

Chapter- 3

Nature of the Movement in the Two Zones

Quit India Movement in the rural and urban areas of Northern Bengal can be divided into two zones, i.e, Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri in the first zone and Dinajpur, Rangpur, Bogra, Malda, Rajsahi and Pabna in the second zone. As Ranajit Dasgupta opined that because of some reasons, the Quit India Movement in Jalpaiguri did not get to its zenith point. In his words:

...though the district lay in the zone of military activity, the socially and economically dislocating impact of the war was much less than in many east Bengal districts and a District like Midnapore. Men, materials and land were mobilised with active help from the planters, and Baikunthapur Zamindars and big Jotedars. But because an availability of vast stretches of sparsely populate tracts in the Duars the impact was perhaps less harsh than in many other districts and so the grievances against and hostility towards the British were perhaps less¹

The nature and rapidity in the first zone, which was a Non-Regulated zone, cannot be compared with the second one. As in the case of the first zone, the movement directly knocked the British Raj because here the Government was Zamindar. Conversely, the movement of the second zone was directed against the Jotedar or moneylenders, in the form of a class struggle. Moreover, the movement bears different characters in respect to the district politics. In this chapter a careful attempt has been made to analyse the manifold nature of the movement in the two zones, the inclination of the movement of the urban quarters to merge with the movement in the rural segment, appraisals of the

commitment of women in the formation of the movement, the responses of the different castes, tribes, and communities.

1942 – Economy of Northern Bengal

Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri were Non-Regulated region². The authority intentionally isolated this area for military recruitment for the loyal Gorkha regiment. D. M or S.D.O. could hurl anybody out within 24 hours through a notice. Govt followed the policy of not raising the rate of the commodities in Darjeeling and adjacent tea garden areas. Both the British tea planters and the Govt were cautious against growing agitations among the ill- paid tea garden labourers and loyal Gorkhas respectively. Prabhat Kumar Mukherjee, the biographer of Rabindranath Tagore, remembers in his memoir 'Fire fire chai' that there was an internal passport in Darjeeling during 1942 when he went there³. This exceptional situation of Darjeeling was at that time when the movement was in acme. The relation between the political movement and the gloomy economic condition can be comprehended from the letter by Jonathan Lyndell an American missionary of Darjeeling to Evelyn dated 25th August 1942.⁴

Dear Evelyn

August 25, 1942

....Lately things have been disturbed here in India, since the 'Congress Party' leaders were arrested. Arresting of leaders has been quite extensive. The general populace who have favoured the demands of 'Congress' have done quite a bit of damage of public utilities in many cities and ports, destroying post boxes, telephone wires, street car, buildings, R.R.S etc. But things are being held firmly in hand by the British govt, who have taken a deciding firm hand- using gunfire to disperse the rioters. Everything seems well in hand, though certain facilities were temporarily suspended. Prices has gone up some. Here in these parts there has been some rise on all products. In Abbott Mt, the feeding problem is very difficult. They can get no meat except they buy a whole goat.

Rice is double the price of it here. Very few vegetables and fruits can be gotten and then high in price. Eggs could only be gotten at times and then very expensive. You see, they are stuck rather alone in the hills, no big food community like here in Darjeeling. But they seem to be getting on well. God has given us all we need and plenty extra. I only feel sorry for those foreigners who live always on canned foods and a lot of foreign stuff and cannot get along on the simple products of the soil around them – what will they do if things really began to get scarce. I guess they would have to trust the lord of grace.

Love My My

Jonathan

Jonathan Lyndell worried about the region, after the World War faced economic crisis. He wrote from Shilong on 24th September, 1942 to his brother Doc that

Prices are exceeding high in Shilong (as I heard through Daniel here). Prices have not gone very high here yet – but some things are beginning. Everything is still to be had in the Bazaar. Darjeeling is simply packed full of people, and when someone goes, others come. Lots of soldiers on leave.⁵

Second World War had an adverse effect on the economy of Malda as on the other parts of Bengal⁶. Poor economic condition led the officers of the English Bazaar Municipality to apply for advance on the ground of price rise of essential commodities⁷. However, the financial condition of the Municipality being depressing, they were in trouble to provide ration for the staffs⁸. In the year 1942, the Municipality tried to raise its fund by the number of distress warrants for confiscated property for the reason of not paying municipal taxes that was raised⁹ and this tendency continued up to 1947¹⁰. During 1942-43, the municipalities put pressure on the workers who was in charge to collect taxes¹¹. Md. Ziauddin, charged on the accusation of financial corruption, affirmed in his resignation letter that his political opinion was the sole reason behind the conspiracy. It commenced when he was gradually realizing the cause of pending taxes. Hence, liaison was exacerbated; three subjects come

together-- religion, finance and politics¹². At the same time, during August and September of 1942, large processions could be seen in almost all the districts of Bengal, demanded to control the commodity price, releasing food grains from storages, security of the populace. Some conferences were also held –at Munsiganj (23 August), Barisal (26 August), Dinajpur (28 August), Pangia of Jessore (28 August), Rangpur (30 August), – raising similar demands. Four thousand people assembled in Rangpur for the demand to supply food and other products by means of regulated price. 1st September and 6th and 7th were celebrated as Peasant Day and Labour Day respectively¹³. From the onset of the year, the peasants of Narayanpur of Gangarampur tried to store their paddy in a storehouse made by them. For this reason they had to collect huge bamboos from the Zamindars' vested land. Thus, a clash was obvious between the peasants grouped by C.L.I and the Zamindars. This movement, organised by C.L.I, articulated by men and women joining in large number ended January 1942¹⁴.

Nationalism, Sacrifice and Politics

The movement of Balurghat, led by Saroj Ranjan Chatterjee, a Congressman, was indeed associated by Sailendra Sundar Das (F.B.) and Pulinbihari Dasgupta (Anusilan Dal, R.S.P). The movement of Balurghat was supported by R.S.P and F.B. Students of Balurghat at that time were inspired by both R.S.P and F.B. There were no confrontation between Dhiren Banerjee, Pulinbihari Dasgupta of R.S.P and Bishwaranjan Sen; Sailendra Sundar Das of F.B. and Kamalendu Chakroborty of Anusilan Dal averted narrowly the arrest of Radhamohan Mahanta in 1941. Debi Bhaduri the leader of Anusilan Dal from Calcutta instructed Radhamohan Mohanta and others not to participate in the Quit India Movement, which Gandhi launched to frustrate the incursion of Subhash Chandra Bose and his Indian National Army. Therefore, they had to wait until Bose invited them. However, the students were not ready to wait¹⁵.

Once in 1930, Piyush Kanti Mukherjee of Alipurduar picketed alone and was beaten by the shopkeepers.¹⁶ He met with Muzaffar Ahmad and was inspired by Communism, though after his contact and attachment with Jugantar Group he detached himself from the Communists¹⁷. 1935 onwards, Mukherjee realised that assassination or extremist revolutionary activities will not be able to bring forth India's freedom¹⁸. Mukherjee worked for Khagendranath Dasgupta during the election of 1937. When Gandhi announced the Quit India Movement, Mukherjee went to Calcutta and met Bijay Singh Nahar, to gather the materials to paralyze the Govt. Later on he sent Naren Daga to collect those materials in return of money. Finally, Mukherjee took permission from his mother to jump in the bandwagon. If he died his, other three brothers were there to look after her¹⁹.

Nalini Pakrashi, 'Duars Gandhi', was the Congress leader whose influence over Rajbansis and Adibasis was praiseworthy. He organised a musical ceremony in 1939 for the celebration of Subhash Chandra Bose in Jalpaiguri²⁰. When Gandhi was arrested in 1930 and the news arrived at Falakata, a geographically dislocated area of Duars, it inspired Pakrashi, a servant under contractor Ramrup Singh, to '*Satyagraha*' and consequently he was arrested. Pakrashi, however, denied to apologize and resigned. Before his way in in the Congress Committee of Alipurduar, resolutions were taken against the arrest of Gandhi and in favour of C.R. Das's entry in the Council, etc. Pakrashi started the process of strengthening the organization making connections with rural masses. At the very early stage of his life (1912-20) he came in touch with Jugantar Dal and later on, during his days in Rangpur he was inspired by Barrister Atul Chandra Gupta, Mohini Mohan Bhattyacharya, Tulsī Lahiri. Despite of his belonging from an orthodox Hindu family, he was quite radical²¹. Pakrashi, influenced by local movements of Alipurduar, organised a strike in Samuktala 'Haat' to protest against Saimon Commission. By this time he, with his wife and children, faced immense poverty, shifted

from one job to another, weaved Swadeshi cloths, opened a rice and grocer shop, though his contact and commitment to the Congress every time made hindrances to the business attempt he made. During the flood of 1921-22 or the earthquake in Bihar in 1934, he was engaged in accumulating relief fund. Khagendranath Dasgupta won the election of 1937, using the organizational potential of Nalini Pakrashi in Falakata, Dhupguri, Madarihat, Alipurduar and some parts of the native state Cooch Behar. From this time, he was able to send five, seven or ten rupees to his family per month. Pakrashi, after the election, worked full time under Dasgupta and now he could send rupees fifteen per month to his family. He participated Haripura, Faizpura and Tripuri sessions of the Congress in the conference against compromise of Swami Sahajananada Saraswati beside Ramgarh Congress 1940²².

Pakrashi and Dasgupta joined with the F.B as the idea of socialism influenced Pakrashi. He was sentenced to imprisonment for the distribution of a leaflet '*Bhai Chasi Tumi Garib Keno*' (Brother peasant, why are you poor?). He was released from the jail and he made up the split in the Congress organization. One group was saying that it was the people's war, and as the U.S.S.R. was attacked, the nature of the war changed. On the other hand, Subhash Chandra Bose and his comrades viewed that it was the prime time to attack the British. Pakrashi was with the second group²³. At that time, he was interned, and was called by the S.D.O, Kaul Han and there Pakrashi stated that he was a true believer of Socialism and that he wished that the Axis power would be ruined in the war. He refused the S.D.O.'s proposal to get rupees two hundred for the propaganda in favour of National War Front²⁴. On 9th August, Quit India Movement was started and all the leaders of the Congress were arrested, which in turn made the Zillah Congress silent about the movement. Pakrashi took the charge of disconnecting the communications in Falakata, his best range of cognition. He, was identified as '*Tarkata Thakur*'²⁵, cut telegraph wires from Birpara to Falakata. Pakrashi was sick and was released from jail while many members of sub-division Congress were

released after their declaration of guilt. Deben Das, a man of Rava tribe, took active part in the uprisings of Kumargramduar and left the job of an schoolmaster²⁶.

Preparation and Organisation

Socialist Congress was much more organised in Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar but not in Malda. As in the case of Alipurduar, it was touched with Jayprakash Narayan, Rammohan Lohia, Achyuta Patyabardhan, Aruna Asaf Ali obliquely all socialist leaders of the Congress²⁷. Naren Daga, a Marwari, who took active part in the movement, had relation with the family of Jayprakash Narayan. The Plan for the course of the movement of Alipurduar came from Narayan's family²⁸. Acquiring political power form factions or cliques, in due course, seemed to the members of the ad-hoc committee of Malda to be harmful for the future interest of the country. Moreover, they did not know the actual plans and programmes of the Congress²⁹. Therefore, the members of the ad-hoc committee and other senior members of the Congress viz. Subodh Kumar Mishra, Dyutidhar Roy, Surendrabala Roy and Satyaranjan Sen of Khadi group met to reorganize themselves and decided that Satyaranjan Sen would be given the duty to convey the modus operandi in detail from the upper stratum to the district. The newly formed ad-hoc committee was eager to prove theselves, while orthodox leaders of the first strata aloofed themselves.

