

CHAPTER – 8
CONCLUSION

Chapter – 8

Conclusion:

The present study is a study of the history of the national movement of the Contai sub-division in the district of Midnapore. In respect of its origin, growth and character the movement of the Contai people was akin to and an integral part of the all-India freedom movement. But in respect of its general issues and dimensions and dynamics the Contai movement was mainly a regional movement.

Chapter II of the present study *The Renascent Mahishya Samaj* analyses how the leading members of the *Mahishya Samaj* organised a movement for fixing their caste-identity. The movement made the Mahishyas a well-knit community, and assured their caste-identity. It is worthwhile to note that the movement made the community socially coherent, economically secure and culturally advanced. In a word the movement crystallized the caste-peasant identity of the Mahishyas. The ‘crystallization of peasant-pride’ i.e. Mahishya caste-pride made a serious impact on the future political mobilization in Midnapore.

In Chapter III an attempt is made to show that the people of Contai had felt that the boycott-*swadeshi* programme could not achieve the desired

end. Yet this time it was hoped against the hope that though the first upsurge of the movement was gone the nationalist sentiment of the Contai people did not disappear. True, the stream of *swadeshi* had lost its life-force in the desert of failure and frustration; at the same time it was true that the stream would again flow with all vehemence and forcefulness in proper times.

Chapter IV A New Wave: The War and Movement in Contai reflects the changes which gradually took place in the colonial policy of the British rule, and also in the varying attitudes of the people of India towards the British rule. During the *Swadeshi* movement the attitude of the Indians towards the alien rule remained the same as before. But during the War the Indians became very much loyal to the government. The *Nihar* gives a date-wise list of the meetings in which the speakers put before the people the necessity of joining the British Army, and of giving war-loans to Britain and of remaining loyal to the government. It was then expected that the War would soon come to an end and then the Indians would attain Swaraj i.e. liberty and self-government, and development in all respects. This time it was found that the Indians started donating to the Imperial Relief Fund through Post Offices and they felt eager to enlist themselves for being recruited for the Army.

In chapter V (i) an attempt is made to refer to a changed India when people did not remain loyal to the British rule. After the brutal massacres and inhuman wrongs and the belying of the war-time promises of the government of India the attitude of the Indians towards the alien ruler was almost totally changed, and the Indians now devoutly dedicated themselves to attain *Swaraj* which was deemed by them as the sovereign remedy for all their ills. The strength, solidarity and coherence of their dedication to the service of the nation became historic. It was from the Non-co-operation Movement the people learned the lesson of conquering the fear for the *Raj* and of marching ahead towards the path of attaining *Swaraj*.

Chapter V (ii) The Anti-Union Board Movement in Contai stresses the history of the movement 'the most successful first *Satyagraha* in India'. The *Satyagraha* was so vehemently direct against the authority that the Bengal Village Self Government Act was at last withdrawn. Really it is strange that the BPCC at the initial stage of the movement did not support the idea of the boycott of the Union Boards and even Gandhiji bypassed the idea of the movement by saying that '*Satyagraha* is a complex phenomenon'. In spite of various active and passive oppositions B.N. Sasmol, the veteran Mahishya leader of Contai, started the Union Board boycott movement at his own risk, and ultimately the movement was crowned with success. The withdrawal of

the Union Board was a great historic event. It gained considerable strength to the people of Contai, and so also of Midnapore.

Chapter VI stresses the *Swarajya* phase of the national movement of the Contai people. It was a short-lived phase of the national movement. Yet it was memorable for the thorough implementation of the Gandhian Constructive Works Programme. The Programme was thoroughly and wholeheartedly followed it constructed the socio-economic and psychopolitical structure of the Contai people. As a result during this phase the Contai people became economically self-reliant, socially organised and politically much trained in respect of participating in the national movement and also of discharging their duties as fighters of freedom in the coming events.

Chapter VII (i) The Salt *Satyagraha* in Contai was the religionized phase of the movement of the Contai people. This phase of the movement made the heroes and heroines of Contai sure of their success in their *dharmayuddha* with the British. In this phase they learned that their years-long sorrows and sufferings and sacrifices would surely bring forth good days of deliverance.

Chapter VII (ii) The Epilogue of the Contai Salt Satyagraha Stresses a very striking phase of the national movement in Contai. It was in this phase

the village Congress committees were re-organised with the sole objective of expunging the prevalent ills and abuses of the villages. Now the village society and economy was re-structured. This was how Contai was made a solid unit for facing any and every national problem and responding to the call of the Congress to participate in the fight for freedom.

The Contai Congress was all along loyal to the AICC. It had every faith in Gandhi ideals. It supported whole heartedly the all India national movement and it had the strong feeling that if the Gandhi ideals and the programme of constructing the nation would follow whole heartedly the *pararaj* would surely collapse and India would surely attain *swaraj*. In spite of this faith and feeling the Contai Congress never became a satellite of the AICC. To conduct the national movement it very often devised its own strategy to stand against the alien rule. The Anti-Union Board Movement, the Non-co-operation Movement and the Quit India Movement were ample proofs of this attitude and feeling of the Contai Congress. This is the distinctiveness of the Contai Congress and its uniqueness too.

* * * *