

## CHAPTER - VII

### MARWARIS AS TRADERS AND BUSINESS GROUP IN THE DISTRICTS

The Marwaris as a community are fond of trade and commerce. The climatic condition and economic environment of Rajasthan have induced them to be so. The position of Marwar at the crossroads of the major caravan routes, the priority assigned to business by their cultural ethic, the general regional attitude towards commercial activity, the anticipated vigorousness in the markets, the precarious nature of agriculture in Rajasthan due to very scarce annual rainfall to make economic well being uncertain, the location of Rajasthan at the head of the Ganges, and Malwa trade routes, etc., undoubtedly moulded the livelihood and occupation of the Marwaris. Their wandering nature with the practice of leaving the women - folk and children at home coupled with the old joint family system, strong fellow - feelings both at home and abroad have been further instrumental in developing their attitude towards becoming a commercial community. So the Marwaris are essentially a commercial class and that is why, they are often called "Baniya" or 'Vaisya'.

With such a commercial background at home, the Marwaris used to migrate elsewhere having very bright commercial prospects. The North Bengal region, specially the districts under study, had such a commercial prospect mainly due to its natural resources, its connection with

many trans-Himalayan trade routes, and plains of India. It had trade links even with foreign countries. So it is no wonder that the Marwaris after their migration here would at once pounce upon the region's trade and make commercial ventures.

Before going to locate the role of Marwaris as a business group, it is obviously necessary to have a regional overview of the chief commercial products or business commodities. In the district of Cooch Behar, rice formed the staple crop and besides paddy, other crops were jute, tobacco, mustard, pulses, wheat, barley, millets, sugarcane, etc. Jute was very extensively grown in the western portion of the state. (1) The average outturn of jute fibre was about 15 to 18 maunds per acre. The area covered by jute cultivation comprised about 14% of the acreage of the state and accounted for 12% of its total produce. It was cultivated all over the district particularly in Haldibari. (2) Next came tobacco which was by far the most important cash crop of the district. It was very largely grown, especially in the eastern portion of the state. (3) The areas adjoining the Mansal River, i.e., Dinhata, Sitai, Sitalkuchi and Mathabhanga produced most of the tobacco grown in the state. Cooch Behar district alone produced 72% of the total tobacco cultivated in West Bengal. In 1876, its export to Burma alone was valued at Rs. 10 Lakhs. (4) While wheat was cultivated in Cooch Behar to some notable extent, production of Indian

corn was not at all significant. (5) Mustard, til, pulses, barley, millets were also grown to some extent. Indian corn or Makai was used to be grown near the towns where people from up - country used to reside. Sugarcane and poppy had also been on the list of commercial crops. It should be noted here that Cooch Behar did not produce tea to any appreciable extent. The only tea garden in the district was situated in Taluk Saulmari of Mathabhanga Sub-division and its production in relative sense could hardly be 0.1% of the total production in West Bengal. (6) This was very surprising compared to its sister districts of Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling which had been enriched in tea production. The likely reason was that the geographical atmosphere and the surface of the district were not favourable to tea plantation.

Still, after British administration was established in the state, a process of transition from subsistence economy having limited market potentiality to a wide colonial market - oriented economy began to spring up and this transition in its wake led to commercialisation of agriculture in the state. The extended communication network with improved road, rail and river transport as discussed in chapter IV, further widened the prospect of commercial agriculture. Thus the scope of trade and commerce was broadened ; and it admits of no doubt that the Marwaris with a long inherited commercial tendency had at once penetrated into the district's trade and commerce

after having migrated here.

The agricultural prospect in the district of Jalpaiguri had been more or less the same as in Cooch Behar since Jalpaiguri was the erstwhile Baikunthapur Zamindari of the Cooch Behar State. But the noticeable difference between the two sister districts was in respect of tea plantation and tea industry which Jalpaiguri could alone be proud of. Apart from tea plantation, the principal crops in the district were rice, jute, tobacco, and mustard. Rice formed the staple food product of the district. The area under this crop in 1907 - 08 was 631,600 acres. (7) Two main kinds of rice were Aman and Bhadoi. The average outturn of Aman rice was about 20 maunds an acre or more while the outturn of Bhadoi varied from 16 to 20 maunds an acre. (8)

The cultivation of jute became increasingly profitable. So the area under cultivation of this crop began to increase at a very rapid rate. In 1895 the area covered by jute cultivation was only 6620 acres, which belonged to Mainaguri Tahsil and adjoining places of the Kranti outpost. But thereafter it began to spread throughout the western Duars areas in the vicinity of Madarihahat, the eastern terminus of the Bengal Duars Railway and the Alipur Duar Tahsil. The best quality of jute was being produced in the Rajganj police circle. (9) According to the Settlement Report of 1906-10, the area under jute cultivation was

50,580 acres. (10)

Next came tobacco which had been a very valuable cash crop in the district and was grown largely in the western duars. The best tobacco - producing lands were lying between the rivers of Tista and Torsa. (11) The yield of tobacco per acre was from 6 to 8 maunds and the market price had ranged between 6 and 12 rupees a maund. The average price of a good variety of tobacco might be somewhere around Rs.8 per maund. (12) However, such a price was existing in the first half of the twentieth century. Besides these, mustard, cotton, sugarcane, maize, wheat, barley, potatoes, pulse, betel-leaf, betel-nut, etc. were grown in some varying quantities in the district.

But by far the most important cash-crop of the district had been tea. Tea plantation and tea industry had completely transformed the demographic, socio-economic and political surface of the district. Tea industry, as a commercial enterprise, was initially established in Darjeeling in 1856. Next to Darjeeling, tea was planted in the Western Duars. In 1874, the first tea garden was opened up at Gazilduba in Jalpaiguri by Mr. Richard Haughton, the pioneer of tea industry in Jalpaiguri district. After Gazilduba, many other tea gardens were started, which included Fulbari (1875), Dalimkot (1876), Bagrakot (1876), Kumlai (1877), Dam Dim (1877), Washerbari

(1877), Manabari (1877), Manihop (1878), Patabari (1878), Ranichhera (1878), and so on.

After 1880, the cultivation of tea was extended rapidly along the tract between the rivers of Tista and Daina. By 1881 the number of gardens increased from 13 covering an area of 818 acres and producing 29,520 lbs. of tea, to 55 with an area of 6,230 acres and the outturn increased from 29,520 lbs. in 1876 to 1,027,116 lbs. in 1881. Thus, the number of tea gardens increased more than four times and the area under cultivation became more than seven times in five years. (13) By 1906-07, all waste lands in the Duars were exhausted with tea production. Attention was then shifted to cultivable lands for the purpose. Between 1834 and 1930, at least 150 tea gardens were opened up in the Duars. (14) In 1973, there were 150 gardens which covered 59,988 hectares of land and yielded 85,55,4000 Kg. of tea. The average yield per hectare was estimated to be 1,426 Kg. in 1976. (15)

A number of factors including the development of tea industry, a huge pressure of migration of Coolies from the neighbouring areas to the western Duars and the rail connection set up by the Bengal Duars Railway in 1896 and by the North Bengal State Railway in 1878, created a general impetus for trade. The large markets which grew up in the vicinity of the tea gardens provided an opportunity to the cultivators of a ready market for rice, vegetables

and other agricultural produce. (16)

Prof. R. K. Dasgupta witnessed a significant transition in the socio-economic sphere of Jalpaiguri as a consequence of tea plantation. According to him, the first emergence of capitalist enterprise in the Western Duars took place in 1874 in the form of tea plantation in Gazilduba. This enterprise was rapidly extended in subsequent years in the 19th century which resulted in extension of roads, railways and the communication network. As a result of these, new markets for agricultural produce such as rice, jute, tobacco, mustard etc. were opened up. " All this provided a stimulus for commercialisation of Jalpaiguri's subsistence - oriented agriculture and for extension of cultivation and reclamation of land. .... By the turn of the century large parts of the Duars changed from jungle waste-lands with little human habitation into cultivated area and growing settlements. Thus Jalpaiguri's subsistence-oriented agricultural economy and society became increasingly integrated with the British Indian Market and wider colonial economy ".  
(17)

The same researcher points out that the concluding years of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century constituted a period of cultivation of cash crops for sale in markets. Taken separately, the area covered under jute cultivation increased from 59,800 acres in 1901-02 to

125,500 acres in 1907-08. The said period also witnessed an extension of trade in rice, jute, tobacco and other agricultural produce leading to almost continuous and general rise in prices. During 1880s, the prices of major crops rose by 50%. The price of common rice increased to Rs. 5 a maund in 1908. " This trend, with some variations, remained in operation in the next decade and, among other effects, led to the rapid intrusion and spread of money-economy." (18)

The permanent seats of commerce and market places were Jalpaiguri, Titalya, Rajnagar, Saldanga, Debiganj, Baura, Jorpakri, Mainaguri, Falakata, Madarihat, Alipurduar, Kumargram, Samuktala, Gairkata, Amguri, Dhupguri, Matiali, Silitorsa, Barnesghat, Ramshaihat, Birpara, Binnaguri and Buxa. The trade of the District had been mainly with Calcutta. The chief exports were tea, jute, tobacco, and Sal timber; and imports were rice, cotton, piece-goods, machinery, corrugated iron, Kerosene oil, coal and coke.