Subhas Chandra Bose was absconded and Sub-divisional Congress went against the F.B.³⁰ in Jalpaiguri. Socialist segment of the Congress had organised themselves in the course of a cultural movement, grouped themselves in Azad Hind Library of Jalpaiguri and Edward Library of Alipurduar. Piyush Kanti Mukherjee became the secretary of Edward Library of Alipurduar and formed a cultural group³¹. Piyush Kanti Mukherjee and others tried to strengthen their organization by involving themselves to enhance education, etc.³² They rejected thriller and other novels and brought

Main Kamph (autobiography of Hitler), *biography of Mussolini*, *Rising Asia*, *Taruner Sapna* (written by Subhash Bose) along with nationalist books and magazines. Fortune of the F.B. to some extent depended upon the result of the Second World War³³. Some topics of the debate arranged in the Edward Library in Alipurduar shows the impact of contemporary politics on the youth, viz.

1. Dialectic Materialism vs. Gandhian Sarboday Samaj.
2. Capitalism vs. Socialism.
3. Violence vs. Non-violence.
4. Sitaramaiya vs. Subhashchandra.

Partakers of the Quit India Movement in Duars forgathered; the participants were from the young readers and debaters of the library³⁴. 26th September 1942 was decided as the day of 'direct action'. Charges were divided in a secret meeting in the following manner:

1. Subodh Ranjan Mitra and Haridas Chatterjee for Madarihat.
2. Nalinikanta Pakrashi for Falakata.
3. Sunil Sarkar for Kumargramduar.
4. Dutta Singh Sanyasi and Piyush Kanti Mukherjee for Kalchini and Alipurduar.

Separate duties were assigned to some members in Alipurduar. The plan was that after seizing the Thanas of Madarihat, Falakata, Kumargramduar, Kalchini, all would come to take possession the Thana of Alipurduar. Insurrectionists were associated with the police warder of jail, Ambica Singh, would open the jail to let the prisoners flee. The O.C. was, who the son-in-law of the cloth merchant Bipin Bihari Ganguly, also agreed to help³⁵.

The Socialists of Alipurduar planned direct action to uproot the administration, while the activists of Jalpaiguri preferred to arrange for meetings and processions. The members of the ad-hoc committee at Malda also decided not to get involved in direct struggle with the British initially, and so they arranged

for small meetings with the villagers, to prepare them mentally to struggle against the British imperialism. Long-term plan was to be seen after the initial stage of the movement. To evoke an outcry in the districts, meetings and processions were to be exercised in Malda town, organised by Sourindra Mohan Mishra. Though all the members of the Congress were to be present in Malda, they would not take part in the processions or meetings, because they took the lesson from the movement of 1930-32 that if all the leaders got arrested at a time ultimately the movement would get weaker. Considering the organization to be weak, the workers joined in very small number in the town; so they had to bring workers from Singhabad and other rural areas. The day was fixed for the meeting in the town and leaflets and pamphlets were printed. The members started their activities in their areas and met before the conference in the town³⁶. Socialists of Alipurduar tried to seize the rural Thanas first as they presumed that the success would inspire the people of the town. This radical plan failed perhaps because it did not match with the programmes had Jalpaiguri and they (The Socialists of Alipurduar) decided not to be attached with them.

Opposition and Hesitation

During the 40's, student politics became ipso-facto³⁷ in the town politics of Jalpaiguri.³⁸ Student Federation had organised peoples defence force. Jalpaiguri District F.B. committee was established in the house of Kabiraj Satish Chandra Lahiri³⁹. Khagendranath Dasgupta and others were released from jail and as patrons reorganised the organization. Gradually town politics got hold of the control of F.B., it challenged the Communists and communal forces⁴⁰. The ratification of the Congress, Civil Disobedience Resolution and the subsequent arrest of the Congress leaders aroused two-fold public reaction in this district. On 29th August, a proposal in Jalpaiguri Municipality, raised by Srinath Hor, went up against the arrest of the congressmen, and was supported by Dr. Charu Candra Sanyal and other seven Congress members;

however, Muslim League members, Khodabox and other Government nominees, opposed it⁴¹. Difference of enigmatic opinions was there among the Congressmen. Charu Candra Sanyal preferred some social reforms, while Khagendranath Dasgupta opposed, while Sachindranath Dasgupta was only against tea planters and Zamindars. Equally, Municipal political pattern was not hopeful for the political leaders of English Bazaar (Malda) Municipality, which was divided into two groups, before 1940, according to their distinctive social status and above all, political interest. There were, among them, Raysaheb, Khansaheb, Roybahadur and Khanbahadur, men who obtained or wished to get hold of courtesy title, who were always with the government, nominated and approved persons in one side, against the middle class businessmen, lawyers, servicemen, Marwaries and Biharies who came from Andhrapradesh, Uttarpradesh and Bihar. Zamindar families like Giri's of Gosaituli and Choudhury's of English Bazaar were with the first group, active in Municipal politics, with the intention of omission of taxes. After 1940, this kind of group politics had swung to communal plarisation pertaining to the issues regarding municipality⁴². On the passing of the Bombay Resolution by the Congress a meeting was held among the Congressmen of this district and an action committee was formed with Atul Chandra Kumar, M.L.A and Govt whip as the President, Narain Das Behari (a Marwari and leading merchant of this town) as the vice President and Satis Agarwala, another merchant of the town and an old member of the Anusilan Party as the Secretary. Some times nothing substantial was done, and the vice- President and the Secretary were merchants with perhaps little of the fire of youth left in them. It is to be noted, however, that the Beharis took a leading part in the last C.D. Movement. A condemnatory proposal in the Municipality was given against the arrest of Gandhi, Azad and Neheru, but was not accepted as a result of the vote; this proposal was supported by Ramhari Roy, Subhanarayan Giri, Rohini Nandan Das and Abdus Sattar, but was opposed by Akbar Ali Choudhury, Raisuddin, Raysaheb Probodh Chandra Roy and another one (name unknown),

alongwith Nandadulal Dutta, Debidas Ghoshal and Abdur Rahman and the other seven members who were not present⁴³.

Despite Municipal politics in North Bengal, Quit India Movement, as was in almost all other parts of India, brought the feeling in Malda that this movement would bring freedom at last. Common party workers became keen for another political movement, since it was well known that they were active only when any movement was launched or the election was forthcoming⁴⁴. Malda Congress was about to plunge into the movement with hesitation and disbelief. Leaders of Malda were grouped under Atul Kumar and Subodh Kumar Mishra, but they tusted between themselves by forming individual groups⁴⁵. Some days before the movement, ad-hoc committee was formed in Malda, Presidented by Rameshchandra Bagchi, which had participated twice in the Legislative Assembly of Bengal, and hence inactive when the said movement launched. Sourindramohan Mishra, the Secretary, was a neophyte in politics; he did not have formidable connections, not even introduction with the old members. Other members of the committee did not do anything notable. So, for them, it was not easy to envisage that people would spontaneously take part in the movement⁴⁶. After 1938, the Socialists captured the control of Malda district Congress, led by Atul Chandra Kumar, Narendra Nath Charaborty, Debendranath Jha, Manik Jha, Ramraghab Lahiri and others. In their opponent group was there were Satya Ranjan Sen, Subodh Kumar Mishra, Satish Chand Agarwala, Surendrabala Roy, Ramhari Roy, Sourindra Mohan Mishra, Digindra Narayan Bhatyacharya, Nikunja Bihari Gupta, Harinandan Brahmachari, Mukutdhari Singh and others⁴⁷. So, it was the Rightist group who participated in the movement of Malda. Atul Chandra Kumar, leader of F.B. was not arrested after negotiation with Nazimuddin Ministry⁴⁸.

In the mid-thirties, two lobbies were formed in Bengal Provincial Congress, one is the radical group wanted that Congress must well worthily consider

peasants' interests, and on the contrary the rural leaders opined for the return of the old-fashioned, conservative thoughts. A leaflet wrote by Piyush Kanti Mukherjee on 11th March 1941, titled '*Paschim Duar Khas Mahal Prajader Prati Nibedan*' put in the picture that, following the survey, rent was increasing in the said region with different impact though this was not carried out in any other regulated region of Bengal. Another leaflet written by Bibhuti Chakroborty '*Bhai chasi tumi Garib Keno?*' -- a memorandum addressing the peasants and labourers to make them aware about foreign capital and British imperialism, was found from the house of Birendra Kumar Niogi, secretary of Zillah Congress committee⁴⁹. A pamphlet '*Swadhinatar Rupantar*' by Anil Roy depicted the social and political implication of freedom and in another pamphlet '*Dal o Neta*' by the same author described contemporary political parties and associations⁵⁰. In this way, the contemporary perplexity of Bengal politics touched the politics of Duars. During the 1940's, after the establishment of Forward Block in Jalpaiguri, two membership forms came to Subodh Kumar Mitra, Secretary of primary Congress sub-committee of Alipurduar, controlled by B.P.C.C. (suspended), through Sasadhar Kar, organiser of Forward Block in Jalpaiguri. Aswini Sen and Nani Chatterjee filled up these forms, offhandedly, but no step was forward taken⁵¹. Thus, there was hardly any existence of Forward Block in Alipurduar. Nani Chatterjee, however, left Congress in 1941 when he got a job in a primary school and Aswini Sen, who was president of sub-committee of Alipurduar from 1939-40, though steered by B.P.C.C., was confused about the guidance of B.P.C.C. and so he decided to join Ad-Hoc committee, and resigned from the post of vice-president on 18th July 1942 for 'personal reasons'⁵².

Conflict and Contradiction

Reflection of the group politics within Siliguri Sub-divisional Congress was found in the nature of August Movement⁵³. Piyush Kanti Mukherjee agreed half-heartedly to take the charge of the Sub-divisional Congress⁵⁴. As the

secretary of the Sub-divisional Congress, he tried to reorganize Congress. But after his tenure of one year, Mukherjee again requested to continue until another.⁵⁵ In the year 1939, he met Subhas Chandra Bose and Bose told him to meet him in Calcutta. Mukherjee did so and informed him that he was forced to work as the secretary of Sub-divisional Congress unwillingly, since it is not matching with his ideas⁵⁶. As a suggestion, Bose said that Mukherjee had to act as Bose was doing then. Bose did not believe that non-violence would bring freedom, but it was true that in that situation British would put those in the jail who would talk about violence. So, non-violence would be the 'camouflage' for future violent movement. Mukherjee followed this instruction and organised people in the fur flung areas Alipurduar, used non-violence as a 'camouflage'⁵⁷. When Sasadhar Kar of Jalpaiguri met Piyush Mukherjee, he wished to start a combined movement in Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar. Though Kar was previously a member of Jugantar group, and at that time a member of F.B., Mukherjee did not agree with Kar's proposal and preferred to continue separate movements⁵⁸. At that time Sachin Dasgupta, District Secretary of Jalpaiguri, intended to join the Communist Party. He wished to take Nalini Pakrashi and some others with him. Pakrashi, however, did not agree with this proposal and said that there is practically no food in his house. Sachin Dasgupta told Piyush that he had decided to think about it till one year, yet he would not sabotage the Congress, as long as he is within it, but hereafter might not ideologically help the organization⁵⁹. Sachin Dasgupta wished to resign but was unable to do so as he could not deny the request of some of his colleagues. Mukherjee then sent a sack full of rice to Pakrashi's house to close Pakrashi's mouth⁶⁰.

