nationalistic or socio-cultural fervour, were not interested in writing either in Bengali or and any subject related to North Bengal (History, archaeology, language folklore etc). But we see that the 'VANGIYA SAHITYA PARISAT' in Calcutta and the scholars associated with this institution were attached with a huge number of research activities in different fields. But it is surprising that they did not take any initiative or get interested on North Bengal and started to write anything on the unexplored field of North Bengal. This task was eventually taken up by a North Bengal Institution 'The VARENDRA RESEARCH SOCIETY' of Rajshahi the cultural centre-pot of North Bengal of undivided

Bengal. This Rajshahi town was always known as a famous centre of learning, trade and commerce. Its importance was further augmented when it was transformed into the headquarters of the Rajshahi district in 1825 and that of Rajshahi Division in 1875.

6.3. SOCIO-CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH BENGAL

Regarding the history of these Associations in North Bengal of pre-independence period we have the reference of an Association in Rajshahi. The aristocrats and the landlords of this area some of whom had some special interest for cultural activities, worked jointly to establish in 1878 the 'RAJSHAHI ASSOCIATION' which provided a forum for reading papers on history, science, literature and art'.² For example, we can mention that a Sanskrit college richly endowed by Rani Hemanta Kumari Devi of Puthia Raj family was founded here in 1894. Another reference of association which we get, is that a branch of 'Vangiya Sahitya Parisat' was opened about this time (1905) at Rajshahi.³ One significant fact we notice in this regard is that after the establishment of the Rajshahi Association, Branch of Bangiya Sahitya Parisat and the Sanskrit College, an educational Institute, were established in Rajshahi and some development in the field of cultural practices were taking place. Though this process was started sometime earlier by the landlords and aristocrats of that particular region, but it is the credit of these Associations, the common platform of the intellectuals. As a result we see that as many as eleven journals and periodicals were published from Rajshahi between 1865 and 1900 including the 'JNĀNANKURA' (1872) the 'PRATIBIMBA' (1872), and the 'AITIHĀSIK CITRA'. The last named, which was edited by none other than Akshay Kumar Maitreya, the most illustrious son of North Bengal. This was indeed very important because it was probably the first historical journal in Bengali language.⁴ In it (AITIHĀSIK CITRA) were published the translations of 'RIYAZ-US-SALATIN' by Rampran Gupta and that of 'INDIKA' by Bhavagovinda Chaudhuri. It is also interesting to note that Akshay Kumar Maitreya began to publish this historical quarterly (Aitihāsik Citra) with the

suggestion of the great poet Rabindranath Tagore who was highly impressed by the literary efforts of Maitreya aimed at making his countrymen conscious of their glorious historical past.⁵ In the subsequent period it is found that a huge number of articles based on literature, history of Bengal particularly North Bengal, archaeology and art were published in this journal. Akshay Kumar Maitreya with his scholarly attention started to explore some untouched corners which got a treasure of history and culture of our country. Hence we see that with this effort of Sri Maitreya patroned by these Associations an atmosphere of cultural advancement started in Rajshahi, which subsequently influenced a considerable number of scholars.

6.4. VARENDRA RESEACH SOCIETY

Another outstanding cultural cum research Association was the 'VARENDRA RESEARCH SOCIETY' (VRS). This Varendra Research Society was founded in June 1910 as a centre for the promotion of historical studies and research in the history of Bengal at the liberal patronage of Kumar Sarat Kumar Ray of the Dighapatiya Raj family. From the inception of this Institution/ Association, the persons attached with it were very much, committed for its outstanding achievements in the socio-cultural and academic activities. While Kumar Sarat Kumar Ray himself was the President of this Association, Akshay Kumar Maitreya and Rama Prasad Chanda renowned historian and archaeologist became its Director and honorary Secretary respectively. This Varendra Research Society set up a high standard museum of its own for the better preservation of its historical and archaeological assets. The collection of this society was so rich that gradually the museum of the society became a storehouse of antiquities which included sculptures, epigraphs, coins, terracotta's metal ware, paintings and manuscripts collected from various places of Bengal (see chapter 2). For there proper utilization the society build up a rich library which helped the students and the scholars too much. As an academic and cultural organization this society (Varendra Research Society) was very much aware with its responsibility and

commitment. So to attract students, teachers and persons interested in history and antiquarian studies, the society (VRS) arranged archaeological tours and excavations time to time which contributed a new mark for the cultural development of this region. It should be pointed out in this connection that Rama Prasad Chanda was a good friend of Rakhal Das Banerji who had also under taken to the task of writing a complete political history of Bengal. Banerji's work in two volumes, under the title 'BĀNGLĀR ITIHĀS' one dealing with the history of ancient Bengal and the other with that of medieval Bengal was published two year later (1914). Again from the footnotes of this 'Gaudarājamālā', it is understood that Sri Chanda was also helped by Rakhal Das Banerji in many ways. Both of them left no stones unturned to explore the myth of the kulaji tradition. Though Banerji did not belong to the Varendra Research Society, he had some personal and academic contacts with its members, and the activities of the Varendra Research Society must have inspired him to write a History of Bengal in Bengali. Dr. N. N. Bhattacharya in his article, "The Varendra Research Society and its contributions to historiography of Bengal" has clearly mentioned that for the sake of information the first serious work on numismatics in Bengali was also done by Banerji under the caption 'Prācina Mudrā' which came out in 1922. Though it was not a complete success, but it has to be mentioned here that the Varendra Research Society undertook a plan to prepare in Bengali a comprehensive history of Bengal in eight volumes dealing with all the branches. So it is found that this associations of the scholars and intellectuals of Bengal under the umbrella of Varendra Research Society got some significant contribution in the field of literature, history and over all cultural activities of Bengal particularly on North Bengal.

6.5. RANGPUR SAHITYA PARISHAD

Regarding cultural development of North Bengal, another important organization/ association was the 'RANGPUR SAHITYA PARISHAD'. This Rangpur Sahitya Panishad was founded as a branch of the 'BANGIYA

SAHITYA PARISAT' (hereafter Rangpur Sahitya Parishad as RSP and Bangiya Sahitya Parisat as BSP) in 1905. We get a reference about this RSP from its proceeding that "Accordingly on 11th Baishak, 1312 B.S. (1905) Rangpur Sahitya Parishad started with 28 members as a branch of Bangiya Sahitya parishad.⁶ In this connection one thing more has to be noted that it was the first branch of BSP in North Bengal. Some intellectuals and Zaminders from most of the districts of North Bengal were its members and patronized this Association for their cultural practices. At the time of formation its president was Mahamohopadhaya Pandit Jadabeswar Tarkaratna and secretary was Surendra Chandra Roy Chowdhury, a Zaminder of Rangpur who were personally interested for the cause of literary and cultural activities. In the mean time Akshay Kumar Maitreya also came forward to be associated with this Association/ organization (R.S.P). Within a short time it is found that these intellectuals and the academically interested persons of North Bengal were gradually becoming interested and associated with this institution out of their own interest. In this context we are quoting relevant parts from the proceedings of the Parishad which are as follows:-

"From the very beginning Akshay Kumar Maitreya and Pandit Kokileshar Bhattacharya Vidyaratna, M.A. the well known literateur and professor of Sanskrit, Cooch Behar Victoria College, became Associate Member of Rangpur Sahitya Parishad. Besides, Rai Calicadas Dutta Bahadur C.I.E, Dewan of Cooch Behar became Associate Member..... Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, the pillar of North Bengal, donated Rs. 500 and became its first patron and life member. After his death Raja Rajendra Narayan became a patron and donated Rs.500.⁷

It is remarkable that the Rangpur Sahitya Parishad from the very beginning was getting the support and co-operation of the Zaminders, intellectuals and some literate persons of North Bengal which facilitated its organizers to promote the cause of cultural atmosphere in this region. Though it

was located at Rangpur, a culturally advanced place in undivided North Bengal, but it was patronized by the renowned persons from this area of North Bengal. In this connection we can refer the name of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan and after his death Raja Ragendra Narayan of Cooch Behar state who became its patron and life member of this organization.⁸ As a result some positive measures were being found and a cultural flow came into being in North Bengal. This RSP started its journey with only 28 (Twenty Eight) members and within only seven years its total members raised to 432.⁹ As a cultural landmark in North Bengal the RSP got much credit by publishing a literary periodical and that was 'RANGPUR SAHITYA PARISHAD PATRIKA'. This Patrika was the mouth organ of RSP which with all its sincerity was engaged in research on history, archaeology, Folklore and Folk literature of North Bengal, and so many things related with the socio-cultural history of North Bengal.¹⁰ About the aims and objectives of R.S.P, it is generally said that, "As a branch of Bangiya Sahitya Parishad this Institution was inaugurated with the avowed object of (i) making archaeological discoveries in North Bengal and Assam."¹¹

During the period of our study we find that several type of Association or organizations had emerged, the detail working of which are not much known. In our Present context we would try to confine our study within the jurisdiction of cultural field and at the same time we will try to show how cultural developments were gradually taking place in North Bengal. For this purpose we have mentioned something in brief about the activities of two noteworthy organization viz. (i) VARENDRA RESEARCH SOCIETY and (ii) RANGPUR SAHITYA PARISHAD of undivided North Bengal. No doubt, these two organizations in their activities achieved the ability to demonstrate the interdependent character of intellectual activities and to show how cultural regeneration in one intellectual domain lead to a realignment of thought in other realms as well.

