

**SOCIAL AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS
OF
NORTH BENGAL (1911-1969)**

**A Thesis submitted to
University of North Bengal for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in History**

Submitted by
Manashi Sengupta

Under the supervision of
Prof. Ratna Roy Sanyal

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL
2016**

DECLARATION

I hereby declared that the Dissertation entitled “**Social and Political Movements of North Bengal (1911-1969)**” is really an original work and it has been set down under the kind supervision of Prof. Ratna Roy Sanyal, Department of History, University of North Bengal. To the best of my knowledge it has not been submitted to any other University or institution for a Ph.D degree or any other Award.

Manashi Sengupta

(Manashi Sengupta)

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

Dr. Ratna Roy Sanyal
Professor *ftd*
Department of History



Raja Rammohunpur
P.O. North Bengal University
Dist. Darjeeling - 734013
West Bengal (India)
Phone : 0353 - 2776351(O); 9474090193(M)
E-mail : rroysanyal@yahoo.com

Ref. No.

Date.....

CERTIFICATE

Certified that Smt. Manashi Sengupta has pursued her Ph.D. Dissertation entitled “**Social and Political Movements of North Bengal (1911-1969)**” under my supervision. The dissertation is her original work. The dissertation is now ready for submission for the award of Ph.D. degree.

RoySanyal 18.01.2016
(Ratna Roy Sanyal)

Prof. Ratna Roy Sanyal(ftd)
Department of History
University of North Bengal

Preface

Ever since my childhood, I had been cherishing in my mind a desire to know the history of Socio – Political movements in details. And the present work – ‘Social and Political Movements of North Bengal 1911-1969’ had offered me a bright scope to satisfy, to some extent the very desire of my mind. The social movements which emerged during this period created serious identity problem of different ethnic groups of this region. The movements though started as a social one but ended as a political one. So the social problems were inextricably connected with the political problem. As a result the social and political movements influenced each other and finally led to the complexities of life of the area.

I had mentally decided to work on this interesting topic and when I intimated this to my teachers Dr. Ananda Gopal Ghosh and Dr. Ratna Roy (Sanyal), they encouraged me a great deal and referred some basic works on the movements. And thus I started to work and to write the Dissertation on it under their kind supervision.

The primary objective of this Dissertation is to highlight the socio- political movements of North Bengal. The pattern and character of the movements was more interesting. I have also tried to reveal the reasons of starting these movements during the period of my study. Barring this there are some other socio-political upsurges of the minor ethnic communities will be discussed in a nutshell.

The name of this work indicates that I had sought to put forward the outline of the history of the Socio – political Movements in the districts of North Bengal, not the whole of Bengal or India. I had been an inhabitant of Maldah district since my very birth. In fact, born and brought up in this district of North – Bengal, I had been eager to find out this district of North – Bengal. It is my sole duty. And I had thus chosen North- Bengal as my field of enquiry.

Therefore, the coincidence of the twin facts; my interest in the Socio – Political movements and my sense of belonging to North Bengal had inspired me to work on the Socio- Political Movements of North Bengal. I do thus once again express my sense of sincere gratitude to all those who had helped me directly and indirectly in writing this paper.

Acknowledgements

The work 'Social and Political Movements of North Bengal- 1911 to 1969' is originally a dissertation. It seeks to ventilate both major and minor social and political movements of North -Bengal during 1911 - 1969.

This work on the Social and Political Movements is, in fact, a fruit of a sincere desire to get the clear picture of socio- political movements of North- Bengal in greater detail. In such work I have had valuable suggestions, generous help, effective guidance and noble inspiration from several quarters to all of which I do sincerely express my deepest sense of gratitude and respect.

In this direction I am grateful to my supervisor Prof. Dr.Ratna Roy Sanyal - Department of History, North Bengal University, for her generous guidance and untiring help, on several important points; the clarification made by her, I do gratefully acknowledge, was a treat indeed.

I am especially indebted to Prof. Ananda Gopal Ghosh - Department of History, North Bengal University and Sri Utpal Roy -Assistant Prof. of Malda College for supplying some basic information relevant to my work.

I do also extend my grateful thanks to National Library (Kolkata), State Archives (Kolkata), Writer's Building library (Kolkata), Census Office Kolkata, Bangiya Sahitya Parisad Kolkata, North Bengal University Library, Himalayan Studies Centre (N.B.U.) Raja Rammohanpur, Darjeeling, Malda women's College Library (Malda), Public Library (Malda), Raiganj Central Library Raiganj, Uttar Dinajpur.

Among other persons, I do feel especially indebted to my father Sri Anil Kumar Sengupta- an Ex-Service man of Malda Land and Land Reforms Office and my husband Sri Amiya Kumar Roy who have injected in me a sense of love for this research work.

Finally, I must wish to thank Sri Bijoy Kumar Das an Ex-Asstt. Teacher of Araidanga D.B.M. Academy, Araidanga, Malda without whose initiative this Dissertation work would not find broad daylight.

Date:

Manashi Sengupta



ABBREVIATION

Govt	:	Government.
W.B	:	West Bengal.
A.I.G.L	:	All India Gorkha League.
M.M.A	:	Malda Muhammadan Association.
S.R.C	:	State Reorganization Commission.
U.C.R.C	:	United Central Refugee Council.
C.P.I	:	Communist Party of India.
T.A.S.O	:	Transferred Area Suryapur Organization.
U.T.J.U.S	:	Uttarbanga Tapasili Jati /Upa-jati Sangathan.
U.K.D	:	Uttar Khand Dal.
P.W.D	:	Public Works Department.
R.S.P	:	Revolutionary Socialist Party.
C.U	:	Calcutta University.
A.J.N.D.M	:	Alipur Jela Nirman Devi Mancha.
G.J.M.M	:	Gorkha Jana Mukti Morcha

Contents

	Pages
Preface	
Acknowledgement	
Introduction	1 - 9
Chapter - I : Geo-Political, Social and Demographic Profile of the Area	10 - 31
Chapter - II : The Emergence of Social Organization	32 - 58
: A. Hill North Bengal, B. Plain North Bengal	
Chapter - III : Socio-Political Movement of the Rajbanshis up to 1947....	59 - 93
Chapter - IV : Post-colonial Geographical, Administrative and Political ...	94 - 107
: Scenario of North Bengal	
Chapter - V : The Post-colonial Political Movements.....	108 - 150
: A. Banga - Bihar Merger Movements	
: B. Berubari Movement	
: C. Enclave Problem	
Chapter - VI : Politics of Migration.....	151 - 187
Chapter - VII : The New Social Movements : Socio-Political	188 - 206
: Upsurge of the Minor Ethnic Communities	
Conclusion	207 - 209
Photo	210 - 219
Appendices	220 - 236
Bibliography	237 - 247

Introduction

The present proposed Dissertation will highlight both major and minor social and political movements of North Bengal during 1911-1969. The social movements which emerged during this period created serious identity problem of different ethnic groups of this region. The movements though started as a social one, ended as a political one. So the social problems were inextricably connected with the political problem. Both social and political movements influenced each other and finally led to the complexities of socio-political condition of the area.

In order to get a clear picture of the problems of the area I would like to provide a social structure of this region. At the same time I want to highlight also the importance of the selection of the period because the social problem which was gradually taking place at that time virtually led to the foundation of social conflict and discontent in the closing phase of my study. The year 1911 was a memorable year in the political annals of Bengal nay India, because Bengal was re-unified in 1911 but had lost the status of the capital of India. The year 1911 was also an important year in the social annals of North Bengal. In this year the first caste and ethnic based social organization sprang up here. The name of the organization was Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samiti. It emerged in the canvas of North Bengal as a social organization but within a short time this organization entered into the political arena of region. In fact, since the beginning of the election system particularly after the Montegu Chemsford reform of 1919 the Kshatriya Samiti fielded candidates in the Bengal Council election of 1921. Since they never looked back as a social organization but asserted them both as a social and political organization, this transformation of this social organization – the Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samiti from a social body to a political organization created a serious problem in the political line of the region is directly connected with the transformation of the Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samiti during the period of my study.

The year 1969 was also a remarkable year in the political atlas of my area of study of North Bengal. In that year the first ethnic based political organization

named the Uttarakhand Dal was founded. The emergence of Uttarakhand Dal initiated a change in the political profile of North Bengal because this was not only an ethnic- based political organization but also an ethnic- based regional political organization.

Area of Study

The area which I have selected for my research study is popularly known as North Bengal. The administrative areas which belong to the different area of North Bengal in undivided Bengal were the eight districts of Rajshahi division. They were Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Pabna, Bagura, Maldah, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling. Though Cooch-behar State was a native state, it was also considered by the people of North Bengal as a part and parcel of North Bengal. North Bengal was partitioned like Bengal during the great partition of 1947. After the partition practically one third of North Bengal belonged to India and two-third, to East Pakistan.

Chapterization: The whole research work is mainly divided into seven chapters.

Chapter -1: Mainly deals the Geo-political, social and demographic picture of North Bengal in brief, as North Bengal is a multi racial and multi lingual region.

Chapter-2: Generally discusses about the emergence of social organizations in two parts of North Bengal, (A) Hill North Bengal (B) Plain North Bengal. All these organizations were deeply connected with the process of socio cultural development of North Bengal.

Chapter-3: Provides a critical analysis about the socio-political movement of the Rajbanshi Kshatriyas up to 1947. The Rajbanshis were the majority among the various races of North Bengal.

Chapter-4: Has been devoted to the study of post colonial administrative and political scenario of North Bengal. The year 1947 was an important landmark in the history of Bengal as well as in North Bengal. At that time the whole North Bengal was reorganized both administratively and politically.

Chapter-5: Mainly deals some post colonial political movements namely Banga Bihar merger movement, Berubari movement and Enclave problem. All these problems particularly the Berubari movement and Enclave problem were created due to the activities of the colonial Government.

Chapter -6: Depicts a painful picture of the men who had come to Bengal as a result of partition of India in the year of 1947. They had no food and shelter. They had become into marginal men. They were also known as refugees. So a burning question originated regarding refugees whose wave had touched North Bengal deeply.

Chapter-7: Gives an overall picture about the socio-political movements of some minor ethnic communities named Santal, Rabha, Chain and organization like TASO and Chhatrishha movement. All these communities had started movement for fulfilling their own aspirations.

The conclusion is part summarizing the findings of all the seven chapters of the research. In this chapter an attempt has made to prove the entire Hypothesis which has come to my mind.

Review of Existing Literature

The number of major publications on this problem is very scanty. It is true that some works have been taken by the scholars upon the pre-independence period of the area. But with regard to the post-independence period I do not find any publication on this problem either in the book or monograph form. Here I would like to draw attention to one important point. The point is that number of research academic publication on this theme is negligible. However, I am giving the names of some books and, Thesis papers upon the period of my study.

1. Caste, Society and politics in India by Sushan Baily, 2001: In this book Sushan Baily explores the emergence of the ideas, experiences and practices which gave rise to the so-called ‘caste-society’ from the pre-colonial period to the end of the 20th century.

2. Social and Political Tension in North Bengal since 1947 (edi) by Dr. Sailen

Debnath-2007: The book is a compilation of articles authored by eminent personalities. It contains the information and analysis on the Social and Political Movements in North Bengal since the attainment of independence in 1947. The authors have tried their best to bring into light the causal connections of the origins and developments of different movements and insurgencies vis-a-vis the role of the Government either in Kolkata or Delhi.

3. Studies in Micro History: Political movements in some parts of India and Bangladesh (1857-1947) by Maloy Sankar Bhattacharya -2007:

The book deals about the political and economic impact of the expansion of the British Empire, the spread of western education and modern communication systems, among other things, brought about significant changes in the life of the people evoking popular response which at times took the shape of the political agitation in due course.

4. Economy, Society and Politics in Bengal: Jalpaiguri (1869-1947) by Ranjit

Dasgupta-1992: The book is an authentic study of the economic, social and political changes in Jalpaiguri district (North Bengal) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

5. Caste, Politics and the Raj (1872-1937) by Sekhar Bandhopadhyay -1990:

The book explores the attitude of certain lower castes to Nationalist Movement in Bengal. It also shows that their aspirations were not accommodated within the mainstream of Nationalist Politics.

6. Dynamics of Caste Movement:-The Rajbanshis of North Bengal (1910-1947) by Swaraj Basu, 2003:

In this book the author deals about the sincere attempts of the Rajbanshis to establish themselves as Kshatriyas, in the first half of the 20th century in Bengal.

7. The Marginal Men by Prafulla kumar Chakraborty-1910:

The book discusses about the history of the refugees coming from East Pakistan and their impact on the politics of West Bengal. The book also deals about what way the refugees had rehabilitated themselves occupying land by force, violating Government order.

8. States and politics in India by Partha Chatterjee 1999: The book is the combination of fifteen land mark essays that collectively presents an overall view of Indian politics. The essays analyze India's major political Institutions among other judiciary, bureaucracy and the party system and also possess domination and resistance that have been under way during fifty years of independence.

10. Gorkhaland Movement - A study in ethnic separatism by Amiya Kumar Samanta- 2000: The book discusses about the activities of the G.N.L.F (Gorkha National Liberation Front) and their gradual attempt to create a separate land i.e. Gorkha land in Darjeeling district.

11. Caste, Class and Politics by Anil Bhatt- 1975, the book is an empirical profile of social stratification in modern India. The author gives authentic account of stratified society of modern India.

12. Caste in Indian Politics (edi) by Rajani Kothari-1970: This book covers details of caste movement in Gujrat and Tamilnadu both from historical and theoretical perspectives. It also considers caste political movements in Rajasthan, Andhra and also in urban areas of Pune and Agra.

13. Caste, Caste conflict and reservation by I.P.Desai-1985: The book is a study of an Anti-untouchability movements of the Mahar of Maharashtra. The Mahar was called 'Dalit' in society.

14. The Rajbanshis of North Bengal by Charu Chandra Sanyal-1965: The book deals about the character, life and culture of the Rajbanshis living in Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar.

15. History of All India Gorkha League (1943-1947) by Bhai Nehar Singh and Kirpal Singh (edi): The book gives some original documents which clearly indicate the purpose and motive of establishing A.I.G.L in Darjeeling district.

16. Caste, Protest and identity in colonial India - The Namasudras of Bengal (1872-1947) by Shekhar Banerjee, 2011: The book presents a curious case for being the largest Hindu caste group in Bengal and a census defined community in 1872. They disintegrated after the partition of India in 1947.

17. Rajbanshi kshatriya Jatir Itihas- by Upendra Nath Barman- Jalpaiguri, 1966: This is a book written in Bengali. The book deals about the history of the Rajbanshi Kshatriyas critically.

18. Nationalist Movement and Freedom Struggle in some selected area of Northern Bengal-N.B.U, 1986: by Maloy Shankar Bhattacharya. In this Thesis paper, Dr. Bhattacharya throws light from the bondage of the British in some selected areas of Northern Bengal such as, Maldah, Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar etc.

19. The Dynamics of Social Mobility Movements among the Rajbanshis of North Bengal and Assam-C,U,1976 by Biman Das Gupta: This Thesis paper deals about the life and culture of the Rajbanshis and their movement for Kshatriya status in North Bengal and Assam.

20. Ethno- Political Aspects of Regional Movements- N.B.U, 1997- D.N. Das: In this Dissertation Dr. Das has discussed about the background and origin and development of the Regional Movement in the context of U.K.D (Uttara Khanda Dal).

21. Protest Movements and the Political Process:- A Study of their implications, in Contemporary Indian Politics- N.B.U, 1998 by Srinanda Dasgupta: This Thesis paper of Dr. Dasgupta deals about Protest Movements in different parts of India such as Gorkhaland Movement (Darjeeling), Kamtapur Peoples' Party's movement for a separate State of Kamtapur backward Castes movements in Punjab, Bihar, Gujrat and Maharashtra, Tamilnadu and women's movement for equality, liberation in Bihar, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Kerala.

It is evident from the above review that no author and researcher wrote any book or thesis paper on my theme. Someone has discussed about social and political movements with regards to India, someone has discussed about the political problems of North Bengal partly. Again some researchers have touched North Bengal partly. Therefore, it can be anticipated that the proposed study would be able to ventilate the social and political movements of North Bengal during 1911-1969.

Hypothesis

The first major hypothesis which have come to my mind is that North Bengal is the origin of connection between North-Eastern India and Aryabarta. It is the gateway to North Eastern India. Due to this particular geographical location there was an advent of people of various regions here. There was not such arrival of new settlers to any other area like Uttar Banga. The new settlers came here and had transformed into local people. This is the main feature of demography of North Bengal.

The second major Hypothesis that pre-occupied my mind is owing to the development of Western education and culture a large number of social organization grew in different parts of north Bengal 1) Hill North Bengal and 2) Plain North Bengal. There was a micro difference between the organizations of Hill and plain North Bengal. For example, in Darjeeling Hill men's Union belonged to Nepali, Bhutia and Lepcha races. They wanted to form a breach between the hill people and the plain's people with regards to political, ethnic and cultural grounds. In 1917 Hill men's Association was formed. Their activities had paved the way for the emergence of an ethnic political party named A.I.G.L. It started its career as an all India political body of the Gorkhas and Nepalis of the different nook and corner in India. But in plain North Bengal (Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur, Maldah, Cooch-behar) I do not find such type of this organization.

3. The third major Hypothesis is that the social structure and demographic pattern and cultural milieu of the area concerned are different from the rest of Bengal. The largest native settler of the region is the Rajbanshis Kshatriya. The paradox is that in the social structure of Bengal the Kshatriya caste did not exist. But the Rajbanshi claimed the Kshatriya status. Naturally it created a socio-psychological status conflict between the Rajbanshi Kshatriya on the one hand and the upper caste of the area.

4. The fourth major Hypothesis which came to my mind is that the year 1947 was an important land mark in the history of India. In that year India was partitioned. Side by side, North Bengal as a part and parcel of Bengal was re-organized both

administratively and politically. Consequently, a large number of problems gathered momentum like Barubari movement and Chhitmahal problems.

5. The fifth major Hypothesis is that in 1955 the S.R.C was formed to reorganize in West Bengal. Among the recommendations of the commission, one was the merger of Banga with Bihar. Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy- the then Chief minister of Bengal and Sri Krishna Sinha – the then Chief minister of Bihar supported it for administrative and communicative facilities. The people of Bengal started anti-merger movement in 1956 and became successful.

Side by side the problem of Berubari and Chhitmahals - both are the major problems, according to me. They are peculiar geo-political problems of my area of study. Recently, an attempt has been made to solve these problems but these problems are not totally solved.

The sixth major Hypothesis that has come to my mind is that there was a strong background during colonial period which created communal feelings between the Hindus and Muslim. In a word, the Britishers had shown the seed of Refugee problem or Migration problem. The refugees had come from Pakistan to Bengal. But the Govt. failed to give them adequate shelter. So the refugees forcibly occupied land and formed colonies in Bengal, whose wave had touched North Bengal also.

The seventh major Hypothesis is that North Bengal was the habitat of different backward classes. These classes were exploited and oppressed by upper classes. So they were compelled to start movement for fulfilling their hope and aspirations. Among the backward classes, mention must be made of Santal, Rabha, Chain, Chhatrishha and Taso.

Lastly, in conclusion I have tried to solve all my hypothetical issues with regard to my research work.

Methodology

In preparing this dissertation, I have followed different types of materials. The first is a traditional one and the second, the modern one. In regard to the first one, I have collected materials from the State Archives of India, National Library, District Collectorate Record Office and also the oldest libraries and Institutions. In regard to the second one I have collected materials from regional Institutions and persons. Apart from this I have given much importance on oral history study. Actually, I have left no stone unturned to give vent to my pent-up feelings by using every atom of my stamina to fulfil my long-cherished dream and aspiration. With this end in view, I, untiringly ran from pillar to post to meet a huge number of social and political luminaries of the region and interviewed them by presenting before them a printed questionnaire in respect of my Dissertation work. That's why; both field study and oral history study have played a dominant but significant role in the Dissertation work.

CHAPTER - I

Geo-political, Social and Demographic Profile of the Area

North Bengal – the northern part of west Bengal is the combination of seven districts viz coach-behar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur, Maldah and Alipurduar. A large number of ethnic groups i.e Rajbanshi Nepali, Mech, Rabha, Oron, Munda, Santal, Malpahari, Toto, Kheria, Jugi, khi, Pan, Poliya etc are the inhabitants of this region. There are also higher castes people in this region. But the Rajbanshis are the largest group of people in North Bengal.

Geographically, North Bengal is the medium of communication between north east India and Aryabarta. For this, Geologists say that North Bengal is the gateway of north-east India. Owing to the geographical position there was the influx of people of different tracts of Indian Sub-continent from the dawn of history. From ancient period it maintained its own tradition and it became the headquarter of the whole of Bengal at one time. In ancient time North Bengal was the capital city of Bengal. It played an important role during later Gupta period and Sasanka period which were contemporary with the history of North–East India and Northern India also.

In this context it can be said that North-Eastern region of India was one of the greatest migration routes of mankind¹ and the population which probably depict the mixture of all races namely Aryans, the Alpaine, Iranian and the Tibeto, Burman. They settled in the region taking their own culture, language and region and became groups of Non-Hindu affiliations.²The region was also the natural home of Non-Aryan tribes bearing Mongoloid traits and features. Cooch-Bihar was the headquarter of the tribes namely Koch, Rajbanshis and Poliyas.³The region also gained importance in the history of Bengal during medieval period. Bengal-particularly North-Bengal was always in the main spring of history from early medieval period to the advent of the colonial rulers. Keeping in mind of all these

things, it may be clearly said that North-Bengal maintained a glorious past. It is well known that for sometime this region with its geographical and political eminence deeply influenced different aspects of the history and archaeology of Bengal.

At present North-Bengal is a connector of two divisions of India as a crucial point in the bottom of the Himalayas from the Chinese border. Its geographical proximity with Nepal Sikkim and Bhutan in the North, Assam and Bangladesh in the East and Bangladesh, West Bengal and Bihar in the South has given her a vital position from the strategic point of view.⁴ Since a long span of time North-Bengal has served various purposes as the eastern gateway for communicating people and their ideas between the Indian sub-continent in the west and Assam, Burma, China and other portion of South-East Asia in the east.⁵ It is also the medium of assimilating different human civilization.

During Vedic and Puranic age, North Bengal was called as 'pragjyotisha – Kamrupa' and Himalayan regions.⁶ We also can know that in ancient period Bengal was introduced as the name of 'pundra'.⁷ At that time 'Pundra' was the capital of the king of Gauda.⁸ Dr. N.N. Acharya in an article, "New light on North Bengal from the records of Assam history" has highlighted the geographical and political history of this area.⁹

We also get a few other place names and the names of the people related with North Bengal namely Kiratas (Hill people of North Bengal), the Paliyas (Rajbansis of North Bengal) and Kachchha (Cooch-Bihar).¹⁰ A few places in this area have also created a tremendous impact on the cultural history of North Bengal such as kingdom of Matsya was situated on the west of the river Koratoya.¹¹ Vijoyapura was located in the North of Purnia district and the king of Nepal won it.¹² Madra and Salya kingdoms are located in the North-West of Kamrupa and at the lowest part of the Bhutan hills.¹³ In Mahabharata we get the mention of twenty-three princes of the family of Bhagadatta who ruled over Bengal including its northern portion.¹⁴ We have also reference about Bhagadatta – the king of pragjyotis supported the 'Kauravas'. Anga, Banga and Pundra – generally the whole east sided with them.¹⁵ In this context, we also see the

mention of the people directed by Bhagadatta-the Chinese and the Kiratas.¹⁶ From the 'Mahabharata' we came to realize that the Kiratas were mountain-dwellers.¹⁷

From the above discussion we come to know a few geographical names which gave vent to territories covering the entire area of the boundary of North Bengal.¹⁸ It is interesting to note that North Bengal came into the canvas of history during the emergence of the city of Pundra nagara on the bank of the river Karatoya in circa 3rd century B.C.¹⁹ There is no question about it that Bengal at that time occupied a very significant place in the political and economic spheres of India. This is proved by the writing of the Greek and Roman writers.²⁰ Pliny – a great Roman writer of the first century A.D. mentions the Gangaridai through which the river Ganga flowed, in the annual parts of its course. Virgil-the great Roman poet also mentions the Gangaridai.²¹ We also get information from the 'PERIPLUS OF THE ERYTHAEAN SEA' written by a Greek writer about the five mouths of the Ganges conquered by the Gangaridai where the king lives in the city of Gange.²² The name and fame of Gangaridai flourished the remote countries of the west during the next five hundred years.²³

During the post-Mourya Period North Bengal was eminent from cultural point of view. A large number of Kushana coins have been discovered both in North and South Bengal. But these coins do not give any signal about the Sovereignty of the Kushanas over Bengal.²⁴

R.C. Majumder mentions that the then Bengal was divided into a host of States namely, SAMATATA including the delta of the Ganges to the east of the present Hooghly river. Another state was DAVAKA which was situated between SAMATATA and KAMARUPA. The real location of Davaka cannot be ascertained. Fleet depicted it as the ancient name of Dacca, on the other hand V. A. Smith referred it as 'North Bengal'.²⁵

It is true that the establishment of the Gupta Empire was a watershed in the history of Ancient India. During the Gupta's we find the mention of North Bengal. It was included within the Gupta Empire.²⁶ This view is proved by I-Tsing that Maharaja Sri Gupta built a temple for the Chinese priests and granted 24 villages

as property for their maintenance. The temple was called as the 'Temple of China' which located near a Sanctuary called Mi-li-Kia-Si-Kia-Po-no²⁷ which was situated almost forty YOJANAS to the east of Nalanda which was followed by the course of the Ganges. There are some controversies regarding the original home land of the Guptas. Examining the view of Allan and Fleet Dr. Ganguly came to the conclusion that the original homeland of the Guptas was in Bengal, not in Magadha. Dr. Ganguly also said that it was definitely situated at Murshidabad and its distance from Nalanda is nearly forty Yojanas. But Dr. Sudhakar Chattopodhyay has given an argument saying that the Chinese Pilgrim first had gone to the Ganges from Nalanda. They made an expedition along the water-route. The distance from Nalanda to the Ganges should be comprised in the total and this takes us to MALDA in Varendra.²⁸ Owing to some controversy it is impossible for us to accept the view that the early home of the imperial Guptas was situated at Murshidabad, not in Magadha. But it is a fact that some territories of North Bengal came under the sovereignty of the Guptas.

During the post-Gupta period the reign of Sasanka was the most significant event in the history of Bengal. He expanded his Sovereignty over both Northern and Western Bengal. Hiuen Tsang came to Bengal in 638 A.D after the death of Sasanka. He remarks that barring territory round Rajmahal, four kingdoms in Bengal namely Pundra Vardhana, Karna Suvarna, Samatata and Tamralipta were under the grip of Gouradwipa Sasanka. The first two were the two component parts of Sasanka's kingdom such as North-Bengal and Northern portions of Western Bengal.²⁹

After the death of Sasanka there was anarchy and confusion in Bengal both in Southern and Northern parts. After the establishment of the Pala dynasty in the middle of the 8th century A.D. this anarchy ended. North-Bengal had very crucial cultural circumstances during Pala period. During this period North-Bengal was annexed within the network of the Pala Empire.

After the Palas the Sena Rajas had included North-Bengal within their empire. We come to know from Deopara Inscription that lord of Gauda who escaped before Vijaya Sena, was certainly Mahananda Pala whose territories in

Bengal were at that period limited to North Bengal. The inscription proves that the magnificent temple of Pradyumnesvara was created by Vijaya Sena. The ruins of this temple are now situated on the bank of a vast tank at Deopara nearly seven miles to the west of the town of Rajshahi. This records the conquest of North Bengal by Vijaya Sena. He made an expedition to North Bengal against Vardhana King of Kausambi and overthrew him. Probably Lakshmana Sena - the grandson of Vijaya Sena took an active role in this expedition.³⁰ From this discussion it seems that North Bengal had some importance geographically under Sena kingdom.

During Sena rule the Turks suddenly attacked Bengal. Lakshman Sena at that time was the Sena ruler. The only source of knowing the Muslim invasion in Bengal during Lakshman Sena is 'TABAQAT-I-NASIRI'³¹ written by Minhaj-ud-din. When Bakhtiyar Khalji attacked Lakhnawati, Lakshman Sena fled to East Bengal. Consequently the Sena rule came to an end and Bakhtiyar Khalji established Muslim rule in Bengal. A new episode started in the history of Bengal and North Bengal particularly.

The Sultans of Bengal founded new cities like Gour and Pandua which had great impact on life and different activities of the people of North Bengal. With the advent of Islam in this area and the mixture of an alien culture with the existing system of Bengal in every sphere gave a new change and produced new ideas in the history of Bengal. But in modern time the geo-political profiles of North Bengal was totally altered. Before the partition of India North Bengal was a vast area. Some portion of which is lying with Bangladesh at present, now an independent State. At that period the boundary of North Bengal was limited within the northern part of the Ganges and the western part of the Brahmaputra river.³² North Bengal at that time was comprised of the area of undivided Rajshahi Division (Dinajpur, Pabna, Bagura, Rangpur, Rajshahi, Jalpaiguri, Maldah, Darjeeling, Cooch-behar - the princely state, some portion of Purnea district in Bihar and some portion of undivided Nadia district. Further the districts of Goalpara and Kamrupa of Assam were located within the geographical authority of North Bengal.³³ Akshay Kumar Maitreya has referred that the Rajshahi

Division was known as North Bengal including the districts of Rajshahi, Maldah, Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, Rangpur, Bagura and Pabna. In short, it was the picture of North Bengal during pre-partition period.

After the partition of India in 1947, the term North Bengal took the dimension of a verbal geographical area which had no legal recognition. Though North Bengal is a specific geographical area in the northern part of West Bengal including five districts (seven districts at present), its socio-political characteristics and identity cannot be ignored. Government has taken various measures keeping in view of its importance. In recent times many scholars of different branches are trying whole-heartedly to highlight the issues of North Bengal. But the cause of these issues and problems are yet to be examined and special emphasis should be given in a proper way, which are connected with identity question.³⁴

It is true that North Bengal is the assimilation of various groups of people with various cultural identities. The Aryans, the Non-Aryans, Dravidians and Mongoloid people all had come and settled here. Hence North Bengal can be said to be a portion of Kiratbhumi.³⁵ The early settlers of North Bengal are the Kiratsas or the Mongoloid's origin.³⁶ But it is true that the Rajbanshis are the majority in number among different groups in this region. Their social habits and cultural practices always created a general unity. But later on, owing to economic oppression and poverty a series of agrarian revolt (For example—Tebhaga Movement 1946) took place in Bengal during colonial period.³⁷

After independence a tremendous change came in North Bengal and it came into limelight with regards to Socio-political tensions. Consequently the social political movement occurred in North Bengal. It is true that before and after independence many unrest took place in North Bengal. Most of them were ethno-based movement. It is originally a subject of great astonishment that North Bengal was the pioneer of the post- colonial problems. For instance, we can mention some cases namely Coach-Bihar merger question with West Bengal, the Berubari problem and the problem of enclave etc. The nature of these movements were so thought provoking that the name of North Bengal had reached in the National and International arena.³⁸

The geographical atmosphere, religious diversity linguistic variety, difference of people of Uttar Banga reminds us of the beauty of India. For this reasons many scholars have defined Uttar Banga as the 'Epitome of India'. Its northern part is fully enclosed by hill and forest and its southern part –Malda and West Dinajpur is totally apart.³⁹

Cooch-behar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling are known as the land of three "Ts" - tea, timber, tobacco and also the land of Jute. With regard to Malda there is a common proverb--

“Aam—Resham—Dhan

Ai tine Maldar Jan”

(Mango—Silk—Paddy. These three is the life of Malda)

On the other hand, with regard to Dinajpur' people generally think---

“Chal, Chira, Gur

Ai tine Dinajpur”

(Rice, Flattened Rice, Molasses is the life of Dinajpur.)⁴⁰

History is always people-centric. So without the study of population which is known as demography, the history of a society cannot be imagined. In this study a humble attempt has been made to analyse and interpret the demographic changes in the districts of North Bengal in historical perspective.

Darjeeling: Darjeeling district was founded by British Govt. on 1st February, 1835. The East India Company had formed this district taking Darjeeling hill and Terai Plain from Sikkim State and in 1865 Kalimpong hill from Bhutan. When the rule of company was founded, about one hundred Lepchas lived there. There were two thousand Lepchas in Kurseong and approximately three thousand to four thousand Lepcha Bhutias lived in Kalimpong. L.S.S.O Malley – the author of Darjeeling Gazetteers wrote that one hundred Lepchas lived at one hundred thirty square kilometer areas of Darjeeling.⁴¹

At an early stage there was no existence of Nepali people in Darjeeling as a serviceman after the foundation of the British rule there. In this context it should be noted that the British had strengthened their power in Bengal at first and the Bengalees at first learnt the English language. After many years(1858) the Nepalese came here after the establishment of tea-garden. They also came here for joining military service. But they did not back from Darjeeling to settle any where.⁴²

W.W. Hunter in his book named 'A Statistical Account of Bengal' writes that the Nepalese, who formed three percent of the population of the district, are all immigrants. In between 1869 and 1901 the Nepalese increased by about three times. There were 2,77,049 hill people in the district of Darjeeling. Among them 73,648 was Gorkhas.⁴³

The river Mahananda has divided Siliguri into two parts. These two parts were under the grip of Hussain Shah – the king of Bengal. After his death, taking advantage of the weakness of his heirs the Koch Rajas named Bishwa Singha and Silb Singha had occupied the Southern part of Mahananda in 1540 and took this portion under the kingdom of Baikunthapur. Sikkim had commanded the Northern part of Mahananda. But taking advantage of the weakness of Sikkim, Nepal had occupied the northern portion. After it, in the year of 1814 -16 as a result of Anglo- Nepalese war both parts came under the British and were added to Darjeeling.⁴⁴

The demographic character had changed as a consequence of modification of political power. Before Hussein Shahi-age the inhabitants of this tract were the Kichaks. They attacked the Prithu Kingdom of Jalpaiguri and destroyed it. When Bakhtiyar Khalji invaded Tibet, his local guide was Ali Mech. He was a Mech Sardar. At that time people of Mech, Dhimal and Tharu clan had begun to live here. But when this area came under Koch dynasty, it became the homeland of the Rajbanshi people. Later they had transformed into majority community under the enterprise of Baikuntha Pur Raj and Cooch-behar Raj.⁴⁵

There were Sannasi and Giri Upadhidari people at Phanshidewa Thana of this Sub –division (Siliguri), They came here from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh with the help of Raikots of Baikuntha Pur. They fought against the British in favour of the Raja of Baikuntha Pur. After the war some Sannasi had begun to live at the jungle of Baikuntha Pur and made matrimonial relation with Rajbansi people.

During the Sepoy Muting a group of non-Bengali army took shelter at the jungle of Baikuntha Pur and mixed themselves with Rajbansis.⁴⁶

After the establishment of British rule at Terai tract (1850), a large number of Rajbansi people had begun to live here in order to save themselves from the oppression of Bhutanese people. The Bengalese of East and South Bengal came here as the revenue collectors of the East India Company. Their number enhanced gradually with the expansion of railways, tea garden and timber business.

There was a natural collection between Terai tract of Uttar Banga and Uttar Bihar. After the foundation of railways at Siliguri this connection very much extended. Now Siliguri is a metropolitan city.⁴⁷

Jalpaiguri: The Jalpaiguri district as an administrative unit was formed in January, 1869 by the British administrator. The five police stations of Rangpur, namely Boda, Panchagarh, Tetuliya, Patgram and Debiganj.⁴⁸ were joined with the newly annexed Western Duars to form the district Jalpaiguri. It was bounded by Purnea district of Bihar and Darjeeling district on the west; on the north, by Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan and some part of the Darjeeling district; on the south by the districts of Rangpur, Dinajpur and Princely State of Cooch-behar. The district consisted of two familiar tracts which differed each other by the physical appearance, geographical formations, economic and production performances, tenurial arrangement, and administrative machineries in the colonial period. One tract covering the area of 879sq. miles consisted of Patgram and western region of the River Teesta came under the British rule after the acquisition of the Dewani. This region was a Regulation area and a part of the Permanent Settlement area. The other tract lying to the east of the River Teesta having an area of 2053sq.miles was known as Western Duars or generally Duars was annexed after the Anglo

Bhutanese war in 1865; this was a non Regulation area and not a part of permanently-settled area.

With the large tracts of forest, ecology, social formations sparse population practicing primitive forms of land use, in the district Jalpaiguri. Soon after its appearing was subjected to major structural changes including demography. The result was that within few years of its formation the district came to bear the imprint of the best and the worst manifestations of the colonial system more prominently than many of the other districts of Bengal which already had been under colonial rule for more than a century. At the time of formation, the district Jalpaiguri was inhabited by the little density of population. In 1858-59, at the time of revenue survey of Rangpur, a rough census was made to enumerate the people and found that the population of the permanently settled part of the Jalpaiguri district was 189,067;⁴⁹ but there is nothing that, how or in which method this enumeration done? Regarding this enumeration the Deputy Commissioner reported in 1870 that, 'the estimate was too low'⁵⁰ In 1865-67 a survey of the Western Duars was made and a rough estimate of the population of the region done at the total of 49,620,⁵¹ but there is little doubt whether it was done correctly, because during the war of 1865 there was temporary emigration. In 1870 the Deputy Commissioner made the first settlement of the Western Duars and conducted a special census in connection with it, the population estimated here at 100,111.⁵² The first scientific and systemic census of Jalpaiguri was done in 1871-72; and from then there were large structural changes in the demographic nature in the district and in both tracts. (See table -1)

Table:-1**Growth of Population in Jalpaiguri District, 1872-1931,⁵³**

Census	Jalpaiguri		Jalpaiguri (Western Duars)	
	Population	% of Increase	Population	% of increase
1872	4,17,855	----	90,668	-----
1881	5,80,570	26.97	1,82,687	101.49
1891	6,80,736	28.30	2,96,348	62.21
1901	7,87,380	15.66	4,10,606	38.55
1911	9,02,660	14.64	5,19,372	26.49
1921	9,362,69	3.72	5,58,971	7.62
1931	9,83,357	5.00	6,61,068	18.26

The following table no. 2 is statement which shows the changes in the density of the population in the Jalpaiguri district, Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri sadar.

Table no.2 Variation in the Density (Person per SQ. Km);1901-71⁵⁴

Area	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971
Whole Jalpaiguri District	88	108	113	120	138	149	220	280
Sadar Jalpaiguri	127	137	134	139	156	163	236	301
Alipurduar	43	73	87	98	115	132	202	264

In a half century between the year 1872-1921, the population of the district had increased by 244.2 percent.⁵⁵ As stated above the total population according to the census of 1901 was 787,380, the number of inhabitants of the district having increased by 15.66 percent since 1891. In the census of 1891 obviously, the growth of population in some of the thanas of the Duars during the same period was spectacular, which was most marked in the Alipurduar Sub-division where it was 64.75 percent⁵⁶. It is said that the population increased in the district mainly due to massive immigration.⁵⁷

Table No. 3 Details of the Census wise First Generation Immigration in the Jalpaiguri District.⁵⁸

Year	No. of Immigrants.
1901	95,899
1911	1,52,174
1921	1,63,024
1931	1,58,757
1941	15,56,765
1951	2,78,842
1961	4,54,177

The question arises why such type of massive immigration took place in this district. In this context it can be said that the uninhabited forest and cultivable waste land attracted a large number of land hungry settlers who had come from Rangpur, Dinajpur, Pabne, Malda, Rajshahi, Bogra, Goalpara, Maymensingh and neighbouring Cooch-behar state, it appears that Cooch-behar supplied most of the sharecroppers and lower ranks of tenantry. Between the censuses of 1881 and 1891 it sent 32,224 immigrants to Duars. This was not only the highest among all districts but also formed one third of the total immigration to duars in that decade.⁵⁹ Joteders of these areas ardently welcomed the immigrants that they were used to cultivate the barred lands as labourers. Another factor encouraging immigration was a new economic activity. The tea gardens had begun to be established shortly after the formation of the districts and within early last decades of the 19th century its economic possibility became clear. Expansion of the tea plantation continued at a rapid pace up to 1920s. Tea industry also attracted immigrant labourers of the districts of Bankura, Purulia, Birbhum. Medinipur of West Bengal, Santal Parganas, Ranchi, Palamou of Bihar and Balasore and Mayurbhanj district of Orissa.⁶⁰

Many tea-garden colliers after working for a time and saving a little many settled themselves permanently in the district. These people had either purchased the lands from the Meches, paying two or four hundred rupees for each or had obtained settlement in the name of the Meches (the earlier settlers) after paying consideration to them According to Subhojyoti Roy, the expansion of agriculture

in the northern parts of the Duars bordering on the tea gardens was also carried out by these migrants.⁶¹ In the absence of any penal laws to hold labour. The management often settled small plots of land with the labourers who also held considerable land outside the tea-gardens directly as tenants of the Govt. or worked as sharecropper for others of their own community.

In 1895 the settlement officer found many Oraons who had come from Ranchi district and settled forever as Joteders in Maynaguri, Falakata and Alipur tehsils.⁶² By 1910 upwards about 60,000 acres land in the district were settled with persons who were either tea-garden workers or their descendants.⁶³ In this regard the govt. had given considerable thought for arranging large-scale migration from the districts of neighbouring states in the goal of extending cultivation and to collect a large amount of revenue. In this attempt the Govt. took various initiatives such as in 1876 a scheme was launched by the Deputy Commissioner to induce people from Patna Division to settle in the eastern parganas of Duars. This particular scheme ended in a fiasco but the idea and tradition of induced migration was revamped in 1890 when a group of 500 Santals was brought over Godda in the Santal Parganas in collaboration with Rev. A.J Shields of the Church Mission Society and settled in Alipur tehsil.⁶⁴ Apart from the privileged rates of rent the settlers were granted free railway passes to the Duars.⁶⁵ All these initiatives undoubtedly increased the idea of immigration towards Jalpaiguri district.

After the partition of the country in 1947 it gave rise to the problem of influx of refugees from East Pakistan, especially into the border districts, immigration of Hindu refugees in Jalpaiguri was more or less counter balanced by the emigration of Muslim refugees. After 1951 more Hindu refugees from East Pakistan poured into Jalpaiguri than Muslims who left for that country. In the Census of 1961, 4,54,177 persons enumerated in the district were found to have been born outside the district i.e. they were the first generation emigrants. It is found that the first generation immigrants formed one third of the total district population in 1961. Nearly half of the total first generation migrants, comprising 2,18,341 persons were from Bangladesh and they constituted 16% of the total population, 1,8,912 persons were from other states of India, they constituted 11.7

of the total population. Most of these persons were from Bihar and Assam, some were also from the Punjab, Hariyana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.⁶⁶The share of other districts of W.B. in the immigrant population of Jalpaiguri district was only 7.4% or 33,579 persons.

The Census of 1961 found Jalpaiguri district inhabited by 13,59,292 persons and in the Census of 1971 it has been found that the district was inhabited by 17,50,159 persons. In the decade between 1961 and 1971 the population of the district had increased by 28.75% or at the rate of 2.87% per year. The percentage of growth of population between 1961 and 1971 was considerably lower than percentage of growth between 1951 and 1961. In the Census of 1961, it was found that the population of the district had increase by 48.27 over what it was in 1951 i.e. the population had raisen at the rate of 4.83% per year. In the 1961-1971 decade, the rural population of the district had increased by 28.05% or 2.81% per year. In 1951-1961 decade, the rural population had recorded an increase of 45.25% or 4.53% per year. In the 1961-1971 decade, the urban population of the district recorded an increase of 35.75% over the population of 1961, i.e. an increase of 3.57% per year. Here too the rate of increase was lower than in 1951-1961 decade. In 1961 it was found that the urban population had increased by 35.97% over the urban population of 1951, i.e. an increase of 3.59% per year.