Tea and jute were railed to Calcutta and tobacco was being exported to Burma by the Arakanese. Most of the Sal timbers used to be sent to East Bengal by river routes. Rice was imported from Dinajpur. In addition to Sal timber, tobacco, mustard seed, jute, cotton and hides were also exported by water routes to Sirajganj, Dacca and other markets. Baura was the chief trading centre. Earthen cooking utensils, coconuts, molasses, dal and other

miscellaneous articles came from Dacca and Faridpur through up-stream traffic. Most of the trade with Bhutan passed through Buxa. Ivory, wax, wool, musk, Rhinoceros horns, cotton cloth, endi silk cloth, blankets, honey and brick tea were imported and bought by local merchants either against cash or in exchange of rice, tobacco, English cloth, or betel-nut. large quantities of indigenous wool from Bhutan, Tibet and Central Asia were used to enter into India by this route. Jalpaiguri was involved in trade exchanges with Bhutan through periodical fairs, notably the Jalpes and the Falakata Fairs. (19)

In such an emerging commercial scenario in Jalpaiguri, the Marwaris, having their traditional commercial knack, had obviously entered into it to make and extract the surplus out of it. The absence of any prominent native merchant class or business group, made their task easy. It helped them to take the control of the district's trade and commerce and to regulate them from the very beginning. Soon they established, without much difficulty, their monopoly control over them.

The district of Darjeeling is composed of two distinct geographical parts: the mountainous region in the north forming the larger part and the alluvial plains in the south, known as the Terai. But the soil and atmospheric condition of the latter part were so divergent that crops of many varieties could be grown here. They were rice,

wheat, barley, millet, maize, potato, cardamom, spices, soyabeans, mustard, vegetables, pulses, orange; cash crops like jute, tobacco, and above all tea. The crops could be classified into the plantation crops like tea and cinchona and the non plantation crops like rice, maize, potato, wheat, barley, sugarcane, etc..

Rice could be grown extensively in the plains; while maize, potatoes and cardamom were grown in the hills. subsidiary crops like cotton, jute, pulses, oilseeds and sugarcane were grown in the plains. Besides, the forests of both hills and plains remained abundant with different kinds of timber which was a profitable item of trade.

Plantations : The East India Company used to export tea from China to England during the long period between 1689 and 1833. In the meantime, although they achieved the monopoly control over this business by 1721, the same was lost in 1833 following the promulgation of the Charter Act of the same year. So they had to find out an alternative source of supply of tea. In the process, Lord Bentinck appointed a Committee to prepare a plan for tea plantations in Darjeeling. Partly due to his initiative and largely due to the pioneering zeal of Dr. Campbell, the Superintendent of Darjeeling, the tea industry had its solid foundation in the district as a commercial enterprise. (20) According to the latest available information, the district's outturn in 1958 was

3,53,38,780 lbs. of tea covering an area of 68,007.46 acres . (21)

Next to tea, cinchona had been the most important plantation crop of the district. After initial experiments in Sikkim, Lebong and Rumbee valley in 1861, the first fruitfull effort at Cinchona plantation was made at Mungpoo. As a plantation crop Coffee cultivation involved very good prospect initially and the production of the crop was expanded to about 300 acres. (22)

Non - plantation crops: Paddy or rice had been one of the most important crops in the district. It was being grown on both plains and high lands up to an altitude of 5000 feet. Millet was grown on lands with heights between 1000 & 5000 feet. Maize could be grown on any type of soil up to the elevation of 7000 feet. Potato was grown in many parts of the district at an altitude up to 9000 feet above sea level. The annual production of potatoes was about 1,689 tons in 1967. Potatoes were being cultivated for export as well as for home consumption. Cardamom could be grown in moist areas. The entire production was being exported, mainly to pubjab. (23) Orange cultivation was a profitable venture and for this reason, its cultivation had been extended widely in recent years. About 90% of the output was for export. (24) Sugarcane and mustard were also being grown to some extent in the district.

The above mentioned crops had been the chief agricultural products which were commercialised to serve the colonial markets. The collecting centres at Tista, Rambi and Panighata dealt mainly in oranges. These centres might be treated as both primary and secondary markets. About 50,000 quintals of oranges were exported to different places in 1966-67, of which 65% was sent to Calcutta. Bijanbari was the collecting centre for seed potatoes. The cultivators or village merchants could hoard the potatoes here to be purchased and transported by the wholesale merchants to their counterparts in the secondary markets at Darjeeling, Ghum etc., Then those were dispersed to different parts of India. In 1966-67, about 50% of the seed potatoes, which amounted to 1.7 lakh quintals, passed through this district. Sukhiapokhri was the main collecting centre for Cardamom. The crop was mainly exported to the secondary markets at Sonada and Kalimpong. The district's total production of 10,000 quintals of Cardamom was added to about 8,000 quintals of the same imported from Nepal and Sikkim for being exported in 1966-67. While 40% of this quantity was sent to different districts of West Bengal, 60% went to Delhi, U.P., Pubjab and Maharashtra. (25)

Darjeeling tea had been famous for its flavour owing to the low temperature of the hill under which better quality

leaf could germinate. (26) So Darjeeling tea had a massive demand both at home and abroad. The major recipient countries were the U.K., West Germany, U.S.S.R, Ireland, Iran and some others. The district produced 1,75,920 quintals of tea in 1966. The total quantity of tea exported in 1970-71 had been valued at Rs. 16 crores. (27) Cinchona grown at Darjeeling also had a demand abroad and was exported to the U.K., other European countries and U.S.A.. While the total value of sales of cinchona was Rs. 96,87,305,00, the value of exports was Rs. 71,71,91,750 in 1966-67. (28)

The geographical location of the district had been favourable for developing a close commercial intercourse with Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and Tibet. In the early 80s of the last century, the district's trade with Nepal was initiated at Naksalbari, Ghum, and Kanjilia. The imports consisted primarily of foodgrains, cotton piece-goods, manufactured wool, hides, potatoes, sheep, goats, cattle, poultry, gram, pulses, rice, other rain crops, ghee, saltpetre, mustard seed and linseed. The exports included cattle, raw cotton, piece-goods (European and Indian), brass, copper, iron, salt, sugar, spices, manufactured wool, Kerosene oil, tobacco and foodgrains.

The trade with Sikkim passed through Bijanbari - Pulbazar via Namchi and Singla via Naya bazar. (29) The trade with Sikkim was introduced at Pedong and Ranjit in 1980-81.

The Principal import items were horses, other cattle, foodgrains, brass-ware, ghee, salt, mustard oil, cloth, pulses, Kerosene oil, copper, cotton yarn, bar iron, wheat products, sugar, potatoes, cardamoms, chirata, majinth, butter, vegetables, Poultry and eggs, slaughter animals, maize, millet, bristles, black dal, fruits, etc. Notable items of export to Sikkim included cattle, European piece - goods, brass and copper, salt, tobacco, rice, mustard-oil, cloth, pulses, kerosene oil, cotton yarn, bar iron, wheat products and sugar. As against the total value of imports of Rs. 1.68 lakhs, the total value of exports, was Rs. 0.81 lakhs in 1980 - 81. (30)

In the beginning of the present century, trade with Bhutan had to pass through Labha and Pedong. A sizable quantity of Bhutanese silk fabrics was imported into the district around 1907. The imports from Bhutan consisted of fruits, vegetables, oil-seeds, animals, etc. Taken together, all these were of the worth of Rs. 5.45 lakhs in 1921 - 22. On the other hand, the cotton (manufactured) piece goods (foreign), betel-nuts, other spices, etc. constituted the exports, which in the aggregate, was valued at Rs. 2.01 lakhs in the same year. (31)

The frontier trade with Tibet was launched at 8 stations, Mallighat, Ranjit, New Ranjit and Singla being the collecting stations for goods exported to or imported from Sikkim, Sukhiapokhri for Nepal, Kanjilia for Nepal and

Sikkim, Laba for Bhutan, and Pedong for Tibet and Sikkim, and partly also for Bhutan. The exports to Tibet consisted basically of cotton piece - goods of European manufacture, cotton yarn, silver, copper, brass and iron sheets, rice, maize and tobacco. The items of imports were wool, yak's tails, musk, horses, mules, sheep and blankets. (32)

Apart from these transfrontier trades, the district's main trade was with Calcutta. The chief items of exports were tea, jute, gunny-bags, wool, cardamom and maize while those of imports were European piece-goods, cotton yarn, rice, Kerosene oil and salt. Rice was also being imported from Dinajpur, and coal and coke from Raniganj. (33)

Such was the commercial background of the district of Darjeeling prior to the advent of the Marwaris who were essentially a commercial community and this identity helped them to spread their commercial net-work over the district's economic resources.

In the district of Cooch Behar or in the old Cooch Behar State, the Marwaris or Kyans or Kayas (34) entered into every kind of business. The prominent among those were stock business (Aratdari) in foodgrains and cash crops like jute and tobacco; export and import business in essential commodities including piece-goods, salt, Kerosene oil, sugar, molasses; rice, 'jute', tobacco,

mustard seeds, oil, etc.; (35) and the whole sale and retail business in items of grocery and stationery and also in items like both hard and soft wires, utensils, electronic goods and electrical parts, automobiles, transport, office furniture, cloths, dress materials, betel - nuts, cocoa - nuts, consumption goods of every kind and every description.

The Marwari traders established 'Basas' at every important bundar or trade centre, market, hat or 'ganj' of the district. The chief centre of commerce was the capital city itself and two main markets were the Kalikaganj and the 'Toha' or presently the Bhabanigunj bazars. Needless to say, the Marwaris established their Basas around these market areas to operate both wholesale and retail business in connection with imports and exports. The wholesale buyers used to import salt, sugar, molasses, spices, Kerosene oil, utensils made of both copper and brass, piece - goods and so on from the alien states to pile them at their godowns in the capital city. These were first sold to the local wholesale merchants and then by them to local retail merchants. Retail merchants were of three groups. One group used to sale the commodities through permanent shops or establishments. The second group of retail merchants were mobile traders who used to sell the commodities at various weekly hats. The third group was composed of hawkers who used to hawk goods at various towns and villages occasionally.