6.6. UTTARBANGA SAHITYA SAMMILAN (USS)

Regarding the contributions of the Associations in the cultural development of North Bengal, now we are to refer another organization, specially a literary organization. It was the credit of the 'Rangpur Sahitya Parishad' that with its initiative a literary conference was arranged which was called "Uttarbanga Sahitya Sammilan" (USS). It is mentioned in the proceedings of the Rangpur Sahitya Parishad that a literary conference (USS) was held at Rangpur for the promotion of literary activities in this region. A few lines from the proceedings are as follows:-

"It was in the 3rd year of parishad's existence, the first North Bengal Literary conference met under the presidentship of Akshay Kumar Maitreya. Babu Surendra Chandra Ray Chowdhury, the secretary of Rangpur Sahitya Parishad, has appointed as permanent secretary of North Bengal literary conference."¹²

The first conference of the Uttarbanga Sahitya Sammilan was held in the Town Hall of Rangpur in 1908. From the very beginning this organization got the active co-operation of some distinguish personalities from different places of North Bengal and Western Assam. For example it can be mention that during the first conference of Uttarbanga Sahitya Sammilan (USS) a good number of complimentary messages were received by the organisers of this Sammilan. Among the most distinguished were the Raja Pratap Chandra Barua Bahadur of Gouripur in Assam, Kalikadas Datta Bahadur, C.I.E, the Roy Dewan of Cooch Behar state, Kumar Sarat Kumar Ray of Dighapatiya. On behalf of the 'Bangiya sahitya parishad' Sj. Byomkesh Mustafi attended this conference. Akshay Kumar Maitreya, the illustrious son of Varendrabhumi and the renowned historian presided over this Sahitya Sammelan.¹³ From these references it can be assumed that the organisers of Uttarbanga Sahitya Sammilan got a very positive response in their endeavour of literary and cultural activities. Before this sammilan (conference) we don't have the

reference to say anything about such type of intellectual intercourse of the literary and cultural interactions among the intellectuals of whole North Bengal and the adjacent area of North Bengal i.e., Lower Assam or Namoni Assam.

However, as our purpose is not the detail study about this organization (Uttarbanga Sahitya Sammilan) we would not elaborate our study about this organization and its cultural activities. But from its Various type of literary activities one thing is observed that with the foundation of this organization the intellectuals of North Bengal found a common platform of their own to assemble together and to express themselves in their intellectual and cultural activities. Quite naturally it is found that a new flow of cultural regeneration with new thoughts and ideas started in this region which ultimately resulted to investigate the antiquarian of rare evidences on the history and cultural life of North Bengal. So long it was found that no organization/Association could create such an atmosphere getting involved a huge number of scholars, intellectuals and culturally interested persons throughout North Bengal. During the first decade of the twentieth century, when only a negligible percentage of people were literate in this area, it was not so easy to create an association for literary and cultural practices, the consequences of which were very much prospective and noteworthy. More interesting was that the Maharaja Nripendra Narayan and Maharaja Jitendra Narayan of Cooch Behar Princely state and a good number of Zaminders of North Bengal were also assembled in this platform which was generally an exception and gave an additional inspiration to the organisers of this Association for their literary intellectual and cultural practices. So considering the over all circumstances we do have a situation contending a consciousness for the development in respect of cultural and literary activities in North Bengal. Gradually this cultural consciousness was getting cemented and becoming dominant in different streams of socio-cultural activities like literature, history, archaeology, press publication, organization of different cultural Associations, holding of cultural conferences etc. As an outcome of all these things a cultural manifestation and consciousness were

emerging in North Bengal which gave birth of a gradual growth and development of cultural activities in the area of our study.

So long our study was concerned with the Associations which were located in the areas in North Bengal of undivided Bengal and it had some direct link with the present North Bengal, the area of our study. It was found that the cultural ideological trends were being started from that places which ultimately flourished and reflected more or less on all the districts of present North Bengal. Though it is not possible and we don't have the scope to deal with all of them, but for the purpose of our study we will make a brief study on a few organizations/Associations for the better understanding of our problem.

6.7. LITERARY AND CULTURAL PRACTICES AT COOCH BEHAR

In the context of present North Bengal let us have a discussion on the cultural activities at Cooch Behar (princely state and later on Cooch Behar as a district). In our previous discussion about the 'Uttarbanga Sahitya Sammilan' at Rangpur, it was found that the Maharajas of Cooch Behar and some high officials and professors of Victoria College had a close link with it (Uttarbanga Sahitya Sammilan).¹⁴ In addition to that we have so many references that the Maharajas of Cooch Behar state and some high officials of Cooch Behar state had some special interest for literary activities. For a long time some Maharajas were the great patrons of literature and socio-cultural and religious activities at Cooch Behar.¹⁵ As a result we see that a good number of books of different disciplines (History, literature, translated books, Poranik Stories, etc.) were written by some persons of Cooch Behar royal courts and by some intellectuals of the state.¹⁶ These literary and cultural activities at Cooch Behar had a great influence on the cultural development of Cooch Behar as well as in North Bengal. As a result of these literary practices at Cooch Behar, it was found that within a few years a new era of cultural regeneration was started at Cooch Behar which got more inspiration and active support during the reign of Maharaja Nripenra Narayan Bhupbahadur.

In this context one thing must have to be mentioned to understand this development of Socio-Cultural and intellectual regeneration. In so many places in the history of Cooch Behar and its modernization the incident referred was the historic marriage of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan with Suniti Devi, the eldest daughter of Keshab Chandra Sen, the celebrated Brahma Reformer of Calcutta. It was on 6th march-1878, the marriage ceremony of Maharaja Nirpendra Narayan and Suniti Devi took place which had a great impact on every sphere in the history of Cooch Behar.¹⁷ After this marriage the Cooch Behar state was stepping towards the process of modernization and within a few years some institutions were established which had created far reaching consequences in the field of education and Cultural life of Cooch Behar state. As Suniti Devi was the daughter of renowned Brahma family, she had some special interest for the cause of Brahma movement. Due to this background, Suniti Devi, the Maharani of Cooch Behar founded a 'Brahma Mandir' (Brahma temple) in 1887. On the other hand the idea and the activities of the Maharaja in building Cooch Behar into a modern state can be traced in the writings of Maharani Suniti Devi. "From the day of his succession to the throne, the Maharaja devoted all the earnestness of his nature and great process of organization of the plans for comfort, well-being and education of his subject"¹⁸ To spread western education specially for higher education, Maharaja Nripendra Narayan established the 'Victoria College' in 1888. In 1890 Cooch Behar state took the special interest for the cause of women education due to what 'Suniti College' was established in that year. Another landmark in the history of higher education and cultural attainment was the appointment of Acharya Brojendra Nath Seal, the noted philosopher and great intellectual, as the Principal of Victoria college (presently Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal College). At that time due to the initiative of Acharya B. N. Seal, a good number of professors/ scholars in different subjects came from Calcutta to join the Victoria College. For this special venture the Victoria College in the subsequent years during the first decade of the twentieth century attained the glory of excellence in the field of higher education. As a whole it was found

that due to the benevolence of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan and special initiatives of Maharani Suniti Devi, who had a mind of modern thought and ideas, and the contribution of Acharya B. N. Seal in the field of higher education, Cooch Behar state became a core-place of education and culture in North-East India. The students came from Assam got the message of a high cultural profile from Cooch Behar. As a recognition of his scholarship Acharya B. N. Seal was awarded so many honour both in India and abroad like Rome and London. At the time of his retirement as principal of Victoria College, the Cooch Behar state as a tribute to his excellence delivered a humble address to him. Some portions of that address are mentioned here:-

“The invaluable services of Dr. Brajendra Nath Seal M.A. Ph. D. whose retirement from the state service caused an irreparable loss to the Victoria college of which he was the principal for sixteen years deserve appreciative notice and grateful recognition. He was appointed to the post in March, 1896 and the departure made by his highness the late Maharaja Bhup Bahadur in his selection was amply justified by Dr. Seal’s distinguished academic attainments, intimate acquaintance with the working of Calcutta University and extensive experience of the needs and conditions of Indian Education which immediately bore fruit in raising the status of the College..... Dr seal extended his untiring energy and activity beyond the sphere of his legitimate duties of the reorganizations of the state Higher English Schools (Collegiate and Sub divisional) which he admirably effected with the limited resources at his disposal”.¹⁹

Not only this about the contribution of Acharya B. N. Seal and the Victoria College for the cause of education and culture in Cooch Behar, we get something more important reference from the writings of Kumud Bandhu Chakraborty, the most beloved student of Acharya B. N. Seal, who stood first class first in B.A. examination in philosophy Honours. Kumud Bandhu

Chakrabarty wrote, "In those days, Cooch Behar had a galaxy of teachers. They used to read and read hard the subjects they professed and were eager to know of the wider world of letters. Thus on Sundays and holidays, Dr. Seal used to have at his house classes of the professors, the subject being, if it is to be given a name universal culture. I was not discouraged if sometimes I made bold to listen from a side room, there was professor Shyam Charan Chakraborty of philosophy whose rational and analytical approach to philosophical problems was often commended to be by Dr. seal, professor Jay Gopal Banerji who later on come to occupy the University chair in English and others. The lure of these classes sometimes attracted stalwarts from Calcutta. Bepin Chandra Paul, for example, the celebrated political thinker and writer was a visitor to Dr. Seal's house at that time, 1908-09. He used to come and stay at a stretch for weeks. The result could be seen in many of his subsequent articles and notably in his "Soul of India".²⁰

So long we have discussed about the Victoria College of Cooch Behar and its principal Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal, the world famous philosopher, whose contribution was naturally for the cause of higher education and culture in the Cooch Behar state. Now we would try to give some other references about the "COOCH BEHAR SAHITYA SABHA" and some other literary practices at Cooch Behar.