Cooch-behar:- Cooch-behar district in the north-eastern frontier of India is included in the Jalpaiguri Division of W.B. Until the 28th day of August, 1949 it was an Indian State ruled by the Maharaja of Cooch-behar. Who had been a feudatory prince under the British Government. By a document dated 28th August, 1949 Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan of Cooch-behar ceded his territory to the Dominion Govt. of India. The transfer of the administration to the Government of India took place on the 12th day of September 1949, from which date Cooch-behar was ruled by a Chief Commissioner appointed by the Govt. of India. By an order under section 290A of the Govt. of India Act of 1935, Cooch-behar was transferred and merged with the province of W.B on 1st January, 1950. Since then Cooch-behar is being administered as a district of W.B.⁶⁷

There had been no attempt before 1871-72 to enumerate the people living in the tract of the land now forming Cooch-behar district. The first enumeration of 1871-72 was not a simultaneous count but was spread over three or four months beginning in November 1871 and ending in February 1872. This Census disclosed a total population of 5,32,565 persons. The next Census was in 1881 when the total population was found to be 6,02,624 of whom 3,11,678 were males and 2,90,946 were females. The increase in the total population was 70,059 or 13.15 percent. The third Census was in 1891 when the total population was ascertained to be 5,78,868. This showed a decrease of 23,756 or 3.9 percent from the population of 1881. The population was further counted in 1901 and the Census taken that year shows the total population as 5,56,116 or a fall of 4.1percent.

There was a slight increase of the population by 1911 as the Census taken that year showed a population of 5,91,012. The increase was 25,896 or 4.58 percent. The two successive Census of 1921 and 1931 showed the population to remain almost static. The population found in 1921 Census was 5,90,599 and the 1931 census found the population as 5,89,053. The decrease in absolute number was 413 and in percentage 0.07 between 1911 and 1931 these figures were 1,546 and 0.26 percent respectively. The slight fall in 1921 was due to the influenza-epidemic. In 1931 there was a further decline owing to cholera and small pox-epidemic of 1928 and 1929. The population started increasing from 1941 and increase has been going on till now. In 1941 the total population was 6,38,703 the decade increase was 49,650 or 8.43 percent. In 1951, the population was 6,68,949; the decade increase was 30,246 or 4.74 percent. In 1961 the population was 10,19,806; the decade increase was 3,50,857 or 52.45 percent. In 1971 Census the total population has been found to be 14,12,148 the decade increase being 3,92,342 or 38.47 percent.⁶⁸

The total population according to 1961 Census was 10, 19,806 and of this number 7, 21,927 persons were born in the district. Thus about 298 thousands persons were born outside the district and of this number a little over 252 thousand were born in Pakistan.

These came mostly from the adjacent districts of Rangpur and that portion of Jalpaiguri district which was partitioned off from India by the Radcliff Award. This territory now forms part of Bangladesh. Of this 298 thousand, 171 thousand were males and 127 thousands were females. In this migrant population, females work out at about 700 thousand. The migrants from other states of India were: 18,269 from Bihar, 6,396 from Assam, 1,860 from Rajasthan, 1,596 from Uttar Pradesh, 397 from Orissa 312 from Madhya Pradesh, 244 from Punjab and 176 from Andhra Pradesh.⁶⁹

During the ten years period, from 1951 to 1961, the immigrants into the district numbered 11,603 while the emigrants numbered 33,969. There has been a net loss of population to the extent of 22,366. The maximum movement of population has been from and to Jalpaiguri district. While 7,265 immigrated from Jalpaiguri, 15,362 immigrated to that district. There has been also quite large emigrations to the industrial districts of 24 Parganas, Calcutta, Howrah, Hooghly and Burdwan; the numbers being 4,852, 4,352, 1,236 and 1,284 1,792. This is what is to be expected of a district which has hardly any industrial potential at present and which has had a 220 percent rise in population in the thirty year period from 1941-1971.⁷⁰

Maldah:- The district of Maldah is the southern most district of North Bengal. The district is situated on the bank of River of Mahananda. It depends entirely on agriculture. There is no importance of this district industrially production of raw Silk and Mangoes are the only two important characteristics of the district's economy. The district is also an integral part of the Jalpaiguri Division.

In 1912, when the partition of Bengal was annulled, it was included in the Rajshahi Division till 1947. On the 15th August, 1947 the fate of the district was undecided, it having not been clearly indicated by Sir Cyril Radcliff whether it would go to Pakistan or remain in India. On the 17th August, 1947 the details of Sir Radcliff were published, it was found that the district would be partitioned, the thanas of Sibganj, Nawabganj, Bholahat, Nachol and Gomastapur being transferred to Pakistan.⁷¹

Maldah is one of the smallest districts of West Bengal and also one of the few districts where demographic changes have come slowly and are not significant through the decades. The district is the habitat of various tribes like Rajbanshi, Santals, Nagar, Dhanuk, Chain along with Hindus and Muslims.

There is a common important feature of this district. The feature is that the district has an ardent connection with Bangladesh through which a large number of migrants have come to the district but their role in the case of Maldah has never been remarkable either in 1961-1971 or in the preceding decades. The following statement will show the decadal percentage variation of population in Maldah during the last Seven decadal, since 1901.

Percentage decade variation in Maldah 1901-1971.

Decade. 1	Total. 2	Rural. 3	Urban 4
1901-11	+15.72	+16.07	+3.80
1911-21	1.77	-1.69	-4.81
1921-31	+4.99	+4.75	+14.44
1931-41	+17.19	+16.61	+38.06
1941-51	+11.05	+10.44	+29.37
1951-61	+30.33	+29.78	+44.44
1961-71	+31.98	+31.89	+33.95

An intimate relation was made between Maldah and Purnea, Katihar and Darbhanga. So a lot of Maithilis lived here. It is difficult to say when and how the Maithilis landed at Maldah. It can be anticipated that they had come here during Sena Age. There are many Marwaries in Maldah district. They maintained the title of Satiar and Podder. They probably came here during the sultan regime of Gour. Among the Marwari Society of Uttar Banga only the Satiars had assimilation with Bengali Society.⁷²

Mention must be made of a lot Behari people among the Zaminders and Joteders of Maldah. During the 2nd half of the 19th century the Zaminders and

Joteders of Maldah brought many Santals to cultivate the barren lands from Chhotonagpur Pargana. They are now regarded as an important tribe of Maldah district.⁷³

In order to save themselves from Bargi attack many people took shelter in Maldah from the opposite bank of the river Ganga. After Chuar rebellion a large number of tribal people settled here. So it can be said that most of the people of North Bengal were outsiders. Among them Rajbanshis were 30%, 20% other backward castes and rest 50% were caste Hindus.⁷⁴

West Dinajpur:- The district of West Dinajpur came into existence in August 1947, as a consequence of the partition of Bengal. At that time the British left India, India had been divided into two parts - one part was known as India and other as Pakistan. On the other hand, the province of Bengal came to be divided in accordance with this partition. The dividing line passed through the district of Dinajpur, the portion lying to the West of line being called West Dinajpur. The district is included in the Jalpaiguri Division of W.B.⁷⁵

West Dinajpur is the home-land of Caste Hindus along with Koch-Rajbanshis, Poliya, Gope, Bhuimali, Oraon, Munda, Turi and Malo. A large number of Muslims also live there.

North and South Dinajpur is actually Poliya based district. During British rule a large number of Santals had begun to live here. They are invited by the Joteders and Zaminders of Dinajpur in order to cultivate barren land and there by establish new colonies. After partition many people have come here from East Pakistan. They were known as Bhatia.⁷⁶

During the decade 1951-61, a total number of 159,907 immigrants entered the district and were enumerated during the 1961 Census. Of these, 97,839 came from Pakistan (Probably East Pakistan), 33,992 from Bihar and 22,125 came from other districts of W.B. There were 1,087 immigrants whose birth place could not be exactly anticipated. Of the 22,125 immigrants from other parts of W.B about 14,974 came from the neighbouring district of Maldah. The number of immigrants to the district during the decade 1951-61 is somewhat inflated.⁷⁷

REFERENCES

1. Mills J.H.-Assam Review, March 1928 p-24.
2. Mosahary R.N. - Aryanisation and Hinduisation of the Boros – Bhattacharya J.B. (edi) proceeding of the North East India History Association, Tenth Session, Session. Shillong 1989, p-165.
3. Hunter W.W.A Statistical Account of Bengal vol-X, p—346
4. Acharya N.N- New Light on North Bengal from the record of Assam History, Mukharjee B.N. and Bhattacharya P.K.(edi) Early historical perspective of North Bengal, published by North Bengal University.1987, p-72
5. Ibid.
6. Sirkar D.C. Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India, Varanasi 960 p -7
7. Mahabharata -Mukharjee B.N. and North Bengal, North Bengal University, 1987, p-5
8. Rajatarangini _ IV 420-21.
9. Mukharjee B.N, Bhrttacharya P.K (edi) op.cit., pp77-79
10. Sirkar D.C: Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India, Varanasi, 1960, pp 103-104.
11. Bhuyan, S.k.- Kamrupa Baranji, Gouhati 1958, p-112.
12. Ahmed Khan Chowdhury, Amanatulla (in Bengali) Part-1, Cooch-behar-1936, p195.
13. Hamilton W. Description for Hindustan, Vol-1 1971, pp 202-203.
14. Rabinson W. – Descriptive Account of Assam –Delhi, 1975, p-147.
15. Majumder R. C (edi) History and Culture of the Indian people, Vedic Age 1971, p-306.
16. Bhattacharya Mandira – Some Aspects of the Cultural History of Assam, Bulletin of the Cultural History of Assam, Bulletin of the Assam State Museum, No.-VI 1985, p-38.

17. Mahabharata—Sabha Parba, XIV, p-32
18. Mukherjee B.N and Bhattacharya P.K. – op. cit., p-5
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Majumder R.C.- Classical Account of India, pp-454-455
22. Ibid., pp-137-138
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Indian Historical quarterly review vol-XIV, pp-532-35.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Chattopadhyay Sudhakar- Early History of India pp 137-138.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Majumder R. C-History of Bengal Part-1 Dacca University, p-2.
32. Mahmud Abdul Oshab (ed) Itihash Anusandhan.
33. Dakua Dinesh- Kamatapuri Andolodner Asol Uddyesha Calcutta-2001, p-15.
34. Mukharjee B. N and Bhattacharya P.K. (edi) op.cit, p-157.
35. Ibid.
36. Chatterjee partha – Agrarian Relations and communalism in Bengal, 1926-1935
in Ranjit Guha (edi) Subaltern Studies- 1 Delhi 1982, p-9
37. Debnath sailen (edi) – Social- Political tensions in North Bengal since 1947.
Vol-I. Global Vision Publishing House, New Delhi 2007, p XII.
38. Hutton- caste in India, 1946, p-I.
39. Nath Lopita—Ethnicity and cross border Movements in the North –East,
Minerva Association Pvt. Ltd. 2003, p-2.

40. Bandopadhyay Asoka—Uttar Banga Parichay, p-9—12.
41. O' Mally L.S.S—Bengal District Gazetteers Darjeeling, pp—58.
42. Ibid.
43. Hunter William—A Statistical Account of Bengal Part-V.
44. O' Mally L.S.S –op cit., pp 24-42.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid., p-58
47. Ghatak Sri Bijay Ch.—Siliguri Saharer Itibritta—Siliguri 1984, pp—65-178.
48. These five districts later included in East Pakistan now Bangladesh after partition, 1947.
49. Gruning;John F,'Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers Jalpaiguri, Siliguri, 2008, p-38.
50. Ibid., p-39
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. Jalpaiguri District Gazetteer Statistics 1901-1902, Calcutta, pp.3-29
54. Kusari, Abani Mohan—West Bengal District Gazetteers, Jalpaiguri, Calcutta 1981, p-75
55. Ibid., p-72
56. Ibid.
57. Sunder, D. N. E; Final Report., p-46.
58. Kusari, Abani Mohan. op. cit., p-73.
59. Monohar F, C-Report of the Dooars Committee 1910., p-23.
60. Kusari, Abani Mohan. op. cit., p-72.
61. Roy, Subhajyoti, Transformations on the Bengal Frontier Jalpaiguri (1765-1948) London 2002., p-79.

62. Sunder, D. N. E; op cit.,p-47.
63. Ibid.
64. Sunder, D. N. E; op cit., p-47.
65. Ibid.
66. Kusari, Abani Mohan. op. cit., p-76.
67. Majumder Durga Das- District Gazetteers (Cooch-behar) Feb.-1977, pp. 1-6.
68. Ibid.
69. West Bengal District Census Hand book – Cooch-behar (1971), pp. 45-46.
70. Ibid.
71. Sengupta Jatidra Chandra-West Bengal District Gazetteers- Maldah (December 1969), pp. 1-6.
72. West Bengal District Census Hand book—Maldah (1971), pp- 1-18.
73. Sengupta Jatidra Nath-op cit., pp. 1-16.
74. Ibid.
75. Sengupta Jatidra Nath-West Bengal District Gazetteers – West Dinajpur- 1965, pp. 1-18.
76. Ibid.
77. West Bengal District Census Hand book—West Dinajpur (1961), pp. 51-59.

The Emergence of Social Organization

A) Hill North Bengal B) Plain North Bengal

The last quarter of the 19th century gave witness of gradual transformation of the people of North Bengal in the Socio-Political sphere.¹ Consequently, a host of social associations originated for socio-cultural and political developments. These associations proved themselves as an important network for promoting social and cultural awareness. The creation of social organizations was evident in two parts of North Bengal.

viz, 1) Hill North Bengal.

 2) Plain North Bengal.

A. Social Organization in Hill North Bengal.

Generally, it is known to all that the associations /organizations are formed to highlight the demands of the people and they place their demands of the people and they place their demands occasionally before the administrators for fulfilling their hopes and aspirations.² It is also true that these organizations had arranged meetings and exchanged their opinions for promoting common objectives.³ Though these associations were not long-lived, they acted as a medium of developing ethnic unity. It is known from the secondary sources (lack of primary source) that during the last phase of the 19th century some associations existed, but their characters were ethno-political. We can know from these sources that in 1883 a branch of Indian Association was established in Darjeeling.⁴ In this context Babu Dwaraka Nath Ganguly and Dwaraka Nath Ghosh of Calcutta went to Darjeeling.⁵ In 1886;two representatives from Siliguri were present in 'Indian National Conference'-which was held in Calcutta. So it can be said that both the Hill and plain areas of Darjeeling had ardent and close contact with nationalist organizations.

The person who played an active role in Darjeeling was Bagha Jatin (1902-07). He was the member of Anusilan Samiti and had opened a branch of it in Darjeeling. The name of this organization was 'Bandhav Samiti'.⁶

In 1905, Lord Curzon divided Bengal into two parts – East and West. All people against this partition started movement.⁷In this context Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das and Sister Nivedita delivered speeches at Town Hall of Darjeeling protesting the unjust decision of the British Government.⁸ They expressed the ideals of Swadeshi through their speeches. As a result some Swadeshi organizations emerged in Darjeeling.⁹ Now we shall discuss about some associations of Darjeeling which were founded for socio- cultural upliftments.

Nepali Sahitya Sammelon: In 1924, Dharanidhar Kairala and Suryavikram Janavali—two Nepali teachers and their companion Parasmani Pradhan founded Nepali Literary Sahitya Sammelon. It was particularly a Nepali literary association. Some learned men of Darjeeling were deeply connected with this organization and did their best for the upliftment of Nepali language and literature. It was influenced by the Uttar Banga Sahitya Sammelon very much. The contribution of this association was remarkable and it had far-reaching significance for social and cultural development of Darjeeling hill areas and especially for the entire Nepali community. It translated and published more than twenty written books for the benefit of the School Children.¹⁰

Nepali Sahitya Sammelon established a strong network for its literary development. Barring publication and translation of many books it published a journal named 'Nepali Sahitya Sammelon Patrika' which was acclaimed as a high standard Journal.¹¹ It produced a large number of famous literary works which survived for a few centuries. Considering all these, it can be admitted that this organization made some outstanding achievements for the upliftment of Darjeeling hill area and the Nepali Community as a whole.

2. Gorkha Dukkha Nivarak Sammelon

In the Darjeeling Hill area another Social organization named Gorkha Dukkha Nivarak sammelon was set up in 1932. It had branches in many towns and

cities of India¹² there was a background behind the formation of this organization. The standard of living of the hill community was not so good, though they got higher wages than the laborers of the plain area.¹³ They led a reckless life and ran into debts owing to heavy expenditure on marriage and other ceremonies.¹⁴ So they had to suffer very much. In order to remove their sufferings and deplorable condition they established this organization and mobilized all the Nepali- speaking people throughout India from Bombay, Calcutta, Benaras, Madras, Lucknow and Darjeeling.¹⁵ In a word, the condition of the inhabitants of Darjeeling hill area could better be imagined than described. So the Gorkha Community tried to remove such kind of pathetic sight in a fruitful way assembling on a common platform.

With a view to highlighting their thoughts and ideas, ventilating their problems and preaching their demands, Gorkha Dukha Nivarak Samiti published a literary journal called 'Khoji' in 1940. This journal was actually the heart of Gorkha Dukha Nivarak Samiti. Its chief editor was Rupnarayan Singh, a famous novelist and short story writer. A socio-cultural environment was created for this by the famous scholar.¹⁶ The organization was strong enough to create a hardy platform in-favour of their low social condition. Side by side, it adopted many plans to improve their social condition. Thus the organization played an important role for the socio-cultural upliftment of their community as a whole.

Nebula

Nebula was a social organization of Nepalis, Bhutiyas and Lepchas. It was founded in 1935 and its leading person was K.D.Pradhan of Kalimpong. He worked to ventilate the problems and preach the ethno-political demands of the hill communities of Darjeeling¹⁷. He became popular among these three communities of Darjeeling. His contribution in-favour of this organization was remarkable.¹⁸ It is interesting to note that Nebula emerged as a periodical but at the same time, it gained much importance as a social organization. The organization became successful to promote the consciousness of the Darjeeling hill people.¹⁹ It

cannot be denied that Nebula played a remarkable role in the arena of socio-cultural development of Darjeeling hill area.

Gorkha Samiti and Gorkha Library

Barring the above mentioned associations, the Indian Nepalis formed another organization named Gorkha Samiti which was founded in Darjeeling after the First World War²⁰(1926). It started its work in the name of ‘Anusilan Samiti’- a terrorist organization of Bengal. But it changed its name as ‘Gorkha Association’ under the impulse of the British Government. The president of this association was Agam Singh Giri. Its objective was to uplift socio-cultural interests of the Indian Nepalese.²¹ In the meantime another cultural organization was formed at Kurseong in Darjeeling district named ‘Gorkha Library’. It was inaugurated in 1918 with a view to developing educationally backward Nepali community.

Besides this, some other organizations were formed in Darjeeling. Among them mention must be made of Nepali Sahitya Adhyayan Samiti (Kalimpong), Nepali Sahitya prasar Samiti (Siliguri), Arya Samaj (Darjeeling branch), Hillmen’s Association and All India Gorkha League (Darjeeling). The first three organizations were most active in the spheres of social reforms, cultural activities, publication of books, journals, periodicals and ventilated the socio—economic backwardness of Darjeeling hill people.²²

Like Chhotonagpur region Darjeeling was regarded as an excluded area. Here the British administrative arrangements had cheated the Lepcha Bhutia tribes and gave birth a sense of separatism among them. So the British Government had to appease the Lepcha-Bhutia groups in order to avoid encounter with them. With a view to protecting themselves the British Government had allowed their migration from Nepal to Sikkim.

Side by side there was the influence of Buddhism on the communities like the Tamangs, the Rais and the Limbus. Each of them had separate language. But in course of time the impact of Buddhism over the Tamangs, the Rais and the Limbus had decreased and it was changed into Hinduism. Although they had

retained some Buddhist customs, they were united with one another. This ethnic unity was further enhanced by a large number of retired army men in Darjeeling district who developed a sense of ethnic exclusiveness which was turned into a movement.²³

At the beginning of the Indian Council Act, 1909, the leaders of the hill people (Nepalese, Lepcha and Bhutia) gave a memorandum to the Government for separate arrangements for Darjeeling. The members of the Hill men's union under the leadership of S.W.Ladenla, which was created in the year 1909, raised more articulated demands. The Hill men's Union was the association of the 'military pensioners' Government Servants traders and rich farmers. They belonged to Nepali, Bhutia and Lepcha races. S.W. Ladenla was the heart and soul of this union.²⁴

The demand of the Hill men's union was the creation of a separate administrative unit including the "present Darjeeling district and the portion of Jalpaiguri district which was annexed from Bhutan in 1865." They also suggested for formation of North East Frontier province by annexing "Assam, Doars and hill territories which lie to the east of Bhutan and whose people have affinity with our people".

The fields for separatism were linguistic, racial and climatic as "the plains are entirely unsuited to the hill people, who will not go to the plains".²⁵

The Hill men's union wanted to form a breach between the hill people and the plain's people with regards to political, ethnic and cultural grounds. In the year of 1917 Hill men's Association was formed, whose main purpose was the social development of hill people.²⁶

On the other hand, the Kalimpong Samiti under Sardar Bahadur Bhindal and the people's Association under P.M.Pradhan presented a separate memorandum in 1920 opposing the exclusion of Darjeeling district under the Reforms of 1919. According to them, this type of exclusion will pave the way of backwardness of this district. In a meeting in Kalimpong in July 1920 an objection was given against separatism of Darjeeling from Bengal.²⁷ The signatories in favour of it were

Prem Sing etc. In spite of it, the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919, declared Darjeeling as a scheduled area and did not consider the demand which was submitted by Hill men's Association.

Under the Government of India Act, 1935, Darjeeling was made a partially excluded area from where only one member could be elected to the reserved seat. This did not satisfy the Hill men's union. They had submitted another memorandum in December 1934 in which an idea was made expressing their "utter helplessness to make their voice heard," only the remedy was the creation of North-Eastern Frontier province which was revived by them.

On the eve of Communal Award (1932), the unity of Lepchas, Bhutiyas and Nepalese became strong forming the Hill people's Social Union. On December 23rd, 1934 a public meeting of these hill people of Darjeeling took place under the presidentship of Sardar Bahadur S. W. Ladenla. About 600 people coming from Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong, and other villages had joined the meeting. In this meeting an attempt was made to foster brotherhood among the Nepalese, Bhutias and Lepchas. The most important feature of this meeting was that the Nepalis, Lepchas and Bhutias adopted the common ethnic term 'Gorkha' and the Nepali language.²⁸

At that time the Nepali Christian of Darjeeling had formed Indian Christian Association.²⁹ Besides this, the Buddhist in Darjeeling opened a branch of Bengal, Buddhist Association. Dr. K. C. Bhanj – a writer of a book on Darjeeling says that at this time an organization named 'Young Men's Buddhist Association' was founded in Darjeeling.³⁰

During Second World War C. R. Kasey was the Governor of Bengal. At that time R. N. Sinha – the then president of the Hillmen's Association gave a memorial to Lord Pethick Lawrance – Secretary of State for India in 1941. In this memorial he urged for the formation of North-East Frontier State under Chief Commissioner.³¹ The Association hoped that the British Government would be liberal in this matter as about two lakh Gorkhas had joined the Second World War

in favour of the British. But the developed national political situation had compelled the Gorkhas to stay restrained in the matter of Gorkhas.

Side by side, in Darjeeling the question of recognition of Nepali language was a turning point for all the ethnic groups in the hills and this issue strengthened the grip of Gorkha identity. In fact, the Lepchas, Bhutiyas, Rais and Limbus etc. become very much ferocious to announce Nepali language as their mother tongue and thus the percentage of Nepali-speaking people in Darjeeling increased from 20% in 1957 census to 60% in 1961.

The activities of the Hillmen's Association had paved the way for the emergence of an ethnic political party whose name was All India Gorkha League (AIGL) Darbar Singh Gurung representing from the hill in the Provincial Assembly founded All India Gorkha League in Darjeeling on 15th May, 1943 in order to assure the future of the Gurkhas if India gained freedom.³²

Now I shall discuss some original documents which clearly indicate the purpose and motive of establishing this organization. The Convener, organizer and President of the League –Mr. D. S. Gurung (B. L), was a renowned agitator, Politician and manipulator. After 1947, he was a member of the Constituent Legislative Assembly of the Free Hindusthan.³³

Home – Political (1) 16—1—1943

D—1 Head Office – Kalimpong

North Bengal

President;

D. S Gurung – ESQ. B. L.M.L.A (Bengal)

General Secretary;

R.D. Subba Esq. B.A.

Asstt. Secretary;

B, B. Chetri, Esq. B. A.

S.K. Rai, Esq. B. A.

Aims & Objectives

1. To organize and consolidate all the Gurkhas spread throughout India and elsewhere into one organic whole.
2. To make everyone realize that the Gurkhas belong to the great martial races.
3. To preserve the civilization, tradition and culture of the Gurkhas.
4. To further the development of the Nepali language and make the propaganda for its use.
5. To establish the political rights of the Gurkhas in India.
6. To promote friendship and harmony with all the communities of India.
7. To have connection with the independent kingdom of Nepal—the mother country of the Gurkhas with devotion and loyalty.
8. Special—to mobilize the Gurkhas spread all over India and to render every possible help specially by supplying man power to the allies in bringing the present World War into speedy and victorious end.

Sd/-

D. S. Gurung

D—2

Proceeding of the mass meeting of the Gurkhas of the district of Darjeeling and from outside held on the 15th May, 1943 at 2-30 P.M at the Rink Cinema Hall, Darjeeling to inaugurate the “All India Gorkha League”.

Sardar Bahadur Harjif Dewan Rai was voted to the chair amidst laud cheers.

About two thousand Gurkha men and women attended the meeting. The Hall was packed to suffocation and these who could not get accommodation inside the Hall, listened to the Speeches broadcast by the loudspeaker installed outside on the roof of the Hall from every nook and corner of the district and from Jalpaiguri, Duars and Calcutta. More than two hundred men from different Gorkha regiment

including the retired Gorkha officials were present and took keen interest in the proceedings.

Punctually at 2-30 pm, the tender age girls from different schools sang the opening song and garlanded the president.

Mr. Ari Bahadur Gurung, Bar-at-law read the message of good wishes from different parts of India. Messages from the following gentle men particularly were very interesting and encouraging Sardar Bahadur Jangbir Tamang , Ex-M.L.A. – Assam, Babu Mani Sing Gurung – The Editor of Gurkha Sewak, Shillong, Assam and from Babu N.R. Thapa—Dehradun.

The president having called upon Mr. D.S.Gurung to explain to the people the object of calling the Mass Meeting, spoke on the necessity of starting the All India Gorkha league and gave a brief history of how the idea of All India Gorkha organization developed and explained the aims and object of the League dealing mainly on the following three points.:

Viz,

- 1) The political rights of the Gorkhas in India.
- 2) The duty of the Gorkhas in the Present World War and (3) The relation of the league with the Nepal Government mentioning particularly the gift of Dhir Dham and Bhim Chhatra Briti by the Nepal Government to the Gorkhas of Darjeeling.

Mr. Bal Bahadur, Chettri B.A spoke on the civilization, tradition and culture of the Gorkhas.

Mr. Chandra Bahadur Gurung spoke on the citizenship and the right and duties of Gorkha as citizens of India.

Miss Tsering Lhamba spoke on citizenship and the responsibility of mothers in the uplift of the Gorkha nation.

Mr. Ranadhir Subha, B.A, gave a brief history of the Gorkha army and explained why Gorkhas in India must support the allies in the war for freedom against Hitlerism.

Mr. Shiba Kumar Rai, B.A. spoke on the necessity of starting the All India Gorkha League and moved the following resolution.

“Resolved in view of the fact that the condition of the Gorkhas spread throughout India is very deplorable and that the political Status of the Gorkhas in India is uncertain and that the future of the Gorkhas is at stake, an organization named, THE All INDIA GORKHA LEAGUE be formed at this mass meeting of the Gorkhas in order to look after the interest of the Gorkhas in all respects and particularly to establish the political rights of the Gorkhas in India after the war or whenever only political change takes place in India and further to mobilize the Gorkhas and support the Allies in the war effect.”

The resolution was seconded by Babu Lal Bahadur Nepali of Metteli Duars and was unanimously passed just at 4-15 p.m.

After this the creation of the General committee of the League took place and the following gentlemen were elected:-

Darjeeling

Rai Saheb Purna Bahadur Pradhan, Sarkar Bahadur Sukharaj Limbu, Mr. Bagbir Gurung, Mr. Bharat Singh, Gaharaj, Mr. Bal Bahadur Chettri, Mr. Bir Bahadur Singh, Mr. Nandlal Singh, Mr. Rup Narayan Singh, Mr. Dhanbir Sardar, Mr. Budhiman Lama, Mr. Hastalal Giri, Mr. Makerdhaj Subha.

Kurseong

Sardar Bahadur Harjit Dewan Rai, Captain Kagiman Lama, Sardar Bahadur, The Government of Bengal, Mr. Mangal Narayan Pradhan, Mr. Harka Sing Subha, Mr. Shiva Kumar Rai, Mr. Manik Chand Pradhan, B.Com, Mr. Purna Narayan Pradhan, Mr. Dil Bahadur Chettri, Mr. Keshab Bahadur Gurung, Subedar Purnodhoj Limbu. Mr. Mangal Singa lama, Naib Commendant Rai Bahadur, Nirmal Rai.

Kalimpong

Mr.K.D. pradhan M.A., Mr.Mani Narayan Prodhan, Mr.Tika Narayan Prodhan, Mr.Ranabir Subham, Mr.Ali Bahadur Gurung, Mr.Mani Kumar Chettri, Mr.Harka Bahadur Lama like many respected persons.

Siliguri

Mr. Rambaran Thapa, Mr.Kharga Bahadur Gurung, Mr.Dhan Bahadur khati.

Western Duars

Mr.Lal Bahadur Nepali, Mr.Jainarayan Pradhan, Mr.Sri Bahadur Thapa.

Eastern Duars

Mr.Amar Das Sharma, Mr.Prithi Narayan Pradhan. Before the presidential speech Mr. D.S Gurung appealed for fund and the donation (Rs.10,46,12,119.00) was collected by him from the volunteers.

The President Sardar Bahadur Hanjit Dewan Rai gave a short but very momentous speech to the following purpose.

The Gorkhas are loyal by nature. Having settled in India the Gurkhas have been true to the salt to the British Government and being Gorkhas by blood are loyal to the Nepal Government and further said that without the aid of the Nepal Government the Gorkhas in India must demand their just and legitimate rights and demand firmly and fearlessly.

Mr. Ari Bahadur Gurung proposed the vote of thanks to the chair, the donors and to all these who had taken so much interest and flocked to the Hall even from 12-30 p.m. after which the meeting came to an end.

After the meeting, the audience was entertained by a beautiful dance as Radha and Krishna.

Sd/-

H. D. Rai
President

Sd/-

D. S. Gurung.
President.

All India Gorkha League.

The first constitution of All India Gorkha League promised to protect the political rights of the Gorkhas mentioning Nepal as “mother land”.³⁴

The All India Gorkha League placed more statements like view and demanded that the district of Darjeeling adjoining Duars section of Jalpaiguri should be included in the province of Assam. This demand was placed through memorials. It was submitted to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Ballav Bhai Patel—the Congress High Command, the cabinet mission and the constituent Assembly through the Sub-Committee, Excluded and particularly Excluded Area.

The All India Gorkha League submitted a Memorandum at Gangtok to Hon’ble Dr. B. V. Keshar – the Deputy Foreign Minister and thereby demanded the inclusion of Darjeeling, and Duars in Assam. The formation of a separate province including the districts of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, States of Sikkim and Coochbehar which should organize a visible unit with the Indian territory.

The active leader named Ratan lal Brahmin and Ganesh lal Subba took the help of plain leaders like Sushil Chatterjee and S. N. Majumder and had formed the undivided communist party of India. This party had raised the slogan of forming “Gorkhasthan” and represented the case in this matter before the Constituent Assembly on 6th April 1947. The Darjeeling. Unit of the party placed a resolution for regional autonomy to the hill region in the mid forties from the point of culture, language and ethnicity.

In fact, the All India Gorkha League proposed two alternatives for Darjeeling on the occasion of ‘Independence Day’ (i) Darjeeling along with Duars should be included with Assam to create a separate province. (ii) The districts of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, the state of Coochbehar and Sikkim should organize a separate province. The second alternative was submitted by All India Gorkha League to the Government of India on April 29, 1952, emerged out of a “Conference at Darjeeling on October 30th 1949, of all the leaders of different groups of Cooch-behar, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Sikkim”. The name of the new province was proposed as Uttar Khand Pradesh.³⁶

The All India Gorkha League memorandum of 1952 brought into prominence three alternatives for Darjeeling.

- (i) To make Darjeeling a separate administrative unit directly under the centre.
- (ii) A different province with Jalpaiguri, Cooch-Bihar and Sikkim.
- (iii) Merger of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri with Assam.

In all the three alternatives the common matter was separation from Bengal. But this plan was not possible in the post independent political Scenario. But the Government had to succumb to the demand for linguistic states and set up the States Reorganization Commission in 1955. It wanted to fill up the aspiration of the linguistic minorities. The S. R. C. reported that the linguistic States would weaken the national unity, observed “the urge for linguistic state has gone now deep down into the minds of the masses and refusal to create such states would lead to wide spread sense of frustration which might have grave consequences”³⁷ The A.I. G.L became very energetic to fulfill its demand in 1955. The State Government was not in favour of separation of Darjeeling from West Bengal and granting of regional autonomy, for such demand was the “thin end of a much bigger wedge intended to foster future claims for merger with Nepal.”³⁸

The official language in Darjeeling hills was Nepali. So the A.I.G.L was active in obtaining the Nepali language which took recognition by State Government. In 1967, the A.I.G.L had joined the United Front Ministry with a view to pursuing the Government to fulfil their two basic demands i.e. the autonomy of Darjeeling within West Bengal and the recognition of Nepali language. The State Assembly had passed a resolution and thereby supported the issue of regional autonomy. But on the basis of nature and extent of autonomy the resolution was valueless, On the other hand, the issue of Nepali language brought AIGL and the Akhil Bharatiya Nepali Bhasa Samity (ABNBS) very close and they started movement jointly to fulfil their hope and aspiration.³⁹

A branch of All India Women’s Conference was founded in Darjeeling in the year of 1947.⁴⁰ Besides this, a branch of All Bengal Mahila Samity was also established in Darjeeling in the year of 1930.⁴¹

B. PLAIN NORTH BENGAL

Barring Darjeeling district the whole area of Jalpaiguri, Maldah, Dinajpur and Cooch-Bihar was called plain North Bengal.

JALPAIGURI: In the primary stage the cultural activities in Jalpaiguri was started by individual efforts not by any social organization. In this context mention must be made of Umesh Chandra Roy who wrote one book namely 'Sikkimer itihash' in 1875.⁴² After it we say the name of Tarak Nath Ganguly who wrote a story entitled 'Soudamini'. Another Scholar was Krishna Mohan Chakraborty. He wrote 'Brahmaputra Mahatyam'.⁴³ Girish Chandra Sen and Salimuddin Ahmed translated Koran in Bengali.⁴⁴

Debating Club, Jalpaiguri (1897)—Jogesh Chandra Ghosh (later on a famous tea planter of Jalpaiguri) was a student of Presidency College, Calcutta. He was deeply influenced by the organizations of Calcutta. From that time he made a plan for forming an association of the educated person of Jalpaiguri to carry out various types of socio cultural activities. Consequently, he founded a 'debating club' in Jalpaiguri (1897). He himself became the Secretary of this club.⁴⁵

Arya Natya Samaj – It is a matter of controversy when this organization was set up. From one reference we can know that in 1900 a voluntary Social Service organization called 'Arya Natya Samaj' was established in Jalpaiguri under the enterprise of some middle class men.⁴⁶ From another source we also can know that Swadeshi movement in 1907 a National School was founded in Jalpariguri. It was situated on the ground of the Arya Natya Samaj which was founded in the year 1904.⁴⁷ Arya Natya Samaj was a drama cum cultural organization of Jalpaiguri. A series of dramas including dramas of Rabindra Nath Tagore were performed in the auditorium of Arya Natya Samaj which was used as a ground of nationalist activities in many times.⁴⁸ Prominent Stalwarts were intimately linked with this organization. It made an expedition against all kinds of social evils. Sashi Kumar Neogi – one of the members of this organization and editor of Trisrota gave a statement that members of this organization will pass their time by literary practices and cultural activities.⁴⁹ Another objective of this organization was to

give actual guidance to the youths who were involved in various types of unsocial activities and to lead them in proper way.⁵⁰ Sri Nirendra Nath Bagchi, one of the senior executive member of Arya Natya Samaj wrote, “Arya Natya Samaj though it was mainly a dramatic organization, tried sincerely to inspire the youths for education and literary activities.”⁵¹ This organization played an active role in the cultural sphere of Jalpaiguri even after 1947.

Jalpaiguri Sahitya Samiti: The cultural atmosphere was created by Arya Natya Samaj and Trisrota. It was followed by another association called ‘Jalpaiguri Sahitya Samiti.’ Some educated persons of Jalpaiguri took active role in forming this organization in 1928.⁵² This organization had great impact on the cultural sphere of Jalpaiguri.⁵³ Among the members of this organization mention must be made of Sri Upapada Banerjee, Sri Pramatha Nath Basu, Sri Umesh Chandra Sarkar, Sri Narendra kishore Nandi and Sri Durga Prasanna Ghatak.⁵⁴

Jalpaiguri Muslim Sahitya Samiti: After the establishment of Jalpaiguri Sahitya Samiti a good number of educated Muslims of Jalpaiguri town founded a literary association named ‘Jalpaiguri Muslim Sahitya Samiti’ in 1931.⁵⁵ Its president was Tajmal Hossain and Vice President Moulavi Safdar Ali and Maulavi Lajemuddin. The secretary and the Assistant Secretary of this organization were Maulavi Md. Sukurullah and Maulavi Azmal Hossain.⁵⁶

The first conference of Muslim Sahitya Samiti commenced on Jalpaiguri in 1931. The conference was presided by Maulavi Ismail Saheb B. L. The persons who had attended the conference were Maulavi Jaharatulla Ahmed-B.L, Maulavi Safiuddin-B.A Moulavi Azizur Rahaman etc.⁵⁷ From the educational qualifications and Social status of the attended persons it is proved that the minor Muslims of Jalpaiguri became much conscious about their cultural life and literary development.

The Anjuman-i-Islamia, Jalpaiguri: (1892) –In North Bengal, Anjumane- I –Islamia was founded at first in Darjeeling. Its branch was opened in Jalpaiguri. The organization had much importance to serve the social, political and educational interests of the Muslims of Jalpaiguri District. Its object was the

promotion of loyalty towards the British Government and the promotion and protection of the social, political, educational and other rights and interests of the Muhammadan community.⁵⁸ There were 165 members of this organization. The president and the secretary of this association were Nawab Musharuf Hossion, Khan Bahadur B.L. and Maulabi Kazi Abdul Khaleque. The association wanted to serve the social and educational interests of Muhammadan Community.⁵⁹

The Indian Tea Planters' Association: In 1915 Tarini Prasad Roy, Aminur Rahaman, Jyotish Chandra Sanyal, Jogesh Chandra Ghosh and others founded the Indian Tea –planters Association. Its aim was to protect their interest and highlight their demands to the Government.⁶⁰The principal officials of this association were viz.-

President – Babu Tarini Prasad Roy.

Vice – President – B.k. Banerjee, D. C. Ghosh, and N.k.Ghosh.

Secretary- B. C. Ghosh.

The members of this association had valuable view on the Reforms Scheme.⁶¹ They patronized many socio-cultural and political activities in Jalpaiguri.⁶² At present A.P. Roy (son of Tarini Prasad Roy) of Jalpaiguri has patronized Uttar Banga Sahitya Chakra a socio – cultural organization of Jalpaiguri.⁶³

Some other Voluntary Associations: From 1920 to 1946, a large number of voluntary organizations were established in Jalpaiguri. They played an active role in the socio cultural life of Jalpaiguri district. Among them mention must be made of 'Jana Kalyan Samiti' Marawari Relief Society, Indian Red Cross Society and Ahamadia association. Barring this, Sishu Niketan – an organization for child development was founded in 1937—38. In 1944 Sishumahal – a children education centre started its work. Another Juvenile organization namely 'Danpiteder Asar' worked for the growth of children physically and mentally⁶⁴.

Jalpaiguri Mahila Samiti: In order to improve the general condition of women the Jalpaiguri Mahila Samiti was founded in Jalpaiguri in the year of 1928. It was the first Mahila Samiti of Uttar Banga. They had opened a library in Jalpaiguri for women named Mahila Pathagar.⁶⁵

Cooch-behar

The Maharajas and some high officials of Cooch-behar State had deep interest for literary activities. Some Maharajas had patronized literature and socio-culture activities in Coochbehar.⁶⁶ Consequently, a large number of books of various branches (History, literature, Pauranic stories etc.) were written by some personalities of Cooch-behar royal courts and celebrities of the state.⁶⁷ A new era was started in the cultural life of Cooch-behar which got more importance and active support during the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan Bhupabhadur. Besides this, we can mention the name of Maharani Suniti Devi (daughter of Keshab Chandra Sen) and Acharya Brajendra Nath Shil – the world famous philosopher whose contribution was remarkable for the development of higher education and culture in the Cooch-behar state.⁶⁸

Cooch-behar Sahitya Sabha: Cooch-behar Sahitya Sabha was an association for the cultural development of North Bengal. It was founded in the year of 1915 under royal patronage and it had a great role for the upliftment of cultural practices in Cooch-behar and North Bengal as a whole.⁶⁹ Before going in details about this institution we should know its background. Cooch-behar state had a remarkable role in press- publication.⁷⁰ In this context a journal named ‘Paricharika’ played an important role in the history of literary activities of Cooch-behar. It was published the year of 1878. The editor of this Journal was Sri Nepal Chandra Majumder. At the beginning its publication was started from Calcutta under the guidance of ‘Nababidhan Brahma Samaj’. Some members of the family of Keshab Chandra Sen took initiative to publish this paper and for twenty eight years the journal was published. But, due to some unavoidable causes this publication of this paper came to an end in 1906. In 1916 under the active supervision of Cooch-behar Sahitya Sabha ‘paricharika’ was again published. At that time its editor was Nirupama Devi—the younger sister of Maharani Suniti Devi and wife of prince Nityendra Narayan of Cooch-behar Raj family. The journal called Paricharika had attained a high quality literary status under the enterprise of the Cooch-behar Sahitya Sabha. It is found that the new part of its publication writing of renowned great poet like Rabindra Nath Tagore was published. Among other writers of this Journal mention

must be made of Kazi Najrul Islam, Banaful, Kumud Ranjan Mallik, Kabi shekhar Kalidas Roy and other writers.⁷¹ Undoubtedly, Coochbehar Sahitya Sabha deserved a remarkable place in the history of Coochbehar state. The famous writers had written so many writings on different issues that Coochbehar state was transformed into a central place of library and cultural practices. As a result of this practice a good number of writers and an enlightened community came into existence which had a remarkable contribution for the cultural upliftment of Coochbehar and North Bengal.⁷²

The persons, who were closely associated with the Coochbehar Sahitya Sabha, were Bijoy Charan Gupta, Bhagawat Charan Bandopadhyay, Sarat Chandra Ghosal, Bimal Chandra Chakraborty, Nihar Bala Devi, Devi Prasad Sen, Jiban Krishna Mukhopadhyay and others. So it can be said that a new wave came into limelight for the upliftment of literature in Cooch-behar which was deeply influenced by the contemporary celebrities of Bengal – the principal proposer of twentieth century society and culture. This cultural atmosphere continued for a long time in Cooch-behar even after its merger with India in 1950.