However, in Malda the members were not confident about their abilities. Sourindra Mishra persisted in pertaining to the old members, who were active earlier, to take charge of the Congress, even though group politics continued. Mishra, unable to write to Atul Chandra Kumar, but succeeded to make contact with Debendranath Jha, ex secretary of the Zillah Congress. Jha

accused Mishra to be an adherent of group politics. He also blamed Mishra as he (Mishra), belonged to a Zamindar family and joined the Congress to acquire power⁶¹. At last, Jha agreed to participate in the movement, and organised the Santals of Gajol. Jha, Mishra and Ramhari Roy met together. Harinandan Brahmachari of Singhabad had good organization among the rural masses. Bidhubhusan Sarkar of Gobindapara agreed to uproot railines with the help of the tribal people. Dyutidhar Roy also got able to organise the people in a part of Ratua.

Satya Sen conveyed the news that the current movement bore a different ideology, no question of non-violence again, but to '*do or die*' which might make violence acceptable⁶². Mishra was informed by Jha about some nationalists' existence in Kalabana village of Nachol district; but found it hard to contact with them, and hence ended without any fruitful result. It was the case of Rahanpur, an unfertile area, which did not react much. Nababganj had responded well in the previous movements and it was the place of origin of Ramesh Chandra Bagchi, the president of the ad-hoc committee, but had not responded this time. Bagchi did not welcome Mishra; another old insurgent, Rameshchandra Ghosh, was not present at that time; so Mishra returned disappointed⁶³. The organization of Harinandan Brahmachari of Singhabad though charmed Mishra again, Noteworthy is the fact that only Singhabad, Harishchandrapur and Bhaluka three places of North Malda responded in Quit India Movement. Mishra confessed that organizational weakness caused southern Malda inactive in the movement⁶⁴. The S.D.O. of Malda, Probodh Chandra Roy (honoured as Roysaheb by the British) and some Govt officials did not find anything troublesome in Malda⁶⁵. The flood in Malda was also another fact that hindered the advance of the movement. Mishra though wrote to the organization of Bhaluka and Harishchandrapur to wait for some time until his final order to start the movement, but the insurgents reacted emotionally, burnt a wine shop and destroyed the materials of post office and Union Board Office at Bhaluka. This unplanned step massacred the final plan

of possession over the Thana⁶⁶. Dyutidhar Roy and Subodh Kumar Mishra then decided to destroy the railway routes so that the news cannot reach the town. Bomkesh Roy, son of Dyutidhar Roy led the team to uproot and dislocate the railways. The movement of Bhaluka was indeed a mass movement; at least one or two men from each family participated in the rail line uprooting. Later on, Sourindra Mohan Mishra saw barber, blacksmith, potter and even scavenger of Bhaluka in the jail⁶⁷. The decision of not taking any step without group consultation were not followed. When leaders as Dyutidhar Roy and Subodh Kumar Mishra failed and arrested, some workers like Bijay Kumar Dasgupta, Naresh Das endeavoured for the last time to dislocate Malda's communication system. However, they did not succeed.⁶⁸ There were Muslims among at least half of the masses who attended the conference of Balupur and supported the proposal of joining by raising their hands. But none of them participated when the rail line was uprooted. Mishra went to the Muslim oriented villages of Bhaluka Dhal and realised that Muslim League propogandised them. His effort to impress them, however, did not worked⁶⁹. Mishra opines that men, who did not take active part in the movement or the areas that did not react much, had sympathy and support to the insurgents⁷⁰.

Middle Class Leadership with Rural Masses: Towns Incorporated Villages

Both the movements of Balurghat and Kumargramduar may be categorised to be of the same nature i.e middle class leadership of Balurghat and Alipurduar town tried to incorporated villages, already aggravated for the scarcity of paddy, though the reason behind it were different. It is already mentioned that the price rise was unlimited in Balurghat like that in other places of Bengal. Government had purchased paddy through their agents at high price from the tenants. At last, the situation became so troublesome that the peasants had no food grains, on the one hand, and on the other, the Zamindars, and the

Jotedars stored huge amount of paddies. Already Haat-Tola Movement and Adhiar Movement proved that Zamindars and government are vise-versa. Saroj Ranjan Chatterjee able to convey this message to the rural masses. When Quit India Movement was launched and the news of the arrest of the Congress leaders reached, all the shops and schools of Balurghat got closed. Sports of Balurghat town league and High School also got postponed⁷¹. Saroj Ranjan Chatterjee was able to use that opportunity to start a movement and the most important example of this was the Congress mass- violence that took place on the 14th September 1942, at Balurghat. The leader of the local Congress Saroj Ranjan Chatterjee, led about 8 to 10 thousand people armed with lathis, bows and arrows, etc, and attacked almost all Government buildings of Balurghat. Ganguram Oraon led the tribals in that movement⁷². Basanta Ranjan Sarkar was with the organization of the people of the village Tapan. On 13th September, he assembled men and transferred them to Balurghat by boat. More than 100 groups were assembled from the rural areas, earnestly invited by Saroj Ranjan Chatterjee⁷³. The Sub-Divisional Headquarter, and Union Board Office and the Sub-Registry Office were burnt into ashes. 12 mon rice and mustard were looted⁷⁴. Along with the background of movements in the rural areas of Dinajpur, the incident of Balurghat was transpired.⁷⁵ The Civil Court building was badly damaged besides other Government properties; offices and records⁷⁶. The estimated loss would have been of about two lakh. 37 persons had been convicted under the regulations 35 and 56 of the Defence of India Rules and sentenced to 2 years to 7-years rigorous imprisonment. Seven were still absconding. The mob that took part in the above noted incident looted paddy from Dangi police station, Balurghat and distributed it among the masses⁷⁷. The mob looted paddy from Simultali police station, Dhamoirhat, in the district Dinajpur, on 14th September 1942. On the next day, Congress volunteers attacked the Gadi-Ghar of Mahadev Bhakat at Madnagar and properties and cash were looted. The primary demand of the masses was not to send paddy outside the district⁷⁸. Dhiren Barman and 18 others had been convicted under section

395, I.P.C, and were sentenced to 6 years to 4 years rigorous imprisonment. On the same day at Talighata, the Congress volunteers looted paddy from the boat of the Dhaka wallahs. Eyewitness, Sub-post master of Balurghat, Gurudayal Ghosh told to special magistrate P. Dasgupta that in the morning of 14th September he was engaged in closing windows and doors alongwith shifting cash, stamps and ensured papers while mob entered the post office crying out the slogans 'Bande Mataram', 'Do or die', 'Give blood to nation', and they destroyed windows, doors, forms and letters. About 24 to 25 men under the leadership of Saroj Ranjan Chatterjee hit the table with stick. When the sub-postmaster failed to stop them he tried to inform the Magistrate, the S.P. of police and other post offices, but he failed because the telegraph lines were cut off. Thereafter he saw the mob to advance towards '*Dewani Adalat*', Sub-Registry Offices and Bazar. When the peon of the post office Sailendra Mukherjee, was returning from Hakim's Banglo, he was attacked by the mob, but managed to escape by chance. The peon then saw those buildings and the central co-operative building burning. The Peon stated that Dibyendu Bagchi and Pulin Dasgupta led the mob. Netai Paul caught him and he was surrounded by Biren De, Kanu Sen, Bishwaranjan, Chandrika Prasad. Agricultural Demonstrator Mujibar Rahman indicated that he saw Jabbar, Iyakub, Radhanath Mondal and Kuku to assemble near Parshadanga building where paddy was stored. The Director of Co-operative Bank, Binoy Majumdar, told that he heard the noise of public nuisance and saw the mob, with bow and arrow, to set on fire the Dewani Adalat and the Sub-Registry Post Office. A group of the mob entered the Bank and broke doors and windows⁷⁹. A shopkeeper, Pushparanjan Chatterjee, gave evidence as eyewitness that he saw the mob near Dewani Adalat from the school corridor. He also saw smoke from the sub registry office. The son of the Sub-Register Manu set Dewani Adalat on fire and Prafulla De, Jiban Guha, Iyakub, Jabbar throwing paper hither and thither; at that time Iyakub and Jabbar brought out an iron chest and Manu and Jiban broke it and took notes and coins. The shopkeeper went to fight the fire with Binoybabu and Omar Ali. He also went

to meet the S.D.O. and the second officer. Local peasant Omar Ali Shekh told that he heard the noise of nuisance and saw the mob with arms advancing towards the town. At that time he saw Sailen, Pulin, Jabbar, Iyakub and other 'Bhadralok's. They went to the Adalat and then came to the Bazar. Tunu and Iyakub took a tin of petrol and some inflammable materials and Nitya Paul hold the matchbox. The peasant followed them and heard the news of burning of the Registry office and the Adalat. Makbul Hussain evidenced that men took kerosin from the shop of Batkrishna Paul. At that time another group came and Mukendu Turi, Haripada Biswas and Jiten cut off the telegraph wires. The President of the Union Board, Dr. Anil Shankar Chaudhury informed as eyewitness that he heard the news of the mob attacking the Union Board Office. He went there and saw the people destroying papers inside the Union Board Office. Sarojbabu led at least five to six thousand men in the town. He requested the people not to burn the Jute-inspector office⁸⁰.

Fulchand Murmu earlier organised a defensive committee in Dinajpur. When the Quit India Movement started, the police attacked the house of Murmu and destroyed it. Murmu, as the ex-vice president and a sitting member of the Union Board was one of the absconding accused of the Balurghat Disturbance case who was arrested by A.S.I. of Porsha police station on 23rd September 1942. Then the Congress volunteers assaulted the A.S.I. and snatched away the arms from the constables, confined them, and burnt their uniform. Basanta Ranjan Sarkar had mercy on the police. Fulchand Murmu and Dhiren Barman took the leading role in the attack against the C.I. of police with armed forces who tried to rescue the A.S.I. of Porsa and the mob who surrounded them shot arrows to them at Parila-Haat police station, Tapan on 24th September 1942. At last, the C.I. he ordered for open fire and the Congress workers fled away with the injured persons. Basanta Ranjan Sarkar the Congress leader had wanted that the police leave the captives. Hence, the tribes throw arrows and things went out of control. The Police fired 78 rounds and four Santals were killed.⁸¹ Whose names were Adhar Barman (Mahalakuri), Etoan Oraon

(Mallikpur), Chaitu Barman (Malancha), Kekara Barman (Haat Sawal)⁸². Basanta Sarkar was arrested and punished for 7 years 4 months rigorous imprisonment after the A.S.I.'s appeal to reduce the tenure of his punishment⁸³. Police sealed the properties of Saroj Ranjan Chatterjee⁸⁴ also. Some convict of the case of 14th September said that they were not responsible for the fire.⁸⁵ Meanwhile, in the interior of Dinajpur, some people looted the Haat. The police arrested the Manager of the Ral-Karisunda state, ex-president of Dinajpur Congress⁸⁶. Participation of the peasants of Tapan and other villages in the Balurghat uprising was eminent. Saroj Chatterjee instructed the peasants to withdraw from the exchange of food grains. Insurgents had looted paddy from the Government storage and Jotedars' houses. Hence, it is clear from the incident that scarcities of food grain compelled them to get involved in the movement⁸⁷. Peasants ran to accumulate paddy from Balurghat with sacks and other bags⁸⁸.

In Duars, it was the combination of local grievances with nationalist forces. The Congress leadership here encouraged the tenants not to give rents to the Government. During the 30's, leaders like Khagendranath Dasgupta supported the no rent campaign⁸⁹. Quit India Movement followed the same pattern. The resettlement operation of 1933 increased the total revenue of Khasmahal by 44.5% over the existing revenue. It resulted in the going down of the revenue collection in the Duars. From 1933, onwards, Jotedars in several meetings urged to reduce the rents in the Khasmahal area. While it was the subject of the Jotedars plea to the Government, it was ignored; however, this demand was caught by the Congress leaders like Khagendranath Dasgupta from the beginning of 1941, who demanded for the extension of the Bengal Tenancy Act to Duars. On the contrary, Jotedars did not want the application of Bengal Tenancy Act in Duars, which probably would have reduced the rent. This economic background of the Quit India Movement paved the way for success from the viewpoint of the Congress⁹⁰.