The majority of the exporting goods were agricultural products or commercial crops such as jute, tobacco, food-grains, etc. At the initial stage, the growers or cultivators used to sell their items to the brokers or mobile whole salers. The price of the commodities remained very low at the primary markets or 'hats.' The brokers, after buying those crops at a cheap price, used to sell those to the wholesale expoters, to be transported to other states or countries, at a high price, the profit margin being 25%. Trading opportunities at all these different levels had almost been monopolised by the Marwaris who came from Marwar, Bikaner and other Rajasthani states.

(36)

Conversations with the leading Marwari businessmen have revealed in detail the nature of their transition from mere migrants to the wealthy trading class of the district. (i) Nathmal Lakhotia and his successors had their business in tobacco, jute, cloth, but later owned two rice mills, one at Sonapur and the other at Pundibari. (ii) The family of Toolaram Saroigi and Dalim Chand Saroigi was initially engaged in the business of jute, tobacco and cloth merchandise. Later on, they switched over to the business of electrical goods, motor parts, agency business, etc. (iii) The late Gobardhan Das Lakhotia came to Cooch Behar in the early part of the 20th century. He, along with his successors, Ramgopal Lakhotia,

Motilal Lakhota, Ratan Lakhota and others started their business in jute, tobacco, rice, mustard oil, wood, and above all were commission agents. Presently, they are engaged in tobacco trade on a big scale. (iv) The chhotokuthi of Cooch Behar was a renowned Marwari house with the prominent members being Rajkumar, Rajnishkumar, Jalim sing, Hukum chand, Chuniram, Punam chand, Giridharilal and Bachhraj Baid. This family was associated in the business of rice, foodgrains, paddy, mustard oil, jute, tobacco and cloth. (v) The family of Daulatram Pugalia, Lalchand Prithwiraj were involved in the business of cloth. (vi) while the family of Anaichand Sant dealt in cloth, that of Arjun Das Bhura dealt in the Jute business. (vii) Similarly, Ganesh mal Jain and his successors embarked on trades of jute, rice, paddy, cloth, etc. (viii) His son Srichand Jain has now been a big business magnate of the district and his present business is of motor parts and the Bayudut Agency. (ix) The family of Toolaram and Binjraj ventured in the business of paddy, rice, tobacco, cloth, etc. (37)

The above information has the following postulations. (1) The Marwari merchants had changed their business from time to time. Initially, most of them were engaged in the business of agricultural crops such as foodgrains, jute and tobacco, etc. With the availability of scientific modern household equipment and the gradual change in consumer demand for those, they switched over to the business

of such items like electrical goods, electronic goods, automobiles, motorparts, transport equipments, luxury goods and so on. (11) At the time of migration, the Marwaris did not have enough capital with them. So they did not venture upon those types of business needing substantial capital. At this stage they mainly carried on hawkery, brokery or the retail business. But as years rolled on, they piled up capital and began to invest that in big business. Some of them have turned now into big business magnates of the district.

The family of Gauri Shankar Agarwal, who came to Buxirhat some 150 years before, was connected with grocery and business in cloth and jute and is now engaged in timber business. This family did the business of jute hoarding (38) Another well known Marwari concern was of Vikam Chand Mahesree who dealt in grocery (both retail and whole sale) and had businesses of jute, cloth etc. This firm was known for its business involving stock of jute. (39) Among the Oswals, living presently at Buxirhat, the family of Lunkaran Oswal initially undertook grocery, but gradually shifted to the business of cloth and jute. Still this family uses to stock jute for exporting elsewhere. Iswar Chand Oswal has also been a well known Marwari merchant at Buxirhat. (40)

In Tufangunj, the renowned Marwari concern was of Likhmi Chand Oswal who came here around 1889. His successors

include Rup chand, Bal Chand and Rautmal Oswal. They have been connected with businesses of a variety of goods like paddy, mustard and other foodgrains, jute, cloth and so on. (41) Lal chand Oswal and his two sons Meghraj and Amarchand Oswal were another Marwari Family who dealt in jute, paddy, mustard seeds, foodgrains and cloth. A few members of this family had the clothing business too. They are Manik chand, Susil, Ray chand, Jatan lal, Tilak chand and Toolaram Oswal. (42) Babu Rautmal Baid and his successors started businesses in jute, tobacco, cloth etc. They also had the stock business in jute and tobacco. (43) The family of Ashkaran Bothra had the business to stock jute at Dinhata. (44) So also the family of Mangilal Sharma was engaged in the business of stocking jute.

para

At Mathabhanga, Babu Minrup chand Jain and his family members, viz., Vikram chand, Jash Karan and Jawahar lal Jain were involved in the business to stock jute and tobacco and in the retail business of cloth. (45) The Bhadani family, graced by Tansukh Das, Gulab Chand, Harekh Chand, Keshri Chand and Tejkaran Bhadani, was engaged in the business of jute, tobacco and cloth. (46) Another family of repute was that of the Bothras who initially began retail business in cloth and gradually entered into stock business in jute, tobacco, and paddy, etc. They also had a jewellery shop. The notable members of this family are Chatidas Bothra, Bhaabandan, Chhagmal, Hanuman, Punam chand, Vijoylal, Nemchand, Nathmal and Sampat lal Bothra. In recent years, they entered into bigger business like

those of opening oil mills, installing pump and dealing in machineries etc. (47) Baktarmal Saroigi and his family were traders of jute, tobacco, paddy, rice and cloth etc. At present they have concentrated on tobacco, jute and the transport business. (48) Again, Indra Chand Saroigi who first came to Patgram ( Now in Bangladesh ) and then moved to Mathabhangra in the first quarter of the present century, had wholesale business in jute, tobacco, foodgrains, etc. Grocery and trading of cloth were also included within their enterprise. (49) Chhatidas Bothra, Punam Chand, Sampat Lal and Manoj Bothra were connected with trade in jute, tobacco, rice, salt, flour, and so on. (50)

The Marwaris also migrated to Changrabandha. Indra Chand Anchalia and his family were connected with cloth and stationery business. (51) Sukhalal Surana and his successors, namely Mahal Chand, Manik Chand and Narendra Kumar Surana, have been well known merchants at Changrabandha. They have their residence (Basa) there and are engaged in stocking and wholesale business in jute, tobacco, rice and foodgrains. Presently, Manik Chand purchases tobacco from the local growers to export those to Orissa, Calcutta and hill areas. (52) Indra Chand Kothari and his father Lun Karan Kothari have also been well known Marwari merchants at Changrabandha. They had wholesale and stocking business of paddy, rice, jute and tobacco. At present, Indra Chand concentrates on jute and tobacco business. (53) Another Marwari family which had petty

business transaction at Changrabandha and Jamaladaha, is of Bachhraj choadhury. (54)

Chimnilal Mahasree came to Mekhligunj some 150 years before. He initially launched a business in cloth. But his son Giridharilal Mahasree and his grandson Ram Chandra Mahasree gradually entered into the wholesale business in rice and grocery. (55) So also, the family of noted Hanuman Mal Mahasree had a wholesale and stocking business mainly in tobacco and secondarily in jute. (56)

Panna Lal Lahoti and his son Jesraj Lahoti came to Haldibari some 100 years before and started a business in jute and tobacco. Presently 'Jalibardhan' (Net knitted with jute fibre) is added to those. Jalibardhans are exported to Karnataka. The business is being run by their successor, Chiranjilal Lahoti at present. (57) Asaram Lahoti came to Haldibari in the last quarter of the previous century. He had a stocking and wholesale business in jute and tobacco. His son Jagannath Lahoti inherited this business which at present is run by his grandson Jay chand Lahoti. A new item which was added to their traditional business 15 years back is 'Jalibardhan' ( Also known as 'Fhatia'). (58) Another well known Marwari family which was connected with the stocking business in jute, tobacco, etc. was of Brijratan Binani and his ancestors - Narayan Das, Krishna Das, Gohalyan Das and Braham Ratan Binani. At present, Jalibardhan which is used for packing of cotton,

has been added to their ancestral business. (59)

The Marwari merchants in the district of Cooch Behar, however, did not think for long of conducting business operations isolatedly. So they began to get membership of the Zilla Babasayi samity which came into existence in 1972. Some of them were even founding members of this Samity, namely Chand Mal Nahata, Hridkaran Somani, Hazari Lal Sharma, Kanailal Nahata, Malchand Baid, and so on.

(60) Presently, some prominent Marwari members of the said Babasayi Samity with their office bearers are as follows : SriChand Jain (President), Kanai Lal Bhura (Assistant Secretary), Mal Chand Boyed (Treasurer), Lal Chand Bihani, Jagadish Prosad Agarwala, Dhanraj Bantia, Lakshi Nahata, Narath Mal Jain ( all members of the executive committee) ; Bhorilal Agarwala and Bhabani Sankar Agarwala (Members, Dinahata Babasayi Samity) .(61)

Some leading Marwari business concerns of Cooch Behar town are (1) M/S Ashoke Express Agency (Transport Contractors and commission agent), (2) Bhogilal D.& Company (Tea merchant), (3) Bhanwar Lal Bijoy Kumar (Cloth merchant), (4) Kaluram Aidan (Cloth merchant) (5) Askaran Subhakaran (cloth merchant), (6) Chunilal Bhawarlal (wholesale cloth merchant), (7) Alay Chand and Punam Chand, (8) Mahaveer Trading Company (Motor parts), (9) Jainco Traders (Petroleum Agency, (10) Ramlal Gupta (Potato and Onion merchant), (11) Toolaram Dalimchand (Electronic and Electri-

cal Goods, office furniture and daily household goods),  
(12) Gupta Watch Co. (13) M/S Surjit Kumar Sunil Kumar.  
(62) At present, no less than 1400 business concerns of  
Cooch Behar town have entrolled their membership under the  
Cooch Behar Zilla Babsayi Samity and of those the number  
of big and leading Marwari concerns is 84. (63)

The bunders constitute the important venues of commercial  
activity of this district. Here the Marwari merchants have  
their 'Gadi' to facilitate wholesale business of export  
and import. Such bundars are found at Haldibari, Mekhli-  
ganj, Changrabandha, Mathabhanga, Dewanhat, Chowrahat,  
Balarampur, Dinhata, Tufanganj, etc.