6.8. COOCH BEHAR SAHITYA SABHA.

When we were discussing about the press publications at Cooch Behar (See chapter 3), it was found that Cooch Behar have achieved the credit of publishing a series of Periodicals and Journals. In this context we must have to mention that the "COOCH BEHAR SAHITYA SABHA" was an association/organization which have contributed a lot for the cultural development of North Bengal. This Association (Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha) was founded in 1915 with the Royal patronage and it had a significant contribution for the promotion of cultural practices at Cooch Behar as well as North Bengal. Before we discuss about this Sahitya Sabha, let us have a brief idea of its background. It

has already been mentioned that the Cooch Behar state had a significant contribution in press-publication (See chapter 3).²¹ In the history of the literary activities the journal which had an outstanding contribution was the 'PARICHARICA'. Paricharika started its publication in 1878 and was edited by Nepal Chandra Majumdar. In the initial stage it was published from Calcutta under the supervision of 'Nababidhan Brahma Samaj'. Some members of the family of Keshab Chandra Sen took special interest to publish this paper and they published it for Twenty Eight years. But due to some unavoidable circumstances this publication was stopped in 1906. After ten years in 1916 'PARICHARICA' again started its publication under the direct supervision of 'Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha'. This time it was edited by Nirupama Devi, who was the wife of prince Victor Nityendra Narayan of Cooch Behar Raj family and younger sister of Maharani Suniti Devi. When the Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha took the charge to publish this literary journal, it was found that the journal attained the status of a high standard literary journal. Most of the contemporary stalwarts of Bengali literature of Bengal used to write and publish their articles in this journal. In this new phase of its publication it is found that famous writers of the Bengali literature of the contemporary period including the great poet Rabindra Nath Tagore used to write in this journal. Among other writers in this journal we can mention the name of Kazi Nazarul Islam, Banaphul, Kumud Ranjan Mallik, Kabi Sekhar Kalidas Roy and so many writers.²² From this reference it may be assumed that 'PARICHARICA' which was publishing from Cooch Behar, a native state, got the credit of a highly standard literary journal and had a close contact with the front ranking novelists, poets and writers of the contemporary period. No doubt, it was an achievement of the 'Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha', the literary and Cultural mouth organ of the Cooch Behar state. In so many issues of this journal (PARICHARICA) these famous writers published their articles which in the subsequent period became a landmark in Bengali literature. Considering all this things specially the connection of Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha with the all Bengal intellectuals and scholars, it can be said that at that time Cooch Behar

became a core place of literary and cultural practices due to which a good number of writers emerged at Cooch Behar in the subsequent period. As a result it was found that after the marriage of Suniti Devi with Maharaja Nripendra Narayan Bhup bahadur of Cooch Behar state, an association of the intellectuals, Scholars and writers came into being and an atmosphere for cultural and literary practices were created at Cooch Behar. Another important factor was that due to this matrimonial relation with a renowned Brahma family of Calcutta which was very much enlightened with western education, Cooch Behar state got the advantage to have a close link with the famous intellectuals and writers' of Calcutta. As a result the newly educated people of Cooch Behar got a scope to contact with the Calcutta based writers and Cooch Behar was gradually developing in the context of education and cultural activities. So it is evident that during the first decade of the twentieth century Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha was very much successful to develop a situation to promote the cause of cultural activities. Another factor which encouraged this cultural activities at Cooch Behar was the social position of Keshab Chandra Sen and his sincere initiative for the cultural development and westernisation of the Native state. This enlightened mind of Keshab Chandra Sen and his social position in Calcutta facilitated to make a bridge between Calcutta and Cooch Behar for intellectual interaction among themselves. Taking advantage of this situation and getting the patronage of the royal court a series of journals and periodicals (at least six journals) were published from Cooch Behar for a long time. As a result of this practice a galaxy of writers and an intellectual community came into being which contributed much for the cultural development of Cooch Behar as well as North Bengal. Among those writers the first and for most was the novelist 'Janaki Ballav Bidyabinode' who wrote the novel 'SOBHA' in 1912.²³ Another writer Subodh Kumar Chakraborty who in his later life became so famous in Bengali literature Ramani Biksha initially started his writings in the journals and periodicals of Cooch Behar. In addition to this the persons who were very much associated with the Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha were Bijoya Charan Gupta, Bhagawati Charan Bondopadhaya

(writer of Cooch Behar Itihash, in Bengali), Kokileswar Bhattacharya, Sarat Chandra Ghosal, Bimal Chandra Chakraborty, Niharbala Devi, Khan Chowdhury Amanat ulla Ahamed, Ashruman Dasgupta, Dr. Birendra Nath Bhattacharya, Akhil Chandra Palit, Devi Prasad Sen, Jiban Krishna Mukhopadhaya and others. So in our discussion about the Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha, an association of literary and cultural activities and about the intellectuals and writers associated with this literary platform is found that a new wave for the development of literature and culture came into force at Cooch Behar which was very much influenced by the contemporary stalwarts of Bengal, the prime mover of twentieth century society and culture. This cultural atmosphere was prevailing for a long time at Cooch Behar even after its merger with the Indian union. More significantly it is found that this cultural atmosphere created due to so many factors encouraged the total situation of education and culture even after its merger. As a result we see that Cooch Behar became a high profile place for literary and cultural activities. So in this discussion about the contribution of associations for the cultural development, Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha and its royal patronage for this purpose had a significant contribution.

As an example of this cultural development at Cooch Behar we can refer a series of journals and periodicals published from Cooch Behar after 1950. In this context we are just to mention the names of these papers –

i) Awan, ii) Awaz, iii) Amader patrika, iv) Uttorayan, v) Yugabarta, vi) Jagaran, vii) Mashal, viii) Khabar, ix) Seemanta, x) Nagarik, and xi) Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha Patrika. These huge number of publications and specially the initiative of Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha got much recognition for the Cultural development of North Bengal as a whole. So it can be said that a Cultural regeneration was started at Cooch Behar due to the sincere initiative of Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha. Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha as an association had achieved an outstanding contribution for cultural development of this region. Cultural atmosphere which was created

by this association and its patrons had far-reaching consequences. As a result it was found that a new generation emerged with new thoughts and ideas of modern literature and culture. In our limited scope it is not possible to mention about all of them. Dr. Nripendra Nath Paul in his article “Cooch Behar Adhiunik Kaler Sahitya Charcha Chalchitra” have presented a detailed picture of literary and cultural activities in Cooch Behar up to the period of 1990s.²⁴ In this article Dr. Paul have elaborately studied about almost all the literary creativities in the field of poem, Novel, Drama, short story, articles on socio-economic and cultural field, History, Archaeology, Folk culture and folk song, Puranic literature and many things.²⁵ In our study it is not possible to mention the names of all poets, Novelists, Historians, Folklorists, Dramatists and other writers’. But it is fact that the cultural regeneration which started during the period of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan and Maharani Suniti Devi continued for long which deserves much credit in this field.²⁶

6.9 LITERARY AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AT COOCH BEHAR IN THE POST-INDEPENDENT PERIODS

With the beginning of the twentieth century the literary practice initiated by some employees of the Cooch Behar state gave the birth of a huge number of writers’ in different subjects. We have already mentioned that Janaki Ballav Biswas published a book titled as ‘SOBHA’ in 1319 B.S.²⁷ In addition to this, some other writers of Cooch Behar who were established in their own field of interest were – Bimal Chakraborty, Sarat Chandra Ghosal, Manindra Nath Mitra, Jiban De (a political activist, later on a communist leader and member of Legislative Assembly of West Bengal), Ashani Bhusan Majumdar (brother of the renowned novelist Amiya Bhusan Majumdar) and others.²⁸

In the literary and cultural history of modern Cooch Behar as well as Bengal as a whole the name of AMIYA BHUSAN MAJUMDAR is a landmark in true sense. He was born at Cooch Behar on 22nd of March, 1918 and brought up there. Amiya Bhusan had a family background of literary activities.