As an instance of this cultural upliftment in Cooch-behar we can mention a number of journals and periodicals from Cooch-behar after 1950. Among the papers mention must be made of Awan, Awaz, Amader patrika, Uttarayan, Yugabarta, Jagaran, Mashal, Khabar, Nagarik and Cooch-behar Sahitya Sabha Patrika. Dr, Nripendra Nath Paul in his article “Cooch-behar Adhunik kaler Sahitya Charchar Chalchitra” have placed a detailed picture of literary and cultural activities in Cooch-behar up to 1990.⁷³ In this article Dr. Paul has thoroughly studied about all the literary creativities in the spheres of Poem, Novel, Drama, short Stories, History, Archaeology, Folk culture and folksong, Puranic literature and many things.⁷⁴ So it is true that the cultural regeneration which had begun during the period of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan and Maharani Suniti Devi existed for long, which justify much credit in this field.

In Cooch-behar there was a development of three regional parties named Hita Sadhani Sabha, Praja Mandal and Cooch-behar people’s Association. The head quarters of first two associations were in Cooch-behar the third in Calcutta.

Hitasadhani Sabha was the Sabha of Rajbanshi Hindu Muslim Joteder of Cooch-behar.⁷⁵ the progressive Rajbanshis and alien Hindus of Cooch-behar had formed the Praja Mandal.⁷⁶

Malda

Socio Cultural Associations of Maldah District: In Maldah district a large number of social organizations were founded. Among them mention must be made of I) The Maldah Association. II) The Maldah Muhammadan Association. III) Maldah Branch of Rampur-Boalia-Dharma Sabha. IV) Maldah Jela Sahitya Sammelan. V) Maldah National Council of Education.(Maldah Branch)

All these associations had achieved an outstanding role for the social and cultural awareness of the people of Maldah districts as well as North Bengal.

I) The Maldah Association (M.A):

The Maldah Association was established in 1887. Its main objective was to ameliorate the conditions of the people of the district in every sphere. Its membership was opened to adult educated residents of the district. All the office bearers of this association were Hindus. The association had no Muhammadan representatives. Most of the members belonged to the legal profession. Others were Zaminders, Merchants, Physicians and Pleaders. There were 55 members of this association. Its president was Babu Jadunandan Chowdhury and vice president was Babu Radhika Lal Satiar B. L – pleader of Maldah. This association was truly a platform to take care of the general interest of the district.⁷⁷

Maldah Muhammadan Association (M.M.A): We can know from the Government reports that Muhammadans were the second largest community of Maldah district W.W. Hunter in his book ‘A statistical Account of Bengal’ (vol-Vii) wrote that the population in Maldah district was divided into Hindus and Muhammadans, The proportion of Hindus was the greatest in the North & West of the district and Muhammadans in the south.⁷⁸ The aim of this association was to uplift the political, social and educational condition of Muslim Samaj.⁷⁹ It was a Registered Association. List of the Registered Association–Government of Bengal shows that ‘Membership was opened to all educated Muhammadans. Business was

transacted by an elected committee of 30, mostly residents of English Bazar. A general meeting was held once a year. Expenses were met from voluntary subscriptions and donations having possessed no found. Present members including all leading Muhammadans were Pleaders, Mukhtears, Land owners, Trade-men and physicians. The association was directed by some officials.

They are as follows:

President –Maulavi Muhammad Ismail Chowdhury.

Secretary-Khan Sahib Abdul Aziz Khan, Pleader, English Bazar.

The association was very much involved for serving Muslim interests.⁸⁰

Rampur Boalia Dharma Sabha (Maldah Branch): Rampur Boalia Dharma Sabha was an organization of Rajshahi district (Bangladesh). Its branch was opened in Maldah under the initiative of Radhesh Chandra Seth.⁸¹ As a social organization some type Socio – religious activities were performed by this organization. It is proved from the activities of this organization (Maldah branch) that some celebrities and social workers assembled jointly for the cause of this organization.⁸²

Maldah Zela Sahitya Sammelon : Maldah Zela Sahitya Sammelon was probably the most active and popular organization in the cultural atmosphere of Maldah. This was also the oldest and the first district wise association in North Bengal. Among the organizers of this Sammelon the main priest was Sri Radhesh Chandra Seth. We have already known that Sri Seth was a great scholar. He published some papers and periodicals and a large number of books. He had begun to start a book on the geographical identity of Maldah.⁸³ He also formed another vigorous organization named Maldah Jela Sabha.⁸⁴ For the cultural upliftment of Maldah Radhesh Chandra took the step to arrange a Sahitya Sammelon in Maldah. Sir Jadunath Sarkar – a famous scholar and historian had attended this conference. It can be noticed that after long preparation a Sahitya Sammelon of North Bengal was commenced in Maldah.⁸⁵ This Sammelon got the best response in the cultural arena of Maldah. Consequently, a large number of celebrities and other interested

persons from every nook and corner attended this Sammelon. It may be marked as a development in the cultural arena of Maldah.⁸⁶

Maldah National Council of Education: Another praise - worthy association of Maldah district was the 'Maldah National Council of Education' which had a far-reaching impact in the social, cultural and political life of Maldah. With a view to popularizing the issue of national education among the pupils of Bengal a campaign was commenced in 1905-06 at the initiative of Sri Radha Kumud Mukhapadhyay, Sri Nripendra Banerjee and Binoy Kumar Sarkar of Maldah.⁸⁷ Sri Sarkar had tried his best to run this organization successfully. He had joined the Bengal National College in Calcutta and made up his mind to inaugurate a branch of it at his birth place-Maldah. Within a short time he took all necessary arrangements and with the help of his companions founded the 'Maldah National Council of Education' in 1907.⁸⁸ The foundation of this organization was a landmark in the history of Swadeshi Movement in Maldah. It was found that in 1913 at least eleven schools were established in various places of Maldah under the guidance of Maldah National council of Education. This association took a very active role for the spread of education in Maldah. It may also be said that professor Binoy Kumar Sarkar had declared different types of prizes and scholarship for the pupils of Maldah. There was a library and a workshop at each school. The Association had planned to visit the schools regularly. In this context one renowned historian and former teacher of the Bengal National College stated that "It was due to Binoy Kumar Sarkar that Maldah became a place of interest. Some of us used to visit Maldah to see Binoy's field of operation.⁸⁹ So it is true that the Maldah National College of Education in Maldah had a remarkable contribution for the spread of education in Maldah. We all know that "Gambhira" was regarded as a popular folk culture of Maldah. Realizing its importance and to encourage the people connected with it Sri Sarkar had declared a prize of Rs.25/- for collection of the history of Gambhira and also wrote a book named 'The Folk Elements in Hindu Culture' in 1917.⁹⁰

Dinajpur

The western part of the district of Dinajpur was by and large a backward area and did not undergo any palpable socio-political change during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. However, the town of Dinajpur, the headquarters of the undivided district witnessed the growth of national consciousness at an early date. In 1895 the Indian National Congress established a branch office at Dinajpur.

In the year of 1904, a branch of Calcutta 'Silpa O Biggan Siksher Unnati Bidhayani Sabha' was established in Dinajpur. The Maharaja Girija Nath Roy was its president. In that year 'Dinajpur Musalman Sabha' was founded for social and political development of the Muslim.⁹¹

Another association named The Dinajpur Land Holder's Association was formed in 1905. Its membership was restricted to those landlords who paid Rs.1000/- per year to the Government directly and gentlemen who paid annual revenue of atleast Rs.20,000/- to the Government. In the thirties of the last century, Maharaja Jagadish Nath Roy of Dinajpur became the President of this organization.⁹²

References

1. Gupta V. S. Dayal Rajeswar (edi) – Rural Press – Problems and Prospects Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1995, p-7.
2. Barpujari H. K. (edi) Political History of Assam Vol.- 1 (1826-1919), pp 158-159.
3. Ibid.
4. Ghosh A. G. –Swadhinata Andolone Darjeeling Zela (in Bengali) Uttar Sarani, Swaran Sankalan1393, B. S., p-3.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p-4
7. Sarkar Sumit—The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 1973 Relevant Portion. Mukharjee Uma and Mukharjee Haridas—India’s Fight for freedom, Calcutta, p-40.
8. Ghosh A. G. op cit., p-40.
9. Ibid.
10. Prodhan Kumar – A History of Nepali literature, Sahitya Academy New Delhi 1984., p-73
11. Ibid., p- 73.
12. Ibid.
13. O Malley L, S. S. Bengal District Gazetteers –Darjeeling. p-111.
14. Ibid., p-114.
15. Prodhan Indramani, Pradhan Parasmani—Makers of Indian Literature, Sahitya Academy, New Delhi, 1979, p.111.
16. Prodhan Kumar op. cit., p-80.
17. Ibid.

18. Ghosh A. G. and Roy Sanyal Ratna—Growth of public opinion in North Bengal. North Bengal University Review, Humanities and Social Science, 1993.
19. Ibid.
20. Pradhan kumar op. cit., p- 78.
21. Ghosh A. G.—Darjeeling Zela (in Bengali) 1393 B. S, p-5.
22. List of Associations Registered by Government, corrected up to 1st April, 1945 Government of Bengal, Home Department (1801), Bengal Government Press, Alipur, Bengal, 1946.
23. Samanta Amiya Kumar –Gorkha land Movement-A study in Ethnic Separation. A.P.H. Publishing Corporation 2000, p-78.
24. Ibid., p-80
25. The state of Gorkhaland –Our fight for Separation (1907—2000), p-4.
26. Chakraborty D, Gorkha land-Evolution of Politics of Segregation-University of North Bengal 1988 (A booklet), p-11.
27. Ibid.
28. Samanta op.cit., pp(82—83)
29. Kumar Pradhan A History of Nepali Literature, p-80.
30. Bhanja Dr. K. C. Darjeeling at a glance. p-3.
31. Chakraborty D. op. cit., p-25.
32. Ibid.
33. Singh Bhai Nehar and Singh Kirpal (edi) History of All India Gorkha League (1943 –49)—Introductory Chapter.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Gorkha Land Agitation, Information Document–1, published by the Government of west Bengal, 1986, p-10.

37. The Report of the State Reorganization Commission,p-38.
38. Ibid.
39. Memorandum before the S.R.C. quoted by O. Chakraborty.
40. Ibid.
41. Trisrota 27.05.1927
42. Jugantar, 27th September,1984.
43. Mukharjee Bhubaneswar—Jogesh jiban, p-36.
44. De Barun –West Bengal District Gazetteers – Jalpaiguri , p-315.
45. Das Gupta Ranjit—Jalpaiguri zelar Artha–samajik itihash sambandhe kichu mantabya., p-83.
46. Ibid.
47. Trisrota, 5th February,1928
48. Ibid.
49. Platinum Jubilee smaranika A.N.S 1979.
50. Trisrota –19th August, 1928.
51. Kirat Bhumi –edited by Arabinda Kar – Jalpaiguri sahitya Lekhya by A. G. Ghosh, p-15.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. List of Associations, 1946.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.
59. Kirat bhumi (edi) –by Arabinda kar, Jalpaiguri, September, 1396 B. S

60. De Barun (edi) – west Bengal District Gazetteers Jalpaiguri, p-36.
61. Ibid.
62. Trishrota 27.5.1927.
63. Chattapadhyay—Goutam (edi) Itihas Anusandhan vol Xi, p-504.
64. Ibid.
65. Dam Mrinal—Cooch-behar Raj Paribar Sahitya Chakra, p-247.
66. Chakraborty Kumud bandhu, 'Reminiscence' Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal Birth Centenary Souvenir. Cal.-1964, p-55.
67. Ibid.
68. Dutta Gopesh—Satabarsher Alope Cooch-behar Patra-Patrika, Madhuparni (A Bengali literary Journal) edi: - ajitesh Bhattacharya – Special Coochbehar District Issue, 1396 B, S. (edi) by Ananda Gopal Ghosh, p-280.
69. Ibid.
70. Ibid.
71. Paul N. N.– Cooch-behar Adunik Kaler Sahitya Charchar Chalchitra – in Madhuparni - Cooch-behar District special issue, edited by Ajitesh Bhattacharya 1396 B. S, p-262.
72. Ibid.
73. Roy Swapan kumar—Prachin Cooch-behar Mudran Yabtrer Abhirbhab O Pragatir Unmesh (in Bengali) Uttar Parni (edi) by Amlan Jyoti Majumder, Coochbehar, p-82.
74. Maitrayani—A Periodical Dwitiya Barsha, Praatham Sankha –1396 edited by Girija Narayan Roy and Ongkush Dutta, p-50.
75. List of Associations Registered by Government, corrected up to 1st April, 1945, Govt. of Bengal, Home Department (801), Bengal Government Press, Alipur, Bengal 1946.

76. Ibid.
77. Lambourn G. E, Bengal District Gazetteer, Maldah., p-29
78. Ibid.
79. List of Associations op. cit, 1946
80. Ibid.
81. Palit Haridas—Maldaher Radesh Chandra (in Bengali) – North East publication. Maldah 1935, p-10
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid.
84. Bhattacharya Malay Sanrkar – Nationalist Movement and Freedom Struggle in some Selected areas of North Bengal – an unpublished thesis paper (1984) p-7
85. Som Susmita –Maldah Zelar itihash Charchha , Dipali publishers, Maldah 2006, p -279
86. Ibid.
87. Mukhopadhyay Uma –Swadesh Sebok Benoy Sarkar, in Dr. Prodyot Ghosh (edited), Benoy kumar Sarkar Janma Satabarshiki committee, Maldah, 1988, p-78
88. Ibid., p-6
89. Mukhopadhyay Uma op. cit., p-79
90. Ibid.
91. Dinajpur Patrika Pous 1311, p-168
92. List of Associations, pp. 37-38.

CHAPTER - III

Socio Political Movement of the Rajbanshis up to 1947

Some crucial changes had come to the socio-economic structure of North Bengal in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. One of the important consequences of this change was that the Rajbanshis or the sons of the soil, who once strengthened their grip in the social and economic fields, came under the subjugation of newly born upper class people. There was a vast difference of culture between the Rajbanshi and the upper class gentry. Among the Rajbanshis, the elite (the educated section among the Rajbanshis) played an effective part to rise up the community consciousness with a view to putting into active use the members of their caste for collective mobility. Now the question arises in mind why the Rajbanshis asserted themselves for creating a new identity and in what way they tried to pour the consciousness among the other members of the community. A satisfactory answer to this question is to be searched in the chapter.

The declaration of the 'Kshatriya' identity by the Rajbanshis was not new before the 19th century. We have enough references that the Rajbanshis spoke of their royal lineage and claimed Kshatriya status in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.¹ towards the end of the 19th century this demand got more spirit and the Rajbanshis started an organized movement in order to fulfill their claim from the early years of the 20th century. From the Rajbanshi caste history and the Government records we can draw a picture of this growing caste movement in the earlier part of the 20th century.

The institution of caste got recognition as the central point of Hindu Society. The identity of a man mainly depends on his caste affiliation. Some expressive transformations took place in social outlook with the change of social values. But caste still preserved its tradition in determining the model of social and cultural interaction in Indian society, though its rules and regulation varied from

region to region. In Bengal the caste system was not very rigid in comparison to Southern and Western parts of India. It still occupied an important position in determining social behavioral norms. Barring this, caste was also defined as an important mobilizing power, in the absence of any other powerful means of mobilization for socio-political movement.² Before going to this question of continued importance of caste in society it is very much essential to note the caste structure in Bengal.

There is a host of historical literatures on the various sides of caste system in Bengal.³ Out of the four popular varnas i.e. Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra, only the Brahmin and the Sudras could be seen. But within the broad structure of Varna, the caste hierarchy could be further divided into six categories centering the notion of ritual purity, i.e. (a) the Brahmins (b) the Baidyas and the Kayasthas, (c) the Nabasakh castes, (d) the Ajalchal castes and (e) the castes between the Nabasakh and the Ajalchal groups, and (f) the Antyajaja castes.⁴ Still now this caste-based ritual rank had an effective bearing on the shape of social interaction. During the colonial rule the social outlook towards caste was not much altered. 'Prescriptions of caste still determined the patterns of social interaction and dominated inter-personal group relations of the Bengali Hindus.'⁵ Even in the Bengali Hindu society caste played an important role in regulating social relationships particularly marriage system. Marriage between the same castes was only allowed in society. Caste pride was very prominent among the upper castes who thought themselves as superior than the lower castes. Any little crime was regarded as belonging to lower caste culture. If a person behaved in a rough way, he was called chandal. There were such many examples of daily practices in Bengali life which prominently expresses the state of mind of the upper castes towards the lower castes.⁶ this type of mentality often created social tension. As there was no alternative means to ventilate their demands, the deprived lower castes looked for a solution by claiming themselves as higher caste. If we find at the Rajbanshis in the context of social reality, it will be easier to comprehend the origin of Rajbanshis' eagerness to declare them as Kshatriya.

In the social hierarchy of Bengal the Rajbanshis had been given the same place with the Namasudras, the pods and the other antyaja castes. Among the Rajbanshis who were much more advanced both economically and educationally, were not ready to think themselves as lower caste and stood bravely in favour of their Kshatriya status. Besides the Rajbanshis, many other lower and intermediary castes in Bengal and other parts of India were also claiming higher caste status at that time. There were mainly two reasons for changing their attitude.

The colonial rule had collapsed the traditional economy and thereby declined the economic basis of the Indian caste system. The British rule had created new avenues for job and an urban civilization was started. Urban influence and modern education had extended the worldview of some section of the lower castes and inspired them to find out ways and means to correct the existing social irregularity. The colonial caste policy gave the guidance to see a way out, staying within the caste system. Consequently the difference between the upper and lower caste 'was essentially a social and cultural dichotomy, was now given a definite political shape.'⁷

It can be said without any hesitation that the colonial policy directed a new path in order to serve the interests of certain under-privileged groups from the early 20th century. This policy undoubtedly strengthened the caste identities and indirectly encouraged to mobilize along caste lines. It all began with education as the Government had declared that it was going to assist those 'who belonged to the very lowest classes of the Hindu social system or ... were outside the pale of caste altogether.' The Government ardently took care for the schooling of the children of these classes.

Special schools were founded in the backward areas and for spreading education the Government also extended its hand for economic help.⁸ Special grants were sanctioned in order to build hostels for various backward classes like Namasudras, the Jogis, the Rajbanshi etc.⁹ The Government made an arrangement to enlist the names of depressed classes and made condition for the reservation of jobs at Governmental institution for the members of these classes. In this matter the Government made a notification in 1923 stating that it would nominate

candidates who belong to the backward classes and they would be appointed according to the provisions of reservation in Governmental jobs.¹⁰ In the legislative council and other local representative bodies, the seats were also reserved for these classes in the same way. The Morley –Minto Reforms in 1909 and the Government of India Act 1919 did the same for the depressed classes and extended their right of special representation by nomination. In this way the colonial Government gave protection to the depressed classes and recognized caste as an official category. This policy also recognized caste identities which had roused a new spirit among the lower classes to work for caste solidarity, in order to assert their own separate identities. This led to social isolation and created tensions between the upper and lower castes.

The local social situation was also responsible for the Rajbanshis' assertion of a Kshatriya identity and their effort to build up caste solidarity. With the habilitation of upper caste Hindu gentry in Rajbanshi dominated areas of North Bengal, equilibrium of local power structure was totally changed. In course of time the upper caste gentry had strengthened their grip in the arena of society, economy and politics and emerged as a powerful landholding class. On the other hand, the Rajbanshi had failed to establish their position in the society. There was an extreme difference between the cultural practice of these two classes and the upper caste gentry treated the Rajbanshis as 'backward' uncultured and even antyaj¹¹ they also referred the Rajbanshis as 'bahe' which was a cultural distortion of the word 'babahe'. By it the Rajbanshis generally called a person.¹² They also referred the outsiders as 'Bhatia' which means an outsider to their land. Thus, the tendency of cultural superiority of the immigrant upper caste Hindus and their mentality to hate the Rajbanshis had closed a friendly relationship between the two groups. Consequently the caste solidarity among the Rajbanshis promoted.

This sense of isolation among the Rajbanshis made stronger by the insults and humiliation which they had to face with the Brahmanical culture. In the Rajbanshi caste literature and also in other contemporary accounts there are various examples of insulting the Rajbanshis by the outsiders. The Rajbanshis had no right to enter the places of worship, kitchens of the upper caste households.

Even water was not taken from their hands by the upper caste Hindus.¹³ According to Charu Chandra Sanyal writer of the 'History of Jalpaiguri District,' casteism at that time strictly existed in that district and both the castes used to take seats at different rows on the occasion of any public lunch or dinner. Although the Rajbanshis were referred as ajalachal and they had no permission to use the wells of the upper castes with the starting of the Kshatriyaization movement, these superstitions were disappeared gradually.¹⁴

But this was regarded as an offensive process. Upendranath Barman, in his biography of Panchanan Barma, has told that one day lawyer Panchanan Barma by error had gone to the court room wearing the toga or the cap of some Maitra who was higher in caste and a colleague in the bar. When he returned the toga to Mr.Maitra, he became angry and threw it saying 'I hate to use toga used by a Rajbanshi'. In another example, Sri Barman mentions that one day a Rajbanshi student of Rangpur Normal School boarding house had entered the kitchen of the Boarding House to know from the cook if the food was prepared or not. But on this excuse, two or three boys of upper caste Hindu classes denied to accept food. At last they threw it outside as a food of cows and fresh food was prepared for them¹⁵ in his autobiography Sri Barman also told another bitter experience. During his student life (1916-20) at the Cooch-behar Victoria College Hostel there were two dining halls where the students attended according to their own will. But one day the hostel Superintendent served a notice declaring that one hall would be reserved for the Brahmins and other for the Kayasthas. Special arrangement would also be made for the students of other classes for accepting food. Sri Barma protested strongly against this caste differentiation and brought the matter to the notice of state administrator and also College Principal. They also took an effective step in this matter. This was the first bitter experience of casteism which Sri Barma had to face at first.¹⁶ Another example is that at the Rajbanshi college hostel a Rajbanshi student was not allowed to the hostel dining hall, and had to eat their meal at their hostel room and also they had to wash their own utensils after taking meal.¹⁷ The other Rajbanshis have narrated the accounts of similar experiences of caste hatred.¹⁸ Faced with such humiliation, the elite among the

Rajbanshis were eager for collective mobilization in order to achieve their aims. They were also aspiring for Government jobs and representation in different self-governing institutions. But they had failed to compete with the educated upper caste elites who were already strengthening their power in North Bengal. Thus the desire for higher social status and political power induces the Rajbanshi elites to raise caste consciousness among the Rajbanshis with a view to launch a well-organized movement for social justice.

The direct factor for mobilizing the Rajbanshis and to demand a Kshatriya status was the government policy of numbering Hindu castes in the Census Report on the principle of 'social precedence as organized native public opinion'. L.S.S.O' Mally wrote that '... there was a general idea in Bengal that the object of the census is not to show the number of persons belonging to each caste, but to fix the relative status of different castes and to deal with questions of social superiority This warrant of precedence gave rise to considerable agitation at the time and proved legacy of trouble.'¹⁹

The Census operation had created an idea among the Rajbanshis and other lower castes if they could enlist their name in the census reports in the class of twice born they will get recognition in the indigenous society. So this wrong idea of legitimacy that census gave birth in local society persuaded the quick growth of caste associations and caste movements. This also had a great impact on the Rajbanshis as well. A.K.Roy has observed-the origin of Kshatriya movement could be located in the hatred and ill-treatment received by the community at the hands of the upper castes of the Hindu society. But the immediate cause of this movement was census of India, 1891²⁰ In a nutshell, Brahmanical cultural domination, British lower caste politics and the social changes brought about by British rule were responsible for Rajbanshis' attempts to claim a Kshatriya descent.

The Rajbanshi caste leader followed the same way like the other mobile castes in Bengal. The common feature was to demand affiliation to one of the three twice born varnas, and then in support of that status, to change the models of religio-culture behaviors, to create legends to prove their claimed origin and to

request the pandits for favorable rulings.²¹ On the one hand following Socio-religious and cultural reforms the Rajbanshi leaders wanted to raise a consciousness among their caste people. On the other hand, they became eager to legitimize their demand by appealing to the traditional guardian of social hierarchy—the pandits, to the modern reformers of social rank- the colonial rulers.²²

The Rajbanshis started their movement for Kshatriyaization depending on a myth to prove their Kshatriya status. The legend, noted in the Census Report of 1901 considering their origin as follows:

The Rajbanshis of North Bengal wished to be styled Varna or Bratya Kshatriya and to be classed amongst the twice born castes. They speak of various stories of their origin. The favourite one being the well worn legend that their ancestors were the descendants of Kshatriyas who discarded their sacred threads when fleeing the wrath of parasurama.²³

The myth is constructed more detailed in the Rajbanshi accounts. This community claimed that they were originally the Kshatriya Varna. At the time of the complete destruction of the Kshatriyas by sage Parasuram, they gave up their ancestor's land and took shelter in a place called Paundradesh, which belonged to the districts of Rangpur, Dinajpur, Bagula and the adjoining areas. With a view to conceal their Kshatriya identity, they left their seared thread and began to live with the local people and addressed themselves as Bhanga Kshatriyas or the Fallen Kshatriyas.²⁴ Sri Rati Ram Das - a famous Rajbanshi poet in his 'Jog Sangeet' (a kind of palagan or folk song) has told that after threatening of Parasuram to the Kshatriyas, they came to North Bengal and lived there as 'Bhanga Kshatriya Rajbanshi.'²⁵ Again in the introduction of their memorandum to the Indian Statutory Commission, the Rajbanshi commented that, they (the Rajbanshi Kshatriya) were once the ruling race in this part of the country, sometimes with divided territories and different capitals, their last capital being Kamata Behar known as also Gosanimari is now with the state of Cooch-behar. About 450 years ago sudden aggression made by Muslim invaders from Bengal brought about secretly by some non Kshatriya traitors surprised and made away with the late

Raja Kamteswar, leaving the people quite concerned and without a recognized head.²⁶

Though the Rajbanshis were the descendants of Cooch-behar royal family, the Rajbanshi caste leaders did not equate themselves with this Cooch-behar royal family because the tribal origin of the Cooch-behar royal family was well-equipped in historical narratives. In order to avoid such genealogy the Rajbanshi caste leaders had depicted their origin from the legends.

The creation of myths was followed by request for the reform of socio-religious and cultural habits of the community. Hara Kishor Adhikari, one of the publicists for the caste movement, referred three direct paces for the upliftment of the status of the Rajbanshi community. There was (a) support of Kshatriya like customs. (b) Decreasing of the period of asauha or ceremonial mourning after bereavement and (c) adoption of Kshatriya titles like Barma, Roy etc. By dint of the existing ones like Sarkar, Das, Mandal etc.²⁷

Another Rajbanshi, Chandreswar Roy, mentioned some other steps to uplift their social status. He told his caste brethren not to permit their women to wander around the market like the caste Hindu. In the same way widow-remarriage was to be abolished. The food items which were not taken by Hindu religion were not to be shared by the Rajbanshis either.²⁸ At the same time attempt was also made to obtain favourable rulings from the pandits of different places in support of their demand to Kshatriya origin and their authority to put off sacred thread.²⁹

These reform Endeavors' had affected a small section and persuaded them to furnish their social behaviour like the Kshatriya model. But very soon the Rajbanshi leaders felt that this movement for Kshatriyaization could not be successful without a proper organization. Side by side the development of associations by other castes also influenced them very much. But before going in details it is very much necessary to note this matter that in what way the Rajbanshi caste leaders recognized themselves as Kshatriyas in the census reports.

The Rajbanshi leaders at the period of every census tried to convert the census officials about the legality of their claim for a new identity. It began with

the 1891 census, when the Government made an attempt to take the Rajbanshis and the Koches as category of the same castes. According to Upendra Nath Barman, this order hurt the caste sentiment of the Rajbanshis and they began a movement within the community.³⁰ When the Census officials refused to recognize them as Kshatriya, they rejected to fill up the census returns and under the presidentship of Hara Mohan Roy, the zaminder of Shyampur in Rangpur district formed an association called 'Rangpur Bratya Kshatriya Jatir Unnati Bidhayani Sabha.' According to a meeting of the sabha, a protest letter was despatched to the District Magistrate on 10th February 1891. The District Magistrate had discussed with the local pandits about this matter and wanted their opinion. The pandit Raj Jadaveswar Tarkaratna, on behalf of local pandits, assured the District Magistrate about the superiority of manners and customs of Rajbanshis than the Koches. He also gave verdict that the rituals and ceremonies of the Rajbanshis were same like the caste Hindus. After it Skye-the District Magistrate gave an order stating that from now the Rajbanshis would be regarded as Bratya Kshatriya in all government deeds. Against this order a few Zaminders and upper caste elites protested strongly. But there was no change in the Government order.³¹

Though the District Magistrate's order had gone in favour of Rajbanshis, the census report of 1901 again classified the Rajbanshis and the Koches as members of the same caste.³²

At the time of the next Census (1910), the Rajbanshis again continued their movement for recognizing themselves as Kshatriyas. In this context, a large meeting was held at Rangpur on 2nd May 1910. Sri Madhusudan Roy, a pleader of Jalpaiguri became the president in the meeting. The meeting was attended by the representatives of Jalpaiguri, Cooch-behar, Rangpur, Dinajpur and other districts of Bengal. The delegates of the community met Sir Lancelot Hare, the lieutenant Governor of East Bengal and Assam at Dacca and the Census Commissioner, E.A.Gait, at Calcutta and gave them a memorandum stating their demands and grievances. About 2000 Rajbanshis had signed the memorandum. The Rajbanshis of various districts made an application to the District Magistrates in order to recognize them as Kshatriyas and differentiate them from the Koches. They also

applied to allow them to use the respectable titles like Burma, Roy etc. Except Cooch-behar all other districts granted their application. At last under the guidance of E.W.Dentith — Cooch-behar state superintendent, the royal officials of Cooch-behar conceded their application. The Rajbanshis became successful and fulfilled their claim as Kshatriya in the final report of 1911 census, where they got recognition as a separate Hindu caste, 'Rajbanshi' with 'Kshatriya'.³³ At the census operations of 1921, they again made an expedition and applied to the Census Authorities to recognize them as only 'Kshatriya' in place of Rajbanshi Kshatriya.³⁴

Thus on the basis the issue of Census the Rajbanshi leaders wanted to strengthen their position in social hierarchy only and to rise a community consciousness among the Rajbanshi, which could be further develop through the processes of 'Sanskritization' and 'Westernization'. The process was completed with the creation of a caste association and the agenda was taken for the construction and assertion of this new identity.

Before the establishment of Kshatriya Samity the Rajbanshis felt the necessity of forming an association of their own. In the last decade of the 19th century, Haramohan Roy, the Rajbanshi zaminder of Rangpur had fulfilled the aspiration of Rajbanshis founding an association named 'Rangpur Bratya Kshatriya Jatir Unnati Bidhayani Sabha'. But this was only the association of some elites. It had no social base. Consequently the organization had no impact on the community. But the developing movement and the census operations in the early 20th century it made easy to some Rajbanshi leaders to form a broader association of their own which could be able to voice their grievances. Among the Rajbanshi leaders who took the Rajbanshis under the banner of such association, was Sri Panchanan Barma. Under his active guidance the Kshatriya Samity was established in 1317 B.S. (1910) at Rangpur. Its goal was to put forward the matter of social and political mobilization among the Rajbanshis.

The foundation of this Samity gave a new path to the Rajbanshi Community. The first meeting of the Samity was commenced at Rangpur and almost 400 members from Rangpur, Goalpara, Cooch-behar, Jalpaiguri and

Dinajpur were present in the meeting. Madhusudan Roy, a pleader of Jalpaiguri became the president of the meeting. Sri Panchanan Barma was then chosen as secretary. In his popular address Sri Barma spoke about the aims and objectives of the Samity,³⁵ which he wrote in detail in his letter to the District Magistrate of Rangpur, on 15th June, 1924. 'The Kshatriya Samity,' Barma wrote to his letter 'aims at the religious, social, intellectual, physical and general progress of the community.' It was mainly connected with the welfare of every direction of the Kshatriya Community, but not connected with the welfare of India.³⁶The Samity thereafter was interested for the social regeneration of the Rajbanshi community through religious and cultural reforms. The Samity believed that group solidarity was very much necessary for all round progress of Rajbanshi Community. The samity also wanted to generate a community spirit and sense of pride among its members and rousing in them the consciousness of a constructed glorious past.

Later, the Samity was doing the registration and also extended its own constitution to control the different activities. Gradually all Rajbanshis became the members of the Kshatriya Samity. But the Article 14 of the constitution had classified them into three categories i.e. Manya, Ganya and Sadharan. Any Rajbanshi who conveyed hundred rupees or more than at a time to Samiti's fund was considered as a Manya Sabhya or a respectable member. Those who gave Rs.2/- each as annual donation were called Ganya Sabhya or notable members. Barring these two categories the rest members or Sadharan Sabhya.³⁷ There was a governing body of the Samity which was called Sansad. The members of the Sansad were nominated every year from the members of the samity named Ganya and manya Sabha.

With a view to arriving to the Rajbanshi peasantry, the Samity organized a multilayered structural set up. The structure was:-

Kshatriya Samity,

- i) Mahamandali (in each sub-division)
- ii) Mandali (consisting of one, two or more village)
- iii) Antarmandali (consisting of some paras)

The organization of villages under different sub-units was the most interesting feature of the Samity. Among the various units in a village organization top was the Mandali and at the bottom was Patti. One gadiani was formed taking ten or twelve patties and five or seven gadianes had formed a ghata. There was a pramanick or pattanayaka in each Patti. A ghata or Mandali was organized taking five or seven gadianis and the pattanayakas.³⁸ The main activity of Mandalis was to run socio-religious reforms within the community, to advice its different social functions and to give energy to the common people for accepting social practices maintaining their social status. The Samity also gave appointment to the preachers or pracharaks for the same purpose.³⁹ The representative of the different units and sub-units had submitted annual progress reports of their activities at the annual conference of the Samity and this was regarded as a part and parcel of their accountability to the main Kshatriya Samity. Thus by 1926 about three hundred local units had been forming all over North Bengal, which tells us that the Kshatriya Samity was successful in developing its organizational network at every nook and corner with a view to mobilizing the common Rajbanshi peasants as their supporters.⁴⁰

Barring the peasants, careful attempt was made to raise caste consciousness among the Rajbanshi students so that they can participate in the Rajbanshi caste movement. In this context, Kshatriya Chatra Samity was founded in the year of 1917. All Rajbanshi students were requested to take the membership of this association. The main organizational body of this association was formed consisting of the representatives from all the districts and students of each school and colleges nominated one representative each and sent this list of its members to the head association.⁴¹ In fact, the Kshatriya Chatra Samity was the sister of the Kshatriya Samity and took part in all its social and cultural reform programmes.

From 1920 onwards, the Kshatriya Samity began to publish a monthly journal called Kshatriya. Its main purpose was to reconstruct an imaginative history of the Rajbanshi Kshatriyas, to appeal the present generation in order to rouse their Kshatriya Spirit and to make strong the bonds of community solidarity.

Through this journal the motto of 'Kshatriyaization' was also preached. According to the Samity leader, the most important purpose was religious reform. Sri Shyama Prasad Barma, one Rajbanshi leader wrote, religion was the source of progress of a caste. By no means, wrote Barma, they should give up their traditional religion- the religion of the Kshatriyas.⁴¹ If this Kshatriya dharma was to be practiced, the community, in the true sense of the term would get back its lost glory.

Following this thinking, the first crucial step of the Kshatriya Samity was to organize the Milankshetras or ritual congregation at various places for the Upanayan Sanskar or the ceremony of ritual rebirth, was written in the Shastras for the men of the Kshatriya varna. In 1911, the second annual conference of the Kshatriya Samity was held at which a suggestion was given for putting up the sacred thread to the Rajbanshis but no concrete resolution was passed. It was determined that the view of the Brahman Pandits from various places would be accepted in this context and their rulings would be given among the members of the community for constructing a suitable public opinion. So consequently the pandits of Mithila, Benaras, Calcutta, Nabadwip and Kamrup had given their opinion which was distributed among the members of the Samity, presenting its third annual conference. The secretary of the Samity took the responsibility of deciding the time and place for the organization of a mass thread wearing function. Accordingly in the month of Magh 1319 B.S. (1912) at a place named Debiganj in Jalpaiguri district, at the side of the river Karotoa, the pandits of Nabadwip, Mithila and Kamrup gave sacred thread to the Rajbanshi according to the rule of the Hindu Shastras and the ceremony continued for three successive days. Following this similar Milankshetras in various districts was formed at which many more Rajbanshis accepted sacred thread which would indicate their Kshatriya status. For example, in the year of 1923-24 Sri Panchanan Barma- the Secretary of kshatriya Samiti came to Maldah. He had gone with Karpur Madal at various places of Habibpur and Gazole. There he delivered a lecture about the importance of wearing sacred thread among the Rajbanshis of different areas. Consequently many Rajbanshis had selected place of Mahamilan-kshetra and

began to wear sacred thread. From 1916-1924 the Kshatriyaization movement started in Maldah but failed to achieve any success.

Side by side in the year of 1920 under the co-operation of Gobinda Chandra Roy, Premhari Barman, Sailaja Kanta Roy etc. the sacred thread wearing day was observed at Debiganj village on the bank of river Atreyi. The secretary of the Kshatriya Samiti was present on that day. In 1927, at the place named Jaulokahar under the Thana of Kushmandi the Mahamilan-Kshetra was prepared and about two thousand Rajbanshis wore sacred thread. In Jalpaiguri on 10th February, 1912 under the leadership of Panchanan Barma, Harikishor Barma and Kamini kumar SinghaRoy many Rajbanshis put on sacred thread at the village named Peralbari of Debiganj thana. In this ceremony some Rajbanshis came from Cooch-behar and joined to it.⁴² The wearing of sacred thread was regarded as a goal in order to put forward the kshatriya movement. Special importance was given to the usefulness of observing religious practices of the community according to the verdict of the Hindu shastras. An earnest request was also made to abide by the rulings of the Brahmin priest, who were invited to different social ceremonies in order to play their priestly role.⁴³ Tolls were established in various places in order to develop religious education among the Rajbanshis and the Kshatriya Samity also took Brahmin priests from abroad to run proper shastric rituals among the Rajbanshis mass.⁴⁴ Besides this, regular rituals of worship which were practiced by the kshatriyas such as Gayatri, Sandhya puja, Achman, Gita path etc. are also introduced. The kshatriya Samity published a host of pamphlets with a view to giving the details of these rituals which was hoped to be put in practice by the members of the community in their daily life. But the most important feature of this process of religious reform was the beginning of the worship of Goddess Chandi by Panchanan Barma. It was determined at every annual conference that Goddess Chandi would be worshipped as the symbol of power and power was regarded as the basic quality of the kshatriyas.⁴⁶

Another important aspect of the Rajbanshi movement was the gradual awareness about protecting of the dignity of women. Following the upper class model of feminine mentality, the Kshatriya leaders also prayed to make some

changes in the existing practices in their society in which the Rajbanshi women enjoyed much more freedom and equality. Consequently the parda system was introduced and they did not allow their women to go to market. This type of norms was considered as a symbol of high status.⁴⁷ This was nothing but an attempt to lessen the freedom of Rajbanshi women. The woman had lost their status and became a subject of protection by others. This was regarded by the leaders of the kshatriya Samity an important concern to protect their women particularly from the Muslim gundas. The matter repeatedly placed the agenda of the annual conferences of the kshatriya Samity and there were ardent appeals through the journal named Kshatriya to the members of the community to become watchful to protect their women. A suggestion was given by Sri panchanan Barma in 13th annual conference of the kshatriya Samity for the establishment of volunteer groups with appropriate training in every village mandali to protect women from hooligans. Everybody in the kshatriya Samity had accepted the proposal. In order to arise the kshatriya spirit for protecting women, Panchanan Burma wrote a fiery poem in local dialect whose name was 'Dangdhari Mao (mother with the power to protect).⁴⁸

The matter of abduction of women had become really more general relation.⁴⁹ It was a developing and in reality a more psychological matter of the Hindus all over Bengal and India. The dread of the Muslim abductors was really more metaphorical than real. Women were regarded as the emblem of chastity of the community and abduction of women by Muslims was considered as an open insult to the community pride. The Hindu Mahasabha took initiative in this respect all over India and urged both the administration and the Hindus to save the dignity of their women from Muslim.⁵⁰ The local news papers also presented the matter. For instance, the sarathi, a news paper publishing from Calcutta in December 1923 wrote 'in broad daylight turbulent Musalman badmasas' kidnap women and brutally outraged them, while like helpless persons we read it in the papers. If government is incompetent, the oppressed people will be compelled to take the place of the avenger.'⁵¹ However, the government opinion in this respect was totally different. In reply to a question which was raised by Panchanan Burma in the

Legislative council on the women abduction issue in Rangpur, H.L. Stephenson, who was in charge of the police station had placed the figures of abduction cases in different sub-divisions of Rangpur. From the figures it is known that it was not only the Muslims alone who played the role of abductors, nor were only the Hindu women abducted always.⁵² Thus, entering into the procedure of 'sanskritization' the Rajbanshi caste leaders accepted the communal idiom of the dominant Hindu culture and chastity of women as its sign. However this also encouraged them to gather all from their community and raised into it a dependable degree of militancy.

However the movement for Kshatriyaization was not only limited to the arena of upper caste culture or religious behavior. The secular ideas of community formation were not thus regarded, though often such attempts were also shown in cultural symbolic codes. For instance, endeavours were continuously made in different ways to revive the Kshatriyas martial spirit and to reawaken the community through educational reforms.⁵³ In order to develop spirit among the Rajbanshis the Kshatriya Samity attempted to encourage the youths to join the army citing examples of those heroes of the Rajbanshi community who had earned fame in the past. About 400 Rajbanshis had responded to such appeals and joined as soldiers in the First World War.⁵⁴ Sri Panchanan Barma argued that the Rajbanshis had included in the war considering it as their sole duty. He begged earnestly the Bengal Government to make a separate regiment for the Rajbanshis.⁵⁵ Side by side new jobs were created exclusively for them. The strategy of Rajbanshi mobilization was more expressed in their leaders' mentality towards education and public employment.