Haldibari was a place of much commercial importance and  
was famous for its jute traffic. (64) Here the Marwari  
Mahajans used to hoard jute in abundance to earn a huge  
amount of profit ranging from Rs. 70,000 to Rs. 80,000 in  
1891 - 92. Similar was the case with the business of  
tobacco and foodgrains. (65) Another contemporary  
Administrative report also speaks of the same tale about  
Haldibari. Here many Marwari merchants used to even take  
the risk of stocking large quantities of jute remaining  
unsold. (66) The stocking of jute was mainly intended as  
a wait for higher prices and thereby to make large prof-  
its. Thus one Well known Marwari merchant made profits  
even to the extent of Rs. 80,000 in a single year. Howev-

er, the Haldibari Mahajans did not usually keep jute in stock for long period. In a rough estimate, the total quantity of jute brought to Haldibari was about 3,50,000 maunds in the single year of 1891 - 92. (67) The Marwari firms used to continue their business of stocking jute during the initial years of the present century. (68) The number of jute carts coming to the Haldibari bunder showed an appreciable increase of 1959 in a single year from 65,583 in 1900 - 1901 to 67,542 in 1901 - 02. The tolls collected from these carts also increased from Rs. 8197 to Rs. 8442-12. (69) From these statistics one could easily guess the annual volume of trade and its increase over time in the said area.

Chowrahat was another important seat of commerce. The Mahajans who were mostly Marwaris, used to exchange commercial goods. Babu Hukum Chand Oswal was a notable Marwari merchant of Chowrahat. He did not bother to bring rice from outside the state to meet its occasional shortage in the area. Such was the case in 1891 - 92 when the local production was seriously affected by a natural calamity, causing the price to soar, he imported large quantities of rice to Chowrahat. (70) Most of the Marwari merchants, however with their shops at Chowrahat, used to make annual purchases of large quantities of jute for export to Sirajganj and other places. (71)

Although the New Marwari Mahajans were reluctant to dis-

close their stock figure, it is apparent that Babu Hukum Chand Oswal of Chowrahat Bunder made a huge purchase of 30,000 maunds of jute and Babu Taktamal did the same of 20,000 maunds of jute in the single financial year of 1899 - 1900. They sent down large quantities of jute from Gitaldah by boat. (72) There was a dull season for the jute market around 1897 - 98 which saw the price of jute varying from Rs. 3 - 2 to Rs. 3 - 6. It may be noted that at that time while Hukum chand could maintain a stock of about 8,000 maunds of jute, Kheturam Misser had 25,000 maunds of jute at his disposal. Other Marwari merchants could stock 5,000 maunds of jute. Messrs Apear and Company, even after exporting 25,000 maunds of jute to Calcutta, could still hoard 15,000 maunds in the said year.

(73)

The increasing importance of Chowrahat as a commercial centre induced a rich Marwari firm to approach the bundar authority for a plot of land to open his new business there. (74) Complaints were occasionally made against the Marwari Mahajans for intentional raising of the price of rice by means of their export to East Bengal and thus to make abnormal gains from the high price there. Considering their role as importers of rice in times of scarcity, the allegation could not always be held as true. (75) Such a complaint, however, could not hinder the growth of the Marwari firms. For example, the big firm of Hukum Chand Oswal at Chowrahat continued to prosper even after his death. (76)

Mathabhanga bunder was famous for its tobacco traffic. From the Calicagunj bunder at Mathabhanga, the respective quantities of tobacco and jute exported were 57876 maunds and 11,285 maunds in 1901 - 02. The corresponding figures were 48,120 maunds and 8030 maunds in the previous year. The total value of exports of tobacco, jute, rice, mustard seed, salt and sugar was estimated at Rs.4,54,000 in that year(77). A subsequent Administrative Report speaks of Mathabhanga Bunder : "Tobacco which is extensively grown in sub - division Mathabhanga is the chief article of trade in the Calicagunj bunder. The total quantity of tobacco imported into the bunder was 38555 maunds against 34,560 maunds of the previous year. There was also an increase from 4,076 to 5,882 maunds in the quantity of jute to the bunder." (78) So it admits of no doubt that Marwari Merchants took a dominant role in monopolising the stock business in tobacco and jute.

Babu Joharmal brought to Mekhliganj and Jamaldah large quantities of rice in 1891 - 1892 when the state became badly a victim to natural calamities. During this year, the prices of foodgrains continued to be high. The lowest rate at which common rice was sold was Rs. 3 - 8. From November to March, the price ranged from Rs. 4 to 4 - 6 ; in some places it went upto Rs. 5.00 "Foreign Mahajans imported large quantities of rice. 9000 maunds of rice had already been imported to Haldibari by rail. Heaps of bags

of rice were found at Mogulhat. At one time, there were 30 boats laden with rice at Kalirghat near Cooch Behar".

(79)

Babu Aidan Oswal had a large stock of jute in that year. " He imported rice in boats from Sirajganj and exported jute in those very boats. The rich Mahajans at Laukuti did the same thing. Rice was also imported to Mathabhanga by boat. Sometimes it was brought in carts from Haldibari. The quantity imported to Haldibari during February and March was large. Ordinary rice is exported from Cooch Behar and the people here do not have to depend for their supplies upon other districts. But last year it was the importation from British India that kept up the supply and saved the State. Fortunately, the Mahajans did their work quite satisfactorily in the midst of the crisis and showed how useful they really were. Imported rice found its way to the most distant corners of the State and in some places no home-grown rice could be had". (80) The jute trade through Dewanganj bunder was also progressing. So a number of Mahajans sought from the bunder authority a piece of land to establish their business firms. (81)

In the middle of the 19th century, a trans-Himalayan trade system emerged in North Eastern India. In connection with this trade system, Bengal had been exchanging trade and commerce with Central India through the routes of Assam, Manipur, Rangpur, Dacca, Narayangunj, Chittagang, and

Calcutta on oneside ; and Nepal, Darjeeling, Sikkim, Bhutan, Tibet, and China on the other. (82) Trade with Bhutan was conducted mainly through the Buxa Duars. Ivory, wax, wool, musk, rhinoceros horns, cotton cloth, and silk cloth, blankets, honey, and brick tea were imported and bought by local merchants, who paid for those in cash or exchanged those against commodities like rice, tobacco, English cloth, or betelnut. Large quantities of indigenous wool from Bhutan, Tibet, and Central Asia <sup>were</sup> used to come to India through this route. (83)

Two things could be highlighted here in connection with Marwari predominance over the district's trade and commerce. First, the Marwaris, though they were the first to migrate to this region in the 2nd half of the 19th century on a large scale and gradually settled here more or less on a permanent basis at the close of the last century, did not think of establishing any merchants' guild or chamber of commerce even by the close of the 2nd half of the present century. This aspect of deficiency on the part of the Marwari merchants is revealed in a recent investigative work by Satyendra Nath Roy. It mentioned that the trade and commerce of the Cooch Behar state were mainly in the hands of the foreign Mahajans who did not pay any attention to the betterment of commercial facilities in the state. They always thought of their own interests. But the concept of Merchant's guild or Chamber of Commerce was not new in our country. The "Bengal Chamber

of Commerce" and the "Bombay Chamber of Commerce" were established in Calcutta in 1834 and in Bombay in 1836. Thereafter, the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, the Marwari Chamber of Commerce and the Indian Chamber of Commerce were founded one after another. But the merchants of the district of Cooch Behar did not feel the necessity for this type of Association. (84)

Secondly, industry has always been a boost to trade and commerce. But in the district of Cooch Behar, the Marwaris did not venture upon industry, even though the district had sufficient economic potentiality, conducive to industrial progress. It is known that industrial revolution needs certain preconditions to be fulfilled in respect of availability and supply of raw materials including electricity, proper communication, and transport facilities to ensure timely supply of raw materials from remote corners and a market for the finished products. The district of Cooch Behar had some favourable aspects including infrastructural benefits upon which industrial progress at least to some extent could be based. The district had two important agricultural products, namely tobacco and mulberry, to build up cheroot and silk industries. Besides, the large production of fruits like pineapples, mango and jack-fruit could be preserved to produce Jam and Jelly, chocolate, and squash in small industrial units. The by product of the jute, i.e. its stalk could be mixed up with plant, small chips of wood and dust wood to

produce particle boards. The vast forest resources of the district could be helpful to the emergence and growth of plywood industry as the packing of tea mostly needed plywood paper bag. (85)

In the district of Jalpaiguri, the Marwari predominance over trade and commerce had been more prominent than in Cooch Behar as is evident from the fact that 82% of the total commercial Organisations of the district have been in the grip of the Marwaris. (86) Although the trading commodities of the district did not differ much from those of the district of Cooch Behar, the sole exception, of course, was tea. Apart from tea, the district has a number of important items of export, such as rice, paddy, jute, mustard-seed, betelnuts, Cotton, lac, sal timber, tobacco, til seed, Bhutia ponies, Bhutia blankets, Yak's tails, ghi, wax, musk etc. Against those, the district has to import the items like brass utensils, salt, oil, cloth, spices, cocoa-nuts, cotton, piece-goods, machinery, corrugated iron, Kerosene oil, and coal and coke. (87) A number of factors such as the tea industry, the influx of population to the western Duars and opening up of some railways, namely, the Eastern Bengal State Railway, the Bengal Duars Railway and the Cooch Behar State Railway, provided an impetus to the growth of the District's trade. Besides, the large markets which had grown up around the tea gardens, encouraged the nearby cultivators to produce more and sell their rice, vegetables and other produce. (88)