His mother Jyotirindudevi was Personally interested with literary activities and she herself used to write some stories.²⁹ Amiya Bhusan started his literary life with the little Magazine which is something exception to a great novelist like him. For sometime he edited a Journal "Uttarayan". Professionally he was an employee of the Post and Telegraph Department and later on he was actively involved with trade union movement. Along with all these business he devoted himself in writing in all the branches of Bengali literature throughout his life. It is really a matter of pride of North Bengal that he wrote and published fifteen (15) outstanding novels some of which got national prestigious awards. The outstanding awards he got during his lifetime were (1) Bankim Purashkar in 1986, (2) Academy Puraskar in 1986.³⁰

In addition to all these literary performances Amiya Bhusan Majumdar had a great interest in art. In some exhibitions, his drawings attracted the attention of the interested persons.³¹ Considering all these literary and cultural activities of Amiya Bhusan Majumdar it is evident that from the pre-independent period to till 1990s, he contributed a lot for the socio cultural development of this region. In a word it can be said that the house of Amiya Bhusan Majumdar was the 'Cultural Power House of Cooch Behar.'³²

6.10. SOCIO-CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS OF DARJEELING DISTRICT

In the study of different perspectives either socio-cultural or political, it is found that the emergence of Associations/ organizations or Institutions (SABHA SAMITIS) have a clear indication of the general awakening of the people specially in the particular area where it was founded. Since long back we have so many references that there came some changes particularly in the relevant field due to the formation of some Associations/organizations and their activities. It may also be mentioned that the tone (aims and objectives) of these Associations were being noticed in several dimensions for the cause of social, cultural and political developments. Even in the present days it is being noticed that this type of SABHA – SAMITIS are generally formed to ventilate the grievances of the people and sometimes they place their charter of demands

before the rulers / administration to fulfil their aspirations.³³ At the same time it is also a fact that there had emerged several Associations and organizations, mostly of cultural and literary character which provided meeting places for exchange of views and for the promotion of common objectives.³⁴ Since most of these Associations were short-lived, information as to their organization and working were extremely meagre.³⁵ However, for the purpose of our study now we would like to mention something about some socio-cultural Associations/organizations of Darjeeling District (specially in the hill areas) and their contribution for the socio-cultural development of this region.

In the history of associations of Darjeeling District, we have the information of different type of associations / organizations during the period of our study. But due to the lack of information we cannot say definitely when the association of any character was sprang-up in Darjeeling for the first time. So far it is known, there was no association in the Darjeeling District during the early phase of our study. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century some association in formative state were existing, but their basic character were Ethno-political. From Government Record and District Gazetteer of Darjeeling, we don't get any reference of any association during this Nineteenth century. But from some secondary sources it is known that during 1883 a Branch of 'INDIAN ASSOCIATION' of S. N. Banerji was founded at Darjeeling.³⁶ For this purpose (opening of a Branch of Indian Association) Babu Dwaraka Nath Ganguly and Dwarakanath Ghosh came to Darjeeling from Calcutta.³⁷ Nothing details are known about this. In addition to that one more information we get from the same source that in the year 1886, two representatives from Siliguri attended the 'INDIAN NATIONAL CONFERENCE' held in Calcutta. So it is found that in the initial stage both the Darjeeling Hill and plain areas had some involvement with nationalist organisations.

In the early stage of the political activities in Darjeeling one most important incident was the role of 'Bagha Jotin.' Before he engaged himself in revolutionary activities, he was at Darjeeling for his service from 1902 to 1907.

At that time he was very much influenced and attracted with the revolutionary activities of 'ANUSILAN SAMITI', a terrorist organization. At that time Bagha Jotin with some of his close disciples opened a branch of Anusilan Samiti at Darjeeling. The name of this association was 'BANDHAB SAMITI'³⁸. In every evening he used to take classes to some youths explaining the ideals and sacrifices which was depicted in 'GITA.' But it is not known whether any person of Nepali community or any other hill community were present there.

During 1905, when the people of Bengal (including northern part of Bengal i.e. North Bengal) got very much excited against the illegal and unjustified scheme for partition of Bengal, people from all parts of Bengal raised a voice of opposition and started agitation to unsettle this settlement.³⁹ At that time on 16th October, 1905, Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das and Sister Nivedita addressed a meeting in Town Hall of Darjeeling criticising the unjustified decision of the British Government.⁴⁰ In their speeches, the ideals of Swadeshi Movement was very much highlighted due to which some people were impressed with the spirit of Swadeshi. As a result, it was found that to spread the spirit of Swadeshi in Darjeeling town, Khagendra Nath Roy started a co-operative society. To popularise the Swadeshi movement, Swadeshi commodities were sold from this centre. Though this initiative of Khagendra Nath Roy could not achieve anything outstanding but it must be admitted that some sort of Swadeshi organization was going to be emerge at Darjeeling.⁴¹ Though the purpose of our study is not to explain about the political associations at Darjeeling but the associations which dealt with socio-cultural reform were sometimes involved with political rather national movement. However, let us now try to say something about the role of the associations of Darjeeling for the cause of socio-cultural developments.

6.10.1 NEPALI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, (1924)

About the study of Nepali language, literature and cultural activities in Darjeeling, one can think of the sixty years between 1880 and 1940 as a period in which Nepali language and literature forged ahead in many new direction.⁴² This period was the age of awakening both in National, Regional even in the sub-regional levels. It was a period of momentous happenings in the socio-cultural regeneration and the awareness of the economic exploitation of the British rule which had given birth to a strong sense of nationalism and received impetus from the contact of European writings and thoughts.

In our study in chapter 4, we have already mentioned about 'NEPALI SAHITYA SAMMELAN', (1924), and some of its literary activities. It has already been mentioned that Dharanidhar Kairala (Sharma) and Sūryavikram Jnavāli, two teachers of Nepali at Darjeeling and their association with Parasmani Pradhan gave birth to 'Nepāli Sāhitya Sammelan, in 1924. The name of this Association/ organization indicates that it was a literary organization particularly a Nepali Literary association. A good number of educated persons of Darjeeling were associated with this organization and with their best effort did some outstanding achievements for the development of Nepali language and literature. From its character and literary activities we find some similarity of it (Nepali Sahitya Sammelan) with the 'BANGIYA SAHITYA PARISHAD of Calcutta which was established in the year 1907. It was also influenced by the Uttar Banga Sahitya Sammilan and to some extent imitated it. It is an established fact that a good number of eminent personalities of Calcutta with their special interest for Bengali language and literature founded this organization (B. S. P) in 1907 in Calcutta and contributed significantly for the development of Bengali literature and culture. Similarly it is found that Nepali Sahitya Sammelan had some outstanding publications and achieved a lot (so far the best literary performance) for the development of Nepali language, literature and culture. These contributions of this association may be regarded as the treasure of Nepali literature which had a far reaching

consequences for socio-cultural development of the Darjeeling hill areas as well as the Nepali community as a whole. Before the initiative of this organization, we don't get any reference of any well organized literary practice for the literary and cultural development of Nepali community. It is really praiseworthy that the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan served useful purpose by getting more than twenty books written, translated and published by reputed publishing companies the benefit of which went to School children.⁴³ About its publication we have already mentioned in our previous discussion. (see chapter 4). There we found that Dharanidhar Kairala, (Sharma) had a strong literary background. He was a famous poet in Nepali literature of the contemporary period. It was noticed in his writings that the national feelings of the contemporarily Bengali poets like D. L. Roy, Nabin Chandra Sen and Hem Chandra Bondopadhaya and others were reflected in the writings of Dharanidhar Kairala⁴⁴ (Sharma). From some records of this association it is evident that no organization before N. S. S. (Nepali Sahitya Sammelan) performed so many literary achievements which had a great impact for the growth and development of Nepali Language, literature as well as for the upliftment and socio-cultural development of the Nepali community as a whole.

'Nepali Sahitya Sammelan' for its literary development made a common platform. In addition to publication and translation of many books, this Sammelan started to publish a Journal and it was 'NEPĀLĪ SĀHITYA SAMMELAN PATRIKA', a journal of high standard.⁴⁵ It gave birth to a host of renowned litterateurs of future and survived for about a few decades. It was an important association of the writers and socio-culturally interested persons. Who in their later life contributed significantly in the socio-cultural activities. Hence, considering all these things specially the contribution of the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan for the cause of socio-cultural development in the Darjeeling Hill area, it must be admitted that during the first half of the twentieth century this organization achieved something outstanding for the development of Darjeeling Hill area and the Nepali Community at large.

6.10.2 GORKHA DUKKHA NIVARAK SAMMELAN

In the Darjeeling Hill district we find one organization / Association, specially a Social organization, namely the 'GORKHA DUKKHA NIVARAK SAMMELAN'. It was founded in 1932 with its branches in many towns and cities of India.⁴⁶ Hence it can be assumed that though this organization was founded at Darjeeling it had some connection with the Gorkha community throughout India. From the name of this organization it is understood that the socio-cultural movement of Bengal as well as India had some influence on it.

For the formation of this organization (G.D.N.S) it must have some background. General standard of living of this hill community was not up to the mark though they were getting higher wages than such labours obtain in many plain districts.⁴⁷ In spite of the general prosperity which prevails, the indebtedness of the people is one of the most serious economic problems of the district. This was due to the reckless manner in which they contract debts owing to the customary obligation to incur heavy expenditure on marriage, funeral and other ceremonies, to their love of drinking, to their propensity to gambling, to their simple delight in display of all kinds, which leads to an extravagant outlay on dress, ornaments and jewellery and finally, to their improvident habits.⁴⁸ Not only this, due to many of the reasons they had to suffer. Generally it is said that to remove their sufferings and ill condition in all respect, this Gorkha organization emerged and mobilized the public opinion of this community not only at Darjeeling but in some of the important towns where they reside. It is known to all of us that the Gorkha or the Nepali speaking population was scattered through out the length and breadth of India from Bombay, Calcutta, Benaras, Bangalore, Dehradun to Shillong, Imphal, Arunachal, Lucknow, Madras and Darjeeling.⁴⁹ For their common interest when this G.D.N.S. spread in some of the cities and towns all over India, it can easily be considered as an important and popular social organization which had certain aims and objectives. Moreover, it is known to all that in a hill station like Darjeeling, most of the inhabitants were not in good condition. As a result

it is expected that the Gorkha community will try for their betterment and will assemble on a common platform.