The Rajbanshi leaders knew quite well about the backwardness of the community and also about the fact that without educational improvement the community would not feel the value of social reform. So the Samity adopted a host of steps to develop educational spirit among the members of the Rajbanshi community. Among them the financial help for the needy students, construction of hostels, and the rise of consciousness among the farmers about the value of education for their children must be mentioned. In this context, the Samity had

repeatedly appealed to the Government for giving aid for their education. It also depended on self help as well. It is known from the report of the 16th annual conference of the Kshatriya Samity that the Samity had provided financial help to about 70 students.⁵⁶ The Samity also raised from among its members with a view to constructing a hostel for the Rajbanshi students in the Rangpur district school. The members of the Samity also realized if the Government had employed some of the educated Rajbanshis, more people would be enthusiastic to take education. So, Panchanan Barma ardently appealed to the Government to give some special educational privileges to the Rajbanshis with regards to the matter of public employment like the Muslims. According to him, it was very much essential to develop education among them for the gradual improvement of their social status.⁵⁷

Side by side the leader also felt the need of material welfare of the peasantry. In this respect the leader of the community also tried to make a fund for the general welfare of the community. They also launched a financial company called the 'Barma Company'. It was situated at Gaibandha in Rangpur district. The primary objective of the company was to supply loan to the poor during emergency, so that they could be able to protect themselves against landlords and money lenders.⁵⁸ A Kshatriya bank was also established in Rangpur. All these attempts were made to mobilize different communities of the Rajbanshis and thereby to develop among them a commonly shared community identity.

The Rajbanshi leaders also tried to create link with the All India Kshatriya movement. From 1912 Sri Barma had been trying to make relation with the Bharatiya Kshatriya Mahasabha. The representatives of the Mahasabha came to the Samity and the journals of the Mahasabha regularly sent to the Samity Office. In the year of 1922 Sri Barma was the elected Vice-President of the Bengal branch of the Bharatiya Kshatriya Mahasabha which was known as the Bengal Prantik Sabha. At that time he had an intimate relation with Janaki Pal Sing, a Punjabi Kshatriya who took a deep interest to make a close contact between the Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samity and the Mahasabha. In the year of 1920 under his guidance Panchanan Barma and other members of the Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samity had gone

to Puri to join the conference of the Kshatriya Upakarini Mahasabhas which was conducted by the Maharaja of Sailana. Janaki Paul was called to attend the Gaibandha, Chakdulia and votamari conference of the Kshatriya Samity as the representative of the representative of All India Mahasabha. In 1924, the Maharajas of Alwar and Sailana became the president and the secretary of the Mahasabha. In that year the Bengal Prantik Kshatriya Sabha was also commenced at the University Institute Hall in Calcutta. Its president was the Maharaja of Sailana. Panchanan Barma also had attended the conference. At the same year Barma, Kamini Kumar Singha and Upendra Nath Barman went to Alwar in order to attend the conference of the Bharatiya Kshatriya Mahasabha. In 1917 its indoor conference was also joined by Panchanan Barma, Harikishore Barma and others.⁵⁹

The main two objectives to develop interaction with the Bharatiya Kshatriya Mahasabha were (I) The Rajbanshi leaders felt the need of recognition of their Kshatriya status by the Kshatriyas in other parts of India. According to their belief, it would extend some sort of legitimacy to their social claims. (ii) This interaction also would extend the much required political support of the all India body for their own cause. In fact, the Kshatriya movement of the Rajbanshis wanted to enter into the lime light of modern institutional politics of colonial India.

Side by side the Rajbanshis had earned the wrath of the upper class people. They were not successful to change the attitude of the upper class people towards them. The Brahmins who generally dominated the society refused to give services to the Rajbanshis and the Maithili and Kamrup Brahmins who had given services the Rajbanshis were called as Brahmins of a lower order.

The movement inevitably brought about face to face confrontation with other castes particularly the so-called upper castes of Hindus who were not prepared to accept these men as Kshatriyas. Many Brahmins refused to serve these people as their priests in religious and social ceremonies and some officials refused to record the caste of these people as Kshatriyas.⁶⁰

Sashi Bhusan Fouzder also wrote that the Brahmins and other upper caste people had spread the rumours that most of the Rajbanshis wore sacred thread and

practiced ritual in order to disobey the rulings of the sashtras and thereby had committed a great sin.

It is interesting to note that the Rajbanshis had faced strong resistance from Cooch-behar state administration. It refused to recognize them as Kshatriya. The administration was under the grip of the upper caste Hindu gentry and the local backward people were failed to compete with them.⁶¹ It was specially reported in the 4th annual conference of the Kshatriya Samity that at many places of Cooch-behar especially in Mathabhanga sub-division, there was a strong opposition to the places of thread wearing ceremonies. The Dewan of the Cooch-behar state named Priya Nath Ghosh in a local hut told the Rajbanshis not to put on sacred thread. In this matter Sri Barma met with the Sub-divisional Officer of Mathabhanga. The officer told that the Dewan wrote a letter to him (Sub-divisional officer) by which it was clear that the Dewan became angry about this movement. So no Milan-kshetra would be allowed in the state. If the leaders of Kshatriya Samity violated it, their property would be confiscated and they would go to the Jail. Panchanan Barma refused to follow it. Consequently the state authority tried to separate the Milan-kshetras with violence. The state police resisted the Rajbanshis from wearing sacred threads during the Asokashtami fair at Baneswar area in Cooch-behar.⁶² The Rajbanshi people felt that their authority in local society would be ended for coming outsiders or Bhatias (upper caste people) 'If we, the Kshatriyas; raise our voice', resolved the Kshatriya Samity, 'they would lose their domination over us. So being scared, they are not allowing, us to unite and to awake our Kshatriya Spirit.'⁶³

But the Rajbanshi leaders did not show much sympathy to the Koches and the Rabhas and refused to stay to the same rank with them. In fact, their major effort was to create distance from the Koches and the Rabhas.⁶⁴ Instead of creating a common platform with them the Rajbanshi leaders wanted to satisfy their own community centric interest.

The Rajbanshi's gradual attempt for gaining Kshatriya identity expresses their belief that caste was not a God gifted and fixed phenomenon, rather it was changeable. The Rajbanshis became totally conscious of their degraded caste

position. 'The continued exclusion ... from social privileges, economic resources and political power'⁶⁵ created demands among the lower castes and raised voice against upper caste domination. Barring Rajbanshis, the Mahishyas, the Sadgops, the Namasudras, the Pods etc. followed the same path. The major violent push of the Rajbanshi Kshatriyaization movement was on the wearing of the sacred thread and the adoption of upper caste Hindu practices. But there was an important aspect that no economic reform was included in the agenda of the Samity. Though it told about education, public employment and military services, there was no idea about these issues among the peasantry.

Since the first decade of the 20th century the political scenario in Bengal was abruptly changed. At this time the Bengali Bhadrakok or the elites strengthened their power. With the introduction of the Government of India Act, 1919, the situation was changed. Commenting on the political development in Bengal, Broomfield observed: 'they (the bhadrakok) were given no indication of the way in which the franchise or the system of representation would be developed and were unprepared for what happened in 1921: the enfranchisement of a million new voters of whom the majority were rural illiterates'.⁶⁶ The force of nationalist upsurge had compelled the Government to search counter forces to resist this tide. The Government got it into the deprived sections of Indian society. Adopting a policy of promotion and protection for the interests of the lower castes, the Government now became eager to set them as a counter force against the socially and politically dominant upper cast gentry.⁶⁷

In the 19th century the colonial ruler tried to create communal tensions between the Hindus and the Muslims. He adopted the policy of patronizing the Muslims to decrease the existing dominance of the Hindu gentry in political institution. Consequently in the late 19th and early 20th centuries a large number of religio-political associations grew. Among them mention must be made of Anjumans whose primary objective was to serve the interests of the Muslim elite must be mentioned.⁶⁸

The colonial Government policy of promotion and protection towards the Muslims had a great effect on the lower caste minds. The different lower caste

associations strongly protested against the monopoly and domination of the upper class people in the fields of education, jobs and representative bodies. Depending on their own strength they wanted to enter into the new colonial institutions which became the safety places of the upper caste elites. This was the origin of the separatist political line among the lower castes.⁶⁹ following the path of other lower cast elites, the Rajbanshi leaders became frayed for power and the revolution in this way had crossed the boundary of Kshatriyaization. At last they entered into the arena of politics.

Among the most prominent leaders of the Rajbanshis reference must be made of Panchanan Barma, Upendra Nath Barman, Monohar Barma, Kshetra Nath Singha and others. Panchanan Barma was the leader of the movement and became the secretary of Kshatriya Samity up to his death (1935). In order to re-establish Kshatriya status of the Rajbanshis, Haramohan Khajanchi – a Rangpur zaminder had started a social movement in the first decade of the 20th century.⁷⁰

Side by side Panchanan Barma found for a higher status of the Rajbanshis within the elite society. For that purpose he felt the need of British support and was not ready to make a common front with the nationalists against the British. But he failed to realize it that without some basic economic reforms, his movement would not be a successful one. Panchanan Barma's successors had no difference in this regard. So beyond Kshatriyaization the politics of the Rajbanshi caste movement was particularly limited to the distinct utterance of the demand for being subjected as a scheduled caste, so that they could obtain special protection in the fields of education, employment and representation in the legislative council and the other local bodies.

Since the late 19th century, the British officials were planning of making a list of castes which felt the need of special protection from the Government. The Calcutta University Commission first prepared a list of 21 castes, which needed such special help and called these the "depressed classes" later the Government had extended this list by including more and more castes at different times. At every stage the Rajbanshi leaders on the basis of their education and bad economic condition demanded their inclusion in this list. Some local association strongly

protested against it. For instance, the Bangiya Brahman Sabha in a resolution submitted to the Reform Officer to the Government of Bengal noted that,--- those castes only can be called depressed who have no Brahmans to perform their religious and social ceremonies'. From that point of view, the Rajbanshis and other castes could not be subjected in the list of the depressed classes.⁷¹ The Indian Association also remarked that the condition of social and political backwardness for inclusion of castes in the list of depressed classes was not suitable to the Rajbanshis. 'It is well known that this caste had already called them as Kshatriya and wore sacred thread. Their leaders had already attended the Kshatriya conference along with the Kshatriya ruling princes'. For this the Association told that the Rajbanshi and other castes should not be included in the list.⁷² The Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha also expressed the same opinion. According to it, since the Rajbanshis claimed themselves as real Kshatriyas and for serving this purpose they had taken the sacred thread, so they could not called as a depressed class.⁷³ Panchanan Barma argued that till the Rajbanshi and other castes required special protection from the Government with a view to making themselves equal with the already advanced higher castes. He also opined that in place of depressed classes the term 'backward classes' should be used and education might be made the criterion for determining backwardness.⁷⁴ In a special meeting of the executives of the Kshatriya Samity he tried to make his fellow caste leaders understand that a backward class could never be improved itself without protection and reservation in spheres of politics, education and administration. He was successful to pursue the other members regarding to the inclusion.⁷⁵

In 1932, Lord Lothian had prepared the list of 'depressed classes. But there was no name of the Rajbanshis in the list. So the Rajbanshi had appealed to the reform officer, Government of Bengal and thereby argued that due to their social and political backwardness they should be included in the list of depressed classes. In the meantime through a Government of India' resolution the name 'depressed classes' were changed to that of 'scheduled castes'. At the end of 1933, the Bengal Reform office published the final lists of scheduled castes for Bengal and there was inclusion of Rajbanshis in it.⁷⁶ the next important activity of the

Rajbanshi leaders was to obtain reservation in jobs for themselves in Bengal provincial services. The data with regard to the appointments of the backward classes in these services shows that during 1930-31 in Dinajpur out of 61 appointments, no one went to the backward classes, in Jalpaiguri out of 81 appointments only one, and in Rangpur out of 75 appointments only two had gone to such classes. This proves the educational backwardness of the Rajbanshis⁷⁷ Which was the main cause of their exclusion from the government services. But the Rajbanshis soon understood as the government had adopted measures to make safe the reservation of the Muslims, the same should be given to them as well. This thought led the Rajbanshis to make a resolution in 1936 in the annual conference of their Samity that the protection and facilities should be given to them like the Muslims in education and government services.⁷⁸ In this respect Sri Barma told that recommendation of higher officials was required with a view to securing government services. The Rajbanshi leaders also appealed to Raja Rajendra Narayan, the Maharaja of Cooch-Bihar to appoint the Rajbanshis in the state administration and the latter had given assurance them in that respect.⁷⁹

In the year of 1931, a resolution was moved in the Bengal Legislative Council. Mukunda Behari Mullick -- a member of the Namasudra Community, had placed a demand that at least 20 percent of the appointment in all provincial services should be reserved for the backward classes. Panchanan Barma had applied a strong defense for the resolution. We hear that everything should go by superior merit and that all classes have the appointment by force of their superior merit, all these may sound very fair. The advanced classes will get the services. But where will the rest go? Are they not to take the burden of administration on their shoulders? Are they to be treated always as the lots... . Then should those classes who already have had opportunities always go up and others go below and further below? Should this sort of thing be perpetuated?.⁸⁰

This was a very ardent appeal no doubt and it touched the feelings of the Rajbanshis and other depressed classes very much. Gathering other backward castes with them the Rajbanshis tried to prove that due to their numerical strength they had a legal claim in the spheres of provincial services. But all their efforts

were in Vain. According to the report of the Rajbanshi divisional officer, in the year of 1934-35, out of 21 permanent vacancies in the division there was only one member of the depressed class who could be filled in. The commissioners also observed that 'as Rajbanshis from the majority among backward classes in Rangpur, Jalpaiguri and Dinajpur and as activities of their association (Kshatriya Samity) would indicate, sufficient number of candidates from their community may be available, if it is widely known that a percentage of vacancies would go to them.'⁸¹

Another major step of the Rajbanshi leaders was to get sufficient representation of their castes in various legislative and local self governing bodies. The Kshatriya Samity vowed to place their demands to the Government of India and accordingly, Panchanan Barma—the secretary of the Samity in a letter to the chief secretary of the Bengal Government represented the following demand:-

That in the matter of administration, Municipality, Village communities and Panchayets should be founded and recognized as units and this will be the basis of public representation.

That if public representation in the council of government is wanted, every community irrespective of high or low, every interest should be allowed to be represented by members of their own community and not by men who belong to other community as they have no feelings on any subject.

That care should be taken by the Government of India to serve the interests of the small communities sending one or few representatives.⁸²

The demands were thus depended upon the same argument that the interests of the backward classes were not uninjured in the hands of the higher castes. So when power would be decentralized through representative bodies, the Rajbanshis should have the right to represent in them. There was a suggestion for a unicameral legislative council for the provinces and separate electoral system for the Muslims in the Government of India Act.1919. The constituencies were separated into Muslim and non-Muslim categories. There was no provision of separate representation for the depressed classes. Under this Act, the first council

election was commenced in 1921 and Panchanan Barma was the sole Rajbanshi candidate in Rangpur who had won the election. The second general election was held in 1923. The congress party did not participate in the election owing to its non-cooperative programme. In place of this party, the newly created Swarajya party which was created by Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das contested the election, Panchanan Barma and Nagendra Narayan Roy- the two candidates of the Kshatriya Samity from Rangpur gained victories defeating their Swarajya party rivals. Kshetra Nath Singha, another Rajbanshi stood as an independent candidate in the election but he did not pass.⁸³ From Dinajpur, Premhari Barma as a candidate of the Kshatriya Samity stood in the election but he was defeated in the hands of Jogindra Chandra Chakraborty of Swarajya party.⁸⁴

In the next council election of 1926, Nagendra Narayan Roy, as only candidate of the Kshatriya Samity had won the election from Rangpur. Panchanan Barma also stood in the election from Rangpur but he was defeated by Jatindra Nath Chakraborty - a congress candidate. In the 4th council election in 1920-30 both Panchanan Barma and Nagendra Narayan Roy became victorious from Rangpur.

If we make a survey on the election result of the Rajbanshis, we can say that among Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Rangpur constituencies, Rajbanshi got much success in Rangpur because the movement for Kshatriyaization started at first from Rangpur and it was the headquarter of the Kshatriya Samity for all practical purposes. The leaders were very much organized and active here. They had much influence in the local society. All these circumstances were not present in Jalpaiguri and Dinajpur. In Jalpaiguri, Prasanna Deb Raikat – the Raja of Baikunthapur, had won all the council, elections since 1921. He stood there as an independent candidate. Though he belonged to the depressed class, the leader of the Kshatriya Samity did not recognize him as a member of their community. In Dinajpur, the local upper caste zaminders, joteders and merchants had continued their victory in the election. But in these two districts the majority voters were Rajbanshi.⁸⁵

But this majority strength could not achieve any success. Their sincere appeals to their member to vote for their own community candidates remained unsuccessful.⁸⁶In such condition they only depended on the Government to get justice. They now earnestly requested to the Government to nominate their members in different representative bodies.⁸⁷

In order to secure the interests of the depressed classes, the Government wanted to bring certain changes in the existing constitutional arrangements and in this regard the Indian Statutory Commission was appointed. In a memorandum the Kshatriya Samity proposed to the commission a host of measures for securing the interests of the depressed classes. The commission applied their attention to the various sides in which the Rajbanshi Kshatriyas and other such social groups were oppressed by the dominant classes' day in and day out. The stress was given on this matter that the time had come of ending the oppressive rule of dominant classes upon the depressed classes and every facility should be given to the depressed classes so that they can get scope to develop their resources and promote their social, political, educational and economical interest. The Rajbanshi Kshatriya also demanded responsible Government with rather extension of the franchise with a view to increase this right to majority section of the society. But to make safe proper representation of the depressed classes the memorandum claimed, 'there should be a separate electorate for them to be represented by members belonging to the backward classes'. Barring this, representation for the minorities was to be ascertained and jobs were to be reserved for backward classes in different services.⁸⁸

In the early 1930 the Government appointed the Franchise Reform Committee to determine the ways and means for making representation of the different castes and communities in the provincial legislature. In this connection Panchanan Barma and Nagendra Roy in favour of the Kshatriya Samity wrote to the Reform Officers of the Government of Bengal that two general and two scheduled caste seats should be permitted to each of the three districts of Rangpur, Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri.⁸⁹ Members of the Jalpaiguri Kshatriya Samity also gave a petition to the Reforms Officer requesting that 'the district be divided into three

parts for electoral purposes and for each division one general Hindu Seat and one special seat for the scheduled caste be allotted, making the total number of seats six in this district'.⁹⁰

At the same time Dr.B.R.Ambedkar was presiding at the Round Table Conference in London for the provision of a separate electorate for the depressed classes. As a result the 'Communal Award' was announced by the Government in 1932. According to this Award, a schedule of the backward classes was made and in Bengal 15 seats were reserved in the proposed Legislative Assembly for such Scheduled Caste candidates, to whom the scheduled caste voters would obtain the right to select. The Kshatriya Samity supported this proposal by heart and soul.⁹¹

Mahatma Gandhi and other congress leaders realized the future effect of this system and persuaded Dr. Ambedkar to come to a pact which was known as Poona Pact (1932).⁹² According to this pact, 30 seats were to be reserved in Bengal for the scheduled caste but the election was to be held jointly. The Bengal depressed classes vehemently protested against this settlement.⁹³ At last the Government of India generally accepted the Poona Pact and its proposals regarding electoral changes were subjected in the Government of India Act.1935.

Under this new Act. the first general election to the Provincial legislative Assembly took place in 1937. In this election Puspajit Barma, Kshetra Nath Singha from Rangpur, Upendra Nath Barman from Jalpaiguri and Premhari Barma, Syama Prosad Barma from Dinajpur became victorious as the candidates of the Kshatriya samity.⁹⁴ This was for the first time that a large number of Rajbanshi leaders won the election and it was undoubtedly a colossal victory for the Rajbanshi leader in the arena of politics. From this time they had also realized the importance of establishing a United Front with other backward castes in order to fulfil their goal. The Rajbanshi leader also tried in the Assembly to place the demands in favour of their community such as increased educational facilities, reservation of jobs, and Governmental assistance in this matter.

In the post 1937 period the Bengal political situation had began to alter. The most vital question in front of the nationalist leaders in Bengal was what will

be the way for preventing the Muslim League to form a ministry? Sarat Bose—the Bengal congress leader was much very eager to make an alliance with the various groups within the Assembly so that a coalition ministry could be organized. For the formation of the coalition ministry the support of the Independent scheduled caste members was necessary. Consequently the progressive Coalition Party under the guidance of Fazlul Hoque had formed a new ministry in 1941. Eleven scheduled caste members supported this ministry.⁹⁵ some of them were Rajbanshis. Their representative Upendra Nath Barman had gone to the cabinet as a minister of forest and excise.⁹⁶ This Fazlul Hoque Ministry came to an end in 1943 and Khwaza Nazimuddin with the support of the European Bloc, Old Swarajists and other had organized a new ministry.⁹⁷ It is interesting to note that Premhari Barma – a representative of the Kshatriya Samity entered into the ministry and took the responsibility of the same department to which his caste brother, Upendra Nath Barman held previously.⁹⁸ In this way a division was created between the Rajbanshi caste leaders. Both Pushpajit Barma and Upendra Nath Barman were against the Nazimuddin ministry.

Since the late 1930 and the early 1940. The Kshatriya Samiti's organizational base was gradually weakened and the scenario began to change in Bengal politics. Certain consideration got more importance than caste identity for the Rajbanshi leaders. As a consequence of the reserved constituency since 1937, caste appeal was no more a decisive factor to enter into the Assembly. The threat of competition from the upper castes had now gone. In place of it a competition had begun among the members of the depressed class themselves. There was an assurance of the return of the Rajbanshi candidates from the Rajbanshi based areas by the reserved constituencies. In the post 1940 period the most important matter for the Rajbanshis was now how to conclude pacts with the powerful groups for securing personal aspiration. They had no more interest to assert themselves into the progress of the Kshatriya Samity. Some Rajbanshi candidates became victorious from Rangpur, Jalpaiguri and Dinajpur districts in the general election of 1946. But they were not all the candidates of the Kshatriya Samity. For instance, it is known from Upendra Nath Barma's own account that Mohini

Barman with the support of the congress leaders won in the election from Jalpaiguri, though he himself contested as an independent candidate from the same constituency with the backing of the Kshatriya Samiti. But in order to become a member of the constituent assembly he was interested to gain this support of Congress later on.

Thus in the post 1940 period there was a clear sign of disintegration in the politics of the Kshatriya Samity.⁹⁹ The support of the Samity or mere caste slogans were not enough for winning an election. In the year of 1946, Nagendra Narayan Roy only one official candidate of the Kshatriya Samity became able to win in Rangpur, though the Samity had placed five candidates in the districts of Rangpur and Dinajpur and the candidature of Upendra Nath Barman in Jalpaiguri had backed.¹⁰⁰ During the 1940s attempts were made by the Congress, the Communists and the newly established political branch of the All India Scheduled Caste Federation of Dr. Ambedkar to gather the scheduled castes in support of their respective party programme.¹⁰¹ But there was much difference among them with regards to ideologies and interests. This was totally clear in the election of 1946. In that election the official Kshatriya Samity candidate was defeated. Rup Narayan Roy the communist party candidate gained victory from Dinajpur. And all other elected Rajbanshi candidates were Congress nominees. Among the name of following leaders must be mentioned; Harendra Nath Roy (Dinajpur), Mohini Mohan Barman (Jalpaiguri cum Siliguri), Rajni Kanta Roy Barman (Rangpur) and Haren Chandra Barman (dogra cum Pabna).¹⁰²

As a consequence of this scenario the scheduled caste failed to emerge itself as a separate consolidated group in the politics of Bengal. They 'operated essentially as an interest group, with the established political parties negotiating with its leaders and actually winning many of them over at different junctures'.¹⁰³

Moreover, the elite leadership of the caste associations did not gain success to fulfil the demands of the masses rightly. So only appeals to caste sentiments could not always subject the support the masses for the scheduled caste leaders.

References & Notes

1. Rati Ram Das, a Rajbanshi poet of the late 18th century talked about Kshatriya origin of the Rajbanshis, Rangpur Sahitya Parishad Patrika, 1315 B.S.Vol,3 No-4 cited in J.M.Debsingha Barman, Kshatriya Rajbanshi Kula Kaumudi (Bengali). Rangpur, 1317 B.S Pp 48-9, Then in the early 19th century account of Rangpur, Dinajpur by Buchnan Hamilton we also find references to a Rajbanshi claim for Kshatriya origin. M.Martin, The History, Antiquities, Topography, and statistics of Eastern India, vols. II, and V. Delhi, 1976 pp 740 and 538.
2. Sanyal. H. Social Mobility in Bengal Calcutta 1981, p-32.
3. J. Wise, Notes on the Races, castes and Tribes of Eastern Bengal, London, 1883, H.H.Risly. The Tribes and castes of Bengal, vol-1 Calcutta 1981, N.K.Dutta, Origin and Growth of caste in India vol-II Calcutta 1969; N.Roy-Bangalir Itihas, Adi Parba vol-I (Bengali) 3rd edition Calcutta 1980, N.K.bose 'Some Aspects of caste in Bengal; in M.Singer (ed) Traditional India; Structure and Change, Philadelphia; 1959. J.Sharma, Caste dynamics among the Bengali Hindus, Calcutta 1980; A.Mukharjee, Jatibhed pratha O Unish sataker Bengali Samaj, (Bengali) Calcutta 1981; Sanyal, Social Mobility in Bengal 1872—1937, Calcutta 1990.
4. Sanyal H, Social Mobility in Bengal p-36; Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar Castes, politics and the Raj, Bengal 1872-1937, pp 3-7.
5. Bandyopadhyay Sekhar, Caste, politics and the Raj Calcutta 1937, p-201.
6. Risley had collected number of such local usages. see Risley's papers (in microfilm) Reel No. -1.
7. Bandyopadhyay Sekhar, Castes, politics and the Raj p-201.
8. GB.General (Education) File No.-IIC-9-1 April 1913 Progs. No. 67.
9. G B. General (Education) File No. IE-8 January 1917. progs No. 14-17 K.W p-9 GB General (Education) File no II-C 33 April 1921, progs No. 28-9, p-1.
10. Notification No. 772 IA 30 July 1923 Memorandum for Guidance (of the) Selection Committee, GB. Appointment (Appointment) File No. 1D-I, October, 1923 Progs No. 3-19.

11. A.K.Roy 'Some Notes on the Kshatriya Movement in Northern Bengal', in Journal of Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, vol XX No-1, p-48.
12. Madhuparni (Bengali), Jalpaiguri Special Number, 1987, p- 393.
13. Sarkar.D.N. Rai Saheb Panchanan (Bengali), Rangpur 1391 BS, p-16.
14. C.C. Sanyal, 'Jalpaiguri Saharer Ekso Bachar' in Jalpaiguri Jela Satabarsapurti Smarak Grantha (Bengali) Jalpaiguri, 1970, pp- 96-9.
15. U.N. Barman, Thakur Panchanan Barman Jiban Smriti (Bengali), 2nd edn. Jalpaiguri, 1387 BS, pp 13-14.
16. U.N. Barman, Uttar Banglar Sekal O Amar Jiban Smriti (Bengali), Jalpaiguri 1392 BS. pp 43-45.
17. S.N.Roy –'Swadeshi Juger Smriti', in Jayasri (Bengali), Bhadra –Aswin, 1358 BS.
18. P.R.Singha, Kamta Rajya Paundra Kshatriya. Itihas vol- I (Bengali), Cooch Behar 1379 BS, Preface: P.B.Roy, Sekaler Agradoot, Ekaler Bismay. Thakur Panchananer Itibritta (Bengali), Dhupguri, 1389 B.S. pp 21-2.
19. Census of India 1911 Vol-v. pp 440-3
20. A.K.Roy. 'Some Notes on the Kshatriya Movement in Northern Bengal' p-49.
21. Census of India 1911 Vol-vi, p-382.
22. A.K.Roy, 'Op. cit., p-49.
23. Census of India 1911 Vol-vi, p-382.
24. M. Kabyahusan Rajbanshi Kshatriya Deepak (Bengali), Dinajpur,1318 BS, pp 23-4. M.Barman, Kshatriya Tattva (Bengali), Santal Pargana 1335 BS, p-22; Deb Singha Barman, Kshatriya Rajbanshi, Rajbanshi Kula Kaumudi, pp 33-7.
25. Quoted in Deb Singha Barman, Kshatriya Rajbanshi Kaumudi, p-49.
26. The Kshatriya Samity Memorandum to the Indian Statutory Commission. Written evidence, Bengal Vol. 11.1930 p-E/Beng.720.
27. H.K.Adhikari Rajbanshi Kula Pradeep (Bengali) Calcutta 1314, B.S, pp-97-9.
28. C.Roy,Uttar Banga Rajbanshi Samaj Niti (Bengali) Calcutta 1333 B.S, pp 12-15.

29. Deb Singha Barman, Kshatriya Rajbanshi Kula Kaumudi, pp52-63.
30. U.N. Barman, Rajbanshi Kshatriya Jatir Itihas (Bengali) Jalpaiguri 1941, p-3
31. Ibid, pp 4-7, Sarkar. Rai Saheb Panchanan Barma, pp 21- 22; Roy, 'Some Notes on the Kshatriya Movement', pp 49-52.
32. U.N.Barman , Rajbanshi Kshatriya Jatir Itihas, pp 7-8 Sarkar Rai Saheb Panchanan pp 22-3; Roy 'Some Notes on the Kshatriya Movement', pp 52-3.
33. U.N.Barman-Rajbanshi Kshatriya Jatir Itihas pp 8-10. Roy.'Some Notes on the Kshatriya Movement' in Northern Bengal, pp55-6. Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam. General (miscellaneous). File No. IC -2G/II March 1921, progs nos, 27-41.
34. G.B. Political; File no. 8A-4,B. December 1931, Progs nos.394-406.
35. U. N.Barman, Thakur Panchanan Barma Jiban Charit, p-16.
36. G.B. (Political), File No. 8A-9, B July1924, Progs Nos 169-71.
37. 'Memorandum and Article of the Kshatriya Samity', in GB Political (Political) File No. 8A-9, B July 1924 Progs nos 169-71, Kshatriya (Bengali), Paush – Chaitra, 1333 BS, p-57.
38. Eight Annual Report of the Kshatriya Samity (Bengali), Rangpur, 1327 BS, p-57.
39. Kshatriya Samity, Nabam Barshik Britta–Bibarani (Bengali), Calcutta 1325 BS pp 8-11; Kshatriya Baishakh , 1331 BS, p-15.
40. Sekhar.Bandyopadhyay – Caste, politics and the Raj, p-145.
41. Kshatriya, Baishakh, 1331 BS, p-18.
42. Ibid,
43. U. N. Barman-Rajbanshi Kshatriya Jatir Itihas, pp 11-12.
44. Kshatriya Samity, Nabam Barshik Britta Bibarani, pp 40-41.
45. Ibid pp36-37; Kshatriya Samity, 'Seventh Annual Conference, working Report' (Bengali), Rangpur 1323 BS, pp21-22.
46. U, N, Barman, Thakur Panchan Barma Jiban Charit, pp 73-81.

47. P.K.Dutta –Carving Blocs: Communal Ideology in Early 20th Century Bengal, Delhi 1999 chapter-4.
48. Report on Native Newspapers –week ending 8th December, 1923.
49. The Bengal Legislative Council Proceedings 13th Session, vol.-XIII, 1923, pp 372-73.
50. H.K.Adhikari, Rajbanshi Kula Pradeep, Deb Singha Barman, Kshatriya Rajbanshi Kula Kaumadi, M. Kabhabhusan, Rajbanshi Kshatriya Deepak, S. Barma Faujder, Basiful (Bengali), Goal Para. 1325 BS; N.C.Roy Barma, Kshatra Sangeet (Bengali). Rangpur, 1326 BS.
51. Kshatriya Samity, ‘Tenth Annual Report’ (Bengali) Rangpur, 1326 BS, pp 37-39.
52. U. N.Barman, Thakur Panchanan Barmer Jiban Charit, pp 35-36.
53. Kshatriya, Jaistha 1392 BS, p -44.
54. D.N.Sarkar, Rai Saheb Panchanan, pp 25-30.
55. ‘Working Report of Kshatriya Samity’s First Conference (Bengali) Rangpur 1317 BS.
56. ‘Kshatriya Samity’, Eleventh Annual Conference Report’ 1326 BS pp 1-16.
57. Roy, ‘Some notes on the Kshatriya Movement in Northern Bengal’, p -57.
58. Ibid, p-53.
59. U. N. Barman Kshatriya Tattwa p42.
60. The Cooch-behar Gazetteer 1937, pp 36-37.
61. Roy, ‘Some Notes on the Kshatriya Movement in Northern Bengal’, p 69, M.Roy, ‘Some Notes on the Rajbanshi’, Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol-1, 1902, p-50.
62. B. Roy Chowdhury, ‘Social Mobility Movement among the Rabha of North Bengal’, Man in India vol. -50, March 1970, pp 89-97.
63. Bandyopadhyay Sekhar. Castes, Politics and the Raj, p-129.

64. J.H. Broomfield, Elite Conflict in a plural Society, 20th Century Bengal, California, 1968.
65. R. K. Roy – Social conflict and political. Unrest in Bengal, Delhi 1984, p-80.
66. R. Ahmed,-The Bengal Muslims 1871-1906, A Quest for Identity, Delhi 1981, pp-160-61.
67. U. N. Barman, Thakur Panchanan Barman Jiban Charit (Bengali), Jalpaiguri, 1387 BS, pp-1-9.
68. Sarkar D.N. Rai Saheb Panchanan Barman (Bengali) Rangpur 1391 BS, pp-5-20.
69. G.B.Appoint (Reforms), File No. IR-2 of 1933, April 1934 Progs Nos. 9-61, Serial No- 9.
70. G. B. Appoint (Reforms), File No IR-2 of 1933, April 1934, Progs Nos. 9-61, Serial No-10.
71. G. B. Appoint (Reforms), File No IR-2 of 1933, April 1934, Progs. No 9-61, Serial No- 12.
72. The Bengal Legislative Council Proceedings, 35th Session, Vol.-XXXV, 1930, pp-763-66.
73. U. N. Barman, Thakur Panchanan Barman Jiban Charit, p-63.
74. G.B. Appoint, File No. 4D-10, June 1931, Progs Nos. 36-41.
75. Kshatriya, Sraban, 1333 BS, p-92.
76. Kshatriya Samity, Eleventh Annual Conference Report 1326 BS, pp-17-18.
77. G.B. Appoint, (Appoint) File No, ID-146, September 1930, Progs nos, 12-17
78. S. Barma Faujder, Basiful (Bengali), Goalpara 1325 BS, p-15.
79. U. N. Barman, Thakur Panchan Barman Jiban Charit, pp 68-70.
- 80 G.B. Appoint, File No. 6R-210, July 1925, Progs nos. 17-25.
81. G.B. Appoint, File No. 6R-8, June 1927, Progs nos. 45-48.
82. G.B. Appoint, File No IR-133, July 1932 Progs nos. 20-21.
83. Kshatriya, Paush 1331 BS, p-92.

84. Ibid, Shraban 1333 BS, p-92.
85. G.B. Appoint, File No IR -30 April 1934 Progs nos 1-9.
86. Ibid.
87. Upendra Nath Barman, Thakur Panchan Barmer Jiban Charit, p-76.
88. By the Poona Pact Ambedkar agreed to give up his claim for a separate electorate in return for increase in number of lower caste seats from 71 given by Communal Award to 148 (letter on 151) seats in the provincial legislative assemblies. The system of separate electorate was replaced with joint electorate.
89. G. B. Appoint (Reforms), File No IR 202, January 1933, Progs nos 20-28.
90. Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform (Minutes of Evidence); Vol. 11C, 1934, pp. 1392-98.
91. Ibid, p-1358.
92. GI, Reforms Office, File No. 199/32-R.
93. G.B. Home (Constitution and election), File No, R 3E -27 May, 1937, Progs nos - 1-13.
94. G. Chattopadhyay, Bengal Electoral Politics and Freedom Struggle 1862-1947, Delhi 1984 p-172.
95. Ibid P-173, U.N.Barman, Uttar Banglar Sekal O Amar Jiban Smiriti, p-98.
96. G. Chattopadhyay –Bengal Electoral Politics and Freedom Struggle, p-192.
97. The Bengal Legislative Assembly Proceedings, List of Ministers, July 1943.
98. U.N.Barman, Uttar Banglar Sekal O Amar Jiban Smrity, pp 98-99.
99. G.I. Reforms Office, File No106/3/45-R.
100. Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, Castes, Politics and the Raj, p-183.
101. G.I. Reforms Office, File No, 106/3/45-R.
102. Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, Castes, Politics and the Raj, p-183.
103. Ibid.

CHAPTER - IV

Post Colonial Geographical, Administrative, and Political Scenario of North Bengal

The year 1947 was the water-shed in the history of India including North Bengal. After the partition of India a serious problem was created at the northern part of West Bengal that means North Bengal. The Mountbatten plan of dividing India on 3rd June, 1947 on the basis of religion was fully responsible for it. According to this plan, a boundary commission was formed in order to divide Bengal. Its president became Sir Radcliffe who was not aware of this region (North Bengal). In fact, the British Government wanted to complete the work of partitioning India hurriedly. On the recommendation of Sir Syrile Radcliffe the picture of dividing Bengal was prepared. Other four members of the boundary commission named Charuchandra Biswas, Bijan Mukharjee, Abu Saleha Rahaman and Muhammad Akram did not agree on the recommendation of Radcliff Saheb. Naturally Radcliff Saheb drafted the picture of dividing Bengal alone and the Government gave him that right.¹

The mental disaster of the inhabitants of North Bengal came on the day of 15th August, 1947. On that day the power was transferred from the hand of the British Government to the inhabitants of divided India. But Radcliffe Award was announced after two days i.e. 17th August, 1947. In the true sense of the term, though India gained freedom having been so would divided into two parts, it required two days to know which citizenship the people of North Bengal acquire. On 15th August, the greatest catastrophe came to the life of the people of Dinajpur, Maldah and Jalpaiguri districts. Panaullah - the District Magistrate of Balurghat of Dinajpur hoisted the Pakistani flag. Pakistani army appeared at Balurghat High School. Members of the Joint Constituency of Provincial Executive Assembly namely Jillur Rahaman and Moja Chowdhury tried whole heartedly to keep Balurghat in Pakistan.² So on 15th August the fate of Balurghat was oscillating and

a great tension was created in Balurghat town. The Kaliaganj thana of Dinajpur was to be included in Pakistan. At this joy a procession was commenced on behalf of Muslim League on 14th August. The Pakistani flag was hoisted at Kaliaganj railway station.³ Maldah was also on the verge of extreme excitement because the flag was hoisted by Muslim League on the 15th August.⁴ a rumour was spread that on 15th August Jalpaiguri would be merged into Pakistan. Mosaraf Hossain, the Nawab of Jalpaiguri was the member of Surabardi ministry and was a very influential person. He became afraid of thinking that a large number of tea-gardens which belonged to his Zamindari would be on the verge of division. So he made a great propaganda to include the whole of Jalpaiguri in Pakistan with the help of other Muslim League leaders.⁵

After this on 17th August, according to the recommendation of Sir Radcliffe the boundary of both India and Pakistan was determined on the basis of religion. Some district of northern part of West Bengal remained undivided and some divided. As there was no single Muslim majority thana in Darjeeling, it was to be included with West Bengal.⁶ According to the Radcliffe Award five thanas of Southern part of Jalpaiguri named Tetulia, Pachagadh, Boda, Debiganj and Patgram - total 672 square kilometers area was declared to be included with East Pakistan. The part of Jalpaiguri came under West Bengal.⁷ At least fifteen thanas of Maldah district namely Nachol, Bholahat, Shibpur, Gomastapur, Nababganj, English Bazar, Kaliachak, Malda, Habibpur, Ratua, Manikchak, Kharba, Harishchandrapur, Gazole and Bamongola were included in West Bengal.⁸ Radcliffe Commission also divided Dinajpur district into two parts. The two third part of it was introduced as Dinajpur which came under East Pakistan and one-third part as West Dinajpur came under West Bengal. There were ten thanas under the jurisdiction of one -third part named Balurghat, Kumarganj, Gangarampur, Tapan, Raiganj, Hemtabad, Bansihari, Kushmandi, Kaliaganj and Itahar.⁹ So after partition the whole Darjeeling district and ten thanas of Maldah, Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri about one-third part of Rajshahi division were included with West Bengal.

The inclusion of Tetulia thana of Jalpaiguri district with East Pakistan gave a great shock to this district because Tetulia was a direct communicative thana with Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, and Dinajpur. Due to inclusion of Tetulia with Pakistan, West Bengal was divided into three parts. On one side of West Bengal there was the river Ganga and other side was covered with Maldah and one part of Dinajpur. This part had no connection with Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling. Cooch-Bihar was the native state. There was no rail connection between North Bengal and the rest of West Bengal. If Tetulia was to be included with West Bengal, a direct connection could be made between Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling with Maldah and Dinajpur. Besides this distance could be decreased with Calcutta and any part of India to Jalpaiguri and north eastern zone. Khagendra Nath Dasgupta—the M.L.A of Jalpaiguri district said to the editor of *The Ananda Bazar Patrika*, “Jalpaiguri district was adversely affected when the British Government left India.” This district was divided on the basis of non-Muslim majority. Between this, the number of people of this district was 2,43,811. In it the number of Musalmans was only 1,08,428.¹⁰

The demographic structure and political situation of Jalpaiguri district was solely responsible for transforming these five thanas to Pakistan. At the thana level Mr. Radcliffe drew the dividing line on the basis of people and religion. The caste-Hindu, Scheduled Caste Hindu and other Scheduled tribes like Santal, Rajbanshi was seen as a different entity at the Census of 1941. Consequently, the Muslim at Jalpaiguri was regarded as the majority group and the caste Hindu as the minority group. For the caste-Hindu was unable to accept the scheduled caste – Hindus and others under their own banner. On the other hand the scheduled caste Hindus accepted the Muslim League whole heartedly. Jogendra Nath Mandal—the leader of scheduled caste group was an ardent supporter of Muslim League. It is interesting to note that Premhari Barman, Nagendra Nath Roy—the members of elected legislative assembly from the area of scheduled caste Hindu proposed for the inclusion of Jalpaiguri to East Pakistan.¹¹ We can see the same picture with regards to the members of elected legislative assembly from the scheduled caste area of Rangpur. If Hathibandha and Dimla thana of Rangpur were included to

West Bengal, the fixation of the boundary of North Bengal became easy and the Chittmahal problem was not created.

There was no clear conception about the inclusion of 20 thanas of Dinajpur to East Pakistan according to the recommendation of Radcliffe Commission because Dinajpur was a Hindu based district. Among the ten thanas of Thakurgaon sub-division, the three were Hindu based tract. But they were included with Pakistan.¹²

Before partition an uncertainty was created in the sphere of Maldah district. In 1947, Sir Jadunath Sarkar gave a memorandum to the Boundary Fixation Commission and thereby he appealed for including Maldah and Rajshahi under the banner of west Bengal.¹³ Though English Bazar of Maldah was a Hindu based area, the whole Maldah district was Muslim based district. For this Lord Mount batten took Maldah district under the grip of Pakistan in his historical plan of dividing India on 3rd june,1947.¹⁴ According to Radcliffe Award, the five thanas were included to Pakistan. Among them Nachol was the Hindu based thana. On the other hand, among the ten thanas of Maldah district (which were in India), Kharba, Kaliachak, Harishchandrapur and Ratua was Muslim- majority areas.¹⁵ In fact, the division system of commission was not clear in this sphere.

Before pointing out frontier, Sir Radcliffe did not give emphasis on the important problems of this area. Due to the lack of time and lack of knowledge about the map of adjoining areas and disagreement among the members of commission the erroneous Radcliffe Award was made.