The principal seats of commerce were Jalpaiguri, Titalya, Rajnagar, Saldanga, Deviganj, Baura, Jorpakri, Mainaguri, Phalakata, and Alipurduar. The district enjoyed surpluses in its crops like jute, sal-timber, tobacco, rice and paddy to be exported to foreign countries. (89)

The trade of the district was mainly with Calcutta, though timber used to be exported to Dacca and other markets in Eastern Bengal and tobacco to Burma. Tea and jute used to be railed to Calcutta. The Arakanese dominated the tobacco trade and they exported tobacco leaves to Burma for manufacturing Burma cheroots. Most of the Sal timbers were streamed away to markets of Eastern Bengal. As the local supply of rice was insufficient, it had to be imported in a large quantity from Dinajpur. Tobacco, Mustard seed, Jute, Cotton, hides were also exported by river routes to Sirajgunj, Dacca and particularly to Baura. Other articles of import were earthen cooking utensils, cocoa-nuts, molasses, dal and a number of miscellaneous items from Dacca and Faridpur. Most of the trade with Bhutan passed through Buxa-duars. Ivory, wax, wool, musk, rhinoceros-horns, Cotton cloth, endi silk cloth, blankets, honey and brick tea formed the items of imports and those were bought by local merchants in exchange of cash or kinds such as rice, tobacco, English cloth, betel nut, etc. Large quantities of indigenous wool were also imported from Bhutan, Tibet and Central Asia through this route (90)

This was the commercial scenario prior to Marwari migration in the district and the Marwari migrants, being basically a 'bania' community, at once entered into the district's trade and commerce. They began to venture upon almost all types of business avenues with sufficiently bright prospects. Those could be mainly classified into businesses of hoarding, imports and exports, whosesale and retail trade as well of the commodities already mentioned.

The early presence of the Marwaris in the district's trade and commerce has been stated in a contemporary survey and settlement report. According to this report, at Buxa Sadar Bazars, the shops were made of timber with roofs of corrugated iron and were owned by the 'Kyans' (Marwaris were locally known as the Kyans or Kayas). Only articles of native consumption could be procured from within the district. Europeans had to obtain every simple item of consumption from Calcutta as nothing was available at Buxa. Fowls and ducks could be procured from Alipur Duar and Cooch Behar at 3 or 4 per rupee. The Kyan shop-keepers used to undertake a brisk trade with the Bhutias of Chana-batti. The Bhutias brought their commercial items, already mentioned, into Buxa. The Kyan merchants immediately bought those either on credit or in exchange of cash or kinds in the form of rice, tobacco, betel-nut, English cloth, or other articles of the same value. No duties were levied on Bhutanese goods entering into Buxa and the

Bhutan Government did not levy any duty on British made articles imported into or transported through Bhutan. (91)

*Para*  
Ghi was made in the Duars and was despatched to Cooch Behar ; Jute, Mustard seed and tobacco to Dacca, Calcutta and other places ; and buffalo and Cowhides to Calcutta. However, rice, gur, sugar, endi silk cloth were manufactured and consumed within the district. But the cotton cloth, made by the Bhutias at Buxa, was sold to the Kyans who again resold those to people at Buxa. The local trade was mainly operated in the markets. Paikars and Kyans and agents of traders purchased all the jute, tobacco and mustard seed of the district. The shop-keepers sold a variety of articles like soaps, needles, pins, comfits, Keating's worm tablets, hair oil, cheap mirrors, boxes, combs, popguns, etc. and made a profit of 50 to 100% (92)

The said report gives a tahsil-wise figures of 'Jain and Rajput' population in the then Western Duars. In the Mynaguri Tahsil, the number of Jain (Marwari) mail population was 25 of which 7 were literate and 18 illiterate in 1895. Then there was no female population. In the Dam Dim Tahsil, the figure was 5. Of them 2 were male and 3 female. But all of them were illiterate. Six male Jains with half of them being literate, were present in the Alipur Tahsil. The female population in the said Tahsil was nil. In Salbari, there were only 45 males, 38 of them being literate. So a total of 81 people of Jaina faith lived in Western Duars in the last decade of the 19th

century. (93) According to the 1891 Census, the Rajput population living in Western Duars was 1735 (Male 1060+ Female 675) (94).

The role of the Marwaris in the district of Jalpaiguri has been highlighted in a recent study which mentions that the Marwaris came here as traders and merchants. " While the sowdagars of Dacca were mainly retail traders, Marwaris were engaged in both retail and wholesale business ". However, both of the Hindu and the muslim as well as the Marwari traders used to keep contact with their ancestral homeland and pay frequent visits. (95) [The entrance of the Marwari class into the tea plantation has also been noted in the study. During the second and third decades of the 19th century, the Dagas, a Marwari family with an active role in trade and financial activity since the 1870s, ventured on many tea gardens. (96)

*Para*

The district had at least eleven trade routes with Bhutan. Among those, five (through the Rivers Teesta and Sankosh) were directly linked with Jalpaiguri and the remaining six, with Goal Para in Assam. These passes were called the "Doors to Bhutan" or the Duars. The Bhutani merchants traded with Rangpur, even with Calcutta through these routes via Jalpaiguri. The Lakhimpur pass was very inaccessible. Although the pass through Buxa and Bhutanghat was very insignificant, the trade route through Chamurchi was very important. The road through Jainganj was import-

ant, for having its direct link with Phuntsholing of Bhutan. A route reached Kalikhola from Kumargram which was a meeting place of Bhutan, Assam and the undivided Bengal. So its commercial importance was much greater than the other passes. (97)

Information on the exportables and the import items are available for six months from Sept. 1875 to Feb. 1876. In the six months, the total quantity of various articles, exported, was 50,540 maunds i.e., 1850 tonnes while jute constituted 47% and tobacco accounted for 43%. As against these, the total quantity of imports was 17,770 maunds i.e., 650 tonnes. The major portion, i.e., 80%, was made up of salt. So exports were three times larger than imports. Hunter separately shows that, against an export of 1310 loads of timber, 7,990 cocoa-nuts were imported during the same period. The writer discloses that value of exports of miscellaneous items was Rs. 85 and that of imports was Rs. 20,658 only of which European Cotton goods alone accounted for 84%. (98)

Hunter's chart reveals that jute, tobacco and piece-goods constituted the three staple items of trade. Out of a total of 23,806 maunds of jute exported from Jalpaiguri, 16,443 maunds or 69% were sent to Sirajganj and 7373 maunds or 31% were sent to Calcutta via Goalanda in a three-month period from Nov. 1875 to Feb. 1876. At that time, 12,907 maunds of jute from Baura and 855 maunds from

Jalpaiguri were exported. 7,484 maunds of tobacco were exported from Baura in the last two months of 1875. European cotton manufactures, worth Rs. 17,605, were imported to Baura from Sirajganj of the Pabna District in the same three-month period of Nov. 1875 to Feb. 1876. (99) Baura was famous for its good quality tobacco. The raiyats used to cultivate tobacco in their small plots of land and sell the same to the 'Paikars' or middle men to be resold to the 'Mahajans' on wholesale basis. Tobacco was brought either in bulk or in bundles by the Paikars. The raw tobacco before delivery needed to be drowned into water for specification. After being dried, that was packed up again in bundles in gunny bags, containing about 130 lbs. each. Those were sent to Goalanda by boat and thence to Calcutta by rail. (100)

A sample survey of some old Marwari families of the district reveals the following. Late Bisweswar Lal Kanodia and his four sons, namely Satyanarayan, Bhadarmal, Muchilal, and Omprakash Kanodia have long been associated with the district's trade at Dinbazar. At present, they are engaged in grocery, and the stationery business, and the retail and wholesale business of foodgrains along with the production of candle. (101) Kaluram Agarwal and his family members Chiranji Lal and Ramdin Agarwal have been engaged in various kinds of business, the prominent being cloth and grocery, since 1880 A.D. (102) Late Lachhiram Lakhotia, Manick Chand Lakhotia and Madan Lal Lakhotia

have their business establishments at Dinbazar.(103) Hanumandas Mahesree came to Dinbazar with his father Tikam Chand Mahesree in 1938. His grand father was Gopal Chand Mahesree. They were mainly involved in the cloth and stationery business. It is noteworthy that they initiated their trading venture by Hawkery and via retail business, finally emerged as wholesale merchants. (104) Ratiram Mahesree started his career as a hawker of Dhuti, Saree, Lungi, etc. Then he along with his son Tansukhrai Mahesree embarked on the cloth business after setting up a permanent shop in 1946. It helped to improve their lot as they began to carry on business with a variety of items like mustard-seeds, ground-nuts, rice, foodgrains, sugar, cement, etc. Besides, they undertook the agency of the items of the Hindusthan Lever Company and also took a rationing licence in 1964 - 65. The nature of their business was 'aratdari' (stocking) and wholesale distribution. A late member of this business concern is Matilal Mahesree, Son of Tansukhrai Mahesree. (105)

The family of late Bisweswar Lal Khorla, Kishori Lal Khorla, and Shyamlal Khorla was engaged in wholesale business of foodgrains at Mainaguri. (106) So also the Behani family with members like Tejmal, Ramprotap, Ram Chandra, Ram Lal Behani, had the business to stock jute and Tobacco and are now carrying on a business of a lot of items including cloth, motor-parts, electronic goods, etc. (107) but the most reputed family living at Mainaguri is of the

