

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My interest in the study of Rajbanshis developed about two decades ago when I used to accompany my father during his visits to the remotest parts of the district of Cooch Behar as a responsible human being and as a committed social activist. Indeed, I have learnt from him my first lesson of history, society, economy and politics of the district and the region. My father provided me every possible congenial space to learn and understand the history of the region and the history of the people. Soon after my post graduation I was encouraged to take up a study on Rajbanshis by my teachers as well as by senior social activists and political leaders who happened to be the close friends of my late father. But for different reasons the interests never got translated into action. I had almost given up the idea when Professor Pradip Kumar Sengupta, presently, Dean, Faculty of Arts, North Bengal University, suggested that I apply for the Research Fellowship of a U.G.C. sponsored Major Research Project under Dr. Dilip Kumar Sarkar, Head of the Department of Political Science, Government College, Cooch Behar (there after joined in the faculty of Political Science, Presidency College, Calcutta). I was awarded the Research Fellowship and here is the work I did for three years of my tenure as a Research Fellow. I am most grateful to Dr. Dilip Kumar Sarkar who is at present the Controller of Examinations, North Bengal University, for the fellowship and to the University Grants Commission for necessary grants. The submission of this work in the form of a thesis would not have been possible without the active support, academic care and guidance of my research supervisors Dr. Dilip Kumar Sarkar and Dr. Pradip Kumar Sengupta. Infact they have provided me required enlightenments to understand the principal issues of my research studies both conceptually and operationally.

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