After independence emphasis was given on the future of native state. It is true that before 15th August, most of the native state gave sign to the instrument of Accession. Jagaddipendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur of Cooch-behar agreed to join the Indian Union although he signed to the Instrument of Accession after two years that means in 1949.¹⁶

A great tension continued among different political parties about the inclusion of Cooch-Behar with West Bengal. A political party named Hitasadhani sabha protested against the inclusion of Cooch-behar with West Bengal.¹⁷ The

Muslim members of Hitasadhani Sabha was in favour of including Cooch-Bihar with East Pakistan. Khan Chowdhury Amanatullah - the Revenue Minister and Satish Singha Roy –the Education Minister delivered a lecture at the public meeting of Mekhaliganj saying that Cooch-bihar state was to be taken outside Indian Union and Cooch-bihar State Congress was to be destroyed.¹⁸ The Maharaja was determined about it.

Cooch-Bihar Projamandal opposed at first against this type of activity of Hitasadhani Sabha. The Communist and Forward Bloc members had complained to the sub Chief minister Sardar Patel and said that Maharaja and his dear ministers are trying to make a deep relation with Pakistan.¹⁹ Sardar Patel himself wrote a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru saying that Hitasadhani Sabha is very much sympathetic towards Pakistan.²⁰ Another party named Cooch-bihar People's Association wanted to include Cooch-Bihar to West Bengal. When the Prime Minister came to Calcutta on 14th July, 1949, a memorandum was placed on behalf of Cooch-Bihar People's Association.²¹ Cooch-Bihar State Congress had also begun a movement to make Cooch-bihar as an integral part of West Bengal. In order to solve this problem many personalities named Sarat Chandra Basu, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Prafulla Ghosh, Bidhan Chandra Roy and Upendra Nath Barman proceeded.

After long warp and woof Indian Government declared the matter of including Cooch-bihar with West Bengal and on 1st January, 1950 Cooch-bihar was included as a district of West Bengal.²²

In 1950 a movement had begun for reorganizing language based states. In the post partition period the problem also greatly affected West Bengal. In order to solve this problem the Central Government had formed the S.R. C in 1953 and the State Reorganization Act had passed in 1956 at the parliament. According to this Act, a proposal was given for organizing fourteen states and six central administrative zones. In order to make a relation between the northern part of West Bengal and the remaining part of state, some Bengali language based tract of Bihar was demanded by West Bengal to the commission. Against this proposal Bihar also demanded three districts of West Bengal viz, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and

Cooch-behar. Besides this, a new state named Uttarakhand was also proposed.²³ During reorganization, a dispute continued between Bihar and West Bengal for taking the inclusion of Maldah. From 1876 to 1905 Maldah had gone under Bhagalpur division.²⁴ Although it was under Rajshahi division before it, Bihar again demanded Maldah under it.²⁵

The demand of re-organizing northern part of West Bengal was reasonable from the geographical, administrative, economic and cultural points of view. Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy had realized the necessity of connecting some portion of the state with North Bengal and said that some Bengali language based tract of Bihar should be included with Bengal. Side by side, in order to make communication with Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Maldah and Murshidabad it was very much essential.²⁶ but the most important problem arose with regards to West Dinajpur because Bihar was the medium of connecting this district with Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri. Besides this, a corridor was necessary for a connection between North Bengal and South Bengal with regard to Dinajpur. For fulfilling this purpose a proposal was placed for including some parts of Purnea district of Bihar within jurisdiction of West Bengal. With a view to including Kishanganj subdivision with West Bengal different political parties and leaders sent a proposal to S.R.C and remarked that “we attach great importance to the geographical compactness of administrative units, because we are of the view that the physical integration of such units is vital to their real political and administrative integration. Besides, inconvenience in administering geographically detached areas we must take a note of the fact that the continued isolation of the northern districts from the rest of Bengal will tend to foster an accumulated separatist trend in these districts. West Bengal therefore has a good case of geographical integration of the northern area.”²⁷

But in 1950 when the commission had entered Purnea, a great mass movement took place against the inclusion of some parts of Bihar in west Bengal. The business community of Kishanganj took leadership at this movement.²⁸ Shyam Nandan Sahay, the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Bihar University had delivered a lecture at Lok Sabha on 20th December, 1955 saying that ‘most of the Muslims in

India live at this part of Bihar.’²⁹ So he was not in favour of transferring this area to west Bengal. Against this statement Sri Upendra Nath Barman on behalf of Congress remarked “If the culture of fifty lakh Muslims is not in danger, why should the culture of only two lakh Muslims be in danger?”³⁰

The Commission gave more importance to the language with regards to reorganization. In this sphere we get a report of the commission about the language of this tract. The report is, “The affinities between Kishanganj of Suryapuria as spoken in the extreme East of Purnea district on the one hand and Bangalee on the other seem to be closed.”³¹ So when Shyama Nandan Sahay remarked that this tract was Urdu language based, Upendra Nath Barman suspected about this matter.³² He stated, ‘If this tract of Kishanganj goes to West Bengal, unity will be made between Behari Muslims and Muslims of West Bengal. Inspire of this if they are eager to learn Urdu, there will be no bar about it----’ the West Bengal Government will give them permission.³³ But Maulana Azad, the then Education Minister opposed vehemently in the Central Cabinet for the inclusion of Kishanganj with West Bengal . He said that most of the inhabitants of Kishanganj are eager to live in Bihar, not in West Bengal. So this part should be kept in Bihar³⁴ the ministry accepted the argument of Sri Azad. At last, the commission suggested that some parts of Kishanganj sub-division on the east bank of Mahananda River were to be included with West Bengal and the rest would be in Bihar. Against this statement on 4th October, 1956 on behalf of Raiganj Boundary Adjustment Committee under the leadership of Sri Nisith Nath Kundu (the president of Boundary Adjustment Commission) a memorandum was presented to Lok Sabha and West Bengal Bidhan Sabha. In this memorandum it was stated that Barsai Thana of Purnea district of Bihar and middle part of Mechi and Mahananda River will be transferred to Bengal for serving the interest of Uttar Banga and the rest of Bengal with regard to their unification³⁵but their demand was not fulfilled. Although the commission had ignored the demand of Bihar in the sphere of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Cooch-Bihar and Maldah but in the matter of re-organizing West Dinajpur district the argument of Bihar had got most importance.

In 1956, according to Bihar and West Bengal Bill (Transfer of Territories) Chopra, Karandighi, Goal-pukur and Islampur—four thanas of Kisanganj Sub-division were included in Darjeeling district and on 2nd November, these four thanas came under West Dinajpur district in place of Darjeeling.³⁶ It is interesting to note that Islampur was declared as a Sub-division.

The report of S.R.C failed to fulfil the aspiration of the inhabitants of North Bengal. The inclusion of whole Kisanganj Sub-division to West Bengal was very much essential for communication between North Bengal and the rest of Bengal. West Bengal hoped that the rental part which it had lost during partition will be included partly through State reorganization. In the real sense of the term, the commission had tried utmost for the welfare of West Bengal but this attempt had totally failed due to the interference of Central Cabinet.

After 1956, the northern part of West Bengal that means North Bengal took a new shape. The boundary of West Bengal was extended due to the inclusion of some new tracts. But it was seen that the areas which had extended, created psychological problems of the inhabitants of these tracts. For example, after reorganization of both Cooch-behar and West Dinajpur, both had become prantiya Zela and Assam, Bihar were designated as frontier states. There was no unity between them with regard to language, religion etc. So, a burning question was raised in the arena of language, religion, economy and politics. Due to the lack of real social and cultural plan there was no continuation of development in these tracts. Social tension gave birth to different political movements.

Different problems had risen with regard to land reforms, language and administration. The part of Kisanganj of Bihar which named was included Islampur Sub-division with West Bengal. There was a vast difference between land reforms of Bengal and Bihar. A tradition continued in West Bengal in the sphere of land reforms. There was no such tradition in Bihar; naturally a question was created in this tract. There was an existence of various languages such as Hindi, Bengali, Urdu and Suryapuri in this tract. So a great demand arose to give same status to the all-existing languages. Besides this, there was a demographical change due to the advent of strangers and refugees from neighboring states in

West Bengal. The mass of this tract became backward in every sphere of life. Consequently one type of separation gradually took shape into their minds. This type of mentality gave birth to a new organization named TASO (Transferred area Suryapur Organization). The members of this organization tried their best to preserve their Suryapuri language and culture.³⁷

As Cooch-Bihar was under native state administration for a long period, a special mentality formed in the mind of its citizens. They were not agreed regarding the matter of including Cooch-bihar with West Bengal. Being the inhabitants of native state, they had enjoyed special facilities regarding education, medical treatment and service. They became angry and demanded Cooch-bihar as a separate state. The ethnological character of these inhabitants, economic backwardness and influence of East-Bengal and Bhatia were solely responsible for this. An ethnological social movement started. On the verge of time some social movements were transformed into political movements.

After re-organization, different movements extended at northern part of West Bengal. A political party named Uttar Khand was founded in 1969. Kamtapuri Liberation Organization had also demanded separate state named Kamtapur. On the other hand, The Greater Cooch-Bihar Association has also formed in Cooch-bihar. Their slogan was the foundation of greater Cooch-Bihar state. In order to legalise their movement. The greater Cooch-bihar Association started organizing mass meeting, procession etc. The influence of these movements was comprehensive mainly on northern part of Uttar Banga namely Maldah and Dinajpur.

The re-organization of North Bengal had created various problems not only in internal affairs but created complicity with alien state on frontier matter. Among these problems two are the most important. They are Berubari problem and Chittmahal problem. It is interesting to note that these Chittmahal or Berubari problems are mainly visible in Jalpaiguri and Cooch-Bihar district particularly.

The post colonial North Bengal is now consisted of seven districts namely Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Cooch-Bihar, Maldah, North Dinajpur, South Dinajpur and

Alipurduar. Side by side the number of Sub-division has augmented. Again formation and re-formation of thanas have brought a change regarding of this administrative permutation. Barring this, the growth of population has created various socio-economic and cultural difficulties and badly influenced the administration through different demands and protests.

For example, Raiganj Sub-division being situated at the middle part of West Dinajpur, the majority people of Raiganj and Islampur Sub-division started a movement for transferring district town at Raiganj for their facilities. Sri Nisith Kundu _ an eminent lawyer of Raiganj supported this legal demand and discussed about this matter with Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy- the then Chief minister of West Bengal and Dr.Roy promised to fulfil his demand. He declared in a public meeting of Islampur that as per the Government's decision the district town will be transferred soon to Raiganj. In this respect the Governmental department was built at Karnojora. But the public of Balurghat had begun a movement against this decision. Consequently the decision was dismissed. After many years the C.P.I.(M) Government divided West Dinajpur into two parts. As a result the two districts had been formed –viz., Uttar Dinajpur and Dakshin Dinajpur. The district town of Uttar Dinajpur was situated at Karnajora of Raiganj. Balurghat was regarded as the district town of South Dinajpur.³⁸

During colonial period Darjeeling was a Non-Regulated area before 1860 and from 1870—1874. In 1874 it was declared as a Scheduled District town and gradually took the position of a Backward Tract and also was regarded as 'Partially Excluded Area'. In 1980 'Gorkha National Liberation Front' started movement for separate Gorkhaland state which took an extreme shape in 1986-88. Consequently in 1988, 'Darjeeling Gorkha autonomous Hill Council' was formed. Yet the peace had never comeback there. A movement was again started in Darjeeling under the leadership of Gorkha Janamukti Morcha. As a result Darjeeling took the new administrative character through the creation of Gorkha Territorial Administration.

On the other hand Alipurduar Jela Nirman Devi Mancha (AJNDM) took a crucial role to make Alipurduar as a separate Jela. Sri Nirmal Das—an eminent

person of Alipurduar had a particular role in this matter. An Administrative Reforms Committee consisting of five members was formed in this respect. AJNDM gave a memorandum to the committee stating that the area of Alipurduar is greater and it is far from Jalpaiguri district town with regard to distance³⁹. But Gorkha Jana Mukti Morcha leadership vehemently protested against the creation of Alipurduar as a separate Jela. In this context Harka Bahadur Chhetri –the leader of G.J.M.M commented, “There are six months to go before the GTA’S functional. We do not want the sub-division of Alipurduar to be re-organized.”⁴⁰ But inspite of a long time resistance of various groups, Alipurduar is formed and regarded as a separate district.

Thus, in the post colonial period North Bengal was reorganized. It had a great impact on economy, society and culture of North Bengal.

References

1. Kali, Kali,"Harano Sei Diner katha ebang Balurghat," Uttaradhikar Balurghat. 1407 Bangabda, p-50.
2. Roy Dhananjay (edi),Kaliaganj Barta, Pakshik Patrika, Kaliaganj, Uttar Dinajpur, 15th November 1988.
3. Chakraborty Sudhir Kumar—"Maldaher Sangbad Patra O Swadhinata andolon" Rupantarar Pathe—Saradiya Sankha-1997.
4. Das Gupta Ranjit—Economy, Society and politics in Bengal. Jalpaiguri (1869-1999).Oxford University press, Delhi 1992, p-238.
5. Chakraborty,Monomohan, "A Summary of the changes in the jurisdiction of District in Bengal(1757-1916) ed. By Kumud Ranjan Biswas, 1993 p-281.
6. Kusari Abani Mahim—West Bengal District Gazetteers; Jalpaiguri, Govt. of West Bengal,1981, p 66.
7. Chakraborty Monomohan , op. cit., p-336
8. Ibid. p-290
9. Roy Chowdhury Ladlimohan—Khamata Hastantar Desh Bibhag, Deys publishing, Calcutta, 1999.p-116
10. Ghosh,Dr. Ananda Gopal—Swadhinata Sat'Prasanga Chhera Asa Mati, Sahitya Prakasani. Cooch-Behar 1416 Bangabda, pp-4-22
11. Ibid., p-22.
12. Sarkar Jadunath—Hindustan Standard,19thJuly,1947
13. Ghosh Dr.Ananda Gopal –Maldah Zila Gathaner Aeithihasik O Bhogolik Pata Bhumika, edi-by Dr.Moloy Sankar Bhattacharya, January 2011, p-50
14. Sengupta J. C.-West Bengal District Gazetteers, Maldah, Govt. of West Bengal, 1969, p-3
15. Mitra-A-Census 1951, West Bengal District Handbooks, Cooch-Behar, Directorate of Census operations, p-1.

16. Ghosh, Dr. Ananda Gopal “Cooch-Bihar Rajer Bhartiya Unioner Jogdaner Patabjumi,” edited by Goutam Chattopadhyay, *Itihas Anusandhan-2*, p-2, 1968.
17. Sanyal Dr. Charuchandra (edi)- ‘Janamat’.(Saptahik Patrika), Jalpaiguri, 31st Bhadra, 1355 Bangabda.
18. Sardar Patel’s Correspondence-vol-7, Letter No.461, 17th August, 1947.
19. Ibid.vol-9 Letter No.27.
20. Ghosh Dr. Ananda Gopal O Sarkar Shekhar “Cooch-Bihar Rajer Rajnaitik Andolaner Ruprekha”—Madhuparni –Bishes Cooch-Bihar zila sankhya, 1369 Bangabda-editor Ajitesh Bhattacharya, p-411.
21. Chakraborty Manamohar-op. cit., p-319.
22. Ghosh Ananda Gopal –“Cooch-Bihar Rajnaitik Andolaner Ruprekha op.cit., pp 414-15.
23. Chakraborty Saroj—Mukhya Mantrider Sanghe (Surawardi to Bidhan Chandra) 1949-62 1st part January, 1977, p-207.
24. Mitra. A—Census 1951, West Bengal District Hand Books—Jalpaiguri Directorate of Census Operation.p-1
25. Chakraborty Saroj ,op cit, p-207.
26. Ibid., p-149
27. Memorandum submitted by Nisitha Nath Kundu, President Raiganj Boundary Adjustment Committee, West Dinajpur, 04.08.1956., p-9
28. Sen Dr. Partha—“Paschim Dinajpur Ziler Sanghe Islampur Mahakumar sangjukti karar –Itihas O Mullayan”- Madhuparni, Bishes Dinajpur Zila Sankha 1399 Bangabda-editor Ajitesh Bhattacharya”, p-3
29. Barman, Sri Upendra Nath –Uttar Bangler Shekal O Amar Jiban Smirity, Jalpaiguri, 1392 Bangabda, p-224.
30. Ibid., p-225.

31. Memorandum submitted by Nisitha Nath Kundu op cit., p-7
32. Barman Sri. Upendra Nath, p-226.
33. Ibid., p-227.
34. Ghosh Sankar—“Jatiya Rajnitir Pasha Khela” Desh Patrika, ,1st July, 1997.64
Barsham 18 Sankha, editor—Sagarmay Ghosh, p-227.
35. Memorandum submitted by Nisith Nath Kundu. Op. cit., p-10.
36. Sengupta, Jatindra Chandra –West Bengal District Gazetteers-1965, p-14.
37. Ghosh Dr. Ananda Gopal O Sarkar Dr Asim (edi) Bharat Tirtha Uttar Bangas
An Article of Ratna Paul—swadhinata Uttar PaschimBanger Uttarangsher
Punar gathanjanita Samashya, p-134.
38. Das Satya Ranjan – ‘Dinajpurer Gaurobujjal Adhyay’.—Amar Bharat,
Calcutta. (October 2011)
39. Statesman, October 29, 2008.
40. Ghosh Dr. Ananda Gopal and Saha Kartick (edi)—1947 Parabarti Uttar
Banga-1-An Article of Kartick Saha Swadhinottar Uttarbanger Prashasanik
Binnasher Bibartan (1947-1997), p-159.

CHAPTER - V

The Post Colonial Political Movements

A. Banga – Bihar Merger Movement

B. Berubari Movement

C. Enclave Problem

In the year of 1947 India got freedom but was divided into two parts-India and Pakistan. As a result of partition the whole Uttar Banga was broken into pieces. Due to this partition Rangpur, Bagura, Pabna and Rajshahi – these four districts were not only included with Pakistan, with that the remaining five districts of Uttar Banga were divided. In this respect the responsibility of determining boundary was given to Sri Radcliffe. He divided the districts applying complex and incomprehensive process which was, in fact, one sided administrative decision. Every district of Uttar Banga having been divided it was very much necessary to re-determine the boundary of each district and their administrative reconstruction.¹

According to Radcliffe award five thanas of Maldah namely Shibganj, Nabajganj, Bholahat, Nachol and Gomastapur went to East Pakistan and the district was divided into ten thanas.² In the same way eastern part of Dinajpur was included with Pakistan and taking ten thanas of Western part West Dinajpur district was created. It had two sub-divisions [vide Home (G.A.) Notification No. 548 G.A. dt.23.02.48.]

After 4 years again the matter of reorganizing Bengal came to the limelight. On 14th August,1952 before going to Vienna Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy. (The then Chief Minister of Bengal) had summoned a Press Conference and said vehemently that some Bengali –speaking area of Bihar should come into Bengal. In this context a Resolution (which was made by one Congress member of Legislative Assembly) had already been passed. The basis of Dr. Roy's argument was only administrative and economic, not sentimental. He said that some adjoining areas

of Bihar should be transferred in order to create a link between Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and area of Maldah and Murshidabad.

In order to serve this objective the State Reorganization Commission (S.R.C) was formed in the year of 1955. On May 24, 1955 the West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee had submitted a memorandum to the Committee. Their point was that about eighty two lakhs people of Bihar, Assam, and Orissa live in West Bengal. So the boundary of West Bengal should be 21,352 square miles, which was their demand. The areas which were claimed from Bihar were Purnea, Manbhum, some parts of Dhalbhum and saraikela- overall 13,945 square miles. Goalpara and Garopahar from Assam also demanded- overall 7,147 square miles. And 260 square miles were claimed from northern part of Baleswar in Orissa. Sri Atulya Ghosh – the President of West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee worked laboriously to submit the demand of Bengal. For this purpose a Sub-committee was formed whose member were the pleaders of the first rank, educationists and old great politicians. The memorandum was divided into eleven chapters. In the first week of June, the West Bengal Government had submitted their report to the Commission. They said that about 15000 square miles of land of frontier region of Bihar and Assam where the number of inhabitants would be sixty eight lakh, had to be included with Bengal. In short, the demand was made by Pradesh Congress; the Bengal Government made a short cut of this demand so that it might be a reasonable one and easily accepted by the Commission.³

On 8th February, the Budget Conference of West Bengal Legislative Assembly was started. On 12th February Dr. Roy had presented his argument before the State Reorganization Commission about two hour in favour of his demand. In this work he got the cooperation of Sri S. K. Basu – Dr. Roy's Land revenue Minister, Dr. R. Amed – the Agricultural Minister and barrister Arun Mukherjee, who was a special officer of State Government in favour of his demand. The basis of Dr. Roy's argument was mainly linguistic, historical and particularly administrative and economic. In this respect, he had explained the necessity of communication between northern part and central part of State. His main point of view was the increasing pressure of masses. This pressure should be

decreased immediately. The areas which were claimed from West Bengal, were Purnea of Bihar district, Manbhum, Singbhum , Santal Pargana and Goalpara of Assam.

The members of State Reorganization Commission named Dr. H.N. Kunjuru and Dr. K.M. Panikkar came to Darjeeling at the second week of May. Against Bengal's demand Bihar had claimed smartly three districts of North Bengal namely Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar. The proposal of creating a new state had given whose name will be Uttarakhand.⁴ Bihar also claimed Maldah district because there was no land relation of West Bengal with these district.

Dr. Roy went to Darjeeling and continued a ninety minutes long important discussion with the Commission ninety minutes. The answer was given against the question of creating Uttarakhand that the number of people of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Cooch-behar was about 20lakhs. Among them the Nepalese were about 1.35lakhs. And the number of Bengali speaking people was 61.0%.

After long waiting the Commission submitted its report in 1955 and the States Reorganization Act and the Bihar and West Bengal (Transfer of Territories) Act were passed in the parliament in 1956 on the basis of the recommendations of the Commission. To show in what way the territorial changes took place (as a result) in case of West Bengal, I shall present the following documents.

1. Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs Resolution No. 53/69/53-public dated 29th December 1953.
2. The Press Note issued by the State Reorganization Commission on 23rd February 1954.⁵
3. Extracts from the Memorandum submitted by the Government of West Bengal.

DOCUMENT-I

Ministry of Home Affairs Resolution, New Delhi, the 29th December 1953

1. No. 53/69/53 public – The Government of India have been giving careful consideration to the problem of the states which are constituent units of the Indian Union. These States, as they exist today, are largely the result of historical processes and the spread and consolidation of the British power in India. On the attainment of independence, India was partitioned and the Independent State of Pakistan was created. A process of merger and integration took place in regard to what were then called the “Indian States”. This integration of the old Indian States, which was brought about within a very short period, was an event of historic significance. The integration, however, was naturally based, to a large extent of the old pattern which existed before independence

. 2. The pattern of State in the Union is thus the result of historical accident and circumstances. Their mere existence is for a hundred years of more developed political, administrative and culture associations within and between them.

3. The greater development of political consciousness among the people and the growing importance of the great regional languages led gradually to demands for the formation of certain States on a linguistic basis. Each separate problem was however closely inter-related with other problems and the formation of a new state necessarily affected a number of other states. It thus became increasingly difficult to consider any such problem in isolation.

4. The language and culture of an area have an undoubted importance as they represent a pattern of living which is common in that area. In considering a reorganization of States, however there are other important factors which have also to be born in mind. The first essential consideration is the preservation and strengthening of the unity and security of India, Financial, Economic and Administrative considerations are almost equally important , not only from the point of view of each State, but for the whole nation. India has embarked upon a great ordered plan for her economic, cultural and moral progress. Changes which

interfere with the successful prosecution of such a national plan would be harmful to the national interest.

5. The government of India has come to the conclusion that the whole question of the reorganization of the States of the Indian Union should be carefully examined objectively and dispassionately, so that the welfare of the people of each constituent unit, as well as of the nation as a whole is promoted. The Government has accordingly decided to appoint a commission to conduct such an examination.

6. The commission will consist of Shri Saiyad Fazal Ali, at present Governor of Orissa, Shri Hriday Nath Kunzru, Member of the Council of States and Sri Kavalam Madhava Panikkar, at present Ambassador of India in Egypt, of whom Shri Saiyid Fazal Ali shall be the chairman of the Commission.

7. The commission will investigate the conditions of the problem, the historical background, the existing situation and the bearing of all important and relevant factors there on. They will be free to consider any proposal relating to such reorganization. The Government expect that the Commission would, in the first instance not go into the detail, but make recommendations regarding the broad principles which should govern the solution of this problem and, if they so choose, the broad lines on which particular states should be reorganized, and submit interim report for the consideration of Government.

8. The commission will be at liberty to devise their own procedure for their work, for collecting information and for ascertaining public problem. The Commission will ordinarily hold their sittings in private.

9. The Commission will have a Secretary and such staff and advisers as it may be considered necessary.

10. The Commission will make their recommendations to the Government as soon as may be practicable and not later than 30th June 1955.

A.V.PAL
Secretary

PRESS NOTE

DOCUMENT-2

States Reorganization Commissions

The States Reorganization Commission after giving the due consideration to the procedure that would be most suitable for the expeditious execution of the task entrusted to them have decided to dispense with a questionnaire. They invite members of the public as well as public associations interested in the problems of the reorganization of States to put their views and suggestions before the Commission by submitting written memorandum of matters on which they feel they can assist them. The Commission expects that wherever any concrete suggestions are made they will be supported by historical and statistical data and if any proposal regarding the formation of any new State or States is made, it will, if possible be accompanied by one or more maps, as the case may be.

It may be recalled that the Government of India resolution, dated 29th December, 1953 in pursuance of which the Commission has been appointed, has referred to certain factors which are to be kept in view regarding the reorganization of States.

“The language and land culture of an area have an undoubted importance as they represent a pattern of living which is common in that area. In considering a reorganization of States, however there are other important factors which have also to be borne in mind. The first essential consideration is the preservation and strengthening of the unity and security of India. Financial, economic and administrative considerations are almost equally important, not only from the point of view of each State, but for the whole nation. India has embarked upon a great ordered plan for her economic, cultural and moral progress. Changes which interfere with the successful prosecution of such a national plan would be harmful to the national interest.”

The Commission hope that due regard will be paid to these factors in the preparation of memorandum.

The Commission looks forward with full and whole hearted co-operation, to the public in discharging their heavy responsibility and hope that they will respond to this invitation which is being extended to them through the Press.

The Commission will appreciate it six copies of each memorandum are forwarded to:-

The Secretary,
States Reorganization Commission,
New Delhi.

So as to reach him not later than 24th April, 1954.
STATE REORGANIZATION COMMISSION.
New Delhi February 23, 1954.

Document - 3

EXTRACTS FROM THE MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED BY THE GOVT. OF WEST BENGAL REPATRIATION OF BENGAL AREAS IN BIHAR AND ASSAM.

The area proposed for inclusion in West Bengal has always formed parts of Bengal geographically and historically and their affinities to Bengal on linguistic, cultural and ethnic considerations have always been pronounced. It is, therefore, suggested that the following areas and populations in the districts named below should be rejoined to Bengal (now the West Bengal State of India).

<u>From Bihar</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Population</u>
<u>I. Purnea District</u>	(Sq .Miles)	
(a) The whole of Kishanganj sub-division and		
(b) four revenue thanas of the Sadar sub-division namely		
(i) Gopalpur		
(ii) Kadwa		
(iii) Amur		
(iv) Katihar	2537	12,73,588
<u>II. Santal Pargana District.</u>		
(a) The whole of Jantara Sub-division		
(b) The whole of Dumka Sub- division.		
(c) The whole of Rajmahal Sub-division		
(d) The Daman –I Koh area in Godda sub-division	4010	15,40,385
<u>III. Manbhum District.</u>		
	<u>The whole District</u>	
<u>IV. Singbhum District.</u>	4129	22,79,259
The whole of Dhalbhum Sub-division	1167	6,13,504
	<u>From Assam</u>	
<u>1. Goalpara District.</u>		
The whole District,	3,987	11,08,124
ADDITIONAL AREA: 15,830 SQ MILES.		

These proposals envisage transfer of 11,843 Sq miles of area with a population of 57,06,736 from Bihar and 3,987 Sq. miles of area with a population of 11,08,124 from Assam. i.e., a total of 15, 830 Sq. miles of area with a total population of 68,14,860 from these two States to West Bengal which has now an area of 30,775 sq. miles with a population of 2,48,10,318 will, after this transfer is effected, comprise a total area of 46,605 sq. miles and a total population of 3,16,25,168.⁶

After long investigation the Commission had recommended inclusion of the following parts of Bihar to West Bengal.

1. Part of Kisanganj sub-division at the east bank of Mahananda.
2. Part of Gopalpur thana which was connected with the above mentioned part. It was extended from Bihar to National Highway of this thana. Purnea will be given to West Bengal except Chash Thana. Barring this, some parts of east bank of Mahananda which belonged to purnea district must also give to West Bengal. As a result of recommendations the area of West Bengal became 34,590 Sq.miles.⁷

The recommendation of Commission had created despair among the political leaders. In order to extend the boundary of West Bengal, the West Bengal Government and Pradesh Congress had done different demands through papers before the Commission. But it was not accepted totally.

A great debate had started taking the report of the Commission under the Chairmanship of Saiyad Fazal Ali – The Governor of Orissa among the members of West Bengal Legislative Assembly on 5th December, 1955. The great debater was Sri Jyoti Basu – the leader of the opposition party. On 6th December, Sri Ramen Sen – the CPI leader gave a speech at Legislative Assembly. Sri Sen. said that real unity and security of India will be prevented if the boundary of State was to be determined forming village as a lower unit on the basis of language, culture, nearness of tracts and passion of masses.⁸ In this respect on 5th December the “State Reorganization Abhijan Committee” had arranged a gathering at Wellington square at 6 p.m. Their demand was the reorganization of State on the basis of language.⁹

Soon the Central Cabinet and the Congress working Committee took a sudden decision regarding the reorganization of boundaries of West Bengal.¹⁰ Reports circulated that Bengal's demand had failed to get any response. The Executive Committee of the State Congress summoned an emergency meeting and passed a resolution recording its protest.¹¹

The Congress SRC sub-committee comprising president U.N. Dhebar, Pandit Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad could not come to a decision with regard to the Bengal-Bihar dispute through discussions and consultation with the leaders of Bengal and Bihar leaders. The press in Bengal reported that the Government of India had reduced by half the area proposed to be transferred from Bihar by the State Reorganization Commission. Reading these gloomy press reports Congress men urged to Dr. Roy that no time should be lost in making further representation to Nehru on West Bengal's claim. On the 15th afternoon he (Dr. Roy) left for Delhi accompanied by state Congress Chief – Atulya Ghosh.

Arriving in Delhi Dr. Roy with Atulya Ghosh, representing West Bengal and Dr. Sri Krishna Sinha, Chief Minister of Bihar met the Congress SRC sub-committee. The issue was about Kishanganj sub-division being retained in Bihar against the definite recommendation of the Commission which had recommended its incorporation in West Bengal to provide a link between North Bengal and the rest of the State. The Bengal team was assured by the central leaders that the Central Government had taken no such decision and the Bengal press circulated the wrong reports. On the other hand, in Bihar team Anugraha Narayan Sinha and Krishna Ballav Sahay were also present. Here let quote what Dr. Roy wrote to Nehru in a letter.

“On the 15th January we discussed about the proposals of the Government of India on the SRC recommendations. Sri Babu Anugraha Babu and Krishna Ballav Sahay were there. Sri Babu proposed a merger and I accepted it. This proposal formed the basis of the resolution of the Working Committee issued on the 23rd January. During these eight days the people of Bengal and even Congressmen were excited over the changing phases of the proposals regarding Bengal and Bihar.

On Monday, the 23rd January, 1956 a historic joint statement was issued from Delhi by the Chief Ministers of West Bengal and Bihar proposing merger of their states, thereby preventing the dangerous trend towards linguistic separatism.

The statement was hailed by Prime Minister Nehru as “The Great Lead”, Members of the Working Committee adopted a resolution congratulating Dr. Roy and Dr. Sinha, “On their wisdom and foresight” and hoping that other regions would follow their path. The unified state of West Bengal and Bihar was likely to be called “Purva Pradesh”.¹²

On 24th January, Dr. Roy had returned from Delhi and summoned a meeting of the Cabinet to discuss the merger issue fully. The people of Bengal particularly the leftists voiced strong opposition and described the merger idea as retrograde and insisted that “it would be worsen rather than improving the situation” Opinion in Bihar was divided; Dr. Sinha was prepared himself for a last decisive battle regarding merger scheme. Neither in Bengal nor in Bihar the popular reaction had been enthusiastic or free from hesitation.

Behind this unification of Bengal and Bihar Dr. Roy’s main statement was if these two states are united, it will be a big state and the number of people will be largest.

Having natural resources the national income of this newly created state must be increased highly. If the number of the member of Legislative Assembly is increased, the Central grant must be augmented and this new state will become a leading power in future. Consequently there will be much development of West Bengal with Bihar. Barring this, the refugee problem and employment problem must be solved as a result of unification.¹³

Whatsoever, Dr. Bidhan Roy and Sri Krishna Sinha, the then Chief Minister of Bihar made a conspiracy in order to destruct the separate entity of West Bengal. With a view to fail this merger proposal the Communist Party, Forward Block, R.S.P, S.U.C.I and Hindu Mahasabha – all the parties gathered under the same banner and started Civil Disobedience Movement. The Communist Party took a leading role in this respect in Calcutta and other districts of Bengal.

The movement was comprehensive in the districts of Jalpaiguri, Raiganj, Balurghat and Malda. Comparatively the movement was very strong in South Bengal.¹⁴

Against merger proposal the mass of Bengal protested vehemently and came forward actively. Dr. Meghnad Saha—the greatest scientist, Sri Atul Gupta—the great pleader including many well known patriots had participated in the Anti merger movement. In order to lead the movement, an Anti-merger committee was formed whose convener was Sri Mohit Maitra.

On 24th January, the politbureau of the Communist Party gave a statement referring that unification of different linguistic states will create discord.¹⁵ The West Bengal Pradeshik Committee of the Communist Party discussed the newly creating situation in details and came to the conclusion of applying all power and strength to resist the conspiracy of unification.

On 26th January, 1956 Sri Jyoti Basu—Secretary of the Communist party (Paschimbanga Committee) and Sri Jogindra Sharma - Secretary of the Communist Party (Bihar Committee) in a Press Conference designated the proposal of merging two states as “decisive reactionary, anti democracy and misleading”. It was said in the Joint Statement that as a result of unification the national integration must be in danger and the Bangalee –Behari rivalry will also develop in all unified states.

The present unity among Bengal –living Behari and tribes must also be divided and badly affected. Secondly, by it Bihar must be transformed into a field oppressing Indian of Calcutta and alien wealthy persons. Side by side the strong reactionary bases of Bihar must be used as a weapon of resisting labour and other democratic movements of West Bengal. Thirdly, in this bi-lingual administration. Bengali-Behari enmity will be expressed and administration must be affected badly. Fourthly, this type of merger will be a great inspiration of creating multilingual states same as in British period—a period of disunity and dispute.

The Joint Statement was very much important because at that time the Congress was spreading the seed of provincialism. In this situation the

Communists of two states protested jointly for preventing Indian unity and cohesion.

On 26th January, a mass meeting was held at Wellington square under the Chairmanship of Sri Jyoti Basu against Banga-Bihar merger proposal. Among the speakers renowned communist leaders like Mohit Maitra, Jatin Chakraborty, Sunil Das and Satyapriya Banerjee were present.

As a protest of unification on 31st January, the Opposition Party of Bidhan Sabha walked out. On 2nd February, about two lakh students observed Hartal.

Kicking the democratic demand of forming language based state re-organization against unifying Bengal and Bihar, the Communist Parties took decision to start a comprehensive mass movement under West Bengal language based state Reorganization Committee . Under the leadership of State Reorganization Committee a comprehensive mass expedition started. Civil Disobedience, mass deputation, protested signature of huge people—all these were the main weapons of mass expedition.¹⁶

In the real sense of the term, the movement took the shape of a comprehensive national movement. In some districts of North Bengal the wave of the movement had reached. Among these districts Raiganj, Balurghat, (West Dinajpur), Dinhata (Coochbehar), Maldah, Jalpaiguri and Siliguri (Darjeeling) must be mentioned.

The storm of protest roused at Raiganj like the anti-partition movement of 1905. Sri Nishith Nath Kundu including local leaders and members of Forward Bloc gave leadership to the movement. Other members and leaders of the Communist Party had cooperated actively to the movement. Prof. Gopal Ch. Majumdar and Prof. Haricharan Debnath of Raiganj College who had no connection with any other political party took active role. Mainly the leadership was given by Nishith Nath Kundu – the undisputed leader of North Bengal, Sachindu Chakraborty (pleader), Rabi Bhaumik, Manas Roy (elected member of Legislative Assembly from Communist Party) etc.

At that time Satya Ranjan Das was in charge of Student and Young Front of Forward Bloc and he took creative role. Thousands of revolutionary leader and members had participated and went to jail in the Civil Disobedience Movement in undivided West Dinajpur including Raiganj. Among the persons who went to jail at first participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement, Sri Kalyan kumar Goswami (Manu Babu) who became the father of Raiganj Municipality.¹⁷

Balurghat had reacted vehemently against the merger proposal of Dr. Roy. At that time Sri Khagendra nath Das Gupta of Jalpaiguri (Law Minister) went to inaugurate Balurghat electric current. This opening ceremony was observed at Prachya Bharati – a cultural Hall of Balurghat. On this occasion the leaders of the Revolutionary socialist Party were present at Balurghat Circuit House and opposed the merger proposal. On the way from Circuit House to Prachya Bharati the R.S.P leader sieged the Government car with hostility taking Black Flag. The police had scattered the agitators battenning them with a stick. In this situation Sri Das Gupta had opened the Balurghat electricity, the agitating meeting continued for three days in this district.¹⁸

In the Civil Disobedience Movement at Balurgat, Dhiren Banerjee – R.S.P leader, Nathaniyal Murmu. Dilip Dhar and Bishwanath Chaudhury of Communist Party had cooperated very much.¹⁹

With a view to cripple the merger proposal at Dinhata of Cooch-behar district the agitation had started. At that time the Central Committee of various political parties took the programmed of meeting, procession and above all Civil Disobedience. Cooch-behar district had followed the same path, at Dinhata. The violators entered in the eflash, raised slogan against Banga-Bihar merger continuously and litigation was closed with great energy. The Forward Bloc taking hundreds of Civil Disobedient Violators started procession everyday from Mahamaya Ghat to the Court.

After some hours the Hakim had accused the violators for creating disturbance in the work of Court and the court had persecuted them as prisoners. The complainants had taken to the police court office with police guard. The court

officer made the necessary papers and sent the violators to Bihar Jail. The Forward Bloc leaders took preparation for the day following. Among these preparations one was the making of list of Satyagrahis. The students also joined with the Satyagrahis and observed the “Student Day of Civil Disobedience.”²⁰

In Maldah district the wave of the anti-merger movement had reached. The communists together with Hindu Mahasabha untidily protested against merger proposal. About ten communist leaders opposed to it. Among them the name Dharani Sarkar and Raipada Das (M.L.A from Malda) must be mentioned. The communist Party had raised the slogan of civil disobedience. In order to lead the movement, a committee was formed at Kalitala of Malda. Besides the Communist Party, other neutral people arranged meeting, Sudhir Chakraborty and Hariprasanya Misra of Hindu Mahasabha came and also extended the hand of help.²¹

The Satyagraha Civil Disobedience movement had begun. The programme of the communist leaders was to collect people from villages and gather them in a procession. The procession went up to the court. Arriving the court the leaders had delivered speeches and raised the slogan “BANGA- BIHAR SANJUKTI MANCHI NA MANBONA”. At last the court was captured by the leaders. The police had arrested the leaders including mass and imprisoned them.

Diptiprakash Bhaduri – a great pleader of Malda, had participated in the movement. The people, who had leading role to the movement, were Naren Chakraborty, Chuni Sen, Durgaprasad Sen, Naren Das, Sekh Siddique, Manik Jha, Sachi Roy etc. Barring this, the members of Student Federation like Amit Gupta, Amitav Chakraborty, Alope Sen, Manab Sen took active role. Prof. Nirmal Sanyal of Malda College did not participate directly in the movement but he wandered from village to village walking 10-12 miles and delivered lectures there against merger proposal.²²

The role of women of Malda had no less significance in the movement. Smt.Sati Sanyal (about 87 age) – mother of Prof. Nirmal Sanyal had entered to George Court raising slogan against the George. Besides her, Smt. Manada

Sundari Das of Abhirampur (Malda) took an important role in the anti-merger movement.²³

About 20-40 Satyagrahis went to jail daily at that time because the party was transformed into a mass-based organization after achieving success in the Tebhaga Andolan, Khadya Andolan and also land occupation Andolan.

Similarly in the district of Jalpaiguri the Communist leaders under the leadership of Sri Manik Sanyal led the movement in the same way which leaders of other districts had done.

The Siliguri Bar Association played an important role in the anti-merger movement. On 16th February, 1956 news was published at a local paper named Sri Durmukh whose title was “SILIGURI UKIL SABHER PRASTAB PASCHIM BANGA BIHAR EKI KARANER BIRODHITA” which was an historic step in the history of the movement.²⁴

Meanwhile two parliamentary by elections took place, one in Midnapur and the other in North Calcutta. Dr. Meghnad Saha – the elected candidate from North Calcutta had died suddenly in 1952. So the seat became vacant and the election was very much necessary.

Dr. Roy put the merger issue before the voters while his opponents – the anti-merger group took up the challenge. Dr. Roy chose Asoke Sen – a barrister of Calcutta High Court as a Congress candidate for North Calcutta by – election. While the anti-merger group set up Mohit Maitra – Secretary of the anti-merger Committee.

During the campaign period the Congress candidate, who newly came to politics, showed great talents as an organizer and was able to marshal a sizeable section of young men of his constituency in favor of the Congress. But the opposition party had a great advantage over the Congress, with catching slogans such as ‘Bengal is being sold to Bihar’, “Bangalee as a community is going to die”, “Save Bengal, defeat Congress”. Consequently Mohit Maitra had won in the election defeating Asoke Sen – the Congress Candidate. On the other hand at Khejuri of Midnapore, the Communist supported candidate Lal bihari Das (R.S.P)

had defeated Bhikari Mandal – congress candidate. On 2nd May, after declaration of election result Dr. Roy had withdrawn the merger proposal.²⁵

Although it was not the movement like anti-partition movement of 1905, but the sincere attempt of the people of West Bengal had won.

The reaction in Bengal on the left parties was swift. The West Bengal Linguistic State Reorganization Committee comprising representatives of Left Parties which had been carrying on demonstration against the proposed merger of West Bengal and Bihar since February 24 withdrew the Satyagraha.

At last much awaited Bihar and West Bengal (Transfer of Territories) Bill has come to light. To tell the truth, it has not satisfied everybody for it has not followed any principle whatsoever. Not only the people of West Bengal but also the local people inhabiting the Bengalee speaking areas in Bihar and Assam demanded transfer of their areas to West Bengal. For economic reasons, administrative facility and cohesion, social cultural and lingual affinity, removing the inconveniences due to absence of direct link between the northern and the southern parts of the truncated west Bengal, for the salvation of rehabilitation problem of the refugees from the East Pakistan and finally for avoiding the increasing bitterness between the Bengalee speaking minority and the Hindi and the Assamese speaking majorities in Bihar and Assam there was felt an immediate necessity of reconstitution of the state was felt. Just before the separation of Bihar and Orissa from Bengal, the question of restoration of Bengali speaking areas to Bengal came to prominence and it attracted the notice and support of the then Bihar leaders. Keeping in view the Bengal's claim in main and to solve the said problem, very eminent Congress and other leaders in past felt keenly about the reconstitution of the States on linguistic basis and a resolution to that effect was adopted by the Indian National Congress from 1911 onwards until the political independence of India was achieved in the year 1947.