Kalyanis. The eminent business personalities of this family are Sukhlal, Govindaram, Kaluram, Gaurisankar and Hoshiari Lal kalyani. With a vast business network, they ventured initially on the stocking as well as retail and wholesale business of jute, tobacco, rice, mustard-seeds, paddy, cloth, grocery, etc. Later on they started their real estate business in lands, opened paper, rice and oil mills and also set up plywood, hardboard and plastic factories. (108) Sant Lal Kalyani, a scion of the kalyani family of Maynaguri also had stocking as well as wholesale and to some extent retail business in jute, tobacco, grocery, cloth, rice, along with an oil-mill at Dhupguri. (109) The Saswat family consisting of Ram Lal, Kisan Lal, Seunarayan and Mohan Lal Saswat was the holder of stock business in jute and tobacco and retail business in grocery, cloth, etc. (110) The proprietors of at least 11 Marwari firms of repute at Dhupguri are Dwaraka Prosad Kalyani (1948, stock business in jute and ground - nuts), Harek Chand Mahesree (1948, jute and tobacco), Sagarmal and Ramkumar Daga (1948, Jute, tobacco and betel-nut), Chandmal and Santok Chand Oswal (1950s, jute and tobacco), Shibdayal and Mohanlal Agarwal (1950s, grocery, cloth and M.R. distributor, rationing), Tilak Chand Mahesree (1950s, grocery), Pannalal Dugar (Hardware and Jute), Purushottam Lal Parekh (Jute and Tobacco), Bal Chand Baid (Jute), Mal Chand Temani (Cloth), and Badri Lal Behani (Grocery). At Birpara, two well known Marwari traders are Sushil Rathi

(tyre and motorparts) and Satyanarayan Agarwal (Foodgrains). (111).

Ramkumar Agarwal and Dwarika Prasad Agarwal, the owners of the Malchand Mahabir Prasad and Company had their retail and wholesale business of petroleum products at Alipurduar. (112) Ram Kamal Agarwal, Jhansiram Agarwal and Nandaram Agarwal had a retail business in utensils. (113)

Jibanmal Daga who came to Alipurduar in 1891, started a business in paddy, rice, jute, tobacco, mustard-seeds, etc. His successors are Norang Rai Daga, Naren Daga and Bachhraj Daga. At present they have an oil mill at Alipurduar which is run by Bachhraj Daga. (114) So Also Meghraj Agiwal is a big merchant at Alipurduar and he deals in foodgrains and grocery on wholesale basis. (115) Ghasiram Agarwal had a wholesale as well as retail business in foodgrains at Alipurduar. (116)

The number of Marwari business firms was 110, out of a total of 300 business firms at Alipurduar in 1971. The number rose upto 114, out of a total of 382. It amply demonstrates the Marwari dominance of the commercial scene at Alipurduar. This is also substantiated in a district Gazetteer. It mentions that two Marwari families- the first one was of Tara Chand babu and the second one was of Mal chand Babu, came to Alipurduar during the early phase of Marwari migration here. They transacted the business of cloth and piece goods. The old market was shifted from the present 'Chowpatty' to 'Betarbhawan' consisting of

many shops belonging to the Marwaris and to some extent to the Beharis. The Marwari families concentrated in a particular place which connected 'Chowpatty' with other market places and hence the place became known as 'Marwari Patti'. In 1915, the population of Alipurduar was enumerated at 25000 which was doubled in 1970s. This was mainly due to the vast extension of trade and commerce.

(117)

The industry and trade relating to tea have now been a monopoly of the Marwaris in the district of Jalpaiguri. In this respect, mention may be made of the Kalyani and Daga groups. The following plantation garden and the associated industry presently belong to the Kalyani groups : (1) Sukna Tea and Industries ltd. (Sukna Tea Estate). (11) Saraswatipur Tea and Industries ltd (Saraswatipur Tea estate), (111) Sunny valley Tea and Industries ltd. (Joypur Tea Estate) (IV) Gour Nitye Tea and Industries Ltd. (Bargara Tea Estate) (V) Goodwill Tea and Industry Ltd. (Bhandiguri Tea Estate), (VI) Gurjangjhora Tea and Industries Ltd. (Gurjangjhora Tea Estate), (VII) S.R.K. Tea processing Industries ltd. (Choulibari Tea Estate). The Director and Chairman of this group is Mr. K.K.Kalyani. (118) The outstanding members of this group are (1) Shri S.K. Kalyani, (11) R.P.Kalyani and (111) B.K.Kalyani (119). The outstanding members of the Daga group are Shri J.K.Daga, Nathmal Daga, B.D.Daga, N.M. Daga, S.K.Daga, Sitaram Daga and Y. K.Daga. Apart from the kalyanis and Dagas, the notable members of the Indian Tea Planters'

Association, Jalpaiguri, are Shri R.L. Agarwalla, Ajit Agarwalla, S.K. Nahata, Chotelal Nahata, R. Maheswari, and J.K. Thairani. (120) The leading tea estates under Marwari enterprise in the Jalpaiguri Division are (i) Katalguri Tea Co. Ltd. (Banerhat) (ii) Atiabari Tea Co. Ltd. (Kalchini), (111) Northern Bengal Tea Corporation Ltd (Nedam Tea Estate, Mal), (iv) Diabari Tea Co. Ltd. (Madhu Tea Estate, Kalabari and Mathura Tea Estate), (v) Amritpur Tea Co. Ltd. (Raipur Tea Estate), (vi) Friends Tea Co. Ltd. (Kailashpur Tea Estate), (vii) Khayerbari Tea Co. Ltd., (viii) Debpara Tea Co. Ltd, (ix) Monmohinipur Tea Co. Ltd., (x) Palashbari Tea Co. Ltd., (xi) Debijhora Tea Co. Ltd. and (xii) Nepuchhapur Tea Co. Ltd. (121)

About sixty-six (66) Marwari business firms are at present conducting business at Alipurduar with various kinds of commodities and having various agencies. Those are (1) M/s Amichand and Abhoy Singh, (2) Palatram Shaw, (3) Sohanlal Bimal Kumar (Barabazar), (4) Amar Chand Shyamsundar, (5) Bajranglal Maheswari, (6) Mahabir Metal Stores, (7) Mahabir Stores (8) Manick Chand Rajkumar, (9) Mangilal Lалуani, (10) Rajkumar Pawan Kumar and (11) Bhagwan Mahesree (Station Road); (12) Bhairudan Surajmal, (13) Bhairudan Joremal, (14) Badrilal Sitaram, (15) M/S Bimal Nahata, (16) Dhanraj Lалуani, (17) Fatechand Nahata, (18) Indrachand Kan hallal (19) Jubarai Kundalia, (20) Joy Singh Kumar Daga, (21) Kalyani brothers, (22) Kishanlal Bhanwar-

lal, (23) K.K.Maheswari, (24) Kalyani Enterprise, (25) Kalyani Traders, (26) Lalchand Meghraj, (27) Mohanlal and Co., (18) Malchand Mahabir Prasad, (29) Mohanlal Bula-kichand, (30) Manoj Kumar Agarwala, (31) Matilal Nahata (32) Maheswari Stores, (33) Matilal Brothers, (34) Nagarmal Sharma, (35) Narayan Chand Daga, (36) Prem Kumar & Suresh Kumar, (37) Rajasthan Bhandar, (38) Ram Kumar Ghasiram, (39) Ramnarayan Ramkumar, (40) Shri Goyel Trading Co. (41) Sitaram Jaynarayan, (42) Satyanarayan Ghanshyamdass, (43) Surajmal Agarwala, (44) Sitaram Jhavar, (45) Seoratan Sankarlal, (46) Shri Jain Stores and Jain Mills, (47) Tolaram Banjoria, (48) Agarwal Brothers, and (49) Abhoy Karan Dugar (Marwaripatty); (50) Basraj Nahata, (51) Jagannath Jhanwar & Sons, (52) Jugal Kishore Daya Shankar, (53) Mohanlal Ghasiram, (54) Ramabatar Satyaprakash, (55) Rameswarlal Rajkumar, and (56) Sushil Kumar Hariprasad, (57) Subhakaran Nahata, (58) Sardarmal Nahata (Puranbazar); (59) Babulal Sarof and (60) Tikam Chand Mundra (Subhaspally) (61) Biraj Flour Mill (Santinagar), (62) Hanumanmal and Kedarmal and (63) Maheswari Brothers (Chowpatti); (64) Lakhmiprasad Gupta, (65) Thakurshidas Pugulia and (66) Pariwal Brothers, (Maya Talkies Road).

(122) The concentration of a bulk of Marwari settlers in a particular place further indicates the Marwari fellow feelings which attracted the later migrants to settle around the dwellings of the early migrants and thus the Marwaripatty grew at Alipurduar. This had been a common feature of Marwari settlements anywhere in India.