In the evening of 26th September, about 400 persons, chiefly Rajbansis with a few Modesias and Paharies, approached Kumargramduar, as it appeared to attack the post office and the Thana. The mob was armed with lathis, Kukris and the bows and arrows and the slogan "*Mahatma ki Joy*" were heard from time to time. The O.C and an assistant S.I. stopped the mob at the Thana. The O.C. harangued the mob impressing upon them that if they presented their grievances in a constitutional manner, their case would be taken into consideration and promptly redressed; but if they committed or attempted to commit any act of violence, the O.C. would be compelled to resort to force. The chief grievance of the mob appeared to be scarcity of paddy in the locality. The O.C. and the A.S.I. listened to their grievances and tactfully and successfully persuaded them to disperse peacefully. A few stones were thrown and the telegraph wire was cut in one place near the post office but no other damage was done. Reinforcements were promptly sent from the headquarters on receipt of a telegram. Some Jotedars were also agreed to supply elephants against the insurrectionists.⁹¹ They supplied guns to the British⁹². Members of the National war front Srish Chandra Ghosh helped the S.D.O to recapture the Thana. They crossed the river Raidak through Tiyamari Haat and proved themselves pro-British by slogans⁹³. The masterminds were arrested a few days after the movement. The Khas Mahal Officer was deputed to the spot to arrange for the immediate release of paddy in all Khas Mahal Haats in the locality asking for it from big Jotedars and stockiest. The Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Pollice also visited the place shortly after the movement. In that movement the leadership was of the Rajbansis and among the seven leaders, only Sunil Sarkar was a non-Rajbansi. According to Ray, it was the last anti-colonial movement in which tenants of the Duars as a class and Rajbansis as a community participated⁹⁴.

Role played by the Leading Section

It was an enthusiasm that on 13th August 1942, the Sadar Sub-divisional Congress President Jangbir Chettri went out into the Bazar at Darjeeling and shouted 'Gandhi- ji – Ki – jay', 'Nehru Ki jay', ' Angrej – Hindusthan Dekhe Jao'. He was prosecuted and sentenced to one-year rigorous imprisonment⁹⁵. Ananda Bazar Patrika reported that the President of Darjeeling Congress Committee arrested on 15th August along with 12 Congressmen⁹⁶. Bihari and Marwaries were active in Darjeeling. Two Beharies of Darjeeling town came in Siliguri on 15th and 18th August with Congress flag and shouted '*Hindustan-Se- Angrej-ko-Nikalo*, etc. Both of them were prosecuted and convicted. Hartal was observed at Siliguri on 1st September. Two Beharies of Kurseong town were sent out from this district for six months since they had violated the law and order on 4th September and were prosecuted and convicted. On 13th August, two parties went out in two different processions at Kurseong shouting the same slogans and intimidated some shopkeepers into closing their shops. Seven persons in this connection were prosecuted and convinced. A Hartal was observed in Siliguri on 18th August for the cause of the death of Mahadev Desai and a Congressman was arrested⁹⁷. Three or four days prior to 18th August the staunch Congress leader of Siliguri, a Marwari Shewmangal Singh, incited the public to organize demonstrations against the arrest of Mr. Gandhi and other Congress leaders, and urged the shopkeepers to observe Hartal on the 18th August. The leader Shewmangal Singh was prosecuted, but when he was being taken to the Thana about 300 coolies and another leader Baroda Kanta Bhattacharjee followed him there and dispersed him. Amrita Bazar Patrika reported that President of Darjeeling Sadar Sub-Divisional Congress Committee and twelve other Congressmen were arrested. Another procession was organised at Siliguri to express grief at the death of Mahadev Desai and some of the participants were arrested⁹⁸. According to the S.D.O. report, Hartal was observed, with the exception of a few Marwari and Muslim shopkeepers, until 16.00 hours; an '*unauthorised procession*' was taken out

with about 250 peoples. Indeed, the Marwari community took a leading part in the events of 1st September by closing shops, heading processions, etc. Some shopkeepers of the Marwari community were arrested since they broke the 144 Criminal Law; later on, they agreed not to participate in any Hartal⁹⁹. The authority of Jalpaiguri had accused the Marwaries as a community solely responsible for the nuisance:

...The Marwari community took a leading part in the events of 1st September by closing their shops, heading processions, etc. Strong action is being taken against the leading members of the community by cancellations of Gun licences, refusal to issue patrol coupons and it is probable that some of the leading Marwaries may be externed from the district¹⁰⁰

Siumangal Singh and Brajendra Kumar Basu Roy were arrested before the movement actually started¹⁰¹. Like the other parts of Bengal subsequent to the arrest of chief leaders, the movement was controlled by the new comer the leaders like Bireswar Majumder, Pratul Maitra and Dhirendranath Roy. Hence, the movement organised by Gandhi followed the way of Subhash Chandra Bose¹⁰². Prodyot Basu and some others did not oppose but kept themselves aloofed from the movement. Nevertheless, Bireswar Majumder and Dhirendranath Roy were not good organisers¹⁰³. A general Hartal was organised for 1st September on receiving information, the Deputy Commissioner promulgated an order for bidding hartals, processions, meetings etc, and on the morning of 1st September arrested four leading Congressmen including Khagendranath Dasgupta, M.L.A., and searched their houses, closed them and placed under armed guard. Despite these measures, many shops in the Jalpaiguri town remained closed on the first. Some half a dozen prominent shopkeepers were arrested and released on police bail and prosecutions were launched against some 30 more. A number of attempts were made to take out processions, on the first, but the police dispersed these¹⁰⁴. Charu Chandra Sanyal and others were convicted in front of the Deputy Commissioner and Sanyal assured that he was not a member of

Congress. He did not however close his doctor's chamber in support of the strike on 1st September and did not know anything about the procession or inspired none to close the shops in favour of the strike of that mentioned day. All of them agreed with his views and released thereafter¹⁰⁵. Group clash between Sanyal and Dasgupta was the uppermost mark of the politics of Jalpaiguri.

A meeting was arranged against the arrest of the Congress leaders at Bhubanmohan Park and a professor of Rajsahi College, Krishnadhan Banerjee, resigned¹⁰⁶. On 15th August, Rajsahi Bar Association took the resolution that Gandhi was against fascist aggression and demanded for democracy and freedom, Which was the contour of the British after the Second World War. So, the Bar Association opposed the arrest of Gandhi and other leaders of the Congress. Seven Congress Commissioners of the Rajsahi Municipality resigned as a protest against *'the present repressive policy of the government.'*¹⁰⁷ As a mark of protest against the arrest of the Congress leaders and the measures adopted by the Government to suppress the demonstrations in various parts of India, several Hindu shopkeepers observed partial Hartal on 18th August 1942 at Bogra. Some manuscript handbills in Bengali, prepared by Anil Chandra Banerjee and the local Congress Committee, urging the people to observe Hartal, distributed Jitendranath Bhoumik under the supervision of Suresh Chandra Dasgupta on 17th August 1942. Members of the Bar association took a resolution recording their protest against the arrest of Congress leaders and political workers and demanding their immediate release and the "declaration of complete independence for India with immediate formation of a national cabinet consisting only Indians with responsibility to the people of India alone". Remarkable that Moulavi Mobarak Ali, a Muslim Leager, presided over the resolution, which was sponsored by Mr. Kamini Mohan Choudhury, a Congressman¹⁰⁸. Suresh Chandra Dasgupta encouraged people by his formidable lecturers. Despite some exceptions, it is clear from the incidents of Bogra that Muslims

participating and were interested in the movement. Hindus and Muslims jointly adopted the resolution Bar Association.¹⁰⁹

According to press report, all shops were closed on 11th August 1942 and a meeting was also held against the arrest of the Congress leaders.¹¹⁰ In the afternoon of 23rd August, a Congress meeting was held at the Congress Maidan, Dinajpur, without obtaining any permission from the District authority. Prabhat Chandra Sen, pleader, Dinajpur, Locendra Mohan Sen of Dinajpur took the leading part in the meeting. They criticised the arrest of Narendra Mohan Sen of Balubari, Dinajpur and the repressive measures adopted by the Government. They extorted the audience to follow the A.I.C.C. mandate and not to be terrified for arrests. They also moved through the town in a procession shouting '*Bande-Mataram*', '*British Samrajya Dhansa Hauk*', etc. The leading persons were prosecuted, and convicted under Rules 56 and 38 of the Defence of India Rules.

The District Students Federation, Dinajpur, under the auspices of the local Congress committee organised a meeting on 1st September, 1942 in the Congress Maidan and led out a procession in the town without obtaining any permission from the District authority for the same. They shouted the slogan '*Police Maro*', '*British Raj Dhansa Hauk*,' etc. And the meeting extorted the audience to follow the A.I.C.C. mandate without wavering an inch with a mind to emulate the example of Bihar people of taking violent recourse to sabotage with a view to paralyse the British Government. The leading persons were prosecuted and convicted under Rules 38 and 56 of the Defence of India rules. Nirupama Chatterjee, Arun Kumar Roy, Rabindranath Bhattacharya and six others of Dinajpur were convicted. Rabindranath Bhattacharya was made the leader of the Communist League after Arun Banerjee had been arrested. He and other leaders of the party had been taking active part in the movement and forming the trouble and were trying to organise a gang with the students and others in order to cut telephone wires, setting fire to outlying

small railway stations and the Govt railway buildings.¹¹¹ Narendra Mohan Sen, Lokendra Mohan Sen and Prabhat Nath Sen were sentenced, to jail on 26th September at Netrakona.¹¹²

The first open action in Malda was taken by the C.P.I. They picketed the school and shops in old Malda town on 18th August. The shopkeepers were not willing to keep Hartal but were threatened to do so. On 19 August, a meeting of the C.P.I. was held at Kaligram, Kharba, to protest against the arrest of Congress leaders. Some leading processions of English Bazar town were direct by defying orders. Some leading participants in the processions were arrested but were let off after giving an under-taking not to take part in any procession in the future. It is to be noted that the Communist leaders objected violently when the fact was published in the local press that they had given an under taking and threatened to sue them for libel. A procession on 21st August was led by Sourindra Mohan Mishra (brother of Jyotirmohan Mishra, Zamindar of Bhaluka) in Harishchandrapur. The students demanded the release of the Congress leaders. Two public meetings were held at Harishchandrapur and Bhaluka in Ratua Police Station. Telegraph wires at Harishchandrapur Post Office were cut off. Subodh Kumar Mishra, Sourindra Mohan Mishra and Dyutidhar Roy held a meeting at Balupur Haat on 30th August, which was attended. On that day Hayatpur Bhaluka Post Office, the local exercise shop, the Debt Settlement Board and the union board offices were set on fire by the mob. In Harishchandrapur and Kachala also the mob set fire on the Debt Settlement Board and the Union Board Offices. Those who attended the meetings of Balupur removed the railway lines including sleepers and the telegraph wires, between Bhaluka Road and Samsi Railway Stations on 31st August.