Free people of independent India who were cherishing high hopes regarding the implementation of promises of reconstitution of the states on linguistic basis, were shocked when their demand was put off on one plea or the

other and dilatory methods of forming committees and commissions were being adopted one after another. This complicated matter made available opportunities to persons to form groups and anti-groups, till at last the great patriot, Sri Ramalu had to sacrifice his valuable life followed by chaos and disorder in the state of Madras. It is true, opinions were divided but it is now well established that every overwhelming majority is in favour of reconstitution of the states on linguistic basis not only in West Bengal but also in Bombay, Madras, Orissa and the East Punjab. It is also proved beyond doubt that the unrest in Madras quietened down as at once the proposal for reconstitution of the state on linguistic basis was conceded to but the unrest in West Bengal, the East Punjab, Bombay and Orissa is yet persisting, and recrudescence in huge magnitude may take place any moment, though in recent past West Bengal had the credit of observing the strictest non-violence throughout the long periods of intensive and extensive Satyagraha it offered. Some very top ranking Congress leaders do not see eye to eye with the general public in this question but profession of democracy and socialism by the Congress and its leaders has no meaning unless they agree to implement it by action and submit to the popular demands, though they may not personally agree with the people in their demands. The false sense of prestige, it is believed, will not stand in the way.²⁶

All said and done on the 14th of the June. The long awaited 49-clause draft Bill embodying decisions of the Union Government on the transfer of certain areas from Bihar to West Bengal reached to the West Bengal Government and it was immediately passed on to the Chief Minister for his perusal. The Bill was called 'The Bihar and West Bengal (Transfer of Territories) Bill.

Under section 3(1) of Bihar and West Bengal (Transfer of Territories) Act, 1956, comprising 52 sections the following areas were transferred from Bihar to West Bengal :-

A. The portion of Kishanganj sub-division of Purnea district which lies to the east of boundary line and that portion of Gopalpur Thana of the said district which lies to the east or north, as the case may be, of the said boundary line and

B. Purulia sub-division of Manbhum district excluding Chash Thana and Chandil Thana and the said territories shall thereupon cease to form part of the State of Bihar.

Barring this, according to this Act a greater part of Purnea was included with Darjeeling at first and after it included with West Dinajpur. Again northern land of Mahananda comprised with Darjeeling and southern land with West Dinajpur whose direct consequence was the creation of a new sub-division named Islampur.

The result was that West Bengal emerged as an additional area and population of 2900 Sq. miles and 1.7 million respectively, thereby raising the total area to 33,944 Sq. miles. The number of West Bengal's seat in Lok Sabha was raised from 34 to 36 and that in the Assembly from 242 to 252.

The scrutinizing eye of the Chief Minister could detect that the Bill had failed in one respect in so far to provide a connecting link between north districts and remaining portions of West Bengal.²⁷

On 4th July a resolution was moved in the West Bengal Assembly by the Chief Minister suggesting that the Bill should be revised accordingly. A strip of about 170 Sq. miles of land would provide for the missing link, ensure geographical integration of the northern areas and establish the much needed line of communication so vital to the very existence of this State and its people. This proposal was conceded by the Union Home Minister in the Bill and southern and northern parts of West Bengal were for the first time connected after the partition.

Tragically, the idea of Dr. Roy for the States in the eastern region solving their common problems by joint deliberations and decision was wrongly described by his political opponents as 'merger of West Bengal with Bihar'. The Central Government took up his idea and the entire country was divided into four zones, each consisting of representatives of States forming zone. Thus the necessity and wisdom of having zones of states charged with the function of solving common problems and common endeavours have now become an accepted feature of our constitutional set up.²⁸

Reference

1. Das Sukumar – Uttar Banger Itihas, Kumar Sahitya Prakasan,. 1982 pp. 206-207.
2. Ibid.
3. Report of the S.R.C.
4. Itihas Anusandhan, Part-XVI pp 503-504.
5. Chakraborty Monmohan – A summary of the changes in the jurisdiction of the districts in Bengal (some original documents), pp 221-224.
6. Ibid.
7. Report of the S.R.C.
8. Bera Anjan (edi) – Jyoti Basur Nirbachita Rachana Sangraha (1st part), p.122.
9. Ibid.
10. Chakroborty Saroj – My years with Dr. B.C. Roy, p. 190.
11. Ibid.
12. Chakroborty Bandiram – Bharat Ratna Bidhan Chandra, p- 76.
13. A written statement collected from Sri Satya Ranjan Das (Retired Head Master, Raiganj), p. 2 dt. 04.04.04.
14. Ibid.
15. Basu Jyoti – Jatadur Mone Pare – Rajnaitik Atmakaathan, p.109.
16. Ibid.
17. A written article collected from Sri Satya Ranjan Das, op. cit. p. 2.
18. An interview with Sri Radhamohan Mohanta (81 years old) Swadhinata Senani, Balurghat,dt.17.04.04.
19. Das Satya Ranjan op.cit, p.2.

20. Guha Kamal- Amar Jiban Amar Rajniti, Part-I, Dip Prakashan, Calcutta 2002, p.43.
21. An interview with Sri Durga Prasad Sen –Swadhinata Senani (Maldah, 77 years old), dt. 02.06.04.
22. Ibid.
23. An interview with Smt. Debika Sanyal- wife of Prof. Late Nirmal Sanyal (Maldah), dt. 02.06.04.
24. Uttar Banga Sambad- 16th July, 2003.
25. A written statement collected from Sri Nishith Nath Kundu (Advocate of Raiganj) about Transfer of Territories Bill, pp. 1-2.
26. Ibid.
27. Chakraborty Saroj – Mukhamantrider Sangha, Calcutta, January,1977.p- 201.
28. Ibid.

B) Berubari Movement

The Gram Panchayet of Berubari is in the district of Jalpaiguri and under the jurisdiction of Kotowali Police Station; West Bengal.¹ It is divided into four parts- Berubari Uttar, Dakshin, Purba, and Madhya. Now the question arises in mind about the significance of the name 'Berubari'. In the 16th century a rich man named Birendra Narayan Roy lived there. He was very much powerful. The name Berubari has come from his name Biru Narayan.² But the greater Berubari is popularly known as South Berubari.

In 1947 by Radcliffe Award a host of problems were created at different border areas like Berubari. But without any movement about 26 miles lands of Murshidabad (W.B) were incorporated to Pakistan.³ Recently regarding border problem at shilong tract the Indian soldiers were killed by the revolver of the Bangladesh Jawans. But there was no protest movement in Shilong for this movement. But in the year of 1958 a mass movement took place centering the transformation of Berubari. This matter created a great reaction in parliament. In order to solve the problem litigations continued at Supreme Court and High Court and according to the verdict of Supreme Court the necessity of amending constitution was felt. So naturally the question arises in mind what was the cause behind it for which a notorious village like Berubari included in a mass movement against Governmental decision. In order to get the answer of this question, I shall discuss here the historical background of Berubari Movement and its significance.

At present Bangladesh is demanding the four villages named Nartatari Debottor, Nababganj, Kajaldighi parani gram and Badosasi gram as their villages. All those villages are situated at Berubari and included in Indian Map. In fact, the problem is created centering this matter.⁴

The area of South Berubari gram Panchayet is 8.75sq miles and almost surrounded by Bangladesh border. The population of South Berubari is about 25 thousand. The Hindu constitute 95% of the total population merely 2% of the population is Muslim. The majority of the Hindu population belongs scheduled Caste and tribe.

According to Article 3 of Indian Independent Act (8th July 1947) a Boundary Commission demarked the India-Pakistan border under the chairmanship of Sir Syre Radcliffe.⁶ While drawing line Radcliffe gave emphasis on thana.⁷ When he drew line, he kept in knowledge Tetulia, Panchagar, Debiganj and Patgram but ignored Boda thana,⁸ The abovementioned thana areas were included to East Pakistan (Bangladesh). But South Berubari Union No. 12 was comprised in Jalpaiguri. As a result border problem started due to the difference between line and report.⁹ which was not solved even by Bagge Award.¹⁰

In order to solve this problem an agreement was signed by the Government of India and Pakistan, which is popularly known as the historic “Nehru –Noon Agreement” 1958.¹¹

The agreement says –

“Berubari Union No. 12 will be so divided as to half the area to Pakistan”...¹²

Vide articles No. 2 (3)

Nehru Noon Agreement, 1958

A serious mass movement had begun against this plan.¹³

On September 14, 1958 “Berubari Pratiraksha Committee” was formed against this above mentioned treaty as a protest. The protest took the model of a people’s movement, Many eminent political leaders from West Bengal as well as other parts of India moved forward violently towards Berubari. They provided a new spirit to the movement and made it more furious. This movement is popularly known as “Berubari Movement.”

Sri Ramaprasanya Roy, Amar Roy Prodhan, Satyajyoti Sen, Monoranjan Guha, Niranjana Dutta etc. were the representatives of Pratiraksha Committee who had gone to Calcutta under the leadership of Sri Prafulla Tripathy and gave deputation on the problem of south Berubari.¹⁴

The Strenuous movement moved on in different phases during long seventeen years at a stretch. As the “Nehru–Noon Agreement” was signed, Prof. Nirmal Bose filed a petition in Calcutta High Court on behalf of South Berubari.¹⁵

The Hon'ble justice Mr.Sinha of that high Court passed his opinion against South Berubari. Mr. Sinha said, "It must be understood that the petitioner's application failed not necessarily on merits but because of an insufficiency of materials without which the wheels of the law cannot be made to move."¹⁶ After it Prof. Basu filed petition in Supreme Court of India.

In the context of transferring Berubari, Sri Nirmal Ch. Chatterjee – a prominent leader of Hindu Mahasabha and a pleader said in a statement that by Nehru and noon Agreement a conspiracy has made to give half of Berubari Union to Pakistan and as a result the national consciousness has echoed. At last, he appealed to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru – the then Indian Prime Minister to withdraw his plan of transferring Berubari to Pakistan.¹⁷

According to 143 No. Article of the constitution, whether the matter is approved by constitution in order to judge it and present the matter to Supreme Court Sri Nirmal Chatterjee had requested to Dr. Rajendra Prasad.¹⁸

With a view to form strong public opinion and active movement against the plan of transferring Berubari to Pakistan a sabha of renewed citizens and representatives of public institution was held under the Chairmanship of Sri Kumudini kanta Chakraborty at the House of Indian Medical Association in Jalpaiguri.¹⁹

It was declared in this Sabha that as a result of Nehru – Noon Agreement, thousand of inhabitants of Berubari will face extreme insulations and inversion. So this Sabha is demanding the withdrawal of Nehru-Noon Agreement and taking decision to start a protest movement irrespective of the caste and creed against this irrelevant transfer.²¹

In order to start Protest movement a temporary institution was established. Among the active members of the institution mention must be made of Sri Kumudini kant Chakraborty, Sri Prinidhan Roy, Sri Saraj Chakraborty, Sri Nikhil Ghatak, Sri Nares Chakraborty, Dr. Sailesh Bhaumik and joint conveners were Sri Debabrata Majumdar, Sri Satyajyoti Sen.²²

Sri Dinadayal Upadhyay- the general Secretary of Janasangha delivered speech at a Press Conference in Lucknow on March 21, 1959 and said that a protest movement will be starting on all India basis.²³

On 22nd March, 1959 a national convention was held at Manikganj hat situating near the border area. At these conventions about 8-10 thousand people were present. The president of this convention was Sri Nirmal Chandra Chatterjee. In his lecture he vehemently criticized the Nehru – Noon Agreement and announced that the Nehru –Noon Agreement and the Munich pact 1938 were both alike. He said that the problem of Berubari was not only a communal or local problem but a national problem.²⁴

On 23rd March, 1959 a great Oath was taken at local Arya Natya Samaj Prangan before a mass meeting of thousands of people to start an active movement on all India basis if the suggestion of transferring Berubari to Pakistan is not withdraw. Sri Pritinidhan Roy – Praja samajtantri leader became the president of this Sabha.²⁵

Under continuous pressure of mass meeting and mass movement on 1st April, 1959 according to Article 143 (1), to consider the question of transferring Berubari to Pakistan constitutionally the president dispatched the matter to Supreme Court.²⁶

1. The president had asked the Supreme Court if there was any necessity of passing Act regarding Berubari Union.²⁷
2. If there is necessity, according to Article 3 of the Constitution only a passing of parliamentary law or amendment of the Constitution is necessary or not?²⁸
3. According to Article 3 of the Constitution, is there any necessity either to pass parliamentary law enough or amendment of the constitution regarding exchange of enclaves? ²⁹

The Supreme Court gave chance to some eminent person / institutions to present their statement about this matter. Mention must be made of Sri Nirmal Basu, Central Government, West Bengal Government, Berubari Union Board. All

India Forward Bloc (Bangla Committee), Revolutionary Socialist party (Jalpaiguri Committee) and different branches of Janasangha Statement was presented on behalf of them.³⁰

Hearing had continued in the Supreme Court from 8th to 11th December, 1959. Barring Sri Bhuvaneshwar Prasad Singha Indian Judge the constitution Bench was formed by Judges named Sri S.K.Das, Sri Gagendra Gadkar, Sri A. K. Sarkar, Sri Subba Rao, Sri Hidayetulla, Sri K. C. Dasgupta and Sri J.C. Shah.³¹

While giving his proposal before Supreme Court Sri M. C. Sitalbad, Attorney General said that the transfer of Berubari was only a simple matter of changing border. So it can be done by administrative decision. If it is possible, according to Article No. 3 of Constitution only the Parliament can pass law for solving this matter.³²

Sri S. M. Basu advocate general of West Bengal told that according to Article No.3 only the area can be changed to the internal part of various states but Constitution should be amended for giving any portion to foreign state.³³ Sri Chatterjee said that according to Indian Constitution, the power of amendment is limited. The integrity which is recognized in prelude. Unchangeable.³⁴

On 14th March, 1960 the Supreme Court expressed its opinion about this matter after three months and two days. The Supreme Court told:

Berubari Union No. 12, with which we are concerned, had an area of 8.75 sq. miles and a population of ten to twelve thousand residents. It is situated in the Police station of Jalpaiguri, in the District of Jalpaiguri. It is undoubtedly Indian tract and this transfer means the bestowal of Indian land to foreign state. According to Article 3, it cannot be transferred by law of Parliament. So in order to put in practice this treaty, Article No. 368 or Article No. 3 must be amended. In short, this transfer is quiet impossible according to present Constitution.³⁵

The importance of verdict given by Supreme Court was far reaching. By it, only the demand of public opinion was not strong but the verdict of Supreme Court about the power of Executive Department, parliament and some Articles of the Constitution was known clearly.³⁶

On the 28th November, 1960 a unanimous proposal was made against the Nehru Noon Agreement 1958 in the Assembly of West Bengal. The proposals were as follows:

“Berubari should remain a part of the territory of the Union of India”.³⁷

On 28th December, 1960 Government of India altered the relevant Article of the Constitution by ninth amendment of Constitution. According to it, the matter of handing over half of the Berubari Union to Pakistan was acted lawfully. At this time, the law Minister of Central Government was Sri Asoke Sen.³⁸

On 26th January, 1961 in the day of 10th Republic day of India, twelve thousand people of South Berubari under the leadership of “Berubari Pratiraksha Committee” assembled at Manikaganj and took “SANKALPA”. The ‘SANKALPA’ was as follows-by giving signature with their own blood and established ‘SANKALPA BEDY’ at Manikganj.

“RAKTA DEBA PRAN DEBA, BERUBARI CHHARBONA” was (we will give our blood, we will sacrifice our life, but we will not let our Berubari go).³⁹

Under the pressure of massive protest the transfer was not implemented due to contemporary change in political situation in national and international level, specially owing to deterioration in India- Pakistan relation.

On the other hand, this period was simultaneously distressing to Pakistan as Pakistan was to face a great revolution in her land and after a huge bloodshed of the revolution the east Pakistan emerged out as Bangladesh in 1971 and Sekh Mujibar Rahaman the “Banga Bandhu” coroneted as the first leader of Independent Bangladesh. The Indian crown was then in possession of Mrs. Gandhi. In fact, this period was pregnant with a new probability for the solution of Berubari problem which was postponed apparently due to the current national and international affairs. So an appeal with necessary memorandum had been submitted to Mrs. Indira Gandhi.⁴⁰ Apart from this various progress were conveyed to her through several faithful channels.

Mrs. Gandhi showered as rain of human kindness to the burning question of Berubari. It was historic 16th May, 1974 when she entered in to a permanent solution to the problem by an agreement with Shekh Mujibar Rahaman. This agreement is known in history as “Indira- Mujib Agreement, 1974. The Indira - Mujib Agreement states:

‘India will retain the southern half of South Berubari Union No. 13 and the adjacent enclaves, measuring an area of 2.64 Sq miles approximately and in and in exchange Bangladesh will retain Dahagram and Angrapota enclaves...’

Vide Article No. 1 (14)

Indira Mujib Agreement-1974

The Indira –Mujib Agreement 1974 was undoubtedly a writ of jubilant success to the long and strenuous movement of Beruberi. After long sixteen years through the Indira-Mujib Agreement 1974 the movement came to an end for the time being.⁴¹

Still the Berubari problem is out of solution. Thousands of people of South Berubari are in great danger on the question of their life and personal land. After sixty six years of gaining independence will the whole area of Dakhin Berubari be subjected in India? It has now stood under question mark. Inter Services Intelligence—the goyenda daptor of Pakistan had formed training institution at the frontier of Nepal and Bangladesh. They had made a communication with terrorists of north-east part of India creating a corridor between India and Bangladesh. So the South Berubari problem is not only a local problem today but also a complex and far-reaching national problem.

References

1. Dakshin Berubari Pratiraksha Committee Pustika, Jalpaiguri, p.1.
2. Chakraborty Santosh (edi) Manasi, Saradiya Sankha--- 1402 p-24.
3. Basu Nirmal – “Berubari Mamler Itibritta” – An Article of –Ananda Bazar Patrika (Calcutta -15.03.60)
4. Uttar Banga Sambad, Siliguri Sanskaran – 2.11.2001.
5. Dakshin Berubari Pratiraksha Committee Pustika of cit p 1 and 3.
6. Ibid p-2.
7. Valuable statement collected from Amar Roy Pradhan (Representative of Berubari Pratiraksha Committee)
8. Hoque Fazlul “Tinbigha Corridarer Badale Arai bigha Dabi” – An Article – Uttar Banga sambad – Siliguri , 4th October, 1998.
9. Valuable Statement collected from Amar Roy Pradhan (Representative of Berubari Pratiraksha Committee)
10. Ibid.
11. Nirmal Basu – An Article in Ananda Bazar Patrika : op. cit.
12. Roy Prodhan Amar – Rules of Jungle pp 11-12.
13. Valuable statement of Sri Roy Prodhan- op cit.
14. Ibid.
15. Basu Nirmal –An Article – Ananda Bazar Patrika op. cit.
16. Dainik Basumati – High Courter Ray: Atiter Pata Thake 10.04.59 Calcutta.
17. Dainik Basumatir Atiter Pata Theke- Statement of Sri N. C. Chattopadhyay about transfer of Berubari (21st March, 1959) -Calcutta.
18. Trisrota: Local News – Berubarite Jatiya Sammelan ebang Berubari Prasanya, (edi) – Suresh Ch Paul , 29.03.59.Jalpaiguri.
19. Dainik Basumati –op. cit.

20. Trisrota: Berubari Hastantarar Pratibade Janasbha, 08.03.59, op. cit.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Dainik Basumati-op.cit.
24. Trisrota: Local news – Berubarite Jatiya Sammelan, 29.03.59 op.cit.
25. Ibid.
26. An Article of Nirmal Basu – Ananda Bazar Patrika op.cit.
27. The All India Reporter, 1960 (volume -47) – Supreme Court.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. An Article of Nirmal basu- Ananda Bazar Patrika op. cit.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. The All India Reporter – op. cit.
36. Ananda Bazar Patrika op.cit.
37. Dakshin Berubari Pratiraksha Committee Pustika– op.cit.
38. Madhuparni – Bishes Cooch-behar Zilla Sankha-“Cooch-behar Chittmahal-
An Article of Dr. Pabitra Gupta (edi. by) –Ajitesh Bhattacharya (p-428)
39. Dakshin Berubari Pratiraksha Committee Pustika– op.cit.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.

C. ENCLAVE PROBLEM

The whole country even many literate and illiterate men of the generic region did not know about chhitmahal or enclave.

Infact, the existence of enclave problem of Cooch-behar is the own problem of Cooch-behar. All the students of History must know though Cooch-behar is a small district but it had its own tradition in the history of India from political and cultural point of view.

Cooch-behar which was a native state, at present is a marginal district. It is full of enclaves. After independence sometimes a dispute took place between India and Pakistan regarding Chhitmahal of Cooch-behar. It can be said that there is no such problem in the world History like Chhitmahal or Enclave problem. Chhitmahal is called 'Daipayanik Bhukhanda, the literary meaning is divided or isolated land. This word cannot present the clear meaning of Chhitmahal. The Chhitmahals are generally prisoner in lands by land of other states. In fact, some isolated lands of India which was surrounded by Pakistan at first and at present has surrounded by Bangladesh is called Indian Chhitmahal. A large number of Chhitmahal of India is situated in Coochbehar which is an integral part of West Bengal. We can say it 'Island territories' in English. The territories are surrounded by neighboring state Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

The origin of enclave can be traced from Mughal period. In the year of 1699 a treaty was concluded between Ali kuli Khan (Mughal faujdar) and Rup Narayan(King of Cooch-behar. By this treaty Falapur, Kakina, Kajirhat Chakla came into the Mughal Empire and Boda, Patgram and eastern part of Chakla was treated as frontier of Cooch-behar state. But the Nawab Nazim did not grant this treaty. After it Nizam Ullah – the Mughal Fouzder demanded Chakla Tributary tax. Consequently a war was imminent between them. In the year of 1712, Jahan Kha- the Nazim of Bangla had occupied three Chaklas but understood that it was impossible to keep these Chaklas for more days in his grip. So he wanted to lease these Chaklas to the king of Coochbehar. But the king felt insultations to take lease

of Chaklas these. Then Santanu Narayan – (Commander of army) had leased those Chaklas in favour of Cooch-behar king.¹

The Mughal army had occupied many portions of border area of Cooch-behar. Their allegiance before the Nawab was intact. These small fragments of villages are now called Chhitmahal of Pakistan (at present Bangladesh). The local people called them MOGLAM. On the other hand, many people of Patgram, Boda and Purbabanga showed their allegiance to the Maharaja of Coochbehar. This person was called RAJGIRS. For example, Sakalu Pradhan of Haldibari and Madhav Roy of Tapa.² were two RAJGIRS.

British East India Company had very zeal to extend their supremacy after Granting Dewani in 1765. The company had strengthened itself over these Chhitmahals named Patgram, Boda and Purbabhag between 1787-1800A.D. But the prajas of these Chittmahals had kept beyond Hast-o-Bub of the Company. In one word, the sovereignty of Cooch-behar was conceded over these above mentioned Chittmahals through this process.³

On 22nd March, 1947 Lord Mount Batten came to India as Viceroy. His aim was to accept a real step with regards to the transfer of power to India. Because at that time communal tension, miss-understanding between Muslim League and Congress relation created political and administrative problem in India. With a view to ending this crisis according to the will of Indian people, he made a plan on 3rd June, 1947 which was known as “Mount Batten Plan”.

According to this plan on 30th June the name of the members of the commission were declared and on the 4th July the name of Sir Syrile Radcliffe as the chairman of the commission was also declared. Radcliffe Saheb had reached Delhi on 8th July and received a decision on the condition that his decision will be final on the matter of demarcation. Later on 22nd July, at a meeting of Boundary Commission at the attendance of Congress and League members, Radcliffe received also one decision and his decision would be unchallenged and the commission would take the decision which was to be compelled by Muslim League and the Congress members. In fact, Radcliffe Saheb became all in all at

the matter of taking the decision of the commission. He had begun to work on this matter within 15th August. He took decision of demarcating land sitting in Delhi. Only within one time he came to Calcutta. In a word he gets a chance to finish this Himalayan work only one and a half months. Consequently he had to draw pencil on the map hurriedly and it is an irony of fate that large number of Chhitmahal was victimized of his whims.⁴

During British rule the inhabitants of Chhits did not have to face any problem in their own state regarding going and coming, trade and other spheres.⁵ All said and done on 8th July according to section (1) of Indian Independence Act, 1947 through Radcliffe Award India was divided into two parts – India and Pakistan. Consequently the Chhitmahals were situated in India and present Bangladesh according to their own location. At that time it was notified that about 95 Chhitmahals of the then Pakistan had entered into India whose area was approximately 12,289,37 sq miles. At the same way there are 130 Indian Chhitmahals in Pakistan whose area is about 20,957,07 sq miles. At the later period, according to the Notice No. 2427-PL/PIJL 4/52 dated. 27.6.52 four Chhitmahal of Cooch-behar district had comprised in Jalpaiguri district.⁶

In fact, after the division of India the Chhitmahal problem had started. Different news papers of Jalpaiguri particularly Trisrota, Janamat etc, had published articles regarding Chhitmahal or Enclave Problem. When Dr. Rajendra Prasad the Indian President came to Jalpaiguri, an eminent citizen of Jalpaiguri named Dr. Charuchandra Sanyal made him aware of this problem. After drawing the picture the president could understand the matter.⁷

The Indo-Pakistan border problem was originated from Radcliffe Award. Even Begge Awards could not draw curtain on it. In 1947 when Radcliffe drew the demarcation line, he gave emphasis on thana. But Begge had to face difficulties when he came to fix boundary at frontier area.⁸ Because he had noticed that while drawing line, Radcliffe kept in knowledge Tetulia, Pachagadh, Patgram and Debiganj but ignored Boda thana.⁹ Consequently a complicity was created between line and description at Berubari Union No. 12 of Jalpaiguri. As a result Begge was totally failed in solving this problem.

In order to solve the problem on 10th September, 1958 a treaty was conducted in Delhi between Sri M. K. Desai- Commonwealth Minister on behalf of India and Sri M.S. A Begge-foreign minister on behalf of Pakistan. On 12th September Sri Jawaharlal Nehru and Firoj Khan Noon –Prime Minister of both countries made their expression about this treaty in a joint statement and declared, half of Berubari will be given to Pakistan.¹⁰ Besides this, according to Article No.10 (which was the main part of this treaty) - (10) Exchange of old Cooch-behar enclaves in Pakistan and Pakistan enclaves in India without claiming any compensation for extra area going with Pakistan, is agreed to.¹¹

About this matter Sri Nirmal Basu-Secretary of Provincial Forward Bloc sent letters in the name of Prime Minister, Home Minister, Commonwealth Minister, Foreign Minister and Chief Minister of West Bengal. Barring this according to Article No.226 of the constitution Sri Amar Chakraborty –a pleader filed a petition in the name of Nirmal Basu against chief Secretary of Central Government on 3rd October. The temporary Judge of Calcutta High Court declared rule against Secretaries of foreign and Commonwealth Department and Chief Secretary of West Bengal Government for giving Berubari to Pakistan according to Nehru –Noon Agreement.¹²

On 8th April, 1959 Judge Sri P.N Sinha dismissed this litigation.¹³ after it Sri Basu filed petition to Supreme Court.

On the other hand, against the decision of transferring Southern half of Berubari to Pakistan had started mass movement. On 14th September, 1958 the “Berubari Pratiraksha Committee” was formed at Manikganj. This Committee played an important role to organize the Berubari Movement. On 28th September, '58 the representatives of Berubari Pratiraksha Committee namely Rama Prasanna Roy Pradhan, Satyajyoti Sen, Niranjana Dutta, Manoranjan Guha etc. met Dr.Bidhan Roy, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal.¹⁴

The leadership was given by Sri Prafulla Tripathi and Dr.Charuchandra sanyal.¹⁵ In this context Sri Nirmal Ch. Chottopadhyay –eminent pleader and leader of Hindu Mahasabha said in a statement that by Nehru –Noon Agreement a

conspiracy has made of giving half of the Berubari Union of Jalpaiguri to Pakistan and as a result the national consciousness has echoed.¹⁶ He also said in his statement against this agreement that the whole of India had expressed their anger¹⁷ and if this illegal agreement is put into practice, there will be no justice over the people of India.¹⁸ A lot of discussion was continued with many members of parliament with regards to this matter. They easily understood the matter and protested against this transfer.¹⁹ Sri Chottopadhyay also requested Dr. Rajendra Prasad (the then Indian President) to send the matter to Supreme Court so that the court can Judge the legality of the matter according to Article No.143.²⁰

Centering the transfer of Berubari, a protestant convention was held at Berubari on 22nd March, 1959. Renowned personalities of India including West Bengal had participated in this convention, The President of this Convention was Nirmal Chandra Chattopadhyay.²¹ Barring this, Sri Dinadayal Upadhyay- the General Secretary of Janasangha said in a Press Conference Commencing at Lucknow on 21st March, 1959 that an All-India resistant movement will be forming against the transfer of Berubari as a protest.²²

On 1st April, 1959 President Dr. Rajendra Prasad despatched the matter to Supreme Court with a view to consider the question of transferring Berubari Constitutionally.²³

The hearing was continued in the Supreme Court from 8th to 11th December 1959. Sri Bhubaneswar Prasad Singha was the Judge of Supreme Court at that time. In this context, a Constitutional Bench was formed in which the judges were Sri S. K. Das, Sri Gajendra Gadkar, Sri A. K. Sarkar, Sri Subha Rao, Sri Hidayetullah, Sri K. C. Das Gupta, and Sri J. C. Shah. Sri M.C. Sitalbad – Attorney General on behalf of India Government, Sri S. M. Basu – Advocate General on behalf of West Bengal Government expressed their statement. Sri Nalini Ranjan Ghosh – advocate of Supreme Court and member of Loksabha, Jalpaiguri and Sri Tridib Choudhury and Sri Arabinda Ghoshal – the members of Loksabha supervised the case.²⁴

After the end of hearing on 14th March, 1960 the Supreme Court had expressed its opinion about this matter. It was said that Berubari undoubtedly is a part of India and this transfer means the bestowal of Indian land to foreign state. It cannot be transferred by any law of Parliament according to Article No 368 or Article no.3 is to be amended. In a word, this transfer is totally impossible according to present constitution.²⁵

On 3rd December, 1960 about 33 representatives under the leadership of Sri Nirmal Basu went Delhi after going Calcutta. A sabha was commenced in Calcutta on 4th, 5th and 6th December and a group of representative met with Dr. Bidhan Roy. On 10th December an All -India Conference was held in Delhi. At that time Sri Nirmal Chattopadhyay was present there. On 11th December, 1960 under the leadership of Sri Chottopadhyay the representatives of Berubari Pratiraksha Committee met the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.²⁶

But ignoring all type of mass resistance in 1960 the ninth amendment of the Constitution became complete. According to this amendment the matter of transferring Berubari into the hands of Pakistan was legalized. At that time Sri Ashoke Sen was the Law Minister of Central Government.²⁷

On 23rd January, 1961 under the leadership of Sri Hemanta Basu a sabha was held at Manikganj and on 26th January the people took 'SANKALPA' by giving signature with their old blood and established 'SANKALPABEDI' The SANKALPA was, "we will not let our Berubari go". In the month of February a petition was filed in the Supreme Court against Ninth Amendment of the Constitution.²⁸

On 14th April, 1961 when Prime Minister Nehru came to Siliguri, the agitated mass showed him black flag and as a result about 128 persons were arrested.²⁹

On 9th February, 1968 when Pakistan (at present Bangladesh) came to occupy Pangya, the common people of that area had applied their all power to resist them. Consequently Pangya stayed in India. In March, a mass deputation was given to Benoba Bhave when he came to Jalpaiguri. Because he made harsh

words about Berubari. He told at Patna that Berubari is like milk in which the flies have fallen. The people spoke him to withdraw this remark. On 4th November, 1962 Survey Resistance Movement began whose leadership was given by Sri Sudhanshu Majumdar, Satis Roy Pradhan, D. Roy, Ramapannya Roy and Devi Roy. About 500 people including five leaders were arrested. Survey Resistance Movement had continued. On 5th November 1963. Including Sri Nirmal Basu, Amar Roy Pradhan and Sudhanshu Majumdar about 700 people were also arrested.³⁰

In the year of 1965 a fierce battle took place between India and Pakistan (now Bangladesh) at Tinbigha area. At that time to control the position Guljarilal Nanda –Home Minister of India and Smt. Padmaja Naidu-Governor of West Bengal came to visit Tinbigha.³¹

In the meantime the wave of Berubari movement became slow but continued in the underground whose picture became distinct in the later years.

On 3rd June 1966, Sri Sudhanshu Majumdar gave a Deputation to Chief Minister Sri Prafulla Sen in which he requested him to stop the Demarcation Survey and in this context on 5th June, 1966 he filed a petition in Calcutta High Court on 6th June. The court gave verdict that the survey will not be stopped but no pillar will be made. No piece of land will be transferred to Pakistan without accurate compensation. Judge D. Basu delivered speech on 22nd December, 1967 and said that the order of Supreme Court will be considered supreme. The Bengal Government appealed to Supreme Court on March, 1968.³²

A demand of exchanging Chhitmahals was placed before the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The leadership was given by Sri Nirmal Basu, Sri Amar Roy Pradhan (ex. M. L.A) and other members namely Sri Bimal Chakraborty, Sri Satyen Majumdar, Sri Upen Roy Sarkar, Sri Himadri Ballav Roy Pramanik, Sri Maoturam Roy and Sri Digen Deb Singha.³³

On 25th March, 1971 began Bangladesh war of Independence. It had a great impact on Indian politics and mass-life. Side by side movement was continued not to transfer Berubari into the hands of Pakistan. After the creation of independent Bangladesh the revolution proceeded step by step. The Supreme Court gave

verdict against revolutionaries of Berubari on 28th March,1973. A Sabah was commenced on against the judgment of Supreme Court at Manikganj on 28th May,1973.³⁴

On September, 1973 three representative of Berubari Pratriraksha Committee namely Satis Roy Pradhan, Sudhanshu Majumdar and Hemanta Roy met with Chief Minister of West Bengal and other political leaders. With this a new chapter had begun.³⁵

On 17th December,1973 eight representatives namely Nirmal Basu, Amar Roy Pradhan, sudhanshu Majumdar, Basanta Roy, Bhaban Adhikari, Satis Roy Pradhan, Parimal Roy, S.Adhikari met with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Home Minister Umasankar Dikskhit and different ministers and political leaders to represent the matter of exchanging Chhitmahals and additional piece of lands.³⁶

Smt. Gandhi promised that she will send the officers to Berubari. On 28th March, 1974 Kornel Chowdhury from Delhi and Mr. Pandey – Assistant Secretary of Revenue Department, West Bengal came to Berubari.³⁷

For solving the Enclave Problem on 16th May,1974 the historical Indira-Mujib pact was signed. The main theme of this pact was – India will retain about 2.64 sq miles area of Southern half of South Berubari Union no.12 and in lieu of it Bangladesh will retain Dahgram and Angarpota Chhitmahals. Besides this Tinbigha was leased to Bangladesh by Bharat for 999 years with a view to establish connection of Panbari Village (P.S. Patgram) with Dahgram. This news was declared through radio of both countries.³⁸

Against this pact, the people of Cooch-behar burst into anger. Because the Coochlibari gram was situated near Tinbigha. Tinbigha was the direct way for going to Mekhliganj from Coochlibari. So if Tinbigha is leased to Bangladesh, the people of Coochlibari will be deprived of the right of going Mekhliganj. And Coochlibari will be a Chhitmahal surrounding Bangladesh. Its people will be drawn in a deteriorated condition.³⁹

From 1974 to 1992 (long 18 years) movement continued on the question of Coochlibari. In this respect different Committees were formed such as Tinbigha

Sangram Committee (1974), 'Amara Bangalee', 'Coochlibari Sangram Committee', etc. Litigation continued in Supreme Court and High Court. But the problem was not solved still now.⁴⁰ It is very much necessary to solve this problem as soon as possible.

After 1952, there is no Census Report about Indian Chhitmahals. The approximate number of its population is 2,00,000 Rajbanshis, Santals, Mundas and Muslim community live there. After 1952, no election Viz. Lok Sabha, Bidhan Sabha even Panchayet election was held there. So there is no identity card and rationing card of Chhitmahal inhabitants. They are deprived of education and medical facilities. The various political, social and economic problems of inhabitants of Chhitmahals has created deep ulcer into the internal part of Chhitmahals. The Chhitmahal has transformed at the centre of inhumanism. They are in a deplorable situation now.⁴¹ No Agreement could not solve this problem.

Mr. Radcliffe wanted to divide the country from the view point of majority and failed to count it on scientific basis. Consequently frontier problem had begun to grow. In what way Mr. Radcliffe was responsible for it?⁴² It is the theme of thinking historically. It can be said generally that Sir. Radcliffe's penline did not only divide the country, the country men's heart was burdened by Chhitmahal or enclave problem as a special gift. After 66 years of gaining independence of India these questions are still running.⁴³ So it is not only the problem of South Berubari and adjoining Indian Chhitmahals but also it has taken the shape of a very complex and far-reaching international problem.⁴⁴

Finally it is very much essential for both states to solve this burning question in the light of historical background. Barring this, historical consciousness, liberal attitude and friendly co-operation only can solve this problem. Political leaders of both India and Bangladesh should have noticed this matter sincerely. So the path is prominent like day-light that a final resolution must be taken on the Enclave and Berubari issues between two friendly neighbors without any clash⁴⁵

It is a matter of great joy that on 6th June, 2015 a historic treaty will be held between Saikh Hasina—the present Prime Minister of Bangladesh and Sri Narendra Modi—the present Prime Minister of India on the matter of exchanging Chittmahal. According to this treaty at least one hundred eleven Chittmahals which are now situated in India will be ceded to Bangladesh. Its total size is 17,160 Acre. By dint of it India will get 51 Chittmahals of Bangladesh whose total area is 7,110 Acre. As a result a lot of ‘stateless men’ will obtain their own country and be free from life of hatred and agony which they are bearing for seventy years.⁴⁶

On 31st July, 2015 India and Bangladesh enclave has exchanged. It was a historic and memorable day on behalf of the Chhitmahal dwellers of both states.⁴⁷

References

1. Saptahik Paundradarpan: Bishay: “Samasya- Tinbigha O Coochlibari” Cooch-behar, 30th January & 13th February 1986.
2. Madhuparni Bishes Cooch-behar Zilla Sankha(1396)- An Article of Dr.Pabitra Gupta (edi) – Ajitesh Bhattachrya, p-428.
3. Madhuparni: op. cit., p-428.
4. Chaki Debabrata –Baratta Janes Brittante, Prasanga Bharat –Bangladesh Chhitmahal,Sopan, Kolkata-2011.
5. Saptahik Paundradarpan op. cit
6. Madhuparni-op. cit., pp. 424-425.
7. Saradiya Janamat (1974), p-158
8. Valuable statement collected from Amar Roy Pradhan (Ex M.P)
9. UttarBanga Sambad: An Article of Fazlul Hoque “Tinbigha Corridarer Badale Araibigha Dabi,” Siliguri , 4th October , 1998.
10. Valuable Statement collected from Amar Roy Pradhan. (Ex M.P)
11. Ananda Bazar Patrika – An Article of Prof. Nirmal Basu –“Berubari Mamler Itibritta,” Calcutta (15.3.60)
12. Rules of Jungle – Amar Roy Prodhnan, pp-11-12.
13. Ananda Bazar Patrika – An Article written by Nirmal Basu op. cit.
14. Dainik Basumiti : High Courter Rai: Atiter pata Theke (10.4.59) Calcutta.
15. Valuable statement collected from Amar Roy Prodhnan.
16. Valuable statement collected from Sudhanshu Majumdar.
17. Dainik Basumati Atiter Pata Theke: Berubari Hasantar Samparke Sri N.C.Chattopadhyayer Bibrity (21st March, 1959)
18. Trisrota: Berubari Patiraksha (edi) Suresh Ch. Paul, Jalpaiguri, 22.3.59.
19. Trisrota: local news – Berubarite Jatiya Sammelon ebong Berubari Prasanga (29.3. 59).

20. Dainik Basumoti – op. cit.
21. Dainik Basumoti– Ibid.
22. Trisrota – local news - Berubarite Jatiya Sammelon op. cit.
23. Dainik Basumoti – op. cit.
24. Ananda Bazar Patrika– An Article written by Nirmal Basu op. cit.
25. Ananda Bazar Patrika– Ibid.
26. Ananda Bazar Patrika– Ibid.
27. Valuable statement collected from Sudhanshu Majumdar .
28. Madhuparni –op. cit.
29. Valuable statement collected from Sudhanshu Majumdar .
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Berubari Samapti Andoloner Saptahik Patrika; ‘Sohojogi’ – Tinbigha Prasanga
Theke News – Jalpaiguri, p-3.
33. Valuable statement collected from Sudhanshu Majumdar.
34. Dainik Basumati “Pradhan Mantrir Kache Chhitmahal Dabi” – Calcutta
Publication (16 Chaitra, 1374)
35. Valuable statement collected from Sudhanshu Majumdar.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Rules of Jungle: op. cit., p- 12.
40. The Statesman Patrika – An Article written by Sankar Chatterjee –Tragedies
of the Chhitmahal 20.9.2003.siliguri sanaskaran
41. Tinbigha Sanggram Committeer Pustika – Dinhat Cooch-behar. Op.cit.
41. Kirat bhumi (Jalpaiguri Zilla Sankalan). An Article of Manamohan Roy –
Jalpaiguri Ziller Simanta Samasya O Kichu Katha (edi) –Araninda kar, pp.
420-421.

42. Kirat Bhumi (Jalpaiguri Zilla Sankalan). An Article of Manamohan Roy-
Jalpaiguri Zillar Simanta Samasya O Kichu Katha (ede)- Araninda Kar,
pp.420-421.
43. Dainik Basumati – 22nd July. 1999.
44. Itihas Anusandhan (19) – An Article written by Madhuri Paul Radeliffe
Batawara, Chhitmahal Simanta Samassyar Utpatti.-Paschimbanga. Itihas
Sangsad–Calcutta, 24.1.2004, p.785.
45. R.Whyte Brendan Waiting for the Esquimo- An historical and documentary
study of the Cooch-behar enclaves of India and Bangladesh –Research paper-8
p. 126. University of Melbourne- Australia.
46. Bartaman Patrika .06.06.2015
47. The Ajkal Patrika – 1st August, 2015.