In our study it has been found that most of the important Associations/organizations got some publication to ventilate their thoughts and ideas, to highlight their problems and to propagate their demands. G.D.N.S. also started to publish a literary journal namely 'KHOJĪ' in 1940. This journal was the mouth organ of G.D.N.S. and its chief editor was Rupnarayan Singh a renowned novelist and short story writer. It is already mentioned that Khoji did not produce any poet of repute but unlike its predecessor 'CHANDRIKĀ' (1918) it produced mostly articles written by Local talent and its prose had the distinct charm of the Nepali language of Darjeeling.⁵⁰ With the literary practices among the persons associated with G.D.N.S. a Socio-Cultural environment came into being and some special interest for the progress of Nepali language and literature have developed. Along with all these literary activities it is found that the G. D. N. S. was active enough to create a strong public opinion in favour of their low social position. At the same time this organisation adopted so many programme to develop their social position. If we make a review of this G. D. N. S., it must be admitted that, as a social and cultural organization Gorkha Dukkha Nivarak Sammelan performed an outstanding responsibility for the socio-cultural development of their community at large.

6.10.3 NEBULA

If the objectives of Ādarsa, edited by Śeshmani Pradhān from Kalimpong in Darjeeling since 1930 and of Udyog from Nepal since 1935 was to create an interest in economic enterprises, NEBULA (1935), signifying Nepalis, Bhutiyas and Lepches (LEPCHAS) published from Kalimpong with K. D. Pradhan as the editor was brought out to highlight the problems and propagate the Ethno-political demands of the three hill communities of the Darjeeling District.⁵¹ Though Nebula was basically a literary journal Published from Kalimpong in Darjeeling, its organizers had certain objectives. To achieve

it they were always active to highlight the problems of three particular hill communities (Nepali, Bhutiyas and Lepchas) of Darjeeling district. particular hill communities (Nepali, Bhatiyas and Lepchas) of Darjeeling district. Due to the non-availability of its copy it is difficult to estimate about its activities. But it is true that this literary organization published some articles of literary value and played a significant role in rousing the consciousness of the general public.⁵²

From some other references it is found that NEBULA as a social organization performed some responsibilities. For the upliftment and betterment of their social position this organization earnestly tried to propagate in favour of their political demands. The most prominent organizer of NEBULA (Editor of the journal, NEBULA) K. D. Pradhan, was a renowned social worker. With his sincere social work, K. D. Pradhan became very much popular among the people of this three particular communities (Nepali, Bhutiya and Lepchas). His role on behalf of this organization was very much significant.⁵³ So far our study is concerned with NEBULA, it is found that though it has emerged as a periodical, at the same time it got some importance as a social organization. From this view point some political demands and problems of these three communities came to be noticed which mobilized the public opinion, promoted the consciousness of the Darjeeling hill people in general.⁵⁴ Considering all this developments it can not be denied that 'NEBULA' as a social organization got some positive role in the field of socio-cultural development of Darjeeling Hill area.

6.10.4 GORKHA SAMITI AND GORKHA LIBRARY

Due to the activities of different type of socio-cultural Associations/organizations the sense of awakening among the Nepalis were getting popularity and some other organizations were founded at Darjeeling and other places in India by Indian Nepalis. The Gorkha Samiti was revived at Darjeeling immediately after the First World War.⁵⁵ As its name sounded like that of 'ANUSILAN SAMITI', a terrorist organization of Bengal, it had to

rename itself as 'GORKHA ASSOCIATION' (1926) under the pressure of the British Government. At that time Agam Singh Giri was its president. Its aim was to promote socio-cultural interests of the Indian Nepalis⁵⁶ In the mean time we find another cultural organization at Kurseong in Darjeeling. The 'GORKHA LIBRARY', was opened in 1918 with the object of bringing about an upliftment of the educationally backward Nepali community.

In addition to these Associations/organizations we get the information about some other socio-cultural organizations at Darjeeling which were equally active for the promotion of their socio-cultural life. In our limited scope it is not possible to get a detail study about all of these organizations. But the aims, objectives and spirit of these organizations clearly reveals that they were always active to promote their social position and cultural development. For example we can mention the name of some other Associations/organizations like:-

- i) NEPALI SAHITYA ADHYAYAN SAMITI. (Kalimpong)
- ii) NEPALI SAHITYA PRASAR SAMITI. (Siliguri).
- iii) ARYA SAMAJ, (Darjeeling branch)
- iv) GORKHA LEAGUE (Darjeeling Branch)
- v) HILLMEN'S ASSOCIATION (Darjeeling).

Considering the activities of these Associations/organizations it is found that these organizations were very much active in the field of social reforms cultural activities, publication of journals and periodicals, publication of books and highlighted the socio-economic backwardness of the people of Darjeeling hill area. (see chapter 6). Hence the spirit of all these organizations were to some extent identical in respect of general awareness, promotion of social position, socio-cultural upliftment, development of language and literature and the mobilization of public opinion for the cause of their own. So far our investigations are concerned it is found that the Nepali Sahitya Adhyayan Samiti and Nepali Sahitya Prasara Samiti were the platforms to explore on

Nepali language and literature. At the same time the 'HILLMEN'S ASSOCIATION', founded in 1917 took up the cause of the hill people of Darjeeling.⁵⁷

This brief account outlining the development of Nepali language and literature shows that Nepali language, literature, culture and society assumed a distinct shape during the first quarter of the twentieth century. This trend of literary development that started from the later part of the Nineteenth century continued to grow more vigorously in the subsequent period. At that time so many important works were written and published which are already mentioned earlier. The activities and projects taken up by different socio-cultural associations /organizations inspired the hill communities of Darjeeling (both man and woman) to take up work for the development of their language and literature. These initiatives of different socio-cultural Associations/organizations produced the sense of consciousness and awakening among the Darjeeling hill communities and got a significant contribution for the socio-cultural development of this area.

6.11. SOCIO-CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS OF MALDA DISTRICT.

Generally the political associations or the organizations of different type serve as the mouth-piece of the people of some particular area presenting to the authorities their "needs and grievances, hopes and aspirations". Its sponsors does not believe in action oriented programmes of the rajmels or village assemblies, but pinned their faith on constitutional agitation that redress of grievances of the people and reforms in administrations could be effected by prayers and petitions. Resolutions which were adopted in general sessions after due deliberations on all burning questions of the day were forwarded to the government for its considerations. But the character of Socio-Cultural associations/organizations are different and their activities generally concerned with the socio-cultural issues which are already discussed in the study of Cooch Behar and Darjeeling Districts. Now we are to give some pieces of information's about the socio-cultural associations of Malda which have

achieved an outstanding role for the social and cultural awareness of the district as well as North Bengal.

6.11.1 NAME OF THE ASSOCIATIONS

First of all we would like to mention the names of the associations/organizations and subsequently discussion will be made about them and their contribution in the socio cultural issues.

- i) The Malda Association. (Established 1887).
- ii) The Malda Muhammadan Association, (Established 1890).
- iii) Malda Branch of Rampur-Boalia Dharma Sabha.
- iv) Malda Zela Sahitya Sammelan.
- v) Malda National Council of Education. (Malda Branch).

Some other associations both socio cultural and political started in this district But as it is not possible to have a study about all of them, we will discuss only on the associations mentioned above.

6.11.2 THE MALDA ASSOCIATION (MA)

This Association (MA) was established in 1887.⁵⁸ For public interest it had different type of activities. Without any detail discussion about the activities of this association if we just quote some portion of its aims and objectives, formation and its constitution, we will have a clear picture about this organization. From the list of registered associations of the Govt. of Bengal we find the following information.

“Object – to improve the conditions of the people of the district-in every direction. Constitution of, and qualifications for membership – Membership is open to an adult educated residents of the district. All the office bearers are Hindus, and the Association does not represent Mohammedans, most of the members belong to the legal profession. Others are Zamindars, merchants, physicians and pleaders. No permanent fund. Subscriptions realized as occasion arises.

Member – 55.

Name of principal officials –

President – **BABU JADU NANDAN CHOUDHURY.**

Vice President –

Name and address of Secretary –

BABU RADHIKA LAL SATIAR, B.L.

Pleader, Malda.

Particular questions in which the Association is interested and upon which it would be in a position to offer an opinion of Value - may be consulted on questions of general interest.

Remarks – NIL”.