The members of Zamindar families of Harishchandrapur and Bhaluka were involved as well.¹¹³ Consequently, Zamindar Rambhadra Roy had to attend local Thana at regular intervals.¹¹⁴ On 2nd September 1942 the records of

Harishchandrapur and Kachala Debt Settlement Board and the excise shop at Kachala were burnt. On the same day, at a meeting at Nakoil, speakers urged no rent and no tax campaign. Subodh Kumar Mishra arrested and rescued by the crowd¹¹⁵, showed its jubilation, destroying all the telegraphic arrangements at Harishchandrapur, by pulling up a whole mile of telegraph posts. When the S.D.O. arrived in the evening of 6th September, he found Harishchandrapur in a very agitated state. Subodh Kumar Mishra was the '*Congress King*' of Harishchandrapur, and had prepared courts; etc¹¹⁶. The local Zamindar had sat on the fence. Reward was announced for the arrest of Subodh Mishra. Mishra was also not an apt organizer. People snatched him from the police, yet and he did not capture the Thana. Boys of the Zamindar family were in the forefront of the procession, and hence he opposed to control take over the Thana, surprisingly. At that time, Shershabadia Mohammedans of Harishchandrapur remained loyal and refused to join with the rebels. Subodh Mishra organised the movement of Harishchandrapur, drew most of his cadres from students and lower class Hindus. The Bhaluka disorders were mostly organised by the Bhaluka state. Here also the liaison Subodh and the staff of the Bhaluka state were turned out¹¹⁷. People of Malda realised what had happened at Harishchandrapur that the authorities were standing gobbledygook and open manifestations began to dwindle.

Mukutdhari Singh and Harinandan Brahmachari organised a movement in Habibpur Police Station. Though Singh was arrested on 9th September, Harinandan still approached aggressively towards Singhabad Railway Station in the night of 11th September and burnt the station. The villagers sheltered them¹¹⁸. The Zamindar of Singhabad [who once helped the rebels¹¹⁹ and the British police jointly searched the rebels. The Singhabad Zamindars arrested Brahmachari. Most of the staffs of the Zamindari were with the rebels. The movement organised by Brahmachari was supported by the lower caste Hindus.

It is to be noted that these two processions were both orthodox Congress processions. Only one orthodox C.P.I. leader was participated in the English Bazar procession. Meanwhile, the information came out information that the C.P.I. were busy in organising a school strike, and they were requested not to do so. It was pointed out to them that their actions were directly helping the programme of the Congress, which they officially disapproved. However, the strike was organised and on 25th August about half of the students of the A.C. Institution went on strike, paraded the streets of the town, and tried to bring out the students of the Zilla School. They were unsuccessful in doing so. The students of the Barlow Girls School however came out largely. A meeting was held in the Gandhi Dharmasala and in the evening telegraph wires were cut close to the town. The perpetrator of this act of sabotage was detected and convicted. On 25 August, the boys of the A.C. Institution again came out and picketed the Zilla School, with the same result as the day before. The Head Masters of both the institutions managed the situation very tactfully. Only four boys left the Zilla School. In spite of the fact that nearly half the boys of the A.C. Institution came out, the strike was a remarkable one. Four boys were prosecuted and convicted in their connection with the strike.

A meeting of the Santhals was organised at Champadighi in Habibpur Police Station on 26th August by some Congress leaders. The launching of no rent and no tax campaign was urged in this meeting. News bulletin were distributed almost every day, urging immediate insurrection. On 12th October 1942, Rabindra Kumar Bhoumik and four other Congressmen contemplated to burn some Govt offices at Rajganj and for this purpose they were attempting to procure 50 arrowheads and two tins of Kerosene while they were arrested under Rule 129 of the Defense of India rules and detained in jail. F.B. Members of Royganj Sub-division took preparation for the Quit India Movement, which was launched; they were advised and helped financially by Sukumar Guha, Rohini Mohan Nag, and Khitish Chandra Mitra. L. M. Sen, Joint Secretary, of Dinajpur District Congress, also had contacts with them.

Some insurgents of Royganj took the leading part on burning Sanjuman Trading Bank of Dinajpur. At the end of September, they took preparation for uprooting rail lines, led by Rabondra Kumar Bhoumik, Anil Nag, Manoranjan Das and Muktesh Chandra Dutta¹²⁰. Manoranjan Saha and Rammohan Saren were given the charge to destroy the railway bridges. But at last, their plans failed.

Congress, Left and Enthusiastic Student Movement

From the beginning, the movement was in control by the students. Like the processions in the surrounding towns, requesting to close shops and at the end of the day, a conference was held. Four manuscripts, leaflets in Bengali, urging the public to make the illiterate masses to understand that the way to liberty was to destroy the railway lines, to burn Government offices and records, to insult Indians wearing European attire, to love their countrymen and to help them in their work, to achieve unity between Hindus and Muslims, were posted on 5th September in Naxalbari Bazar in Siliguri Police Station. High school of Siliguri and M.E.Girls School was picketed by women on September 9th ¹²¹. Two Congress workers of Siliguri were prosecuted on the previous night of 9th September for canvassing the shopkeepers to observe Hartal on the 9th ¹²². At about 3 p.m, a procession of about 2000 was taken out shouting anti-Govt slogans. The persuasions by police officers failed to disperse people participating in the processions; the masses halted at a place called Mahabirstan and speeches were delivered intimating that the British failed to withstand the Japanese attack at Singapore, and such would be the case in India if they were attacked here. The masses broke the glasses of street lamps, attempted to break open the gate of the police station, and demolished some small sheds in the D.I. fund Haat. They returned to the police station after a short time with the obvious intention of attacking the police station and they pelted stones as it. When the mob grew violent, the Sub-Divisional Officer ordered open fire; five and twelve rounds were fired,

four persons altogether died and about 10 were injured. 25 people were prosecuted in the connection of which 19 were convicted¹²³. Students took part in the movement, of whom noteworthy are Dilip Kumar Roy Sarkar, Upendranath Das and Dipendranath Roy of Siliguri Boys School.¹²⁴

A prejudicial Congress headed "Bandemataram"; "The Congress Gazette of the National Govt of India, vol – 1, No –2, Calcutta dated the 22nd August 1942 printed in English and Bengali on the reverse by the National Govt of India Press, N/1, 25000 and 8 typed prejudicial leaflets headed "Do or Die", "Azad- Hind- Zindabad", were found posted up on 5th October 1942 at several places in Kalimpong town. Seven houses were searched simultaneously at Kalimpong and nine prejudicial leaflets and pamphlets came out, four unlicensed 12-bore blank cartridges were seized and the person concerned was prosecuted under the Arms Act. Two Congressmen who were arrested from Kurseong sub-division were extruded from the district for six months, but having coming back on the fourth instant they were arrested and been lodged in Darjeeling District Jail¹²⁵. Jangber Sapkota and Basudev Ojha were arrested in November 1942.¹²⁶

On the other hand, partial strike was held in the Fanindra Dev School of Jalpaiguri town and the attempt was made by the boys of the school to bring about a strike in other school of the town as a protest against the arrest of the Congress leaders, but they were not successful to do so. The ringleaders were arrested at once and later let off with severe warnings. At the night of the 15th and 16 August telegraph wires in Jalpaiguri town were cut surreptitiously in two places. The police for that traced none. Two constables were posted at the head Post Office and one constable at the telephone exchange as a precaution for any attack. From 24th August to 3rd September, there were a number of strikes held by students in different schools in the town. Civil guards were employed to prevent picketing in front of school gates. Owing to the prompt dispersal of picketers outside the schools, normal attendance was

resumed within few a days. At Pabna, the picture was the same, students left the schools and colleges and shouted slogans and at the end organised meetings¹²⁷. All the hackney carriage drivers and rickshaw pullers in the town went on strike for one day, i.e. 28th August. The owners were summoned by the Deputy Commissioner to appear before him and to show cause why they should not be punished by the confiscation of their vehicles or otherwise. They begged for mercy, promised never to repeat such conduct, and were therefore, let off with a severe warning.

The courts, government offices and offices of the local bodies continued to function normally. All the legal practitioners attended the court. Rumors were heard that a general Hartal and the dislocation of the administration from the 9th to 15th September were being organised by the local Congress members. On receipt of this information, no time was lost in arresting and detaining prominent Congress leaders. The shopkeepers who observed Hartal on 1st September were all arrested and then placed on bail of Rs 1000 each and made to undertake in the bail bond that they would not repeat the offence. The guns of all the persons, known or suspected to be sympathetic with the Congress movement, were immediately seised and these persons were threatened with cancellation of their gun licenses. The Deputy Commissioner with the refusal of petrol coupons threatened the owners of cars and buses also who were Congress supporters and who would supply conveyance to political agitations. The leaders of the Marwari community were threatened to be externed from the district if they persisted in any prejudicial activity. The Muslim leaders and the leaders of the Scheduled Castes were persuaded to take a firm stand against any possible disturbance by the Congress. It was widely announced that very drastic steps would be taken against those who would observe Hartal and that, if necessary, the authorities would break open shops, commandeer, and dispose of the stocks in the interest of public need. Managements were also made to display the strength of the police force in the town. The armed police force marched through the town on several occasions

and strong pickets of armed police were posted at strategic points. The above measures had a desired effect. Not a single shop was closed during the period from 9th to 15th September, and no strikes were organised. There was a feeble attempt to take out small procession on 10th September in the town. Ten youths were arrested at once and taken out in a motorbus to a remote part of the district where they were left to find their own way home. After 15th September, all persons who were arrested and detained were released on their giving definite assurance that they would not join in any Hartal or strike or any other subversive movement. M.L.A. Khagendranath Dasgupta and three others who had been professed Congressmen had since been made security prisoners. At the night of 18th September a telegraph line of about 3.5 miles from Falakata Police Station in the Alipurduar sub-division was cut in several places and two telegraph posts were uprooted. These telegraph posts were on Kutcha ground and the telegraph line cut had unimportant village connection. Two Congress workers found moving in this locality were arrested with some prejudicial leaflets. It was widely announced that any interference with lines of communication would meet with the immediate imposition of collective fines.

Some Hindu students of A.H. College and the Coronation Institution Bogra boycotted their classes along with some students of Jubilee Institution and Town School participated. The procession started from the A. H. College, led by Banipada Majumdar who was associated with Jugantar Dal, and later on S.F. of Forward Block and Jagadindranath Chakroborty of S.F. of R.S.P. and some other member of S.F. Some Girls' of the V.M. Girls School wished to join them but the plan remained incomplete due to bad weather. The procession, before terminating in the Altafunessa Park, approached the pleaders of the local bar with the request to join them, but they did not respond. Again, on 1st September, same institutions alongwith Medical School and Town School went on strike. Members of the bar library and Zillah School did not join. Though, the participants requested them. Hence, from this time, students of the rural areas of Dupchanchia, Talora, and Sherpur High English School went

on to strike. Strikes were held, manuscripts were distributed, though their effort to gain the support of the Government officials did not get success. The procession of 4th September against the arrest of a rebel ended at Altafanesa Park. On the next day, partial Hartal was observed at Bogra. Shops of both Hindus and Muslims were closed¹²⁸. Tarun Chandra Maitra, Chitta Ranjan Dasgupta, Priya Gopal Dutta and others who attempted to create trouble in the Collectorate and Police Court organised a students' procession. They entered the Civil Court and destroyed some tools¹²⁹. From 10th September, pleaders took part in the movement. Bidhu Bhusan Das, Muktear and Haripada Das, pleaders, marched through the main streets of the town. They tried to create disturbances in the exams of Zillah School. Then tried to enter the Civil and Criminal Court but were not successful. Students also violently reacted and rejected classes against the arrest of the local Congress leaders¹³⁰. However, Zillah School and Madrasah did not respond, so picketing continued on the gates of those institutions. From the beginning, women participated in the processions and meetings regularly in Bogra. It was an exceptional case when a number of female students of the V.M. High School picketed the school gate by lying down on the ground and blocking the entrance. R.K.Roy, the District Magistrate, came to the school at the request of the Muslim girls with a view of persuading the picketers to allow them to enter the school. Nevertheless, the picketers refused to move in spite of his permissions; the District Magistrate caused the gate of the adjoining hostel to be opened, through which the Muslim girls entered the school. The Headmistress eventually closed the school finding it impossible to hold the classes. People in the procession later came to the bar library and requested the pleaders to join the meeting that was held in the Altafanesa park¹³¹. Students from almost all the educational institutions, except Zilla School and Madrasah, took part in the strike on September 1st and paraded the streets of the town in a procession shouting various slogans. On 12th September some leading pleaders and Muktears of the town including ten to fifteen Muslims, some Muslim Congressmen, several student members of the national front and some Marwaries organised a

procession which paraded through the main streets of the town with slogans. After that procession destructive activities started. A telegraph line was cut between Dupchanchia and Talora on that night. Then the mob set on fire a first class compartment near Velurpara railway station. At Adamdighi, the police had to stand in guard of a Post Office.