CHAPTER - VI

Politics of Migration

Generally, Migration is a complex process and is symptomatic of basic economic and social changes. It has been the experience of most of the developed countries that rapid economic and social changes are accompanied by population redistribution between rural and urban areas. So the migration flows have a bearing upon several problems of the development process such as employment and regional development.¹

Many scholars have explained migration from their own point of view. According to William Peterson, 'Free Migration is a movement motivated by the individual willingness to risk the unknown of a new home and breaking from a familiar social universe for the sake of adventure, achievement of idea or to escape a social system 'from which he has become alienated.'² Helen I.safa opines. "Migration is normally viewed as an economic phenomenon". It means the migrants leave their birth place for the want of employment facilities and also for searching better chances at some other places.³

Smith gave emphasis on migration as a change in physical space.⁴ Eisenstaedt depicts migration as 'the physical transition of an individual or a group from one society to another'.⁵ According to Weinberg."Human migration is considered as the change of place of abode permanently when temporarily for an appreciable duration as in the case of seasonal workers".⁶ Baker gives the latest definition of migration. He says "Migration is the act of moving from one spatial unit to another." Mehta also has explained migration as a process of movement of special mobility.⁷

According to Encyclopedia Britannica, the word "migration means moving from place to place in search of means of subsistence or to escape a stranger foe men, from time immemorial, have spread over the greater part of the earth's

surface. Within recorded history, human migration have transformed the entire aspect of lands and composition of their inhabitants,”⁸

The word migration is intimately related with the word ‘refugee.’ Jacques Verdant had remarked long back in the year of 1953 that ‘a refugee is someone who has been compelled to abandon his home’.⁹

The most tragic scene of independent India was its partition. In order to solve political problem, the two provinces of Bengal and Punjab, were divided on 15th August, 1947. As a result there was a large influx of refugee immigration in Bengal whose wave had touched North Bengal deeply.¹⁰

Before going in details we should go to the background which paved the way of partition of India and thereby created a burning problem like Migration. From 1905 to 1947 the British had planted the poisons tree of communalism which came to an end through partition and refugee problem.

Three types of religions came to the lime light of History in the pre-partition and Post-partition period namely Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh. Among them the Hindus and Muslim were two great enemies of each other. This hostility had begun from 5th or 6th century A.D. From this time the Vedic religion had spread. During the reign of Paul-Chanda- Barman-Sen and Deb the Brahmanical religion had very much extended. The main principle of Arya-Hindu was Social division. The sudras at that time were neglected deeply and oppressed by Brahmans and Kshatriyas. Their chief work was to give service to the upper class people. There was no liberation of this caste without this service. This was also regarded as the law of God. Goutam Buddha had protested against this social oppression in the name of religion. He said that no God the honesty and Sad Jukti of man will reach him to the proximity of truth. But gradually the Buddhist religion had declined and the Brahmanical religion was again revived. The Sudras were again oppressed by upper caste people. The Buddhists were also persecuted by Hindu rulers. Any man, who worshipped Buddhadev, was either killed or exiled. At this juncture the Buddhists or the Sudras were separated from the life-line of society. The Muslim invaders who came from outside took the chance of this separation.¹¹

In the year of 712 A.D. when Muhamad-Bin Kasim invaded Sindhu province, he was helped by some inhabitants of this province secretly and indirectly. These helpers, in the true sense of the term, were the men of oppressed class.¹²For this reason Swami Vivekananda said, "Musalmaner Bharutadhiar daridra padadalitader Uddherkaran haiyachilo. Aeijanyei amader ek-panchamangshya Bharatbasi Musalman haiya giyachilo. Kebal Tara barir bale Aeiha Swadhita hoi nai."¹³

In order to get relief from social oppression a large number of untouchables accepted Muslim religion during the reign of Muslim rulers.¹⁴But some Hindu men were transformed into Muslims getting the fear of Muslim swords. In 976-77 A.D. Subuktaghin, the Sultan of Gazni invaded India. His son sultan Mamud also invaded India about seventeen times and became greedy for gaining Indian wealth. Many persecuted men of India expanding from Punjab to Mathura and Sindhu to Somnath accepted Muslim religion by night. The Muslims became their friends. In 1192 Muhammad Ghuri defeated Prithviraj Chouhan in the 2nd battle of Tarain and thereby paved the path of establishing Muslim rule in India in 1206 A.D. After it the Turkish and other Muslim lucky men came to India forming into a body. Consequently social gathering and friendly relations between ordinary Musalmans and upper caste Hindus decreased and a gap was also made between them. Converted Muslims never said 'Eso Brahman, suchi Kari mon dharo hat Sabakar' On the other hand upper caste Hindus also never said 'Eso hey patit, hoke apanit Sab apaman bhar.'¹⁵

In 1204 A.D. the Muslim rule in Bangladesh was founded by Bakhtiyar Khalji . This rule was continued up to the defeat of Nawab Siraj-ud-daulah and the grant of Dewani of the British in 1765 legally.¹⁶At that time a part of some clever Hindus was able to take high position at Muslim court by dint of their educational qualities. Matrimonial relations were also made sometimes. In spite of that there was possibility of Hindu –Muslim friendship during Muslim reign. The Hindus wanted the destruction of Muslim rule. In order to fulfil their aspirations the British East India Company came to India and they extended their hands towards the Hindus. Naturally the British rules were transformed into the friends of

Hindus.¹⁷The Hindus became eager to learn English language and thereby to adorn their society culturally. On the other hand, the Muslim community became unfavorable to learn English education and culture. Consequently they became backward both educationally and culturally than the Hindus. The Muslim communities kept themselves in a limited scope and forbade English education. Side by side the fate of western educated Hindus became bright. The use of Arabic and Parshi languages in the official work of royal court and law court was evident. Taking advantage of it the Hindus absorbed the honorable posts of this country by dint of their educational qualification. The gap was gradually increased between these two communities.

The Faraji movement of the year of 1804 in Bangladesh had opened the door of Wahabi movement. Haji Sariatullah took the leadership in this movement. The Hindus neglected this movement in the name of religious fanaticism. The conservative Hindus did not recognize the opposition towards the British as a vital step of freedom movement. In fact, both the Hindus and Muslim had different opinion with regards to the realization to liberate the country from the bondage of the British. From this point of view the Sepoy Muting of 1857 was not the movement of both Hindus and Muslims. The Muslim Sepoys at first led the movement. After that it had spread among the Hindu sepoy. But many upper class Hindu and Muslim communities were in favour of the British. The Hindu zaminders were also benefited by the Permanent Settlement introduced by Lord Cornwallis in 1793. But the Muslim Krishaks and Prajas fell a prey to this settlement. As a result, a social and mental distinction gradually extended between these two communities. In this condition Sir Saiyad Ahmen Khan came in the stage in order to upgrade the backward Muslims through western education and culture. For fulfilling this purpose he established Aligarh Anglo-Oriental College for the Muslims at Aligarh. Later this college was transformed into a university named Aligarh University. Only the Musalmans of Uttar Pradesh were benefited by this step of Sir Saiyad Ahmed. Most of the Muslims of North India stayed in miserable condition as before. In this condition the Hindu opposition of Muslims took a terrific shape.

Saiyad Ahmed of Rai Berili - the leader of the Wahabi movement definitely wanted to free the Muslims from internal stagnation and thereby to re-establish the Muslim Sovereignty in India. Above all, he wanted to give birth to a separate and free Muslim State.¹⁸ This mentality had affected the Hindu-Muslim political relationship adversely for one century. On the other hand, Sir Saiyad Ahmed Khan who is called the 'Father of Muslim Renaissance' said embracing communalism that Hindu-Muslim are two separate nations. They should never be united.¹⁹

Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India took opportunity of this two—nation theory. In order to increase the social and educational differentiation between the Hindus and the Muslim he gave the proposal of dividing Bengal. This proposal had influenced the Muslims of Purba Banga deeply.

On 18th February, 1904 he delivered a speech at a public meeting of Dacca saying that this proposal will give such an opportunity to the Muslims of Dacca which they can never imagine.²⁰ On 16th October, 1905 the whole of Bengal was divided into two parts –Purba Banga and Assam on the one hand and Paschim-banga, Bihar and Orissa on the other. Curzon showed the cause that with a view to removing administrative complicity, this division was made. But the real purpose of this division was to strengthen the British Empire rousing the communal feeling between the Hindu and the Muslim. This proposal had shaken the Hindu Society powerfully. They started the anti-partition movement. Naturally the anti-partition movement formed clear nationalism not only in Bangladesh but in the whole India amongst Hindus and Muslims. As a re-action in 1906 two communal parties were founded namely All India Muslim League and the Punjab Hindu Mahasabha.²¹ On the other side, in the Surat Congress the rift on the question of directing Swadeshi movement arrived at the highest point and the congress was divided into two sections the Moderate and the Extremist. Somebody opines that after 1906, the congress was transformed into a congress of the Hindus.²² and its competitor was the newly formed Muslim League. In fact, the seed of partitioning the country was sowed in this episode at which a division became clear between British Indian Association and Muslim Community. In 1887, before starting the Madras

Congress Saiyad Ahmed acquainted the Muslims of Hindu supremacy. In 1888 he remarked that the Hindu and the Muslim are two belligerent nations and their peaceful co-existence should not be possible at the end of British rule. At that time under his enterprise Mr. Theodore Baker had established an anti-congress institution. The rift between these two parties gave a green signal of imminent partition and migration problem.

When Muslim League was born, the age of the Congress Party was only twenty one. But from birth time the League became the greatest competitor of the Congress. The Muslim league was becoming the main shelter of the Muslim. It got support of the British directly and indirectly. When the Hindus invited them to support the anti-partition movement, they did not show any eagerness in this matter. But the Swadeshi movement had removed the British fear from the minds of men.²³ This movement had also taught men to embrace the woe. This was an important step for rousing national consciousness. Will Durant had admitted that Indian Revolution truly started from 1905.²⁴ This Swadeshi movement was transformed into a vast national movement gradually. This newly born nationalism was able to create fissure in the Indian National Congress. One side was moderate and another side, extremist. We have already known it. Side by side various terrorist revolutionary organizations were formed at different parts of Bangladesh. They had no trust either in please prayer and protest policy like the Moderates or confidence in non violent protest. The only way to them for expulsion was the way of using Bomb, Gun etc. Creating terrorism by armed revolution or guerilla warfare they one by one had killed the British, looted Armed-bhander, invaded European club and were able to create terror in the whole country. From 1757 to 1900 –during this long period many simultaneous and separated revolts took place at different parts of India. Most of the terrorists were non-Muslims. And the shrewd British Government took the step of hated communal politics to repress the Swadeshi movement. They were in-favour of the Muslim community in the communal riot. The main objective of the British Government was to maintain the support of the Musalmans towards partition of Bengal. The Hindus were deprived of Government service. If any riot took place, the Hindus were only arrested. The

British had distributed pamphlets in order to rise anti Hindu feelings in the minds of Muslims. Sir Bamfield directly said, between his two wives the Muslim one was the principal queen.²⁵

At that time under the leadership of Aga Khan some Muslims met Lord Minto. This meeting was a pre-planned step of the British Government. The demands of the Muslims were (I) the Muslims were to be appointed in the administrative Department of the Governor-General. (ii) The post should be reserved for the Muslims in the civil service (iii) A Muslim university should be opened (iv) A Muslim judge was to be appointed at each High Court. In fact, this appeasement towards the Muslim was the part and parcel of Government plan.²⁶ Thus the Divide and Rule policy of the British Government had waded the painful moment of partitioning India.²⁷

The Secretary of the newly formed Muslim League openly remarked that both the Hindus and the Congress wanted to drive away the British. Their mentality is totally opposite to the Muslims. So there was no question of compromise between the Congress and the Muslim League.²⁸

The division of the congress into two parts at the Surat Congress, the active works of the revolutionaries in different countries of Europe in-favour of freedom warmed the political arena of the country.²⁹ In 1907, Bipin Chandra Paul—the extremist leader demanded clearly the end of British rule in his speech. Khudiram Basu, Prafulla Chaki, Ullaskar Datta, Bhupendra Nath Dutta—all these revolutionaries also wanted to expel the British through the way of Secret murder.³⁰

In 1908 the moderates gathered at a meeting of Allahabad and took a decision of demanding self-administration from the British through 3ps policy. On the other hand in 1907 at Karachi and 1908 also at Amritsar Congress the Muslim League took the principle of compromise with the British. Like old method of congress they made an arrangement of broadcasting with the help of Saiyed Amir Ali.³¹

The Morley—Minto Reforms Act of 1909 gave additional facilities to the Muslims depending upon Two—Nation Theories definitely. Some progressive Muslims protested against it but most of the Muslims became glad in this respect.

On the occasion of the Emperor George-V and Rani Mary to India a Durbar had commenced in Delhi on 12th December, 1911 in which the announcement of abolishing partition of Bengal had done. This news failed to get back the condition of Bangladesh like as before. The young revolutionaries were engaged in secret murder and the expulsion of the British. A bomb was thrown on Lord Hurdinj. He became conscious about it that all Indians were not the worshipped of the British. Side by side the Muslims were not glad at the news of abolishing partition of Bengal. They cherished that the British Government will always appease them. This hope was transformed into despair by chance.

In 1914, the First World War started and the condition was changed partly generally. Among the moderate leaders Gandhiji agreed to help the British freely. In this war Smt. Annie Basant declared the price of Indian allegiance was the independence of India.³² From 1915, she started her Home rule movement. At that year she delivered a speech in Bombay and said: Home rule means she understood own Government of the country. The mass from every province will select the members of the parliament by vote and the Government which will be formed among them will be responsible in the parliament for their own work. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Muhammed Ali Jinnah and Ali brothers were in favour of the Home rule movement. In 1917 at Calcutta Congress Srimati Besant in her powerful speeches demanded self—rule within a brief period, which was the main slogan of the extremists. The extremists were driven away from the Congress at the Surat Congress in 1907. Only ten years later they had occupied the Congress.³³

In 1919 for a few years the Hindu Muslim relations took different shape. After the First World War according to the Treaty of Sevras Turaska got punishment and the power of the Sultan was cut. The Muslims did not accept this activity of the British. They burnt in anger and demanded that the British policy towards Turaska was to be changed and the Turkish Sultan was to be given its own status as before. Later this demand took the shape of Khilafat movement.

Gandhiji was the main supporter of this demand. In fact, Gandhiji wanted to draw both the Khilafat question and the demand of Home rule at the same time.

On 23rd November, 1919 a sammelon of All India Khilafat Committee was held in Delhi at which Gandhiji was selected as the President. In this sammelon the Muslims took the decision of non-cooperating with the British at every step until their demand was fulfilled and the Muslim League welcomed this decision. A memorandum was placed by the Indian Khilafatists towards the Viceroy on 19th January, 1920. Gandhiji, Swami Shradhdhansda, Modanmohan Malavya and Motilal Nehru—the Hindu leaders signed at this memorandum. The main objective of Gandhiji was to maintain Hindu Muslim unity supporting the khilafatists. But he did not realize that the origin of the Khilafat movement was pan-Islamism which had no similarity with Indian hope and aspiration. Some Muslim leaders were not glad gaining co-operation from the Hindu leaders. Muhammad Ali—a renowned leader of the Muslim said openly at the Madras Congress, he is at first the Muslim then other. And any Amir of Afghanistan invades India, if the Hindus do not support it, he himself will stand against the Hindus.³⁴ The Congress just avoided this remark.

On 1st August, 1920 the Non-cooperation movement was transformed into national movement for Khilafat. At the Nagpur Congress ‘The programme of Non-co-operation was accepted permanently’. In this connection about 14,000 persons were Musalmans. But Annie Besant, Jinnah, Bipin Paul and Modan Mohan Malavya—the Congress leaders did not support this movement started by Gandhiji. In this context Jinnah said to Gandhij, your principle in the mean time has contained division and confusion in the life of the mass. The people become angry everywhere and your extremist programme has caused a partial madness to some in experienced and illiterate youngs.³⁵ Despite this objection the non-cooperation proposal was put into practice. Chitya Ranjan Das and Lajpat Roy supported it.

The Hindu—Muslim relation degraded from the year of 1923. During this time communal riot had begun at different parts of India. The Musalmans started Communal movements like Tanjim and Tablikh. Side by side the Hindus started Suddhi movement.³⁶ At that time under the leadership of Sri Malabya the meeting

of the Hindu Mahasabha was held in Baranasi. The relation between both communities was becoming gradually bitter. Chitya Ranjan Das concluded 'Hindu—Muslim pact' for Bangladesh. In this pact it was declared that the Muslims were to be given at least 55% Government Service. But this attempt was an actually force.

On 24th May, 1924 Jinnah said in his speech at Lahore Congress of the Muslim League that the Non-Co-operation movement has failed. Now it needs to do such work by which Swaraj can be achieved.³⁷ In the mean time riots took place in Delhi, Gulabarga, Ko-hat, Ellahabad, Kanchra para and Jabbalpur regularly. Gandhiji started fasting against these riots but failed to change the minds of the rioters. It is true that the British Government was responsible indirectly for these riots. They knew as long as the ruled engaged themselves in rift and quarrel, they will stay safely in India. But the terrorist revolutionaries of India at that time did not sit silently. The revolution under the active leadership of Surya Sen had spread at Chattagram of Bangladesh. This movement of Chattagram had inspired the youths of the country to start the movement.

The relations between Hindu and Muslim had degraded from the year of 1926. A large number of people died at the riot of Calcutta. Its influence had reached Rawalpindi and Allahabad. Swami Shradhananda was killed by one stranger. The love and sympathy of Gandhiji, Chittaranjan Das and Lajpat Rai towards the Muslim community was becoming unbearable to the Hindus.

From 1930 a new movement under the leadership of Gandhiji had started again. This movement was called Civil Disobedience Movement. The Dandi expedition and other non-violent activities of Mahatma Gandhi had shaken the British Government very much. In 1933 when Gandhiji and his thirty four associates were arrested, the speed of the movement was decreased. An uncertain condition was created towards the Congress. Gandhiji appealed to his associates to engage themselves in constructive works from now.³⁸ He remarked this seeing the circumstances totally.

According to the Reform Act of 1935 a general election took place in 1937 at which the congress got majority seats in United Province, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Madras and Bombay. The Muslim League was totally defeated in this election. It got limited seats among the reserved 482 seats. But the blunder politics, short sightedness and stupidity had augmented the influence of Muslim League within few years very much.³⁹The liberal Muslim leaders like Fazlul Hoque of Bangladesh became more eager to form United Ministry with the congress. But the Congress had cancelled this proposal under the direction of Gandhiji.⁴⁰Consequently, a great destruction occurred in India. After refusing the Congress proposal the Muslim League was summoned to form ministry in the Muslim based provinces. The League, accepting the ministry applied itself for strengthening this weak institution and everywhere of the country the branches of the Muslim League were formed on the basis of terrible communalism. Thus the poisonous tree of Indian partition was planted.

After the defeat of the Muslim League in the election of 1937 Jawaharlal Nehru announced with vanity that there are only two political parties in India--one, the British Government and the other Congress.⁴¹The Muslims became very angry at this remark.⁴² But the League wanted to make a compromise with the congress. After it Nehru demanded the allegiance of the League through Mass propaganda on 31st March, 1937. Jinnah had accepted the challenge. At the Lucknow Congress he said: After it the Muslims will take weapons at every village against Congress propagators.⁴³ The League became active under the leadership of Jinnah. The other Muslim political parties came under the banner of the Muslim League. In that year Jinnah said to Gandhi directly if the Congress should declare itself as the representative of the Hindus, the Muslim League should get recognition as the representative of the Musalmans.⁴⁴ Consequently a great crisis was created in the country.

On 19th February,1938 Subhas Chandra Bose was elected as President of the 51st sammelon of the Congress at Bithal nagar of Gujrat. After Munich Agreement Subhas Chandra Basu had called the mass to form a national movement on the background of imminent Second World War. This call was not

accepted by the disciples of Gandhiji because they became greedy for obtaining ministry and parliamentary power. Consequently a rift took place between Gandhiji and Subhas Chandra Bose. The principle of Gandhiji's supporters was to make Subhas Chandra Bose out of order. They gave votes to Pattavi Sitaramaiya in the election of Tripuri Congress in place of Subhas Chandra Bose. But Subhas won in this election defeating Sitaramaiya. Gandhiji and other Congress leaders had planned to non-cooperate with Subhas Chandra Bose. As a result Subhas Bose had resigned from the post of President and formed another party named Forward Bloc in 1939. In 1938-39 when a rift had begun in the Congress, Jinnah exerted himself to strengthen the Muslim League. The rift between Jawaharlal Nehru and Md. Ali Jinnah had reached the highest peak. Jawaharlal Nehru had remarked that there are many Musalmans in the Congress who are the inspirators of Jinnah.⁴⁵

Gradually, the Two Nation Theory had inspired the Muslim League Versus Jinnah very much. The demand of Pakistan became strong. In the meantime the Second World War had begun. The freedom movement of India took a new shape from this period.

In 1930, at the Allahabad Congress of the Muslim League Sir Muhammad Ekbal—a great Urdu poet at his presidential Congress demanded a separate Muslim state within India. This state will be formed under the combination of Punjab, Sindh and Baluchistan. At the same time Chowdhury Rahmat Ali including some Muslim students—the students of Cambridge University had given the same proposal.⁴⁶ But the Muslim leaders did not accept the proposal. After two years Chowdhury Rahmat Ali and his three associates had published a pamphlet of 4 pages named 'Now or Never' (1933) in which they wanted the creation of a separate Muslim State dividing India. The name of this state will be Pakistan—the combination of five provinces namely Punjab, Afghan Pradesh, Kashmir, Sindhu Pradesh and Baluchistan.⁴⁷ But this proposal was also rejected by the 2nd Round-table conference. At the Third Round Table conference Jinnah and other Muslim leaders did not give much importance to the matter of Pakistan proposal. It was declared in 'Now or Never' pamphlet that their demand was the demand of about three crores of Muslims of West India. According to this pamphlet—the Muslims

of Pakistan are persons of separate characteristics and they can demand a separate state.⁴⁸ The proposal was rejected by the Muslim League. In 1940 that proposal was put into practice. It was an irony of fate. At the Lahore Congress (1940) the proposal of partitioning India was accepted permanently.⁴⁹

This change in the character of Muslim politics did not get any importance on behalf of the Congress and Hindu leaders. The Congress had never tried to draw the League for rejecting the proposal of a separate state through discussion. They had only ended their duty summoning the All-India Muslim Conference in Delhi and nominating Moulana Abul kalam Azad as the President of this conference. In the true sense of the term due to vanity and lack of far-sightedness the Congress did not recognize the Muslim League as only a local institution and did not also recognize Jinnah as an undisputed leader of this community, But the time was over when they were compelled to give recognition to the Muslim League.

The plan of partitioning Bengal was not the attempt of partitioning India.⁵⁰ But the possibility of this plan to put into practice created a gap between the Hindus and Muslims whole heartedly. Consequently, the matter of partioning India was never avoided. The terrorist mentality of the Muslim League and the obstinate mentality of the Congress leaders were solely responsible for it.

Sir Theodor Morison—the principal of Aligarh College had remarked in a pamphlet “If fifty lakh Muslims are habilitated in Northern India, a national consciousness will be created and consequently the problem of the Muslims will be solved”. In 1890 Abdul Halim Sairai at first proposed a separate landscape for the Muslims. In 1917 an international socialist sommelson was summoned at Stockholm at which two Indian representatives named Abdul Jabber and Abdul Sattar had remarked the same. In 1921 Nadir Ali—an ardent supporter of British rule had published a pamphlet in which he had remarked the partition of India was the only way to the solution of Hindu-Muslim problem. After three years Moulana Muhammad Ali had delivered a lecture at Aligarh saying that India will be divided into two parts—Hindu Bharat and Muslim Bharat if Hindu—Muslim problems are not to be solved. At that year a meeting was held at Lahore in which the Federal

type of administration was proposed in exchange of unitary administration in India. In 1924 Lala Lajpat Rai had planned the same in which four Muslim states were to be created in North-Western frontier province, Punjab, Sindh and East Bengal. Sir Muhammad Shahnawaj of Punjab League wrote a book entitled 'Confederacy of India'. The book offered the partition of India into five parts named Sindhu tract, Hindu Bharat, Rajasthan, Deccan, and Banga. Sir Sikander Hayat Khan—a contemporary Chief Minister of Punjab wrote a pamphlet namely 'Outlines of a scheme of Indian Federation' in which he proposed the creation of an Indian Confederation under the combination of seven separate tracts. Khalikujjaman had placed a plan of Indian partition to the then Indian Secretary Lord Jettland and his assistant Kornel Muirhed on March 1939. This plan was accepted by the committee of the League Working Committee on 4th February, 1940 and paved the way of creating two separate states—Pakistan and India.

Two professors of Aligarh University named Sayed Jafar-Ul-Hasan and Dr. Muhammad Afjal Hasan Kadri propagated a plan of Indian partition under the combination of six independent and sovereign states namely Pakistan, Banga, Hindustan, Hyderabad, Delhi, and Malabar. Dr. S.A. Latif in his written book 'The Muslim Problem in India' had also placed a plan of partitioning India into four states for Muslims and six states for Hindus on the basis of six cultural tracts. On 15th November, 1939 Dr. Jakiruddin, Dr. Forman Ahamed and Ubed-Ullah-Durani including Prof. Hasan appealed vehemently to Muhammad Ali Jinnah to form more than one independent Muslim states at Muslim majority tracts. In this context they sent a secret proposal to Jinnah. The committee of Sir Abdullah Harun of Sindhu Pradesh also composed a plan for dividing India. In 1940, when the position was in favour of Pakistan, Chowdhury Rahmat Ali gave another statement from Karachi which was published after as the title named The Millal of Islam and the Menace of Indianism from Cambridge. This statement supported for creation of independent Pakistan state preserving Indian tradition of the Musalmans completely.⁵¹ From the year of 1936 Aga Khan—an ardent supporter of British imperialism played an important role in this respect. He thought that a

new total platform should be necessary for submitting own demand of Indian Musalmans.⁵²

In fact, the Hindu newspaper had depicted Lahore proposal as Pakistan Proposal. In this context Jinnah's personal Secretary Pirjada mentioned Jinnah's statement saying; we did not introduce the word Pakistan. The Hindus gifted this word to us. The Hindus had criticized the Lahore proposal greatly and mentioned it as 'Pakistan Proposal'. As a result this word was introduced.⁵³

Maulana Azad in his books 'India Wins Freedom' gave credit to many persons directly and indirectly namely Sardar Ballav Bhai Patel, Lord Mountbatten, Jawaharlal Nehru, Muhammad Ali Jinnah and partly Gandhiji.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah—Father of Pakistan nation—at a time was the first rank Congress leaders in 1920, Gokhle and Sorojini Naidu were the representatives of Hindu –Muslim unity. One day this so-called Jinnah became anti-Hindu, anti congress and a great orator of Pakistan proposal. After partition Jinnah remarked “partition was the greatest blunder in his life.”

If we divide Jinnah's political life in four parts, we can see⁵⁴

In the first part, he was an important member of the Indian National Congress, Political disciple of Dadabhai Naoroji and guard of Indian national interest. He did not support separate election system for Muslims because this system will be harmful for national integration. He was not the member of the Muslim League at first. He was elected by the Muslim Election commission and then also became the member of the Muslim League after accepting the membership of Central Assembly and said: I am the member of the Congress with regards to national integration and also the member of the Muslim League for serving communal interest of the Muslims.⁵⁵

In the second part, he had tried his best to make a bridge between the Congress and the League. He had concluded the Lucknow pact (1916) with Tilok jointly. Jinnah's power had raised to the highest peak. This episode was ended when under the leadership of Gandhiji the Congress had accepted Ahinsha Non-co-operation principle. Jinnah wanted reciprocal co-operation not non-co-

operation. He could not accept the principle of Gandhiji.⁵⁶ In the third part he was not the member of the Congress. He established Independent party in the Central Assembly. The members of this party were Hindu, Musalman and Parsi. This party was more independent than the Government and the Congress. At that time (1934) Chowdhury Rahmat Ali had requested Jinnah to be the Convener of Pakistan in the dinner party commencing in England. Jinnah had remarked disappointing him that it was an absurd dream.

In the fourth part, Jinnah had formed Muslim League party breaking Independent party. From this time he gave much importance to Muslim communal interest than national interest. He did not hesitate to say the congress as a Hindu Institution. Gradually he promised that he did not give the Congress to form Government at Central level alone. It will be done with the help of League and on the condition of the League. If it is not possible, he will demand Pakistan in order to secure it he is prepared to fight with the Congress. If the British Government helps the Congress in this matter, he also will fight with the British. He remarked that the Congress supported Muslims. They are the showy boys of the Congress. From then he became a Muslim nationalist, not an Indian nationalist. He had followed blindly 'Two Nation Theory'. India is a land of two nations—Hindu and Muslim. A separate land is necessary for the Muslim. He had created Pakistan betting the game. That was the trick of the Congress. The Congress wanted East Punjab and west Bengal. If it was not possible, Delhi was not safe and the gain of Calcutta city was impossible.

Through same comments of Jinnah we can watch the change of mentality of him from time to time.⁵⁸

1. Hinduder Prati Amader drisstibhangi Hobe Subhecheha ebong Bhatribhavapanna Amader chalak Niti hobe Desher Swarthe Tahader Sange Sahajogita. Dui Bhatrpratim mahat Sampradayer bhitar Jathartha bojhapara ebong hriddyapurna sammandha Prathistita halei Bharatbarsher Jathertha Pragati Sambhavpar⁵⁹ habe, Ahmedabad 1916.

2. Musalmander shartha upeksha karle Kono Bharatbasi kokhono ter swadesher seba karte samartha habe na.⁶⁰ (1931)
3. Amra kono daler Talpibahak habo na. Saman Angshidar rupe Amra kaj karte prastut achi.⁶¹(03.01.1937)
4. Congress pradhanata Hindu pratisthan. (Calcutta April,1938)
5. Amra Bharatbarsher Musalman sampradai Amader Purna adhikar adai karar bapera manasthir kare niachi. Congress ke Hindu punaruthanbader yantre prarinata karer janya jadi kano ekjan baktike dayi karte hai tahale tini haten Mr.Gandhi (Patna; 26.12.1938)
6. Jati Sabder je kano paribasha anusare Musalmanera ekti jati ebong tadher nijasya Basbhumi ,Elaka ebong Rashtra Chai.⁶²(1940)
7. Musalmander Kono matei ami Hinduder Kritadashe parinata karte parina.(peshwar, 24.11.45)
8. Bharatbarsher Samasyar ekmatra Samadhan halo Pakistan (Bombay, July 1946)
9. Akhil Bharat Muslim League biswas kare je Pakistan prapti, nijedher nay sangata dabi arjan, nijeder samman raksha ebong bartamaner Engrejer bhabishater Barnahinduder dasater hat theka praritrان pabar janya Musalman Jatir taraf theke pratakhyā sangrame prabitta haber samay ekhan eshe gache(1946).
10. Aj Amader eman abasthar madhye thele dewar pechhane Congress O England Ubhayeri Jogayog aache. Amader dui dik theke akkraman kara hayeche---Aj Amra Sabgbhidhan O Sagbhidhanik padhyatike bidai janiachhi---ek daler pachane chila khamata O Machinegun ebong apar dal sarbada Aasohojog O Gana Aain amanya suru karer sasani ditto . Eai praristhitir mokabila karte hobe. Amader ekhan pistan ache.(1946).⁶³

But it should be minded Jinnah was not solely responsible for the partition. There were also contribution of Lord Mountbatten and other Congress leaders. It

is that in divided or undivided condition, Bharatbarsha was to be free within 1948⁶⁴.

In the meantime the Second World War had begun in 1939 and ended in 1945. In spite of great personality of Churchill and wartime unique leadership in this war the people of Britain had elected the labour party in the general election. Clement Attlee became Prime minister and Sir Pethick Lawrence was appointed as the Secretary of State for India. The labour party of Britain according to their declared principle took decision to give freedom to India.⁶⁵

On 21st August Lord Wavell declared that the election of Indian parliament will be commenced in the coming winter. Returning from London on 19th September he announced in Delhi the Government will summon a Gana Parishad after the general election. Then the Government also will take step for transferring power. The main participants in the election were the Congress and the Muslim League. The main demand of the league was the partition of India and creation of Pakistan. And the Congress wanted transfer of power as soon as possible.

On 4th December in the House of Lords the Secretary of State for India declared that a parliamentary representative group under the combination of all members will visit India and held a meeting with various leaders about the matter how India will acquire a place of an independent state within British Commonwealth. India will to be get complete independence which was declared at first officially. In December election the Hindus won in the Hindu majority tracts and the Muslims got votes in the Muslim majority tracts.

On 5th January under the leadership of Robert Richards a parliamentary representative group including ten members came to India. Jinnah said to them that it is necessary to form two institutions for drafting constitution, one for Muslim. Nehru gave a statement saying: if the British Government will divide India, in the sphere of frontier districts general election is very much necessary.⁶⁶

On 24th March, 1946 the Cabinet Mission came in Delhi. Pethick Lawrence—the Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. A.V. Alexander became present in it.⁶⁷ Both the Congress and the Muslim League

became busy for securing their own interests. Abul Kalam Azad—the Congress president awarded the Mission that before independence an Interim Government will be formed full of responsible sense and this Government will take necessary step for drafting future constitution of India.⁶⁸ Mahatma Gandhi had delivered a speech against Two Nation Theory. On the other hand, Jinnah demanded Pakistan on the basis of Two Nation Theory. At that time the rift between the League and the Congress reached to such an extent on that, the fire of communalism was too hot which had no way to subdue .Even, there was no power of any leader to face it. Consequently in order to keep peace the leaders of all parties wanted rapid relief. India was partitioned into two parts—India and Pakistan. At that moment when the British had prepared himself to quit India and both the congress and the League accepted the policy of compromise, our country was saved from the effect of partition, cry of minority group and above all continuous refugee problem. Due to the greedy mentality of being a dictator of newly born Free State, the leaders of two communities had spread the poison of communalism in the air. As a result the minorities were oppressed and the cry of refugees grew during the later days of independence. Thus a large number of innocent people became victimized due to selfishness of some notable leaders. This example can never be found in the World History Maulana Azad wrote clearly in his book that Ballav Bhai Patel was the innovator of Partition of India.⁶⁹ He had depicted the complex political circumstances in the following:-

“The communal feeling was increasing gradually in the country. The Government was paralyzed due to the fight of the Congress and the League. Patel had submitted Department of economy for fear of losing the Home Department which was the main key of administration. Patel felt that he is unable even to create the post of a peon being a home-member. The Congress members of the Council were at stake. Lord Mountbatten took this opportunity fully. He had absorbed the real power in the name of compromise. He had tried whole-heartedly to make influence on both parties with regard to the creation of Pakistan. The first prey of Lord Mountbatten was Patel Saheb. He was intoxicated towards partition in order to get free from Jinnah’s manner. Mountbatten tried to make him

understand saying that the problem can be solved only through partition as it is impossible to work with the League together. Patel said openly if he gets deliverance giving one piece of India to Jinnah, it will be his aspiration.

The second prey of Batten Saheb was Jawaharlal Nehru. He did not support at first partition of India. But he was very much influenced gradually both by Lord and Lady Mount batten in this matter. Krishna Menan was solely responsible behind the changing of opinion of Nehru. When Azad understood that in the name of partition of the country the leaders in fact were much eager to dig to the grave of the country, he had tried his best to give resistance to this work. But Patel remarked that "we want or do not want, there are two nations in India now. The rift between the Hindus and the Muslims can be stopped only through partition". Patel was becoming a more ardent supporter of partition of India than Jinnah. Nehru then said to Azad that the matter of partitioning the country is inevitable. So it will be the sign of great intelligence to accept it. In the true sense of the term it was not possible for Nehru to avoid Lord and Lady Mountbatten. But Azad said to Nehru to be careful in this respect. He said if they give permission for partition, History will never forgive them. The next generation will say without hesitation that not the Muslim League, the Congress had divided India.

The remaining person was Gandhi, He remarked; the Congress may agree with the partition of the country if it wants, but that will be happened upon my dead body. But after intimate discussion with Mount batten and Sardar Patel Gandhi's opinion was partly changed. He said to Azad; The present condition of India is going into such a way that it seems the partition is inevitable.⁷¹

When Mountbatten noticed that plan of partitioning country was accepted by Patel, Menan, Nehru, and even Gandhiji generally, the question of Bangladesh and Punjab got importance newly. He said as the basis of partitioning country is Muslim majority tracts and the Muslims are minority both in Bangladesh and Punjab, these two provinces will be divided. Azad wanted to defer the matter for at least two years by which the partition will be stopped. But Mount Batten was becoming desperate to solve this problem.

Azad said; before partition the two communities are engaged in riot which will take extreme shape after the partition of India. Mountbatten gave answer that he is fully promising to resist the riot by his military experience. But all know that in post-partition India the communal riots took place day by day. The military experience of Batten Saheb was out of practice. Because military army failed to close the fighting of both the Hindus and the Muslims. Gandhiji felt piteously although he was declared as the Father of the Nation but his relation with other Congress leaders was like a relation between an old father and his sons. There was no way for him without acting like Dhritarashtra. Feeling the whole circumstances applied his extreme weapon that means Fasting.⁷²

Jinnah fully demanded Punjab and Bangladesh for Pakistan. But the Congress demanded to include the Hindu based tracts within India. As a result at last the possibility was created for dividing Bangla and Punjab. Sarat Chandra Basu and Surabardi demanded the undivided independent Bangladesh. Both the Congress and the League did not support. On 10th May, Batten Saheb had published a proposal which was granted by the British Cabinet. Its main theme was, Freedom will be given to every province of India on a fixed day. Then the provinces will join the Hindustan or Pakistan according to their own will. But Nehru protested vehemently against this plan on the argument if this plan was to be accepted, India would break into pieces.

Secondly, a plan was also submitted to Mount Batten by Nehru's one personnel of his Secretariat. The main theme of this plan was that Indian Union will be formed taking Hindu-based tracts and Pakistan consisting of Muslim-based tracts. Punjab and Bangladesh were to be divided and Pakistan will gain Purba Banga and Paschim Punjab. Mount Batten submitted this proposal to Nehru, Patel, Jinnah, Liakat and Baladev Singh. According to the expectation of Menon both parties had agreed to this proposal.

Menon took three hours to make this plan newly. And Batten Saheb took only ten minutes to pass the plan through the British Cabinet. The deplorable fate of a large number of people of undivided India was fixed within only ten minutes. According to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, 'A dream was laid in grave'. The

question arises in this context why the British Government was so eager to divide India before? In this respect Maulana Azad writes, according to the plan of the Cabinet Mission if undivided India became independent, there will be no chance for the British to strengthen their grips in the sphere of trade, industry and economy. On the other hand, the division of India means the creation of separate and independent states named Pakistan. Consequently, there will be an advantage of the British to keep India into their own hands. The Muslim League ruled states will be under the influence of the British forever. Consequently an influence will also be created on the mentality of India specially. There will be no way for India without respecting the British interest as the British out post is situated at the frontier.⁷³ Jinnah was playing his war drum at the eleventh hour. The Muslim League will not reject the demand of Pakistan.⁷⁴ It is the only way of freeing 10crores Muslim.⁷⁵ The political situation of India was like a burning glass. So Mount batten awarded the British Cabinet aware that the Muslim League would take recourse to weapons if the Muslim League demand was not accepted.⁷⁶ This Governor General named Mount Batten was directed by the policy of ‘Vini Vidi Vici’ and paved the way for partitioning India. Consequently the painful cry of a large number of men, women and children had engulfed the air and the sky of India—till then the misery of refugee and oppression towards minorities continued, Lord Mountbatten was solely responsible for this painful situation of India.

There was no end of communal riots and murder at the outset of partitioning the country. Both Punjab and Bangladesh were sunk in the festival of blood then. Jenkins—the then Lieutenant Governor wrote a note in this respect; we think that we are living among those men who are engaged much to destroy themselves.⁷⁷

This is like a modern Jadubansha who are determined much for suicidal destruction. Naturally the minorities left their home from Banga and Punjab. On 4th June,1947 Mountbatten had declared in a press conference that on 15th August,1947 the power will be transferred in place of June,1948. It is interesting to note that Gandhiji said in his prayer sabha: Mountbatten—the British Sarkar

was not responsible for partition. There was no blame of the British Government General in this matter. He was also against partition. If both Hindus and Muslims did not want to live unitedly, what can he do?⁷⁸

On 10th June, the League Council had accepted the 'Mount batten plan'. It was said though Punjab and Bangladesh should be included totally within Pakistan, League will agree to the division of these two provinces. Jinnah was empowered to actualize the transfer of power.

On 14th and 15th June, a meeting of All India Congress Committee was held in Delhi Referring to the Mount batten proposal Govinda ballav Panth remarked; The meaning of rejecting this plan refers 'Commitment of suicide'. Because there was no way without omitting the unnecessary parts. Azad said that no alternative way was there without partition. He believed that Pakistan will not exist on longer. So the divided parts will be united again. Gandhiji, Nehru, Patel and kripalini had delivered speeches in favour of this opinion. But the other Congress leaders like Chaitaran Gidoyani, Purusattam Tandan, Maulana Habijur Rahaman and Dr.Kichlu etc. were against it. Their opinions were (1) Undivided India is more necessary than a strong union. (2)The acceptance of this plan means surrender to envy and brutal power. (3) The value of hope and aspiration of a large number of people is more than the hope and aspiration of the Congress Committee. (4) If partition is held, the condition of both Hindus of Pakistan and Indian Muslims will be at stake. (5) This proposal was self-surrender of nationalism towards communalism. But all protests were in vain. At last the proposal means accepted through vote. About 157 votes were in-favour of it, only 29against it and 32 members were neutral in this matter. Other parties except Hindu Mahasabha had supported the partition at that time. The working committee of the Hindu Mahasabha depended on the undivided India. They took oath for this. They took decision to observe Anti-Pakistan day.

Side by side a Boundary Commission was formed under the leadership of Sir Syrile Radcliffe including two members of both the Congress and the Muslim League to fix the law of dividing Punjab and Bangladesh and put in practice. After the announcement of Radcliffe Royedand mass-murder, robbery and setting of fire

started throughout the whole country. The number of displaced persons was increasing continuously. This is an extreme example of the misery of people in the history of the world.

In the circumstances on 7th August Muhammed Ali Jinnah landed on the capital of newly created state through Karachi airport. He gained the greetings of a large number of people and said to the general of navy named S.M.Assan: jeno amar jibita kale Pakistan dekhe jeta parbo—eman asha Ami kakhono karini—amra ja arjon karechi tar janya Ishwarer prati attanta kritagya hawya uchit.⁷⁹

After partition watching the fear fullness of this incident the then leaders started to give blame to each other. Someone held Mount Batten responsible, someone Jinnah, some one Gandhiji and again someone, Krishna Menan, Sardar Patel –Nehru, Rajendra Prasad—Raja Gopalachari and Kripalani. In this context Annada Sankar Roy writes; The British had divided India. It is not totally true. The Congress became eager to divide the country. It is also true. The Congress leaders persuaded Gandhiji so that he cannot interfere in the matter of partition. Neither Jinnah nor the British were fully responsible for partition. Gandhiji firmly believed that the Hindu Muslim problems will not be solved during the British rule. It will be solved after their departure from India. That is not fully true,⁸⁰ On the other hand according to Mount Batten; Jinnah was the main key of all matters.⁸¹ Hodson says the main hero of other characters of mega-novel named ‘Rejuvenation of Indian Independence was Muhammad Ali Jinnah.’⁸² But we know that Jinnah one day said Pakistan ‘disable and worm-eaten’ which cannot be expected from him. One time the demand of Pakistan was to him like a matter of a trick of treating both the Congress and the British Government. At last Jinnah became much angry at the unexpected communal riots, increasing greediness of the Congress and above all shrewdness of Lord Mount Batten. Pakistan took the shape in practice.