From the above statement concerned with the objectives of this association is quite evident. How far it was active with socio-cultural issues that cannot be stated definitely. But from its memorandum it may be said that this Malda Association was a platform to look after the general interest of the district.⁵⁹

6.11.3. MALDA MUHAMMEDANS ASSOCIATION (MMA)

According to the Government Reports it is found that in Malda district Mohammedans were the second largest community. W.W. Hunter (SAB, Vol. vii) stated that in Malda the population is almost evenly divided into Hindus and Muhammedans. More specifically, it can be said that the proportion of Hindus is greatest in the North and West of the district and of Muhammedans in the south.⁶⁰ So it is not Unlikely that being a major Community of the district the Mohammedans were very much aware to develop their community. Objects of this association was to improve the social, political and educational condition of the Muhammedans community.⁶¹ List of the Registered Associations, Government of Bengal shows that “Membership is open to all educated Muhammedans. Business is transacted by an elected committee of

30, mostly resident of English Bazar. A general meeting is held once a year. Expenses met from Voluntary subscriptions and donations. Possesses no fund, present members include all leading Mohammedans, pleaders, Mukhtears, landowners, trade men and physicians.” The association was run by some officials—

President – Maulavi Muhammad Ismail Choudhari.

Name and address of the secretary-

Khan Sahib Abdul Aziz Kkan, B.L. pleader, English Bazar.

Particular question in which the Association is interested and upon which it would be in a position Questions affecting Muhammedans interests.⁶² It is found that most of intellectuals (pleaders, physicians etc) got some active involvement with this association (MMA) to look after the general interest of the Mohammedans of the district. So as a social organization (MMA) the association was very much concerned for the betterment of their community.

6.11.4 RAMPUR BOALIA DHARMA SABHA, (Malda Branch)

In our discussion in chapter 3, we have already mentioned about this organization/ Association. We don't have any details about this organization (RBDS). Actually it was an organization of Rajshahi District (in present Bangladesh) a branch of which was established at Malda. Due to the initiative of Radhesh Chandra Seth, a renowned intellectual of Malda, (already mentioned earlier in chapter 3) a branch of this organization (RBDS) was established at Malda. In the course of publications from North Bengal (before 1947), a journal namely 'HINDU RANJIKI' was published and it was the mouth piece of 'RAMPUR-BOALIA DHARMA SABHA'⁶³ of Rajshahi. From this reference it is known that it could not play any significant role in the socio-cultural field. But it is assumed that as a social organization some sort of socio religious activities were performed by it. From the activities of this organization (Malda Branch) it is evident that some intellectuals and social

activists were assembled together for the cause of this organization and performed some socio-religious practices.⁶⁴

6.11.5 MALDA ZELA SAHITYA SAMMELAN (1317 B.S).

Malda Zela Sahitya Sammelan (MZSS) was perhaps the most important organization/Association in the cultural life of Malda. So far it is known that this MZSS is the oldest and seems to be the first districtwise organization in North Bengal. This organization was a common platform for the literary and cultural activities in the district. Among the organizers of this Sahitya Sammelan, the key person was Radhesh Chandra Seth. In our discussion in chapter 3, we have already mentioned that Radhesh chandra had a special literary interest due to which he published some papers and periodicals and wrote a good number of books. As a mark of regional interest he started to write one book on the geographical identity of Malda.⁶⁵

For the cultural development of Malda, Radhesh chandra took the initiative to arrange a Sahitya Sammelan (Literary Conference) at Malda. From the proceedings of this Sammelan (conference) it is known that sir Jadunath Sarkar a renowned historian, who happens to be a son of Rajshahi, a district of North Bengal of undivided Bengal kindly consented to attend this conference. After a long time preparation it was found that ultimately a 'SAHITYA SAMMELAN OF NORTH BENGAL' was held at Malda on 25th day of Paush, 1317 B.S.⁶⁶ This initiative of Sahitya Sammelan in the district which was arranged for the first time got a good response in the cultural life of Malda. As a result it is found that a good number of intellectuals and interested person with socio-cultural activities from Malda district as well as some other places of North Bengal attended this 'Sahitya Sammelan'. Quite naturally the total cultural life of Malda district was very much encouraged. Due to this literary exercise in the district a good number of educated as well as interested persons involved themselves in literary and cultural activities which may be marked as a development in the cultural life of Malda.⁶⁷

From this brief discussion about the 'Malda zella Sahitya Sammelan' (MZSS) it may be assumed that this organization / Association, within its limited scope achieved so many things for their general awareness and it started a cultural regeneration in Malda district as well as North Bengal.

6.11.6 MALDA NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATION (MMCE)

In our discussion about different type of Associations/organizations in the district of Malda we have found the process of so many socio-cultural activities. But apart from all these Associations/organization, the most important and noteworthy Association was the 'MALDA NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATION' (MNCE) which had a long drawn impact on the socio-cultural even in the political life of Malda. About the background of this Association we have already discussed (see chapter 3).

It has already been stated that to popularise the issue of national education among the students of Bengal a campaign was started during 1905-06 by Radhakumud Mukhopadhaya, Rabindra Narayan Ghosh, Nripendra Chadra Banerjee and Benoy Kumar Sarkar of Malda.⁶⁸ After the establishment of the 'National council of Education' (N.C.E.) on 11th June, 1906, Benoy Kumar Sarkar tried his best to make it a success. After joining the 'Bengal National College in Calcutta Professor Benoy Kumar Sarker decided to open a branch of it at his birth place, Malda. With this intention he had been at Malda for some days. After reaching Malda, professor Sarkar within a very short time made all necessary arrangements with the help of his associates and established the "MALDA NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATION" ON 6th day of June, 1907.⁶⁹ From the perspective of Swadeshi Spirit, it was a landmark in the history of Malda.

Apart from the establishment of Malda National Council of Education Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar initiated some other programme for the cause of national education (Swadeshi Siksha). During 1913, it was found that at least 11 (eleven) Schools were established in different places of Malda under the supervision of Malda National Council of Education. So, from this initiative of

Malda National Council of Education (M.N.C.E) it is evident that MNCE performed a very positive role for the purpose of education in Malda district. It may also be mentioned that to encourage the students, professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar announced different type of prizes and Scholarship for the students of Malda. Each and every School had a library and a workshop for vocational teaching. The MNCE used to visit these Schools frequently. In this context one renowned historian and former teacher of the Bengal National College stated that, "It was due to Benoy Sarkar that Malda became a place of interest. Some of us used to visit Malda to see Benoy's field of operation".⁷⁰ We have so many references to explore on this field of study. But for our purpose all are not needed to be explained. However, it is fact that the Malda National council of Education had a significant contribution for the spread of education in the district.

For the development of the cultural life of Malda, one more thing has to be mentioned here. It is known to all that 'GAMBHIRA' was a popular folk culture of Malda. Considering its importance (GAMBHIRA) and to encourage the people associated with it (Gambhira), Benoy Sarkar announced a prize of Rs.25/- (Twenty five) for collection and compilation of the history of Gambhira. As a result we see that Haridas Palit of Malda published an article on 'ADYER GAMBHIRA' which was published by 'BANGIYA SAHITYA PARISHAD' in 1909.⁷¹ On the basis of this article, Benoy Kr. Sarkar, when he was in London wrote and published one famous book "The Folk Elements in Hindu Culture" in 1917.

So, in our brief discussion it is evident that as an organization / Association the Malda National Council of Education (MNCE) got a significant contribution for the development of education and culture of Malda. Though 'GAMBHIRA' the popular folk culture of Malda was not directly related with the MNCE, Benoy Kr. Sarkar during the course of his activities at Malda undertook a Scheme for its development. Quite naturally it can be said

that as an association MNCE had an outstanding contribution for the Socio-Cultural development of Malda, as well as North Bengal.

6.12 SOCIO-CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS OF JALPAIGURI DISTRICT

In our study about the socio-cultural associations/ organizations of Jalpaiguri we will see a huge number of organizations (SABHA-SAMITIS) of different type which were engaged in so many socio-cultural activities during the period of our study. If we try to discuss about all of them (so far known) it will be too much voluminous and to some extent irrelevant. So for our purpose we will make an attempt to focus on some of them and perhaps that will be enough to understand the main tone of our study.

Before our discussion about socio-cultural associations of Jalpaiguri it has to be mentioned that in the initial stage the cultural practices in the district were started by individual efforts. In this connection the name of Umesh Chandra Roy may be mentioned who wrote one book entitled 'Sikkimer Itihash' (in Bengali) in the year 1875.⁷² Next we can refer the name of Taraknath Gongopadhyaya who wrote the story 'Soudamini'. Krishnamohan Chokrabarty was another person of Jalpaiguri who wrote 'Brahmaputra Mahatyam'.⁷³ Girish Chandra Sen translated 'KORAN' in Bengali and Salimuddin Ahmed was another person who also translated 'KORAN' in Bengali.⁷⁴ In fact in the initial stage the literary practice in Jalpaiguri was started by individual effort and not by any organization.

6.12.1 DEBATING CLUB. JALPAIGURI, 1897

When Jogesh Chandra Ghosh was a student of presidency college, Calcutta (Later on a renowned Tea-planter of Jalpaiguri), he was very much influenced by the associations/organizations of Calcutta. From that time he had a mind to form a platform of the educated people of Jalpaiguri to perform different type of socio-cultural activities. As a result we see that he established a 'DEBATING CLUB' at Jalpaiguri in the year 1897. Raja Jagadindradev Raikot was its president and Jogesh Chandra Ghosh himself was the secretary of this Debating club. (Jogesh Jiban, Bhubaneswar Mukhopadhyaya, p.36).