Hartal was observed at Bogra on 5th September 1942 as a protest against the arrest of a local Congress leader. All the shops of Hindus and some shops of the Muslims were closed. Some Banks were also closed. Bogra District Board Office was closed after one hour. Bar Association adopted a resolution of condemning the arrest¹³². Two students entered forcefully to Bogra Zillah School and snatched the answer scripts and destroyed them.¹³³ Four students were arrested while protesting against the arrest of four Congressmen on 9th September in front of English School, Police, Office and Court. On 11th a procession entered to the court and eleven were arrested and most of the educational institutions including Azizul Haque College were closed.¹³⁴ In a procession of 2000 persons at Bogra on 13th September a number of Muslims participated.¹³⁵ People damaged the rail lines between Chhatiagram and Tilakpur Railway stations on 14th October. On 19th the letterbox of the post office was also damaged.

Quit India Movement in Pabna started with great enthusiasm by both Hindu and Muslim students in Sirajganj town. Near about 300 students of the Islamia College, B.L. and Victoria High English School moved in the town with slogans, posters, flags etc. On the next day, the students of the Pabna Edward College and Radhanagar High English School went on strike, procession, slogans. Here the movement was led by the supporters of the C.P.I. who criticised the Govt and urged for the unity of the Govt. Gradually the movement got its strength and on 17th August, this said college and school G.C. Institution went on to strike. In that evening, a meeting was organised by Girls Students Committee. On that day, shopkeepers and merchants of

Haripur protested against the arrest of Congress leaders. Thereafter the movement spread in the rural areas of Pabna, along with Pabna town students of Mohanpur High School of Ullapara and the schools of Sohagpur and Deina protested against the arrest of Congress leaders. About 200 students of Sirajganj town had a clash with a military car, a European driver and, at last, with police; 12 persons got arrested for throwing brickbats and stones. On the next day telegraph wires of 5 miles and Pabna-Isuari road were cut¹³⁶. The movement got momentum, when on 21st August the number of students reached 500 in Pabna town with those educational institutions. On the next day when strike was held at Pabna town, students urged for a national Govt, a meeting in the Bazar of Ishurdi, Satyendranath Bhattyacharya read out a Congress bulletin which instigated the mass to attack Thanas, railways, etc. He and Jihendra Nag were also arrested. About 50 boys of Bouwarinagar High English School left their classes and gave slogans against the Govt. Up to 31st August the movement of the students continued at Pabna Edward College and Ullapara High English School and Primary School. Bimal Chandra Chanda, Bimal Kumar Dey and few others attempted to cut telegraph wires and were arrested on 31st August.¹³⁷ From 7th September onwards students' movement strengthened itself, some female student joined it and on 14th September they threw brickbats to the police, injured them and got arrested. On 14th September, police arrested five members of the family of the retired Judge Jadab Chandra Bhattyacharya in Pabna¹³⁸. At that time, women organised huge processions at Pabna. Police charged the students of the Edward College who intended to enter in the Gopal Chandra Institution and arrested them.¹³⁹

On 4th October, Hinayetpur Union Board Office was set on fire and police remained inactive; an attempt of burning Ataikola Post Office and cutting telegraphic wires was made¹⁴⁰. Their attempt further succeeded on 6th October by cutting railway telegraphic wires between Saratnagar and Dilpasar Railway Stations. On the same day, Nalini Nath Bishi came from Rajsahi and

delivered speech to the youths of Edward College and then he was convicted for doing so¹⁴¹. Students distributed leaflet 'Desbasir Prati' (free India league notice) on 14th October. As a result, some enthusiasts burnt Nakalia Branch Post Office of Bera Police Station (19th October). Post Office and letterboxes of Pabna were the target of the insurgents from 11th to 25th November.¹⁴²

The movement of Rajsahi started just after the arrest of Gandhi. Schools and colleges of the town reacted first. Rajhahi Bazar was holding Hartal for a couple of days. During that time from 10th to 12th August, both boys and girls left their schools¹⁴³. Some Hindu students destroyed the examination papers of the High English School. Leaflets were also pasted on the college walls and educational institutions, but it was not worked for a week. This student movement then spread over Nator and Naogaon – two subdivisional towns by students' strike the participation of Nator Madrassa and Dighapatia High English School. A threatening letter was received by the pro- British Principal of Rajsahi College. Until the end of August, anti- Government agitations, in the form of processions, continued. Three students announced to cut telegraph wires and Dasgupta railway lines publicly at a Haat and got arrested. However, a communal clash between Hindu and Muslim students took place after the pro-Congress shout by the Hindu students¹⁴⁴. On 6th September, Naogaon Post Office was burnt and telegraph wires were cut by some students. This was followed by another telegraph wire cutting at Kundra of Puthia Police Station on 8th September. On 9th and 10th September, the authority had to face huge tumultuous processions and hartals at Rajsahi, Nator and Dighapatia. The mob tried to enter the Rajsahi Jail but some leaders were able to stop them. People also threw stones to the Boalia Thana¹⁴⁵. With this experience, the authority ultimately applied force to disperse a procession on 11th September; indeed rice storage was burnt by the mob¹⁴⁶. On 26th September, police stopped a procession by lathi charge. At that time, police also arrest two students, who attempted to burn the college laboratory. Thereafter, six weeks passed without despite reckless cutting of

telegraph wire on 7th November, processions and meetings was continued as political exercises¹⁴⁷. From October, price- rise was the ipso-facto and Abadpukur Haat was looted at Naogaon of Rajsahi on 5th October. Again, on 12th some shops of Kujali of Raninagar were looted and also an attempt to loot the Haat of Kashimbari failed.¹⁴⁸

In Rangpur, the Congress movement started on 9th August 1942, immediately after the arrest of Gandhi and other Congress leaders. In furtherance of this movement, the R.S.P. cum F.B. organisations of this district drew up a combined attempt for the distribution of leaflets, organisation of demonstration, strikes in colleges and schools, Hartals, processions and meetings, and cutting of telegraph wires, looting of Post Offices, committing mail robbery in trains, etc. On the next day, the students of the schools and colleges of the Rangpur town did not attend their classes as a protest against the arrest of Gandhi and other Congress leaders. Most of the students of the Nilphamari School went on strike on 12th August, 1942. Strike was continued and the students of Nilphamari Girls School and majority of the students of senior classes of Ulipur High English School absented themselves from their classes on 13th August 1942. On the next day, students of Ulipur High English School continued their strike, they formed a procession and passed through the District shouting slogans such as '*Mahatma Gandhiji-ka Mukti Chai*', '*Congress Netader Mukti Chai*' and '*Swadhin Bharat Ki Joy*'. The students' procession got dispersed when they reached the Ulipur cinema hall. On 16th August, at night, different manuscript posters in Bengali issued by the Rangpur R.S.P. were seen pasted on walls in different parts of the Rangpur town. In these posters, it was pointed out that those who did not support the resolutions of the A.I.C.C. were the enemies of the country. In another poster, it was stated that the Calcutta Police opened fire at the non- violent procession of male and female students who were exhorted to come to their schools as a protest against police actions. On the next day, the majority of the students of Rangpur College and other high schools, except Rangpur Zilla School, did not

attend their classes. Some students were seen picketing near the entrances of the schools. About 50 to 60 students, mostly boys, moved in a procession through the station road to the public library in Rangpur town. The students shouted slogans like '*Bande Mataram*', '*Rajnitik Bandider Mukti Chai*' etc. As a result of picketing by some students and ex-students, the majority of the students of the Gaibandha High English School absented themselves from their classes on 17th August. About 50 students met in a procession shouting slogans. A meeting was held at the Gaibandha Municipal Park as a protest against the arrest of the Congress leaders and the repressive measures adopted by the Govt.

A meeting on 19th August attended by about 200 students was held at Saidpur and the students were asked to join the Students Federation. Discussion was also held about organising a strike in the local school, but they could not come to any decision. In this meeting objectionable speeches suggesting that the British should go out of India, were delivered. Students of Tulshighat High English School absented themselves on 20th August from their classes as a protest against the arrest of the Congress leaders. A meeting was also held shouting slogans demanding release of the Congress leaders etc. On 22nd August, students of Tulshighat High English School again went on strike, in the course of a procession shouting Congress slogans; they also went round the Tulshighat harbour. On the next day, partial Hartal was observed at Rangpur town. On 23rd August, a big meeting was held at Rangpur Municipal area where the demand to free the nationalist leaders came from both Hindus and Muslims along with unity of Congress and League to form the nationalist government. Vice Chairman of Rangpur Municipality, Md Mahatabuddin Khan, was the President of the meeting in which many League members were present among approximates five thousand people. Sudhir Mukherjee and Sachin Ghosh delivered speeches on behalf of Communist Party. The President, Khan, gave stress on Hindu-Muslim unity.¹⁴⁹ Communist leaders Sibdas Lahiri and Abani Bagchi were arrested since they were engaged in anti

Facist Propaganda, and between them, Bagchi got bail, however, he was compelled to restrict his movement inside the town after the revelation to the authority about their anti- Japanese Propaganda¹⁵⁰ .At the instance of the local F.B. members, the students of the Gaibandha High School organised partial strike in their respective schools on 26th August, the Gaibandha F.B. members also brought about Hartal in the town. The Hartal, observed at Gaibandha on 26th August, was more successful than any other. The members of the Gaibandha F.B. threatened the shopkeepers with damage if they refused to close their shops. Some Muslim shopkeepers kept their shops open in the morning. A procession consisting of 300 people's carrying Congress flag and the flag of S.F. (R.S.F) passed through the main streets of the Gaibandha town shouting usual slogans. The members of the local F.B. and the Congress took a leading part in the procession. While the procession was passing, two boys hoisted the Congress flag on the top of the Municipal building, amidst shouts of usual slogans and cheers. In the afternoon, the leading members of the F.B. Gaibandha took out another procession consisting Hindus, Muslims, students and others. A meeting was held at the High English School compound and was attended by 2000 people under the Presidentship of the Chairman of the Gaibandha Municipality. At the instance of the local F. B. members, the students of Gaibandha High English School and Girls' schools organised partial strike in their respective schools on 9th and 11th September. Except some Muslims shops, all shops were closed. The F.B. members organised Hartal in the town and made processions with a large number of people. This terminated in a meeting where inciting speeches were delivered by Mainuddin Khan, President of Rangpur Zilla Congress Committee, along with Kabir Ranjan Das, Arujit Kar, lawyer Sasibhusan Das, Sushil Kumar Roy, Santosh Bhusan Dev¹⁵¹ protested against the arrest of Congress leaders. Men and women under Badarganj Thana pasted a leaflet where Congress-Muslim League, Muslim students League, Krisak Samity, Soviet Suhrid Samity, Student Federation and Women Samity requested jointly for national unity. On 13th September, a meeting was held among all

political parties, and the president was Maulavi Darajuddin Mondal. Before starting the meeting, flags of Congress, League, Krisak Samity and Student Federation were hoisted parallelly. It was a unique scene ever seen in Badarganj. League leader Haidar Ali Choudhury, leader of Krisak Samity Manikrishna Sen, Taraprasad Roy, delivered speeches. Proposals were taken for Congress-League unity, establishment of nationalist government¹⁵². Despite the attempt of Congress- League unity, tussles were common between Congress and Communist workers¹⁵³ and between Jugantar, Anusilan, North Bengal Party and Kamal Kadma Party.¹⁵⁴ The members of Anusilan Group beat Piyush Kanti Mukherjee of Jugantar; moreover, he was sabotaged within his group too.¹⁵⁵ He also beat the Chairman of the District Board and tried to kill a betrayer of his group.¹⁵⁶