Some Marwari merchants were holding a number of important office bearer posts of the Alipurduar Babasyee Samity for the year 1987. They are Meghraj Agiwal (Asstt. Secretary), Kishanlal Jhawr (Treasurer), Jagadish Jhawr (Member), Subha Karan Nahata (Do), Makhan Lal Agarwal (Do), and Mohan Lal Surana (Do), Gopal Soni (Do), Prem Kumar Goenka (Do). An available list of president and General Secretary as well as the members of the Samity for some different years since 1971 exemplifies the predominance of the Marwari merchants in the district's trade and commerce. Fatehchand Nahata became the president of the Samity for the period from 1971 to 1976. Lalchand Baid became the General Secretary for the years 1976 and 1980 and the president for the continuous period from 1981 to 1987. (123) The members' list for the year 1985 consisted of the Marwari merchants like Begraj Agarwal (Asstt. Secretary), Sukhlal Lahoti (Treasurer), Dwarikanath Agarwal (Member), Meghraj Agiwal (Do), Subhakaran Nahata (Do), Kisan Lal Jhawr (Do), Jagadish Jhawr (Do), and Satyanarayan Pariwal (Do). (124)

The district of Darjeeling was the latest creation among the neighbouring districts of Cooch-Bihar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling. Nevertheless, its commercial prospect was most sparkling among the three. This became possible mainly due to its geographical location which made it an entrepot of commerce with the Sub-Himalayan countries, viz, Nepal,

Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet and to approach as far as the central Asia on the North and as far as Bengal including Calcutta on the South. Apart from this international trade system, Darjeeling was also connected with the trans-Himalayan trade system relating to Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet. There were two sides of this trade system. First, Calcutta used to trade with Tibet, China, even with central Asia, through the Himalayan rocky passes, via the Terai and the hilly Darjeeling. At that time, there were two trade routes to reach Tibet. The first one reached Tibet through Darjeeling and Sikkim and the second one approached Tibet through the Buxa Duars and Bhutan. Large quantities of Wool used to come India via Central Asia, China, Tibet, and Bhutan. The famous "Silk Route" entered into India through these hilly Passes. Secondly Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet used to transact business themselves with each other to emerge as a kind of trans-Himalayan trade system. So Darjeeling came automatically under the orbit of an international trade system.

It is already noted that the British annexation of Terai from Sikkim in 1850 and the Duars from Bhutan in 1864 made the British territory continuous from Darjeeling to Purnea and then to Calcutta. This also helped to open new areas of undertaking British Commerce with Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Tibet, China and as far as Central Asia. So it would not be an exaggeration to say that British commerce in Bengal linked with the Central Asia through Darjeeling which

played the role of a buffer zone in this respect. After the formation of the District of Darjeeling, the British interest centred round Sikkim and Tibet as the British themselves were interested in Tibetan trade as a first step towards the promotion of Anglo-Chinese trade through Sikkim and Tibet. (125)

Edgar who visited sikkim and the Tibetan frontier in 1873, narrated the nature of trade between Sikkim and Tibet in the following manner : " While we were at the pass, a man from Gungtuck, with his wife, came up with marwa of their own growing to the value of about six rupees, which they were taking to choombi for sale. They said that they meant to take the proceeds to Phari, where they could buy salt, which they would bring into Darjeeling, where they might probably lay out the proceeds of its sale in an investment for the Thibet market, if they found time to do so before next year's sowing season. There was scarcely a day .....that I did not meet people either coming from, or on their way to Darjeeling with goods..... These Marwa-sellers expected to get six rupees for their Marwa at Choombi, and with the sum to be able to buy at phari four maunds of salt, which they could sell at Darjeeling for Rs. 32, while the value of their Marwa at Gungtuck was only Rs.4-8." This was the nature of business transactions and while the items of export were millet, rice, oranges and madder, the items of import were ponies, blankets, salt, jewellery, yak's

tails, China caps, musk, silk, tea and sheep. Tibet earned the British Rupees. by selling their cattle, salt and other produce in Assam and Nepal. (126)

In case of Bengal's trade with Tibet, the latter, following Bogle's Report, had gold dust, musk and cow tails as the items of export, and coarse cloth, other skins, indigo. pearls, coral, amber, conch shell, spices, tobacco, sugar, malva striped satins and a few white coarse cloths along with snuff boxes, smelling bottles, knives, scissors, spectacles, cloves, nutmegs, sandal wood, emeralds, sapphiers, lapislazuli, jet, cottons and leather as the items of import. In the report Sikkim was deemed as a part of Tibet. (127) While sikkim's exports to Bengal amounted to Rs.8,02,657, the imports amounted to Rs. 1,41,647 in 1976-77. The corresponding figures were Rs. 69,35,711 and 15,51,532 in 1922 - 23. (128) So it is easy to understand that after the formation of the district in 1865, the economic potentiality of Darjeeling as a buffer zone had rapidly increased and the Marwari merchants entered into the scene as a natural business group.

The Marwaris ventured upon a number of commercial undertakings including commissin agency, stock business (aratdari), wholesale and retail business, exports and imports business, ownership of hotels, godowns, restaurants and the like. The stock businesses were mainly of Jute, tobacco, rice, paddy and other foodgrains. These

commodities were dealt in wholesale and retail trade and also used in export and import business. Business with such types of goods require large godowns or ware house facility. So the Marwaris began to be owners of godowns and big buildings. Four of such notable Marwari merchants who became proprietor of few big buildings in 1925 were Sri Hanuman Prasad, Manturam, Kajarimall and Mahungulal Agarwal. (129) Some of the Marwaris were commission agents who dealt in jute, tobacco, rice or paddy, tea and betel-nut.

The Marwaris used to hawk cloth and supply timber and coal in the Terai tea gardens in the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries. Again many of them had retail business in cloth rice, dal (foodgrains), salt, oil and others at the hats and markets. Some with permanent shops in the bazars, conducted wholesale business. In doing so, they did not, however, ignore retail business. After partition, many Marwaris migrated to Siliguri from the adjacent Saidpur, Parbatipur, Rangpur, Domar, Nilfamari, Kushtia and Dinajpur. Again, some came to Siliguri from Assam, the Duars, Jalpaiguri and hilly Darjeeling. So the marwari population had increased enormously over time. With the installation of shops, the scope of business in the Terai also expanded. In the Terai, Siliguri occupied a place of special importance as a seat of commerce. It was the place where the northern terminus of the Eastern Bengal State Railway joined with the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway. Being also the terminus of the cart Road running through

Pedong and ranjit in 1880-81 while the imports were horses, other cattle, foodgrains, brass-ware, ghi, salt, etc, the exports were cattle, European Piece-goods, brass and copper, salt and tobacco. The imports, in connection with Indo-Bhutan trade which needed to be registered at Labha and Pedong in the beginning of the 19th century, were Bhutanese silk fabrics, fruits, vegetables, oil seeds, animals while the exports were cotton, piece-goods, betel-nuts, spices, etc. Trade with Tibet was to be registered at Jalap-La-pass and Nathu-la-pass via Kalimpong and Gangtok respectively. The exportables were woolen and cotton piece-goods, cotton-yarn, silver copper, brass and iron sheets, rice, maize, tobacco, steel, stationery, foodgrains, sugar and gur, dried fruits, almonds and pistachios, dyes and chemicals, Kerosene, candles, lanterns, electric torches and batteries, brick tea, aluminium -ware, porcelain-ware, pearls, leaf-tobacco and pharmaceuticals. The imports were mainly wool and musk, furs, yaks' tails, slaughter animals, bristles, gold-dust, ponies, mules and so on.

In respect of local trade, Tista, Rambh and Panighata were the collecting centres which dealt mainly in oranges. Bijanbari was the collecting centre of seed potatoes. For cardamom, Sukhia pokhri was the main compiling centre. The Marwari traders indulged in all sorts of trade and commerce, Whether of hoarding, export and import, whole-sale and retail and even peddling or wheher it be local and trans-frontier or even international and trans-Hima-

layan trade since their migration to the district in the 19th century. A contemporary gazetteer rightly asserts : "Marwari and Behari control of the commodity trade of the district is practically complete and ..... Marwari and Behari control over retail supply of consumption goods is dominating ". (131)

A sample survey of the Marwari entry into different kinds of business in the district reveals the following : (1) Hanumanmall Kundalia with his business firm Lalchand Amarchand engaged at a time in business of stationery goods and papers. (132) (2) Once Sitaram Gohalyan was a hawker of clothes. Later he and his family entered into the business of hardwares and motor parts. (133) (3) Ramjilal Gidra first came Kurseong in 1920. But later on, he further migrated to Siliguri. Though he came to Kurseong as a manager of Goenka and company limited, he along with his son Toolaram gidra started their own business in foodgrains later on. They also undertook the business of cloth, motor parts and petroleum subsequently. (134) (4) Seukaran Das Agarwalla and his family first migrated to Jalpaiguri in 1921-22. But they came to Siliguri in 1933. Initially they started a business in cloth on retail basis. But as soon as the business was established firmly, his successors transformed the retail business in cloth to wholesale business. (135) (5) Babu Gulab Roy Dalmia, his son Bilas Roy Dalmia and his family were involved in business during three generations. They ventured on

goodgrains, clothes, tea, jute, orange, timber, rice, paddy, nuts, tobacco, money lending, hardwares etc. A present day member of this family, Mohanlal Dalmia now purchases tea from auction markets, and exports that to Behar, Bombay and Calcutta (136)

The Marwaris are inborn traders and a commercial class. They inherit a long past wisdom and efficiency in undertaking commercial ventures. The locational, climatic and economic environment as well of Rajasthan and the surroundings made their ancestors commercial minded. The emerging commercial environment anywhere in the world had tempted them to rush to exploit the situation with early investment and thus to extract huge initial profit. The region around the northern part of West Bengal, which is commonly known as the North Bengal, was also an example of it. The systematic and rapid development of transport and communications by the British created tremendous possibilities of commercial uprising in the region. The abundant production of food crops like rice and non-food crops like tea and tobacco and also the fruits like oranges enhanced these possibilities. The introduction of tea plantation deserves special mention in this connexion. All of these lured the Marwaris to migrate and venture into the business area in the sub-Himalayan districts of the region, namely Cooch Behar, jalpaiguri and Darjeeling.

They undertook every possible type of invesment to promote

local, regional, national and in cases like tea, international trade and commerce. They tried their luck in any kind of business without considering its status beginning from hawking to retail and sholesale including stocking and dealt with any kind of goods varying from agricultural produce to fashionable consumer items, from hardwares to automobiles and to hotels and restaurants. The recent generations have been induced to shift to industrial ventures also. From the mere migrants, they have turned to be the business magnates of the region by virtue of their determination, courage and sincerity. These helped them to emerge as the dominating business class of the region.