6.12.2. ARYA NATYA SAMAJ

Regarding the establishment of this organization we have some confusion. From one reference we find that in 1900, a Voluntary Social service organization named 'ARYA NATYA SAMAJ' was formed in the district headquarters with the help of some gentlemen.⁷⁵ From another reference it is found that it was established in 1904. During the Swadeshi Movement when a National School was founded in Jalpaiguri (1907), in the initial stage it was located at the ground of the 'Arya Natya Samaj', established in the year 1904.⁷⁶ Whatever may be the year of its establishment (either in 1900, or in 1904) that is not so important to us. But from available sources (Platinum Jubilee Smaranika, 19.4.1979) we can say about this organization i.e., Arya Natya Samaj that it was a drama –cum cultural organization of Jalpaiguri. Along with different type of cultural activities of Jalpaiguri a series of dramas including some lyrical dramas of Rabindra Nath Tagore were staged in the auditorium of A. N. S. In this connection one thing may be mentioned that the auditorium of this organization (ANS) has been used so many times as a venue of nationalist activities.⁷⁷ Naturally it is assumed that this organization had a close link with the nationalist activities. Available sources suggest that the prominent personalities of Jalpaiguri were closely attached with this organization. From its very inception this socio-cultural organization (ANS) have patronized all kinds of cultural activities in the district. At the same time it had a mission to campaign against all kinds of evils. Sashi Kumar Neogi, one of the organizers of ANS and editor of Trisrota, stated that members of this organization will spent their time in literary practices and cultural entertainment.⁷⁸ Another purpose of this organization was to give proper guidance to the restless youths who were involved in different type of unsocial activities and to lead them in the main stream of the social life.⁷⁹ Sri Nirendra Nath Bagchi, one of the senior executive member of ANS wrote that, "Arya Natya Samaj, though it was mainly a dramatic organization, tried sincerely to inspire the youths for education and literary activities,"⁸⁰ About the socio-cultural activities of ANS, we have so many references which are not needed to be mentioned here.

However, on the basis of our findings it is found that this organization played a significant role in the cultural life of Jalpaiguri even after 1947.

6.12.3. JALPAIGURI SAHITYA SAMITI

The cultural atmosphere which was the outcome of Arya Natya Samaj and TRISROTA, (a literary journal of Jalpaiguri) was followed by some other associations. 'JALPAIGURI SAHITYA SAMITI' was one of them. Some educated persons of Jalpaiguri who got some special interest for literary as well as cultural activities took the initiative and formed this literary organization namely 'Jalpaiguri Sahitya Samiti' during the month of August, 1928.⁸¹ This organization also performed some socio-cultural activities which had some impact on the cultural life of Jalpaiguri.⁸² About the aims and objectives of this organization it is mentioned that members of this J. S. S. (Jalpaiguri Sahitya Samiti) will have discussion on literature, articles related with literature, reading and criticism on the writings of famous authors and their books etc. Some of the members of this organization were—Sri Umapada Banerjee, Bireswar Prasad Basu, Mohini Mohan Ghosh, Nirendra Binod Sen, Pramatha Nath Basu, Indubhusan Bhattacharya, Umesh Chandra Sarkar, Narendra Kishore Nandi, Jitendra Nath Majumdar, Pritinidhan Roy, Bhabesh Chandra Ghosh and Durga Prasanna Ghatak.⁸³

6.12.4 JALPAIGURI MUSLIM SAHITYA SAMITI

During 1930, a good number of Muslims were there in Jalpaiguri town and they were sufficiently influential and possessed some qualities (see chapter 3). At the same time it is also found that there were not even a single Muslim member of the Jalpaiguri Sahitya Samiti. So for their own purpose and out of interest the Muslims of Jalpaiguri town established a literary association within three years after the establishment of 'Jalpaiguri Sahitya Samiti'. The name of this association was 'JALPAIGURI MUSLIM SAHITYA SAMITI' (J.M.S.S.) established in the year 1931.⁸⁴ Some of the office bearers of this association were as follows:-

President – Tajmal Hossain.

Vice President – Moulavi Safdar Ali and Maulavi Lajemuddin.

Secretary – Maulavi Md. Sukurullah

Assistant Secretary – Maulavi Azmal Hossain.⁸⁵

The first conference of this Muslim Sahitya Sammelan was held at Jalpaiguri in 1931, and was presided over by Maulavi Ismail Saheb, B. L. Some of the persons attended this conference were Maulavi Jaharatulla Ahmed, B.L, Maulavi Safiuddin, B.A., Maulavi Azizur Rahman, B.A. etc.⁸⁶ From the educational qualifications and social status of the persons attended this conference of J.M.S.S. it is very much clear that the Muslims of Jalpaiguri were also aware about their cultural life, and literary development.

6.12.5. THE ANJUMAN-I-ISLAMIA, JALPAIGURI (established-1892)

In our discussion about associations in chapter 3.3, we have already mentioned about this association and some of its activities which were pointed out by Ranjit Das Gupta as sectional politics to some extent. In spite of that association had some importance to promote the social, political and educational interests of the Muslims of Jalpaiguri district. About its objects it is mentioned as follows:-

“The promotion of loyalty towards the British Government and the promotion and protection of the social, political and educational and other rights and interests of the Muhammadan Community”.⁸⁷ Total member of this association were 165. Some principal officials of the association were entitled to look after the functioning of it. Principal officials were-

President – Nawab Musharruf Hossain, Khan Bahadur, B.L.

Secretary – Maulavi Kazi Abdul Khaleque.

Particular question in which the Association was interested and upon which it would be in position to offer an opinion of Value questions affecting Muhammadan interests.⁸⁸ Hence. it is found that though it was interested with

the affairs of a particular community, but as an association it got some credit performing the responsibility for looking after the social and educational interests of the Muslims of the district.

6.12.6 THE INDIAN TEA PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION, JALPAIGURI

It was in 1915 at the initiative of Tarini Prasad Roy, Aminur Rahman, Jyotish Chandra Sanyal, Jogesh Chandra Ghosh, and several others, the Indian Tea planters organized the 'INDIAN TEA PLANTERS ASSOCIATIONS' (ITPA) with the aims of safeguarding their interest and ventilating their grievances to the government.⁸⁹ So it was an association absolutely for the Tea professionals and they were more interested with their own business than the social and cultural activities in the district. But it has to be mentioned that this ITPA was an association of the indigenous Tea-planters. Name of the principal officials of this association were:-

President – Babu Tarini Prasad Roy

Vice President – Messrs B. K. Banerjee, D. C. Ghosh and N. K. Ghosh

Secretary – B. C. Ghosh

Particular question in which the association is interested and upon which it would be in a position to offer an opinion of Value – All matters concerned with the Tea. Industry. The members of the association have views on matters like the Reforms Scheme.⁹⁰ Hence, from these objectives it is clear that the association was not directly concerned with the socio-cultural matters of the district. But from the sources of other association (Arya Natya Samaj) it is found that some of the principal officials of ITPA and some members of this association were the patron of many socio-cultural even political activities (Swadeshi) in the district.⁹¹ Even today we see that A. P. Roy of Jalpaiguri (son of Tarini Prasad Roy and a renowned tea planter) is a great patron of 'Uttar Sarani Sahitya Chakra, a socio-cultural organization of Jalpaiguri.⁹²

6.12.7. BRAHMO SAMAJ (JALPAIGURI BRANCH)

Brahmo Samaj, Jalpaiguri Branch was established in 1869, the year of the formation of the district.⁹³ In the initial stage there were only a few number of Brahmos in Jalpaiguri. In the District Gazetteer of Jalpaiguri it is mentioned that a House for the Brahmos was constructed in 1901 at Samajpara, Jalpaiguri.⁹⁴ Later on, probably in the year 1923 a permanent house for the Brahmos of Jalpaiguri and a Brahmo Samaj temple was established.⁹⁵ At that time Hari Mohan Chakrabarty was the Secretary of this Association. During the census of 1909, when the total population of Jalpaiguri town were only 10,231, there were only a few number of Brahmos. But they were mentioned as Hindus. During 1940 to 1950 the number of this Brahmos were gradually increasing. From contemporary newspaper we find that during 1944, Indubhusan Majumdar was its secretary and Jyotirindra Das was the Assistant Secretary. Some other members were Sunitibala Chanda, Sadhana Basu, Nirmal Nalini Dutta, Debaprasad Dutta and Sudhir Chandra Nath.⁹⁶

Indubhusan Majumdar, Secretary of the Brahmo Samaj was appointed as the principal of Ananda Chandra College of Jalpaiguri. Santi Majumdar, wife of Indubhusan Majumdar was also associated with some women organizations of Jalpaiguri. It is also significant that some educated women of Jalpaiguri town were actively involved with the reform activities of Brahma Samaj. Some of them were Hemprava Chanda, Ashrukana Dasgupta, a lady doctor of Jalpaiguri Sadar Hospital, Sarala Manjari Dutta, Sadhana Basu, teacher of Sadar Girls School and her sister Karuna Basu, Aruna Dasgupta (wife of Khagendra Nath Dargupta, a district Congress leader).⁹⁷

About the role of the Brahmo Samaj activities in Jalpaiguri, it is found that during the initial stage it (Brahmo Samaj) played a constructive role. Within a very short time some schools, libraries and cultural programmes were organized by this organization. Specially women education was very much encouraged in the district. So it is found that Brahmo Samaj as an organization took some positive steps for the cultural development of the district.⁹⁸

6.12.8. SOME OTHER VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

In the socio-cultural life of Jalpaiguri district, the Voluntary organizations of different character played an important role. During the period from 1920 to 1946, huge number of voluntary organizations were founded and they did something for community welfare which have already discussed in chapter 3. Now we don't have the scope to discuss about the welfare activities of these organizations. Among them we are just to mention the name of some organizations and they were—GANA KALYAN SAMITI, MARWARI RELIEF SOCIETY, INDIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY etc. (see Chapter 3). Apart from this SISU NIKETAN, a voluntary social service organization for child was founded in 1937-38. In 1944, a children education centre namely 'SISUMAHAL' was started. In 1954, a Juvenile organization named "DANPITEDER ASAR" started working for the physical and mental growth of children.⁹⁹ Some other organizations like 'SISU-UDYAN', and 'MILE-MISE' were also started at Jalpaiguri. So far our information is concerned it is found that all these organizations were engaged in different type of socio-cultural and welfare activities.