Maulavy Mahiuddin Khan, Vice Chairman of Gaibandha Municipality was sentenced for three months imprisonment and Bhabani Banerjee for 18 months¹⁵⁷. Some Congress leaders of Nilphamari organised Hartal in the town on 16th and 19th September and held meetings urging the people to follow the Congress programme. Movement of Saral Kumar Guha was restricted within the town¹⁵⁸. In case of participation in the Hartal, police cautioned of six months imprisonment and fine of 50 rupees, indeed all shopkeepers both Hindus and Muslims of Gaibandha closed their shops on 17th September¹⁵⁹. The students of Lalmanirhat High English School and the girls of Gaibandha Girls' School brought about partial strike in their respective schools on 14th September. Some Congress leaders urged to the people to follow the Congress programme. Police at last sealed the Congress office and arrested the Chairman of the Gaibandha Municipality Surendranath Chakroborty, and others.¹⁶⁰ Sunil Kumar Roy, Atul Chandra Bhattyacharya, Jatindranath Chakroborty, Birendranath Chatterjee, Sirish Chandra Dhar, Goutam Lahiri, Rabindra Chakroborty. They all were arrested for delivering anti-government speeches and sunset restriction order issued against Arun Chandra Bagchi, Satish Chandra Maitra, Chuni Lahiri, Manik Mukherjee, Sachin Ghosh, Prafulla

Kumar Bakshi¹⁶¹. Subsequent to this period until middle of February, there was not much activity on the part of the major political parties in this district. The C.P.I. held some meetings in which government policy with regard to the arrest and detention of political workers was discussed. Annoyance rose of Rangpur in the Haats of rural areas, when people had to buy commodities at a high price. Police arrested many peasants in this regard¹⁶². Janajudda reported that anti-Fascist gatherings or meetings were prohibited and adherents against Fascism were arrested.¹⁶³

Women's Commitment

War and price-rise of 1942 unsecured the lives of women and they organised '*Mahila Self-Defence Organisation*' in many areas of North Bengal. Self-defence organisations, controlling the price of the commodities by the government through ration shops in every locality were the agendas of their organisation.¹⁶⁴ It was a great enthusiasm before the first conference in Malda. Women congested on the roofs of the houses, throwing flowers to bless the insurgents¹⁶⁵. Every time they had been in the leading section of a procession. The large procession of 15000 men and women in Siliguri, held on 11th September, where police fired and killed four and injured many was led by Bengali, Bihari and Punjabi men and women; daughter of Brajendra Basu RoyChoudhury, Srimati Kalidasi Sengupta and others were among the participants¹⁶⁶. Girl's procession at English Bazar town on 8th October demanded the release of the political prisoners¹⁶⁷. At Bogra, a few girls managed to enter the Collectorate room on 10th September and destroyed some papers.¹⁶⁸

Asoka Mukherjee, wife of Piyush Kanti Mukherjee, came to Alipurduar at the early stage of 1942. She was sent by Lila Roy of Srisangha (Dhaka) to teach in a girls' school of Alipurduar, as Asoka was one of the member of the revolutionary group. Later on, she married Piyush Kanti Mukherjee. Asoka

used to go Dhaka to convey instruction from Piyush's group and leaders.¹⁶⁹ She politically groomed herself under Lila Roy (follower of Subhash Bose) and her husband Anil Roy¹⁷⁰. Leader of Nari Siksha Mandir, Helena Dutta, recruited Asoka into politics. When she was in Dhaka, she got engaged to include new women members to Sri Sangha¹⁷¹. At Alipurduar also, she regularly went to Kamakhyaguri, Daldali and other villages to deliver lectures and to reorganize the Congress. Women Samity regularly distributed cloths, milk, rice and medicines among those poor people. She collected milk from Red Cross fund of Gopal Banerjee and distributed it. Other womens, mostly housewives, Lily Ghosh, Kana Roychoudhury, Putul Mitra, Sona Bhattyacharya, Maya Mitra, Usha Talapatra, Sudha Chakroborty, Ruxini Mukherjee, Bina Mitra were supporters of Congress though not politically active; they were confined within their household, however, they took part in the Quit India Movement¹⁷². On 26th September, the endeavor to attack Thana was coupled by activists' wives¹⁷³. Women of Alipurduar were surprisingly active in political participation, encouraged by Asoka who attempted to contact with the prisoners of Boxa Fort¹⁷⁴. Asoka's brothers were banished earlier and her mother-in-law, Sarat Kumari Mukherjee, cyclostyled leaflets and pamphlets to the Congress members, distributed cloths, and other commodities in the tea gardens. Asoka had an inheritance of the political activist background like Nirupama Chatterjee of C.L.I. of Dinajpur, who belonged to another group (There had been a split among the members of the Students' Frederation and of the Communist League in Dinajpur) Asoka want to join the struggle started by the Congress, but the others wanted to aloof themselves, and work under the direction of C.P.I.; Nirupama Chatterjee took the charge in absence of his brother Khemesh Chatterjee¹⁷⁵ who was in jail then. Nirupama, along with other members of her group, started picketing in the local colleges and schools. They also organised a procession of young boys and paraded through the town on 24th August 1942, shouting slogans¹⁷⁶. Nirupama mixed freely with the cadres of his brother's group and discussed about the misery of the poor people of the country¹⁷⁷. She sent several boys of

his party to work in villages in different places in the interior of Dinajpur. They returned after a week and gave accounts of their work to Nirupama, who helped them with money¹⁷⁸. Nirupama Chatterjee was arrested and fined 50 rupees; same was the case with Siburani Mitra,¹⁷⁹ who took charge of the movement, though got arrested shortly. Khemesh and Nirupama, the brother and sister, attempted for an armed revolution. For the reason they tried to buy weapons¹⁸⁰. Lila Roy was detained in the jail of Dinajpur; an unsuccessful attempt was made by her to break away from the jail with the help of the warder Ramswarup Singh, but he arrested for that¹⁸¹. Women restricted within their household, mainly wives of the insurgents, boosted morally their husbands' alongwith their separate political entity. Belarani Chattopadhyay, wife of Sushil Ranjan Chattopadhyay, was pioneer among them who organised Women Samity; she was on the leading part of Balurghat movement including some prostitute women exceptionally¹⁸² Surendrabala Roy, one of the great organisers of the movement of Malda, sent her Husband Dyutidhar Roy and son Byomkesh to uproot the rail line between Samsi and Bhaluka.¹⁸³ Sometimes they had to fight with the anti-political mentality within their family circle like Prabasini Devi of Dinajpur, who always used to wear Khadi cloths, and who once donated Gandhi all of her ornaments¹⁸⁴. Authority put restriction on a batch of girls in Gaibandha town viz. SefaliKa Dev, Malati Bhattyacharya, Parimal Choudhury, Mira Choudhury and Amita Choudhury, confining their movement within and ordered not to participate in the political activities¹⁸⁵. Some homemakers of Rangpur viz. Gita Dasgupta and Tripti Roychoudhury and Uma Roy of Malda, though they were not able to participate directly in the movement of 42, helped the movement financially¹⁸⁶. Tarulata Pal and Sailaja Roy were arrested at Brahmanberia and sentenced to jail for their participation in a procession on 22nd September¹⁸⁷. Women of Rajsahi organised processions against the arrest of the five Congress members at the 'Flag day'. Police tried to stop them and a woman slapped a police¹⁸⁸. At the same time, people also threw stones to the police and six police and twelve people were injured.¹⁸⁹

Observations

Election of 1937 and subsequent political changes as well Gandhi- Bose tussle made it clear that success of any further movement launched by Gandhi would be dependent on two factors: firstly how forceful was the leftist-rightist group clash was noticeable in any district and secondly how far leaders were able to incorporate the rural masses into their movement. Economic issues became the ipso-facto from Darjeeling to Malda. British were not able to control price- rise in Darjeeling, where, as a policy, they had done it earlier. The nature of the Quit India Movement in North Bengal depended on the grouping pattern of Anusilan –Jugantar clash, which did not disappear but took a new shape, grouped according to the ways of Gandhi or Bose. At Alipurduar or Jalpaiguri, Socialist section of the Congress (Not influenced by F.B. totally) led the movement, but elsewhere it was the orthodoxes that led the movement. F.B. members opposed the movement in some areas like Malda or Rangpur. But R.S.P. and F.B. supported the movement of Balurghat too. C.P.I. took a leading part at Rangpur, but not at Bogra or Pabna. Rajsahi did not have the support of the political party. In the Muslim oriented districts of Bengal, a larger part of that community did not participate and in some cases opposed too. The middle class leadership of Alipurduar and Balurghat were able to incorporate rural masses that expressed their grievances against the sudden economic gloom. These two places and Malda were at least able to include rural masses; elsewhere the movements become mere political exercise, though notable that looting the Haats were common everywhere. This established the fact that was the utmost problem of that time.

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- ³⁷ See Chapter-2.
- ³⁸ Ghosh Ananda Gopal- Jalpaiguri Sahare Pragati Andolan Gare Othar Gorar Katha, Sourashikha, No-74, December, p-3.
- ³⁹ Satish chandra lahiri established Hindu Mahasava and also F. B. in his own house. He was aged leader of orthodox group of Congress in Jalpaiguri.
- ⁴⁰ Sanyal Mukulesh - Swadhinata Andolone Jalpaiguri Zillar Yuba Samaj, Kiratbhumi, Jalpaiguri, p-536.
- ⁴¹ Proceedings book of the Jalpaiguri Municipality, 1942.
- ⁴² Proceedings book of the English Bazaar Municipality, 1944-45.
- ⁴³ Ibid, No 1, 15.08.1942.
- ⁴⁴ Mishra Sourindramohan, op.cit., p-59.
- ⁴⁵ Chakroborty Narendranath – Swadhinata Sangrame Maldaha Zillar Bhumika in Dr. Radha Gobinda Ghosh(ed)- Swadhinata Sangrame Maldaher Abadan, Malda, 1398 B.S, 1991, p-5.
- ⁴⁶ Mishra Sourindramohan, op.cit., p-59.
- ⁴⁷ Dasgupta Bijay Kumar – Swadhinata Sangram O Malda Zillah in Dr. Radha Gobinda Ghosh(ed)- Swadhinata Sangrame Maldaher Abadan, Malda, 1398 B.S, 1991, p-26.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid, p--28.
- ⁴⁹ Trisrota, 15.06.41.
- ⁵⁰ I.B File No- 601/42 Jalpaiguri.
- ⁵¹ Ibid.
- ⁵² Ibid.
- ⁵³ Ghosh Ananda Gopal- Darjeeling Zillah Congress Gathaner Gorar Katha- Himachal Barta, vol-9, issue-30.
- ⁵⁴ Unpublished Autobiography, Piyush Kanti Mukherjee, op.cit., P-34.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid, p-35.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid, p-46.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid, p-47.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid, P-51.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid, pp-52-53.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid, p-53.
- ⁶¹ Mishra Sourindramohan, op.cit., p- 60.

