

Preface

The study is an attempt to understand the socio-economic condition of scheduled castes population of Maldah district of West Bengal. In the Vedic time all men were equal. In that time there was no trace of untouchability as we see it today. But in course of time Aryans divided the society into four divisions based on qualities and actions. This four fold division has been a pre-dominant feature of Hindu social fabric. This is clear from the various studies prior to independence and even sometime latter, the scheduled castes had been poorest of the poor and socially and economically most backward castes in the society. Many social problems like illiteracy, unemployment, child labour, gambling, superstitions, discrimination by higher castes, inferiority complex against other castes, child marriage, lack of awareness ect. are found among them. After independence the scheduled castes are going under social and economic changes both in rural and urban areas.

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data have been collected from census reports, various Govt. reports and from different books on scheduled castes. The primary data have been collected from house hold survey of fifty villages / urban areas of Maldah district. The collected data have been processed and analyzed by statistical techniques.

The study is divided into seven chapters including introduction and conclusion. Chapter 1 is introductory chapter, chapter 2 deals with the geographical profile of the study area and chapter 3 gives the idea about Indian social order and scheduled castes of Maldah district. Chapter 4 and 5 are the core chapters of this study. The former deals with the social status of scheduled castes of Maldah district while the chapter 5 is deals with the economic status of the scheduled castes. Chapter 6 highlights the suggested strategies for the development of scheduled castes and the last chapter summarizes the research work and represent logical conclusions.

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