#### References

-----

1. W. W. Hunter, op. cit., P. 382
2. Durgadas Majumder, op. cit., P. 71
3. W. W. Hunter, op. cit. P. 382
4. Durgadas Majumder, op. cit., P. 73
5. W. W. Hunter, op. cit., P. 382
6. Durgadas Majumder, op. cit., P. 75
7. J. F. Gruning, op. cit., P. 58
8. Ibid, P.60
9. Ibid, P. 60
10. Abani Mohan Kusari and others, op. cit., P. 105.
11. Ibid, P. 105

12. J. F. Gruning, op. cit, PP 61-62
13. Ibid, P. 103.
14. Manas Dasgupta : "Jalpaiguri Duarser Cha-Bagan" Madhu-  
parni, Op. Cit. PP 183-184
15. Abani Mohan Kusari and others, op. cit., P.135
16. J. F. Gruning, op. cit., P.110
17. Ranajit Dasgupta, Op. cit. P. 31
18. Ibid, P. 37
19. J. F. Gruning, op. cit. PP 111-112.
20. O'Malley , op. cit., P. 73.
21. Barun De and others op. cit. P. 235.
22. Ibid, PP 235, 236 and 242
23. A. J. Dash, op. cit., PP 170-171
24. Ibid, P. 106.
25. Barun Dey and other op. cit., P. 277
26. A. J. Dash, op. cit., P.116.
27. Barun De and other, op. cit., P. 279
28. Ibid, PP 240-241.
29. A. J. Dash, op. cit., P. 169.
30. Barun De and others, op. cit., P. 272.
31. Ibid, P. 274.
32. O'Malley, op. cit., PP 129-130.
33. Ibid, P. 129.
34. Bhagabati Charan Bandopadhaya : Cooch Beharer Itihas,  
edited by Dr. Nripendr Nath Paul, 1987, PP 20, 224 and  
225.
35. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch Behar

State for the year 1911-1912, C.S.P., 1912, sec. VI, P. 12

36. Krishnendu De : " Cooch Beharer Byabasaye-O-Banijya-Sekal Eakal", Madhuparni, op, cit., PP 178-179.

37. Informations obtained from Sample Survey with the following Marwari businessmen : (i) Punam Chand Lakhotia (ii) Ganesh mal Saroigi, (iii) Motilal Lakhotia, (iv) Bachhraj Baid, (v) Daulat Ram Pugalia, (vi) Anai Chand Sant, (vii) Hansraj Jain, (viii) Srichand jain, and (ix) a present day member of the Binjraj family Cooch-Behar.

38. Interview with Gauri Sankar Agarwal, Buxirhat, Cooch Behar.

39. Interview with Vikam Chand Mahesree, Buxirhat, Cooch-Behar.

40. Interview with Lun Karan Oswal Buxirhat, Cooch-Behar.

41. Interview with Rautmal Oswal, Tufangunj, Cooch-Behar.

42. Interview with Meghraj Oswal, Tufangunj, Cooch-Behar.

43. Interview with Champa Lal Baid, Dinhata, Cooch-Behar.

44. Interview with Ashkaram Bothra, Dinhata, Cooch-Behar.

45. Interview with Jawaharlal Jain, Mathabhanga, Cooch-Behar.

46. Ibid.

47. Interview with Bijoy lal and Sampat lal Bothra, Mathabhanga, Cooch-Behar.

48. Interview with Bijoy Lal and Sampat Lal Bothra, Mathabhanga, Cooch Behar.

49. Interview with Indra Chand Saroigi, Mathabhanga, Cooch- Behar.

50. Interview with Punam Chand Bothra, Mathabhanga, Cooch-

Behar.

51. Interview with Indra Chand Anchalia, Changrabandha, Cooch-Bihar.

52. Interview with Manick Chand Surana, Cooch-Bihar.

53. Interview with Indra Chand Kothari, Changrabandha, Cooch-Bihar.

54. Interview with Bachhraj Choadhry, Changrabandha, Cooch-Bihar.

55. Interview with Ram Chandra Mahasree, Mekhliganj, Cooch-Bihar.

56. Interview with Hanuman Mal Mahasree, Mekhliganj, Cooch-Bihar.

57. Interview with Chiranji Lal Lahoti, Haldibari, Cooch-Bihar.

58. Interview with Jay Chand Lahoti, Haldibari, Cooch-Bihar.

59. Interview with Brij Ratan Binani, Haldibari, Cooch-Bihar.

60. Madhab Chandra Dutta: "Cooch-Biharer Zilla Babasayi Samitir Chalchitra". Smaranika a special issue, published by the Cooch-Bihar Zilla Byabasayi Samity on 2nd April, 1995, to commemorate its silver jubilee year celebration.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. Records and Registers - Cooch-Bihar Zilla Byabasayi Samity.

64. District Census Handbook, Calcutta, 1996, P.126.

65. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1891-1892, C.S.P., 1892, P.10.
66. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1897-1898, C.S.P., 1898, Sec- VI, P.82.
67. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1891-92, C.S.P., 1892, P. 23.
68. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1900-1901, C.S.P, 1901, Sec. V, P. 55.
69. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1891-1892, C.S.O., 1892, P. 23.
70. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1891-1892, C.S.P. 1892, Sec. I, P.9.
71. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1892-93, C.S.P., 1893, Sec -VII P. 21.
72. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1899-1900, C.S.P., 1900, P.115.
- 73.The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1897-1898, C.S.P., 1898, Sec. VI, P. 83.
74. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1906-1907, C.S.P., 1907, P.18.
75. Ibid, PP 7 and 18.
76. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1907-1908, C.S.P., 1908, P.16.
77. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1901-1902, Sec. VI.
78. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar

- State for the year 1911-1902, Sec. VI. P. 19.
79. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1891-1892, Sec-I, P. 9.
80. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1891-1892, C.S.P., 1892, Sec. I, P.9.
81. The Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch-Bihar State for the year 1901-1902, C.S.P., 1902, Sec-VI, P.19.
82. Madhuparni, op. cit., P. 147.
83. J. F. Gruning, op. cit., P. 111
84. Saratchandra Ghosal " Cooch-Bihar Darpan", Vth issue, 1938, Cooch-Bihar, PP 52-54.
85. Parimal Kr. Bandopadhyaya : " Cooch-Bihar Shilpa Sambhavana", Madhuparni, op. cit., PP 455-456.
86. Records and Registers of the Merchants Association, District of Jalpaiguri.
87. W. W. Hunter, op. cit., P. 297.
88. J. F. Gruning, op. cit., PP 110-111.
89. W.W. Hunter, Op. cit., pp 298-299.
90. J.F. Gruning, op. cit., pp 110-111.
91. D.H.E. Sunder: Survey and Settlement of the Western Duars in the district of Jalpaiguri, 1889-1895, Calcutta, 1895, p. 25.
92. Ibid, p. 38
93. Ibid, pp 44-45.
94. Ibid, p. 46.
95. Ranjit Dasgupta: Economy, Society and politics in Bengal: Jalpaiguri - 1869-1947, p. 75.
96. Ibid, p.61.

97. Dr. Chandidas Lahiri:"Jalpaiguri Zailler Babasya Banijya", Madhuparni, op. cit., pp 173-174.
98. W.W. Hunter, op. cit., pp 299-300.
99. Ibid, p. 300
100. Ibid, p. 298
101. Interview with Satyanarayan Kanodia, Dinbazar, jalpaiguri.
102. Interview with Ramdin Agarwal, Dinbazar, jalpaiguri.
103. Interview with Matilal Mahesree, Dinbazar, Jalpaiguri.
104. Interview with Hanuman Das Mahesree, Dinbazar, Jalpaiguri.
105. Interview with Matilal Mahesree, Dinbazar, Jalpaiguri.
106. Interview with Shyam Lal Khorla, Maynaguri, Jalpaiguri.
107. Interview with Ram Lal Behani, Maynaguri, Jalpaiguri.
108. Interview with Hoshiari Lal Kalyani, Maynaguri, Jalpaiguri.
109. Interview with Sant Lal Kalyani, Dhupguri,, Jalplai-guri.
110. Interview with Mohan Lal Saswat, Dhupguri, Jalpaiguri.
111. Interview with Sant Lal Kalyani, op, cit.
112. Interview with Dwarika Prosad Agarwal, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri.

113. Interview with Nanda Lal Agarwal, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri.
114. Interview with Bachhraj Daga, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri.
115. Interview with Meghraj Agiwal, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri.
116. Interview with Kisan Agarwal, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri
117. Suranjan Dutta Roy: " Sahar Alipurer Atit-O-Bartaman" Satabarshiki Smarak Grantha - 1869-1868, B.S. 1377, PP 104-105.
118. Platinum Jubilee Souvener 1915-1990, Indian Tea Planters' Association, Jalpaiguri, 1991.
119. Ibid, PP 2-5.
120. Ibid, PP 2-5.
121. Ibid.
122. Souvenir-Alipurduar Babasayi Samiti, 1990.
123. Ibid, P. I
124. Ibid, 1986.
125. Dr. J. C. Debnath : " Sikkim as the Anglo-Chinese Trade Route and its trade with Tibet and Bengal". The North Bengal University Review, 1981, PP 73-74.
126. Ibid, PP 77-78.
127. Ibid, PP 79-80.
128. Ibid, PP 82-83.
129. Pradyot Kumar Basu, op. cit. P.
130. A. J. Dash, op. cit., P. 162.
131. Ibid, P. 175.
132. Interview with Hanuman Mal Kundalia, Siliguri, Darjeeling.
133. Interview with Sitaram Gohalyan, Siliguri, Darjeel-

ing.

134. Interview with Toolaram Gidra, Siliguri, Darjeeling.

135. Ibid

136. Interview with Mohan Lal Dalmia, Siliguri, Darjeeling.