- ⁶² *Ibid*, p- 62
- ⁶³ *Ibid*, p- 63.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p- 64.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p- 64.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid*, pp- 64-65.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p- 69.
- ⁶⁸ Dasgupta Bijay Kumar, *op.cit.*, pp-31-32.
- ⁶⁹ Mishra Sourindramohan, p- 66.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p- 63 & 67.
- ⁷¹ Ananda Bazar Patrika, 18th August.1942.
- ⁷² Baske Dhirendranath- Bialliser Andolane Saontal Janagoshthi, Subarnarekha, Calcutta, Jan, 2003, p-35.
- ⁷³ Chakroborty Tarini Sankar – August Biplab 1942, Bangla O Assam, vol-1, Hindustan Book Dipo, First edition, 1946, p-107.
- ⁷⁴ Ananda Bazar Patrika, 19th August.1942.
- ⁷⁵ Roychoudhury Tapan- Bangalnama, Ananda Pub, Cal, 2007, Page-103, Tapan Roychoudhury wrote that the only mentionable incident happened in Barisal was the vain attempt of the youths to snatch the rice with the object to distribute it.
- ⁷⁶ The Statesman, 17th Sep 1942.
- ⁷⁷ Chakroborty Tarini Sankar, *op.cit.*, p-108.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid*.
- ⁷⁹ Ananda Bazar Patrica, 30th January 1943.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 31st January 1943.
- ⁸¹ Baske Dhirendranath, *op.cit.*, p-35.
- ⁸² Balurghat Barta, Sarad Sankalan, 1399 B.S, 1992, 28th edition, Bharot Charo Andolan Sankha. P-2.
- ⁸³ Gupta Bishwapran- Basanta Sarkar: 42 er Samaranio Sainik, Balurghat Barta, Puja edition, 1993, based on the interview of the inhabitants of Tapan.
- ⁸⁴ Ananda Bazar Patrika, 24th Sep, 1942.
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 11th Dec, 1942.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 11th October.1942.
- ⁸⁷ Das Kamalesh – Balurghat Mahakumae August Andolan, Itihas Anusandhan, vol-2, Firma.K.L.M, 2000, Cal, p-479.
- ⁸⁸ Mohanta Radhamohan-Balurghat Biyalliser Andolener Ak Jhank, Attrei weekly, 39th year, 33,34,36,41,42nd issue and 40th year 1st issue, Balurghat, South Dinajpur and Ghosh Ananda Gopal(ed) – Bharat Charo Andoloner Prekhapate Uttarbanga, N.B.U, 1992, p-22.
- ⁸⁹ .Ray Subhajyoti --- Transformations on the Bengal Frontier, Jalpaiguri 1765 – 1948 (Routledge Curzon, London, first edition, 2002, p-166.
- ⁹⁰ *Ibid*.pp-171-172.
- ⁹¹ Unpublished autobiography, Piyush Kanti Mukherjee, *op.cit.*, p-63. Ganguly Anil, *op.cit.*, p-342.
- ⁹² Interview with Dhananjay Dev Kongar, Kumargram, 14.03.05.
- ⁹³ Biographical writing, Nonai, *op.cit.*, p –110.
- ⁹⁴ Ray Subhajyoti, *op.cit.*, p-173.

- ⁹⁵ *Political, District Officers Chronicle of Events of Disturbances Consequent Upon the All India Congress Committee Resolution of August 1942 and the arrest of Congress leaders thereafter August 1942 to middle of March 1943 (Alipore, Supt, Govt print 1943).*
p – 106.
- ⁹⁶ *Ananda Bazar patrica, 16th August, 1942.*
- ⁹⁷ *Ananda Bazar & Amrita Bazar Patrica, 20th Aug 1942.*
- ⁹⁸ *Amrita Bazar Patrica, 16th August, 1942.*
- ⁹⁹ *Ananda Bazar Patrica, 11th September, 1942.*
- ¹⁰⁰ *Amrita Bazar Patrica, 7th September, 1942.*
- ¹⁰¹ *Trisrota-05.07.42.*
- ¹⁰² *Prodyot Kumar Basu- Ekti Janapader Kahini, Memories of a Lawyer, Hoogly, Uma Basu Pub, 1990,p-65.*
- ¹⁰³ *Ibid, p-65.*
- ¹⁰⁴ *Hindusthan Standared, 8th Sep, 1942.*
- ¹⁰⁵ *Trisrota-30.08.42.*
- ¹⁰⁶ *Ananda Bazar Patrika, 18th August. 1942.*
- ¹⁰⁷ *Hindusthan Standared, 14th September, 1942.*
- ¹⁰⁸ *Ibid, 20th August, 1942.*
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid, 8th September, 1942.*
- ¹¹⁰ *Ananda Bazar Patrika, 13th August. 1942.*
- ¹¹¹ *I.B. File No –368-35(Dup) Rabindranath Bhatyacharya, Dinajpur.*
- ¹¹² *Ananda Bazar Patrika, 28th August. 1942.*
- ¹¹³ *Hindusthan Standared, 17th Sep, 1942.*
- ¹¹⁴ *Hindusthan Standared, Ananda Bazar Patrica, 8th November, 1942.*
- ¹¹⁵ *Political, District Officers Chronicle of Events, op.cit.,p – 115.*
- ¹¹⁶ *Ibid, p – 115.*
- ¹¹⁷ *Ibid, p – 116.*
- ¹¹⁸ *Ibid,p – 116.*
- ¹¹⁹ *Mishra Sourindramohan, op.cit.,p- 69.*
- ¹²⁰ *Sarkar Himansu Kumar -Swadeshi Andolan, Swadhinata Sangram O Samokalin Andolone Raiganj Mahakumar Bhumika, Suryabij, Swadhinata Sankha, August 1987,pp- 38-39.*
- ¹²¹ *Hindusthan Standared, 11th Sep, 1942.*
- ¹²² *Political, District Officers Chronicle of Events, op. cit., p – 106.*
- ¹²³ *Ananda Bazar patrica, Hindusthan Standared, 12th Sep, 1942.*
- ¹²⁴ *Choudhury Nirmalchandra -- Swadhinata Sangrame Rajbansi Samproday, Jal, B.S 1382. p-58.*
- ¹²⁵ *Hindusthan Standared, 15th Sep, 1942.*
- ¹²⁶ *Ananda Bazar Patrica, Hindusthan Standared, 26th November, 1942.*
- ¹²⁷ *Anandabazar Patrika, 20th August, 1942.*
- ¹²⁸ *Hindusthan Standared, 7th September, 1942.*
- ¹²⁹ *Political, District Officers Chronicle of Events, op.cit., p-109.*
- ¹³⁰ *Ananda Bazar Patrica, 11th Sep, 1942.*
- ¹³¹ *Hindusthan Standared, 8th Sep, 1942.*
- ¹³² *Ibid, 7th Sep, 1942.*

- ¹³³ *Ananda Bazar Patrica*, 18th Sep, 1942.
- ¹³⁴ *Ibid*, 18th September, 1942, *Hindusthan Standared*, 15th Sep, 1942.
- ¹³⁵ *The Statesman*, 16th September, 1942
- ¹³⁶ *District Officers Chronicle of Events*, op.cit., p – 111.
- ¹³⁷ *Ibid*.p – 112.
- ¹³⁸ *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 16th September 1942.
- ¹³⁹ *The statesman*, 18th September, 1942.
- ¹⁴⁰ *Anandabazar Patrika* 7th October, 1942.
- ¹⁴¹ *District Officers Chronicle of Events*, op.cit.,p – 112.
- ¹⁴² *Ibid* p – 112.
- ¹⁴³ *Anandabazar Patrika*, 20th Aug 1942.
- ¹⁴⁴ *District Officers Chronicle of Events*, P – 101.
- ¹⁴⁵ *AnandaBazar Patrika*, September 15 1942.
- ¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 17th September 1942.
- ¹⁴⁷ *District Officers Chronicle of Events*, p – 101.
- ¹⁴⁸ *Anandabazar*, 18th October, 1942.
- ¹⁴⁹ *Janajuddha*, 9th September, 1942.
- ¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*.
- ¹⁵¹ *Ananda Bazar Patrica*, 11th September, 1942.
- ¹⁵² *Janajuddha*, 23rd September, 1942
- ¹⁵³ *Interview with Sachindranath Ganguly, Suryanagar, Alipurduar, 28.05.04.*
- ¹⁵⁴ *Unpublished autobiography, Piyush Kanti Mukherjee, P-14.*
- ¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p-7-8.
- ¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p-14-16
- ¹⁵⁷ *Hindusthan Standared*, 19th Sep, 1942.
- ¹⁵⁸ *Hindusthan Standared*, 20th Sep, 1942.
- ¹⁵⁹ *Hindusthan Standared*, 21th August.1942.
- ¹⁶⁰ *Ananda Bazar Patrica*, 24th September, 1942.
- ¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, 17th October.1942, *Hindusthan Standared*, 12th October.1942.
- ¹⁶² *Janajuddha*, 12th August 1942.
- ¹⁶³ *Ibid*, 12th & 16th August 1942.
- ¹⁶⁴ *Mukherjee Saroj*, op.cit., p-24.
- ¹⁶⁵ *Mishra Sourindramohan*, op.cit., p- 62.
- ¹⁶⁶ *Prodyot Kumar Basu- Ekti Janapader Kahini*, op.cit., p-65.
- ¹⁶⁷ *District Officers Chronicle of Events*, op. cit., p – 116.
- ¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p-110.
- ¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p-47.
- ¹⁷⁰ *Interview with Asoka Mukherjee with Sipra Sen Dhar, Nonai, Golden Jubilee edition, 1998, 1405 B.S, pp-37-42.*
- ¹⁷¹ *Ibid* pp-37-42.
- ¹⁷² *Ibid*, pp-37-42.
- ¹⁷³ *Dasgupta Kalyani – Rajnaitik, Samajik Andolone Zillar Mahila Samaj, Kiratbhumi (1869-1994), Jalpaiguri, 1989, p-538.*
- ¹⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p-538 & *Interview with Asoka Mukherjee dated 20.06.2004.*
- ¹⁷⁵ *I.B File no 367/35 (part-2) Khemesh and Nirupama Chatterjee,*

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Amalendu Bagchi's confession to the police, 24.09.42.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ananda Bazar Patrica, 11th November, 1942.

¹⁸⁰ Nirupama's confession to police, 12.10.42.

¹⁸¹ I.B File 169/43 Ram Swarup, Warden of Dinajpur.

¹⁸² Bagchi Bandana – Bharater Swadhinata Andolone Narider Bhumica, Suryabiz, Independence edition, August 1987, p-11.

¹⁸³ Hari Prasanna Mishra – Maldaher Swadhinata Sangramer Kahini Jatatuku Jana in Dr. Radha Gobinda Ghosh(ed)- Swadhinata Sangrame Maldaher Abadan, Malda, 1398 B.S, 1991, p-21 & 35 & Mishra Sourindramohan, op.cit., p- 62.

¹⁸⁴ Bagchi Bandana, op.cit., p-12.

¹⁸⁵ Hindusthan Standared, 21th Sep, 1942 & Anandabazar 24th September 1942.

¹⁸⁶ Interview with Sachindranath Ganguly, Suryanagar, Alipurduar, and 28.05.04.

¹⁸⁷ Anandabazar Patrika, 11th October, 1942.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 27th September, 1942.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, 30th September, 1942.