6.13 KSHATRIYA SAMITI (KS)

Though we are discussing about the associations of Jalpaiguri, the activities of the Kshatriya Samiti cannot be confined either in Jalpaiguri or in any particular district of North Bengal. In course of discussion about the Socio-political stirrings during the first half of the twentieth century it is important to take account of a movement that emerged and spread among the Rajbansi Hindus of Jalpaiguri district and also other parts of North Bengal, particularly Rangpur and Dinajpur, the princely state of Cooch Behar and Goalpara district in Assam. The movement came to be known as the Rajbansi Kshatriya Movement led by the Kshatriya Samiti.¹⁰⁰ The background of the movement was provided by some social problem of the Rajbansis is due to the census report of 1891. In this census both the Rajbansi and the Koch community belonging to the Hindu social group or caste on the basis of social hierarchy

were treated in the same category. The census authority gave instructions to the effect that the 'Rajbansi is the same as Koch'.¹⁰¹ As a reaction several leading Rajbansi Zamindars and Jotedars of Rangpur took initiative in voicing protest against this report. They urged F.M. Skrine, then District Magistrate of Rangpur, to recognize Rajbansis as a caste separate from the Koch and to allow them to be recognized as Kshatriya. The District Magistrate called for the opinion of the intellectuals on the identity of the Rajbansis. After consultation with representatives of different School of Pandit Samaj, important personalities of Hindu Society and prominent 'Rajbansi Kshatriyas' the opinion came out that the Rajbansis and the Koches two entirely different casts that the former were of Kshatriya origin and that they had been degraded to a Bratya state due to non-observance of Vedic practices.

However, the identity of the Rajbansi Hindus conspicuously changed in the census of 1901. They were regarded not as Bratya Kshatriya as recognized earlier. To quote the then Magistrate of Rangpur,

"On a recent reference to the superintendent of census operation, he has ordered that the man are to be classed Rajbanshis and not Bratya Kshatriya, I therefore decline to reopen the matter.¹⁰² Hence, in the 1901 census, the Rajbansis were enumerated as belonging to the lower caste. They were mentioned as Rajbansis and not as Bratya Khatriyas unlike in the previous Census report. The Rajbansis were socially degraded in their position, which led to their frustration. They were an aggrieved lot, and to exonerate them of their grievances pertaining to their social degradation, one Rajbansi intellectual Panchanan Barman, who was the then advocate of the Rangpur Court, took the leadership of the Rajbansi Community in pursuit of their social identity in the upcoming census of 1911. In these circumstances, an association was formed named 'Rajbansi Kshatriya Samiti', an organization of Rajbansi Kshatriyas in 1910 attended by around 400 delegates from Cooch Behar, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Assam and presided over by Madhusudan Ray an advocate of Jalpaiguri. The Samiti (KS) placed its charter of demands for the resolution of

their identity and social position. The period in the aftermath of the 1911 census saw the publication of a report by the then Superintendent of census O' Mally in 1913 which said that the Koch and the Rajbansis were separate communities.¹⁰³

But it is fact that Sanskritisation, or the assimilation of tribal or semi-tribal people into Hindu fold was not so smooth. In this circumstances the movement started with particular emphasis on 'UPANAYANA SANSKARA' or the wearing of the sacred thread and on the basis of that readmission to Kshatriya status. In February 1912 (27 MAGH, 1319 B, S.) several thousand Rajbansis from different districts of North Bengal congregated at Debiganj on the bank of 'KAROTOYA' a river sacred to the Rajbansis (in Jalpaiguri district) and took sacred threads as a symbol of sanskritisation.¹⁰⁴ Similar congregations were arranged in different places for the same purpose in the subsequent period. Within a few years it is found that the KS guided by small group of Rajbansi lawyers and educated persons worked for the spread of education among the members of the community. The Samiti also took the initiative to raise a fund for the community to provide loans to Rajbansi agriculturists and urged them to improve their agricultural practices. A co-operative credit society was also organized.¹⁰⁵ To highlight different reform programme for the community the Samiti (KS) brought out a monthly Journal named as 'KSHATRIYA' which dealt with the various socio-economic problems of the Rajbansi community.¹⁰⁶

Another important achievement of the KS was to provide physical training to the Rajbansi youths. At that time the outbreak of the First World War prompted the Samiti leaders to give a call to the young men of the community to show their kshatriyattva that is, martial abilities by joining the British army and issued appeal to the government for raising two battalions composed exclusively of Rajbansis. As a result it was found that several hundred Rajbansi youths from Jalpaiguri, Rangpur, Dinajpur and Goalpara (Assam) Joined the army and went to the war. In this context Panchanan

Barman, secretary of the Samiti contributed a lot and in recognition of the service rendered by Panchanan Barman he was conferred the titles of 'RAI SAHEB and M.B.E. (member of the British empire).¹⁰⁷ With several activities, the Samiti claim to be a non-political association. As a social organization the Samiti worked for so many social, intellectual, moral and religious progress of the Rajbansi Community.¹⁰⁸ However, it is found that the Samiti took a political position in course of several Occasions. All these are not required to be discussed here. But it is fact that the Kshatriya Samiti created an apparent caste solidarity among the Rajbansi's in general and an identity consciousness among the educated and well to do section of the community in particular. On the whole, the Rajbansi Kshatriya movement represented an endeavour to find social identity and status for the Rajbansi community though it had some anomalies and internal tension. In spite of so many socio-religious and economic reform programme the Samiti did not have any programme for the poor peasants and 'ADHIARS' (share croppers) who constituted the bulk of the Rajbansi Hindu peasantry. The movement remained confined mainly among the large landlords, Jotedars and better off peasants. Hence it can be stated that the immediate objective of the 'Kshatriya Samiti' was to regain the lost social status of the 'Rajbansi community' in the Hindu social system.

So far our study is concerned with the contribution of the Associations (SABHA-SAMITIS) in the Socio-Cultural movement of North Bengal, it cannot be denied that the 'KSHATRIYA SAMITI' had a great contribution for the social, religious and cultural development of the Rajbansi community who were at that time probably one third of the total population of the region. Though the Samiti started to work as a social organization to regain their social status and for social upliftment, in course of time it had a multidimensional impact in our society which require to be investigated in details. Hence on the whole it can be said that the Kshatriya Samiti had a great contribution for the socio-cultural regeneration of present North Bengal.

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⁹⁷ Subir Roy – Jalpaigurite Brahma Samaj, in Maldhuparni, Jalpaiguri District issue, edited by Ajitesh Bhattacharya and Issue editor Dr. A.G. Ghosh. 1394 B.S. p.143

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ West Bengal District Gazetteers, Jalpaiguri, Barun Dey (ed), P. 316.

¹⁰⁰ Bandopadhyaya, Sekhar - Social protest and politics of Backwardness? The Namasudra Movement in Bengal, 1872, 1872-1911, in Basudab

Chattopadhyay, H. S. Vasudevan and Rajat K. Ray (eds) *Dissent and consensus: Social, protest in Pre-Industrial societies* K. P. Bagchi, Calcutta, 1989, pp. 170-232.

¹⁰¹ Barman, Upendra Nath, *Rajbansi Kshatriya Jatir Itihash*, (3rd edition). 1388 B.S., Jalpaiguri, P. 56.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, P. 60.

¹⁰³ *Census of India, Report 1911*, p.445

¹⁰⁴ Barman, Upendra Nath – *Thakur Panchanan Barman Jiban Charita* (in Bengali) 2nd edition. 1387. B.S., Jalpaiguri pp.20-23.

¹⁰⁵ See the Resolution adopted by the Samiti in its different conferences.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁷ Barman, Upendra Nath, *Op cit*, pp. 30-44.

¹⁰⁸ Memorandum on constitutional reforms submitted by the Kshatriya Samiti to the Chief Secretary, Government of Bengal, in December, 1917, published in full Kshatriya Samitis Ninth Annual Proceedings.