The Congress nominated Mount Batten as the Governor General of Independent India. Because Congress leaders like Azad thought; no change should be done at that time. Barring this, if Mount Batten held this post, a continuation of national and administrative system will be maintained well. And everybody

thought that Pakistan then will follow this principle. But at the eleventh hour everybody was astonished when Jinnah was proposed as the first Governor General of Pakistan. Hearing this news Mount Batten requested the Congress to reconsider their decision and to give appointment to any Indian as the Governor General. But the Congress remained rigid at their decision and installed Mount Batten as the first Governor General of Indian dominion. On the other hand on 15th August, 1947 Jinnah took oath as the Governor General of Pakistan.⁸³ Liakat Ali Khan became the Prime minister. And on 15th August in the morning after taking oath as the Governor General of India the ministry under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru had taken oath by Mount batten.

So the above mentioned background had paved the way for creating a burning question that means Migration problem.

The most tragic scene of independent India was its partition. In order to solve political problem, the two provinces of Bengal and Punjab were divided on 15th August, 1947. As a result there was a large influx of refugee immigration in Bengal whose wave had touched North Bengal deeply.

A partition based on the distribution of majority community usually led to the existence of minority community both in East Pakistan (Bangladesh) and West Bengal. This minority community had to face a lot of problems. Millions of people especially Hindus were compelled to flee from their fatherland and live like a slave. Maldah, West Dinajpur, Cooch-behar and Jalpaiguri became overpopulated by the advent of refugees. They came to West Bengal for relief and rehabilitation over a long course of time. These minority Hindus were oppressed in Pakistan by the orthodox Muslims.

After the communal riot of Noyakhali the Hindus generally came from East Pakistan to West Bengal. The number of the people was about two lakh in March, 1948. This number gradually increased to 11 lakh on June in that year.⁸⁵

The second phase of leaving the Country of minority Hindus had begun in 1950. In this year the majority Muslims started rape, murder, dacoity, theft and thereby had deprived the Hindus from their proper right. Leonard Mosle has given

a list of the people who became victimized by communal riots sacrificing themselves for freedom. About six lakh had died. One crore forty lakh of people became homeless. One lakh women became raped. Among them many were sold by auction.⁸⁶ These helpless and wounded people fled to West Bengal in large numbers. We come to know from the Census Report of 1951 that the number of refugees in West Bengal had reached at 35lakh even after the completion of Nehru-Liakat Treaty the arrival of refugees had not stopped.

The third phase of coming of refugees in West Bengal had begun in 1960-61. About 10lakh refugees had come during 1961-65. During this period a large number of minority Hindus were murdered with great cruelty. Consequently the refugees came to West Bengal in plenty. When East Pakistan was transformed into Bangladesh, a lot of changes came there. But the coming of Hindus had not stopped to West Bengal. This is still continuing.⁸⁷

Before partition the Muslims started oppression over the Hindus. A phobia was always working into the minds of Hindus.⁸⁸ These Hindus were influential and aristocratic community of East Bengal. They had great contribution in the freedom movement of India. Both the Hindus and Muslims unitedly fought against the British with a view to freeing their mother land.

After gaining freedom the attitude of the Muslims towards the Hindus had totally changed. They disrespected the Hindu women. There was no security of Hindus women there. In spite of this the Hindus had stayed at their homeland. If the state administration had helped them, there was an entente between Pakistan administration and anti Hindu Muslims. So in this condition the Hindus were compelled to go towards unknown path and dark future.

The Pakistan Government had also tried to weak the Hindus economically. The east Bengal Minority community gave a statement by which what type of economic oppression had done upon the Hindus, was clearly depicted.⁸⁹

The Hindu doctor, lawyer and shop keeper were boycotted socially. The businessmen did not get permission for doing business. The peasants could not

cultivate the lands of Zaminders. How is it possible for the Hindus to live in the country?

The Udbastu shop-keeper said to the reporters of the Amrita Bazar patrika⁹⁰—The shop of a Musalman was established beside the shop of each Hindu. Pressure was created upon the customers not to sell anything from the shops of Hindus. The Hindu teachers were insulted by the Muslim students. The mental oppression and lack of economic security had forced the Hindus to leave their homelands, although they were unwanted to the Indian Government.

On 16th August, 1948 Sir Jadunath Sarkar had delivered a lecture at the sommelon of Calcutta University Institute. He had pointed out the cause of the Hindus fleeing from East Bengal. He said that the factors behind them leaving home were the religious oppression, unsympathetic attitude towards the Hindus by the Muslims and patriot administration. He had regarded the coming of Hindus from East Bengal as the greatest and mournful migration in world History.⁹¹

Hiranmay Banerjee has divided the refugees of first phase into three parts.⁹² (I) The richest and most enterprising refugee who did not want Governmental help. They had tried to rehabilitate themselves. (II) One type of refugees who had no wealth but they were energetic. They had solved their problem occupying empty land or house. They worked laboriously forgetting rice. (III) The refugees of third category were very poor. They had no education and ability to earn money. They took shelter at Government camp.

The number of refugees of the camp had reached about 70,000 last year in 1949. Most of them were women and children. After partition when a large number of refugees came to West Bengal, both central and State Governments did not take any effective measure. It can be understood from a statement which Prafulla Ghosh—the then Chief Minister of West Bengal sent to Jawaharlal Nehru—the then Prime Minister of India. He wrote that they (the refugees) would return to their homeland after cooling down the atmosphere.⁹³ But they did not come back to their home land. They had begun to come to West Bengal like flood water.

Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal wrote a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru in order to take necessary steps for their rehabilitation. But Nehru answered that steps should be taken so that the refugees could not come to West Bengal. It is not justifiable. It has become wrong to some Hindu leaders who have come to West Bengal from East Bengal.⁹⁴ We should try to close the process of migration in any way.⁹⁵

In the true sense of the term the refugees came to West Bengal in large numbers and this incident was undoubtedly a great catastrophe. This disaster was hidden into partition on the basis of 'Two Nation'. The refugees did not flee. They were driven by Muslims. The Prime Minister had no power to solve this burning question. It is a fact that Nehru had opened the door for the refugees to come from West Pakistan to save Kashmir. But he had neglected the refugees of East Bengal whole heartedly. He gave financial help for relief and rehabilitation of East Bengal refugees.

Nehru and other Congress leaders promised that they will give shelter to those minority people if they are fallen in danger and come in West Bengal. But all promises had sunk into deep sea when the refugees had begun to come to West Bengal.

The intelligentsias of West Bengal were ashamed to describe the communal riot as an addiction of Hindus.⁹⁶ The adverse condition of uprooted men did not touch their heart.

In the year of 1948, under the enterprise of West Bengal State Government, West Bengal Land Development and planning Act was passed by which reacceptance of land for udbastu rehabilitation became possible.

But in the year of 1950 a cruel oppression started on the Namasudras of Khulna, Barisal and other districts. Consequently, many people came to West Bengal again. Purba Pakistan Government did not take any step to save them from oppression. The flow of refugees in 1950 totally destroyed the administrative structure of West Bengal. It was urgently necessary to arrange food and shelter for these painful men.

In order to solve migration problem the central rehabilitation minister named Mohanlal Saxena had summoned a meeting in Calcutta where representatives of West Bengal, Tripura, Assam, Bihar, Orissa, and celebrity like Meghnadh Saha were present “Rehabilitation would not be given to the refugees. They will take shelter at relief camp temporarily.”He had hoped if the condition is calm, the refugees will come back to their country.⁹⁷

Under the pressure of a large number of refugees the condition of West Bengal was deplorable. The Central Government thought it as a temporary matter. Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal became angry. On the other hand, the refugees know if they can form any colony by force at barren land, the burden of Dr. Roy’s shoulder must be partly decreased. But it must be done unitedly. A Strong Association should be formed against hired gundas of police and land holders. This necessity gave the birth of the United Central Refugee Council (U.C.R.C).⁹⁸

A new epoch had begun in the history of West Bengal. Side by side the age of Sabha—Samiti, procession and protest of refugees came. Most of the members of the U.C.R.C. were C.P.I. So other communist parties became anxious thinking that the C.P.I workers will grip their hands in this institution. Their idea was not out of suspense, because the number of C.P.I members was enormous at the Central Committee. They had followed the principle of mass—line of Mao-je-Dong. It means from the mass and to the mass.⁹⁹ on this principle they had arranged for taking decision and putting it to practice.

Under the leadership of this type of institution the movement of forming forcible occupied colony had spread in West Bengal like conflagration. Its wave had touched North Bengal deeply. The first part of forming this type of colony ended within one year. The Government was not ready for this incident. At the end of the year of 1950 the number of refugees in West Bengal had reached up to 21lakh.¹⁰⁰

The refugees flow had shocked West Bengal like an epidemic. All enterprises of the Government were spent to face this flow. So easily one by one

refugee colonies were formed. The Government used police force to destroy the colonies. But all ended in vain. In the meantime the Government gave a notice to the refugees of forcibly occupied colonies by which it was declared that the people, who had occupied the lands illegally, were to leave from the land. If they did not do so, they will be evicted from the land. But the refugees refused to obey this notice. They knew that the Government had no power to evict them from land.¹⁰¹

Barring the movement of forming forcible occupied colonies and the rise of communism, the defeat of the Congress in the first by-election created danger at the ministry. Nehru spoke the matter of an Interim Government in this respect.¹⁰² There was a political turmoil and danger at the Ministry of West Bengal from June 1949 to January 1950. In these circumstances the Government had no capacity to stop the movement of forming forcibly occupied colonies. A large number of forcibly occupied colonies sprang up in different districts of North Bengal in this respect. They are as follows¹⁰³:

List of Forcibly occupied Refugee Colonies

Jalpaiguri:

Total Number of Colonies - 39

1. Bhakti Nagar Quarters Colony.
2. Harekrishna Quarters Colony.
3. Saratpalli Quarters Colony.
4. Bankim Nagar Quarters Colony.
5. Yaskst Nagar Quarters Colony.
6. Takur Nagar Quarters Colony.
7. Ananda Nagar Quarters Colony.
8. Mayamaya Quarters Colony.
9. Dacca Udbastu Quarters Colony.
10. Dhumdangi Quarters Colony.
11. Surya Sen Quarters Colony.
12. Niranjan Nagar Quarters Colony.
13. Netaji Nagar Quarters Colony.
14. Pakaghat Quarters Colony.
15. Santi Nagar Quarters Colony (1,2)
16. Asoke Nagar Quarters Colony (1, 2)
17. Ajay Ghosh Palli Quarters Colony.
18. Banarghat Adarsha Palli Quarters Colony.
19. Mala Netaji Bastuhara Colony.
20. Ramkrishna Colony.
21. Bagha Jatin Colony.
22. Indira Gandhi Colony.
23. Bhaga Jatin Colony.
24. Rabindra Nagar Colony.
25. Arabinda Quarter Colony.
26. Hamilton (Rabindration).
- 27.

Bidhan Nagar 28. Ananda Nagar. 29. Bholer Dabri Subar Nagar. 30. Rabindra Nagar. 31. Chitta Ranjan. 32. Thora Danga . 33. Purba Nagar thali. 34. Uttar Nagar thali. 35. Chotta Daldali O Gochamari. 36. Suban Colony. 37. Kunja Nagar. 38. Bijay Nagar Quarters Colony. 39. Daceswari Quarters Colony.

Cooch-behar

Total Number of Colonies-26

1. Patal Khoa 2. Rasmari Colony. 3. Putimari Baksir Bose Colony. 4. Bidhan Upanibesh. 5. New Patakura Colony. 6. Indrajit , Nehru Nagar, Chandan Nagar. 7. Shyam Sundar Colony. 8. Khagribari Colony. 9. Garabanga O Chatwalaka Colony. 10. Gandhi Nagar Colony. 11. Priyaganj Colony. 12. Daceswari No. (1) 13. Ashutosh Palli. 14. Netaji Colony. 15. Ashutosh Palli(2) 16. Ramkrishna Palli. 17. Dubai Block Colony. 18. ShyamSundar Colony. 19. Chakohaka Govt. Jaigir Land. 20. Natker Pur Colony. 21. Banisowar Colony. (Baniswar Colony). 22. Sagirpar gharamara. 23. Gopal Nagar Colony. 24. Daribas Colony. 25. Middle class Colony. 26. Kodal Dhoa-2.

Darjeeling

Total Number of Colonies-17

1. Mahatar Quarters Colony. 2. Durgadas Colony. 3. Dabgram Unnayan-1 4. Dabgram Unnayan-2 5. Deshbandhu Para. 6. Debasis Quarters Colony. 7. Das Quarters Colony. 8. Sramik Nagar Quarters. 9. Udayan Unnayan Colony. 10. Bagha Jatin Colony. 11. Subhas Nagar Colony. 12. B.B.D. Colony. 13. Adarsha Nagar Colony. 14. Natun Para. 15. Prantik Palli. 16. Jyoti Nagar (2) 17. Pati Colony.

Maldah

Total Number of Colonies-38

1. Mangalbari Colony. 2. Khaihata Colony. 3. Gandhi Colony. 4. Char Kasimpur Colony. 5. Khanpur Colony. 6. Baglabari Colony. (Ranir Gard) 7. Bilbari Najib Khan Colony. 8. Buraburi Tala Krishna palli Colony. 9. Pashim Shariman

Golapalli Colony. 10. Adi Ma Colony. 11. Uttar Mahima Gard Kanchan Gard Colony. 12. Govinda pur Colony. 13. Duba Khokan Colony. 14. Kadubari Colony. 15. Chandrail Colony. 16. Belbari Colony. 17. Kutub Sahar Golahar Colony. 18. Gosanibag Colony. 19. Kutub Sahar Colony. 20. Dalla Colony. 21. Prati Danga Colony. 22. Agra Colony. 23. Tohai Colony. 24. Harishchandrapur Aranggachhi Colony. 25. Nanda Palli Colony. 26. Pathar Sasuli Colony. 27. Dharndra ebong Jogipathar Colony. 28. Kachiamore Colony. 29. Chaitangachi Madhya Kendua Colony. 30. Bulbulchandi Rice Mill Colony. 31. Baksi Nagar Colony. 32. Joydebpur Colony. 33. Digal Pagal Colony. 34. Baroa danga Colony. 35. Bangatola Colony. 36. Phuldanga Colony. 37. Chinidanga Colony. 38. Kendua Colony.

West Dinajpur

Total Number of Colonies- 52

1. Pirpukur Colony. 2. High road Kalitala Colony. 3. Netaji Palli Colony. 4. Shaki Nagar Colony. 5. Shilpi Nagar Colony. 6. Mali para Colony. 7. Ma Manasha Colony. 8.1 No. Air port Colony.(paschim) 9. Subhas Colony. 10. Deshbandhu Colony. 11. Santoshi Ma Colony. 12. Karbala Colony. 13. Turbagha Colony. 14. Drivers Colony. 15. Parpatiram Halder Colony. 16. A.K. Gopalan Colony. 17. Pabna Colony. 18. Chhinamasta palli Colony. 19. Haptia Gacch Udbastu Colony. 20. Dhiagadh Colony. 21. Jayaguri Jayapura Udbastu Colony. 22. Hulanu gacchi Udbastu Colony. 23. Mangacchi Udbastu Colony. 24. Chaksubid Harmen Colony. 25. Sanias Colony. 26. Khadimpur Maldar Para Vest Colony. 27. Aatri Colony. 28. Bhatpara Colony. 29. Dangi Patharghata Colony. 30. Dangi Dakshin Colony. 31. Kamal pur Netaji Colony. 32. Aatear Colony. 33. Namadanga Colony. 34. Durgapur Colony. 35. Padma pukur Colony. 36. Jorapani Udbastu Colony. 37. Subandhi gacchi Udbastu Colony. 38. Ratugacchi Udbastu Colony. 39. Tinmile road Udbastu Colony. 40. Tinmile road rail station Udbastu Colony. 41. Adragari (Dakshin) Udbastu Colony. 42. Congress Colony.(Jyoti Nagar-2) 43. Congress Colony. 44. Santragacchi Niranjani Palli Udbastu Colony. 45. Aariagaon Narayan Udbastu Colony. 46. Ananta Nagar Milan Palli Udbastu Colony. 47. Niranjani

Udbastu Colony. 48. Pramod Nagar Udbastu Nagar . 49. Dakshin Kasba Rabindra Udbastu Colony. 50. Harichand Udbastu Colony. 51. Shakti Nagar Colony. 52. Shilpi Nagar Colony.

It is interesting to note that after the Bolshevik Revolution the Proletariats had occupied the places of richmen. Similarly, the victims of independence (proletariats) wanted to stay in West Bengal occupying land by force.

The West Bengal Government arranged Relief camps for these refugees. Some political parties showed sympathy to them and there by wanted to use them as vote bank. Some wanted to send them back to East Bengal through understanding. Some wanted to send them to Orissa and Andaman. The condition of the refugees at that time was like a floating shrub. They were compelled to go from one place to another like the beasts of a zoo. They were running in search of dwelling houses. From 1946 to 1955 these refugees came to West Bengal passing many water courses. Still today this infiltration is continuing at secret routes avoiding passport system.¹⁰⁴ Again I will conclude mentioning the writing of Sri Prafulla Kumar Chakraborty of this chapter. Sri Chakraborty in his book 'The Marginal men' writes, 'The History of the Migration of the Hindus from East Pakistan after partition is one of the most tragic episodes of contemporary history. It is the story of the uprooting of a virile population deeply attached to their beautiful land. It started before partition with the Noakhali riots of 1946 and continues down to this day'.

References

1. North Bengal University Review (Vol-6) No.-1 June 1985.
2. Peterson William, A General Typology of Migration Vol-23, 1958, p-256.
3. Jacques Verhant, Helen L. Safa, Brain M. Dutait, Migration and Development Introduction, The Hague 1975, p-1.
4. Smith T. H, fundamental of Population Study, 1960, p-420.
5. Eisenstadt S. N. The absorption of immigrants—London 1954, p-1.
6. Weinberg A.A.-Migration and Belonging. A study of Mental Health and Personal Adjustment in Israel, 1961, p-5
7. Mehta B. S, Regional Population Growth – A case study of Rajasthan, Research Book, 1978.
8. Encyclopedia Britannica, A New Survey of Universal Knowledge, Vol-15.
9. Jacques Verdant-The Refugee in the post World War—London 1953, p-5.
10. Bandhopadhyay Hiranmay-Udbastu, p-156-57.
11. Islam Dr. Najrul—Banglay Hindu-Muslim Samparka, p-30.
12. Shasmal Bimalananda—Bharat Ki karne Bhag Halo, p-15.
13. Bharate Vivekananda – Udbodhon karyalay,1367,p-327-28.
14. Khandkar Fajale Rabbi-‘Banglar Musalman', p-32.
15. Thakur Rabindra Nath- Gitanjalir Bharat Tirtha.
16. Islam Dr, Najrul op. cit., p-47.
17. Rahim M. A. Banglar Musalmander Itihas, p-4-5 Jacca 1989.
18. Paul J. J. Jinnah and the Creation of Pakistan, p-2.
19. Bandhopadhyay Sailesh Kumar –Jinnah, Pakistan/Natun Bhabna, p-162.
20. Sarkar Sumit-The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-1908, p-18.
21. Islam Dr. Najrul—Bengali Hindu –Musalman Samparka p-117. Bhattarcharya Dr.Narendra Nath., p-79.
22. Shasmal Bimalananda-op.cit., p-24.
23. Two Remarks of Rabindra Nath Tagore in his two essays named ‘Lokahita’ and ‘Badhi O Pratikar’.
24. A Case for India- (1930), p-113.

25. Nevinson H. w-The new Spirit in India, pp-192-193,202.
26. Macdonald R.-Awakening of India, p-176.
27. Bhattacharya Dr Narendra Nath-Bharater Swadhinata Sangramer Itihas., p-79.
28. At that time the publication of Sandhya Bandemataram, Yugantar was restricted under the Newspaper Act of 1908.Ibid., p-87.
29. Ibid, p-84.
30. Ibid, p-87.
31. Besant A: India Bond or Free, p-162-63.
32. Nair Sankaran—Gandhi &Anarchy, p-38.
33. Prasad Ishwari-Modern India, p408.
34. Bhattacharya Dr. Narendra Nath –op.cit., p-166.
35. Ibid, p-170.
36. Ibid, p-209.
37. Ibid, p-213.
38. Ibid, p-214.
39. Ibid, p-215.
40. Coupland R.—Constitutional Problem in India (1945)-II, p-181.
41. Abul Kalam Azad wrote in his book –In this context the imprudent comment of Nehru created unkind reaction among Muslim community.
42. Bhattacharya Dr. Narendra Nath –op.cit, p-216.
43. Bandhopadhyay Sailesh Kumar, p -106.
44. Bhattacharya Dr. Narendra Nath –op.cit., p-223.
45. Bandhopadhyay Sailesh Kumar, p -169-170.
46. Ibid.
47. Bhattacharya Dr. Narendra Nath –op.cit., p-223.
48. Bandhopadhyay Sailesh Kumar, p 169-170.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. Sen. S-The Birth of Pakistan p-140 and Bhattacharya Narendra Nath –op.cit., p-229-230.

52. Ibid.
53. Bandhopadhyay Sailesh Kumar, p 168-169.
54. Ibid.
55. Pirjada—The Pakistan Resolution and the History of Lahore Session.
56. Bandhopadhyay Sailesh Kumar-op cit., p-10.
57. Jinnah became the member of the Muslim League on 10.10.1913.
58. Bandhopadhyay Sailesh Kumar-op cit., p-10.
59. Ibid. p-25, 64,106,129,134,152,211,237-239.
60. Hasan Saiyad Matluul – Muhammad Ali Jinnah, p-64.
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid.
63. Pirjada- op. cit., p-17-18.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Azad- A. K.-India wins freedom., p-195.
67. Bhattacharya Narendra Nath –op.cit., p-270
68. Ibid.
69. Bharater Swadhinata Sangramer Itihas- op. cit., p-276.
70. Azad, A. K –op cit., p-198.
71. Ibid., p-197-198.
72. Ibid., p-182-186.
73. Shasmal Bimalananda-op.cit-p-6.
74. Azad, A. K –op cit, p-92.
75. Mujahid Al Sharif: Ideological Orientation of Pakistan, p-637.
76. Menon V.P –The Transfer of Power in India vol-10, p-896.
77. Ibid, p 282-83.
78. Johnson Allan Cambell: Mission with Mount Batten p-110.
79. Stanleyul part; Jinnah, p-336.
80. Bandhopadhyay Sailesh Kumar-op cit. Introduction.
81. Kalins Larry O Lapiyer Dominic _ Mountbatten & partition of India, p-42.
82. Hadson-The Great Divide, p-37.

83. Mosle Leonard: The last days of British Raj, p-247.
84. Ibid.
85. Azad A.K: India wins freedom, p 206-207.
86. Ibid., p-208.
87. Mosle op, cit., p-244-246.
88. Azad, A. K Ibid., p-228.
89. Amrita Bazar Patrika-8th October,1948.
90. Ibid.
91. Bandopadhyay Hiranmoy Udbastu, p-31.
92. Ibid,
93. Chakraborty Saroj: with Dr. B.C. Roy and other Chief Ministers Vol-1 p-107.
94. Ibid,
95. Ibid,
96. Franda Marcus-Radical politics in West Bengal, p-38.
97. Bandapadhyay Hiranmay op.cit, p-59.
98. Chakraborty Prafulla Kumar prantik Manab, p-32.
99. Ibid
100. Ibid
101. Census 1951
102. Singha Anil—Jabardakhar Udbastu Upanibhes, p-4.
103. Chakraborty prafulla kumar op.cit, pp-202-204.
104. Titir- Subject Deshbhagh –a literary journal-7th Barsha- Pratham Sankha –
Cooch-behar, p-109.

CHAPTER - VII

The Social Movements: Socio – Political Upsurge of the Minor Ethnic Communities

The social feature of North Bengal is apart from the rest of Bengal. It generally consists of some Hindu sub-castes and minor ethnic communities. The majority of people of North Bengal are Rajbanshis. It is really interesting to note that the people of various castes, being an integral part of Bengal society, did not accept the 'varna' system. They were deprived of their social position. They had no dignity like the other castes. These deprived social groups had tried to promote their condition in the society. On the eve of the 20th century different social groups of North Bengal engaged themselves in a number of socio-political movements. The Rajbanshis were the fore-fathers with regard to this movement in North Bengal. Afterwards, several movements like Santal movement of Maldah district (1924-32), movement of Rabhas for raising the position of Hinduism, Chain movement in Maldah and also the movement of TASO etc. took place.

Santals

The term Santal has originated from Sanskrit word–Simantapal. It means the protector of border. This word was known as simantapaul in medieval age and later it has transformed into Santal.

Among the Non- Muslim agriculturists, the name of Santal comes at first. They are divided into four sections- Christian, Hindu, Khedroar and Santal.

The Santals of the Barind tract in eastern Malda district were engaged themselves in a rebellion between 1924 and 1932. In 1924 an anti-landlord tenant agitation had spread in Maldah. A large number of Santals were involved in it. The most important feature of this upsurge was that 'leaders of the Swaraj movement supported the tenants.¹The leader of this movement was Jitu Chotka or Jitu Santal. He was the inhabitant of Kochakandar village land and very much closed to the

Swarajists. The Swarajists had sent them to the Faridpur Congress to have instructions about the art of popular agitation.² The Swarajists were very much interested in taking untouchables and aboriginals into the Hindu fold through Shuddhi and social reform. Kashishwar Chakraborty, one of the Swarajists was that type of person. He was a pleader of the neighbouring district, Dinajpur. He had begun to travel Maldah from 1925 and made his disciples Jitu and Arjun Santal who spread his motto at Habibpur, Bamongola and Gajole thanas in the Barind. Kashishwar Chakraborty was named as Sanyasi-baba. He and his disciple Jitu had formed a 'Sanyasidal'. They had defied police orders, performed Kalipuja and thereby proclaimed its new Hindu status.³

By 1926, Jitu had begun to work as a supreme leader of a wide spread protest movement converting the Santals into Hindus. They gave up their tribal identity by renouncing the use of pigs and fowls. It was an action in order to raise them to the status of the intermediate castes of 'Jal-Chal' Hindus, from whom the higher castes would take a drink of water without fear of Pollution. The Santals had acknowledged Jitu as their sovereign authority, abided by his justice and paid one Kula (about five seers) of Paddy to him instead of paying rent to the Zaminders. It was anticipated that this not only would bring an end of their tribal identity, but also the adhiars or Share-cropper status. 'Those who cultivate in adhi from another will get the land', it was declared.

There was a rumour all over the Barind area that 'Jitu's Raj' was to be come in early spring that year. Jitu Said that he would go to the 'Gar' at Pandua, that all would go with him there and that from there the 'Larai' would begin, which is to drive out Muhammadans and other who do not join them⁴.

Jitu gave an instruction to the Santal adhibasi in 1928 to take the bhadhoi crop from the land tracts of Gazole – Bamongola and Habibpur thana area. A promise was given by them that they will come now under the coming settlement records as tenants and not as adhiars. Several cases of paddy looting were followed there and about 150 armed santals looted the whole crop from a six-bigha plot. The district magistrate and the superintendent had arrested Jitu after a

number⁵ of clashes. All the santals who were arrested, were 'reformed Hindu'. This fact created stimulation among the middle class Hindus of Maldah Town.⁶

Jitu was engaged in his last larai on 3rd December, 1932. In that year, the Zamindar of Kotwali of Malda District demanded 2/3 crops from Santal Bargadars. The Mahajans of the village availed themselves of the opportunity. The Bargadars had to take credit from these Mahajans as they could not produce crops at their own cost. The Mahajans had also augmented the rate of interests. The Santal Krishaks were reluctant to give taxes at high rate. So they were uprooted from the land and the land was distributed among new Bargadars. The Santal Krishaks began to unite themselves. They gathered at Bansihari village of Dinajpur and took a pledge to start larai against Zamindari oppression of Kotawali under the leadership of Jitu.⁷

In the meantime a tiny incident took place. The Santals gathered to perform Kalipuja near Adina mosque. But the District Magistrate of the then period gave order to stop the puja without any cause. But violating this order the Santals had performed Kalipuja. As a result, Jitu's assistant –Arjun Santal was arrested. An order for arresting Jitu was also declared. This event made the Santals impatient. They, under the leadership of Jitu and Saghu, looted the house and gola of paddy of Kotawali Zamindar. They also attacked the property of rural Mahajans. The Santal revolt had spread in wide areas belonging to a greater part of Dinajpur and Maldah.⁸

A large band of Santals who were recently converted to Hindusim, had gone to the historic city of Pandua. They had captured the ruins of the Adina Mosque and transformed the Mosque into a temple with a view to conducting there a debased form of 'Hindu worship'. Jitu calling himself Gandhi declared the end of British Raj and from the mosque he announced his own government.⁹

A fierce battle took place between his men and a large number of armed police. The police opened fire after the Santals. They had refused to come out. Jitu himself including three santals were shot dead. On the other hand a constable was murdered by a poisoned arrow.¹⁰ with the death of their leader, the revolt came to

an end in the Barind and this event also made Jitu into something of a district legend. The calendar of Events of Local Importance mentioned 'the murder of Jitu Santal at Adina' as an important land mark for the year, 1932.¹¹

After the tribal protest movement, the authorities had appointed a special officer for Barind in June 1933 to mitigate conditions. In this respect an enquiry, in the year of 1945-46 was done. According to this enquiry, the Santals in the Habibpur, Bamongola and Gazole area had remained share croppers and their livelihood did not rise above the maximum subsistence level.¹²

At the initial stage of their movement Jitu relied very much upon religion so that the illiterate and ignorant lower caste people could only be aware of the language of religion. Jitu perhaps understood it fully if the Santals could give up their old religious faiths and social customs, and establish a religion and society of their own, they would be able to be victorious over their rival known as Dikhu. It would subsequently help them to oust Dikhu and establish their authority. But, in the later period, the impact of religion on Jitu's movement became weak.¹³

Jitu himself had no land. The hostility had grown when the headman complained against his activities¹⁴ indicating that he was still called as a usurper. He depended upon the rumours that spread regarding his struggle. His charisma was very much connected with Gandhi and the National Movement. His campaign was continued against the existence of the British Government. In this respect there was no difference between the Santal Movement and other anti-colonial and tribal movements that followed against the British Government. Thus it was declared "The rail will stop and our bows and arrows will carry three kos and the guns of the English will not fire."¹⁵ In other word the Santals had believed that all the strong weapons of the English (the trains and the guns) would be powerless.

In 1928, Jitu paved the path of movement which aimed at termination of the payment of tax. The zaminders of the Barind area had augmented the rate of tax day in and day out. Though some sporadic attempts were made against the high rate of taxation, Jitu for the first time, made a united effort against it and this anti-taxation movement gave birth to a resistance of upsurge among the Santals.

The Santals movement under its mythological leader-Jitu Santal was an epoch making event in the history of Bengal. On the one hand, the movement had tried to save the poor peasants from the bondage of feudal lords¹⁶ which ultimately took the shape of anti-British movement. On the other hand, the 1926 and 1932 phases of the movement, seemed, a refusal of the Santal identity in an endeavor to lift up their status through unification with the Hindu society that had always exploited them.¹⁷

Jitu's struggle also ended in a battle symbolically which reminds us of the struggle of Birsa Munda.¹⁸ Denying the political training that had been given to them by external leaders, denying even the aims of his own struggle, the Santals thus took revenge upon his indigenous code of belief. His awareness of national politics--is that of Hindu communalism or that of the Gandhian Congress was eventually organized by this code. The force of the Gandhian movement lay in a nutshell. For many subaltern groups, its aims and methods were broad and accommodating enough to fit in with their own particular modes of struggle. 'Ramrajya' was for them a statefull of any number of millennium possibilities and Gandhi's messianic role could be made to confirm to a tradition of grass roots leadership with similar functions and aims, so that the use of the spinning wheel or the manufacture of salt as means of advancing the nationalist cause could be seen as ritual or symbolic acts necessary for world transformation. Thus the broader National Movement had supplied suitable context in which many tribal communities like the Santals could continue their larai in the way of their own culture in order to achieve their own political ends.¹⁹

Chhatrishia Movement (1922-23)

A non-violent movement was started in some tracts of North Bengal. The movement had spread comprehensively in the district of Dinajpur under the leadership of local congress leaders. The movement was known as the 'Chhatrishia Movement'. The aim of this movement was to agitate against the landlords' oppression.²⁰ At Balurghat, the leadership was given to Sri Suresh Chandra Bagchi, Sureshranjan Chottopadhyay and Amiruddin Chowdhury. They were all Congress leaders of the area.

The movement took serious step to interior villages like Tapan, Agradugan, Moradanga etc. The eminent Congress leaders of this movement were Bhagabati of Tapan, Latu Mahammad of Agradugun, Pitambar Mandal of Tepukhuria, Fulchand Mandal of Moradanga etc. The movement had a secular character. The leaders wanted to transform the movement into a mass movement in the area with the help of peasants who established a village committee with a view to protecting the interest of the farmers. The village committees took the role of an arbitrator in land disputes and made social boycott of persons who opposed the verdict.²¹

The Chhatrishia movement was an important phase in the history of Dinajpur. It started in the year 1922-23 and was continued up to the passing of Bengal Tenancy Amendment Act.

The name 'Chhatrishia' originated from the word 'Chhatrishia' (thirty six). About thirty six traditional castes of Bengal were involved in this movement.²²

Rabha

Before the birth of Jesus Christ one type of tribe came through Tibbat and Burma from China. They were called Rabha. The Rabhas live not only in North Bengal, but also in Assam, Garo hill and Meghalaya. They are a Mongolian race and are divided into two types – Regional and Ethnic. Particularly they are the inhabitants of Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar. From this point of view they are deeply influenced by Rajbanshi-culture. Like them, the Rabhas tried their best to improve their social position in many ways.

The social reform movement of Rabhas had begun in two stages, the movement of the first stage started in 1930. The background of the movement of 1930 was that the Rabha people were excluded from the Harisabha of Bharoa village. It was located at Tufanganj Sub-division of Coochbehar. The Rabhas did not get permission to enter into the Harisabha. It created agitation among the Rabhas. Bhabendra Narayan Chowdhury – a hermit had remarked that the Rabhas were the Hindus and they had right to perform all Hindu divine rites. In 1934 he had emphasized on the purification of the Rabhas.²³

The Rabhas were much impressed by the Kshatriyaisation of the Rajbanshis during the early forties of the 20th century and also started an agitation for improving their position 'to get equal social rank as that of the Hindu caste like the Rajbanshis. "To obtain the higher social position they would leave grazing of pig and fowl willingly. They would also leave their Rabha title and use 'Das, it was also determined.

An Assembly of the Rabhas was held at the campus of Bharoa primary school for their purification. More than one hundred Rabhas had participated there. Some Rajbanshis were also present. The Rabhas abstained themselves from grazing of pigs and fowls. It had an adverse impact on the economic status of the Rajbanshis. They had requested the Rabhas not to abstain from grazing of pigs and fowls. They also advised the Rabhas to go back to their previous religion and they did the same within two years.²⁴

The Rabhas had to face several problems after elevating themselves to the rank of the Hindus. Some constructive Rabha people of Barasalbari and Kamakshaguri had refused to accept the newly converted-Hindu Rabha in their society. The Rajbanshis also did not treat them as Hindus. Caste Hindus also refused to drink water from the Rabhas. So the Rabhas again introduced their rituals and customs in their society and their movement came to an end for that time.

In 1940, the second phase of their movement had begun. Sri Dhaneswar Bhattacharya –a teacher of Bhatibari village of Alipurduar took an ardent attempt to convert them into Hinduism. At the same time the Christian Missionaries tried whole –heartedly to convert the Rabhas to Christianity. In order to protect them from the hand of Christian missionaries Sri Bhattacharya met the then Pandit Madan Kumar Smritiratna of the Coochbehar Raj family. He suggested that the Rabhas might be regarded as Hindus but they had to embrace Hinduism for expiation. The Rabhas had accepted his opinion. Sri Bhattacharya had performed 'Jojna' in different areas for the purification of the Rabhas. A large number of Rabhas of Barasalbari of Tufangunj Sub-division of Coochbehar and also from Madhyamansi, Daldali, Hemaguri regions of Alipurduar thana of Jalpaiguri

district became Hindu after expiation. The people who were the priests of this movement were German Rabha, Bholanath Rabha, Barburam Rabha, Hanuman Rabha etc. With a view to performing socio-religious rites of the Rabhas Sri Bhattacharya also invited two Brahmins named Hridinath Deb Sharma and Mohit Kumar Dev Sharma and two barbers called Ghanashyam Shil and Nidhiram Shil from Assam. In 1957, the Rajbanshis also encouraged the Rabhas to become Kshatriya and assured them treating as Kshatriya.

The Rabha had founded an organization named 'Rabha Hajong Dabi Samity' which gave importance on the Autonomous Government and they had obtained it from the Assam Government in the year of 1995. But it failed to fulfil their hopes and aspirations. Till now they are trying a preparation to satisfy their long cherished expectations.²⁵

Chain

There is no historical evidence or any dependable information about the earlier history of Chain caste. Only it is known from District Gazetteers that there was the existence of this caste at the Santal Pargana of Bihar, Rajshahi of Bangladesh and Maldah, Murshidabad districts of West Bengal. But it can not be anticipated what was the origin of this caste and where their original home was.

According to Dr.P. Mitra's census report, "Another interesting Mandal caste is the chain Mandal who are found in the west of the Maldah district. Their most remarkable peculiarity is that they will never touch a chain. (This had, of course no connection with the name of the caste). No one could say what was the origin of this custom, but it probably goes back to pristine days .The chain Mandal, would not even draw water from a well if a chain is attached to the bucket."²⁶

According to this report, it is known about their existence and number except their origin. At present the number of this type of people in Malda and Murshidabad is above lakhs.²⁷

The chain was the victim of social injustice. Their status was low and they had been neglected year after year. In course of time they became conscious of

their social backwardness and wanted to develop their social status .In order to secure their objective the Chain community of Maldah under the leadership of Shri Radhikanath Das organized a Pak-Indian Chain–Vaishya Conference at Khasmahal village of Panchanandapur in Maldah. The conference was commenced in the year of 1942.²⁸

Many delegates of Chain caste from different districts of Bihar, Murshidabad, Rajshahi and Jashahor etc. had participated in this conference. An important discussion was continued about the origin of the Chain caste at this conference. According to their matrimonial rules, some persons said that the Chain caste was Kshatriya and another told that the main occupation of the Chain caste was agriculture-based trade. So they were Vaishya. There was no solution of this question at the Conference. It can be anticipated that they had raised their agreement in order to ameliorate their position from Sudra stage.²⁹

‘Chain Samaj Unnayan Samity’ was founded with a view to improving their social economic and cultural life. The samity started the movement in this respect. But the wave of the movement only had Murshidabad district although there was no demand of them to include them into the list of Scheduled Caste. No leader of Maldah participated in the movement which had started in 1960. The Samiti was active in the year of 1970-71. From 1980, the Chain Samaj Unnayan Samity was again registered under the leadership of Sri Tulsi Charan Mandal and the movement including the Chain caste to the list of Scheduled Caste gathered momentum. It is interesting to note that this movement widely spread in Maldah district.³⁰

T A S O

The undivided Dinajpur district was under Rajshahi Commissioner of the province of East Bengal and Assam before the partition. Its area was 3,946 square miles and the population of this district according to the Census Report of 1911 was 1,68,7,863. Dinajpur the chief town was the head quarter of this district. The other two Sub-divisions of this district were Balurghat and Thakurgaon. When in 1947 Bengal was divided, Dinajpur district was also divided. Its western portion

came under west Bengal. A new district was established called West Dinajpur Balurghat was known as its head quarter. Owing to the partition, North Bengal was delinked with South Bengal because there was no direct road and railway connection between North Bengal and South Bengal.³¹

At that time, Dr. B.C. Roy, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal applied to the State Reorganization Commission that the frontiers of the Bengal should be extended including some parts of Bihar and Assam. Bihar preferred the creation of Uttar khand including five districts of North Bengal.³² It is interesting to note that Uttar khand Dal was established on 5th July, 1969. Uttar khand Dal was eager to demand a separate state annexing Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, West Dinajpur and Maldah.³³ Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy demanded that the total population of Cooch-behar, Jalpaiguri, and Darjeeling district was twenty lakhs in number, Out of twenty lakhs the number of Nepali people was 1.35 lakh and 61% people spoke in Bengali language . Justice Fazal Ali –the chairman of the commission along with Dr. Hridya Nath Kunjuru and K.M. Pannikar-other two members of the commission ignored the claim of Bihar and took useful parts of area Purnea district for creating communication by road-link from North Bengal to South Bengal.³⁴

According to the recommendation of the commission the present Islampur Sub-division was transferred from Purnea to West Bengal on 01.01.1956 and at first this transferred area was included with Darjeeling district.³⁵ But on 02.11.56 this area was assimilated with West Dinajpur.³⁶ The inclusion of Islampur area with Darjeeling district may irritate the hill people. Besides this, the district head-quarter's distance was not close to Islampur. Thinking all these, the commission wanted to merge Islampur area with West Dinajpur. It was also under the kind consideration of the commission that both the people of the transferred area and the people of West Dinajpur will enjoy linguistic and cultural homogeneity. Three years later Northern part of the Mahananda River was transferred to Darjeeling district.³⁷ Due to the constant pressure of the tea garden owners this notification was probably made. The tea-garden owners of Bidhan Nagar got a chance of using

Darjeeling tea label due to this chance.³⁸The following areas were transferred from Purnea district to West Bengal.³⁹

Revenue Thanas	Name of the Police station.	No. of village.	Areas in square miles	Population.
Islampur	Thakurgaon	12	58	14,359
	Chopra	129	158	52,999
	Islampur	123	139	59,652
Kishanganj	Kishanganj	285	180	66,810
	Goal Pokhor	95	73	36,028
Gopalpur	Karandighi	269	151	47,492
Total		913	959	2,77,288

The inclusion of Islampur Sub-division had extended the area of the newly founded West Dinajpur. The extended area was 2,052 square miles. According to the Census Report of 1961 the population of the district was 1,323,797.⁴⁰ Although the Bihar Government demanded that 906 villages had been transferred to West Bengal originally in 1961.⁴¹

The transfer of Islampur area from Purnea had adverse effect. After independence, the State Reorganization Committee visited at first to the Purnea district and the people of Purnea did not take Committee's decision of transferring some parts of Purnea to West Bengal easily.⁴² The business community of Purnea and Kishanganj strongly opposed the matter of transferring Islampur to Bengal because they did not want to lose the Islampur Marketing treatment and other affairs. The matter of transfer was also vehemently opposed by Bar Council of Kishanganj and Purnea courts. The people of Islampur Sub-division had to depend very much for all sorts of legal affairs. Above all, Purnea, the district Headquarter was closer than Balurghat—the district Head quarter of West Dinajpur district. The educationally advanced section of people of Islampur was against the merger of Islampur Sub-division with West Bengal. They thought that they would be exploited by the Bengal intelligentsia in every sphere of life. More than one lakh people strongly opposed and gave demonstration to the State Organization Commission.⁴³ Under the leadership of Sri Swadesh Sen and Sri Panchkari

Mandal only a few Bengali people claimed for the inclusion of Islampur with West Bengal, but the anti-transfer agitators prevented Sri Sen from appearing before the State Reorganization Commission.⁴⁴

At last Islampur was merged with West Bengal despite the opposition of a large number of people. But it created social tension. The implementation of West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955 in the transferred areas caused a major problem. All documents regarding lands of the transferred area has not yet reached the West Dinajpur Land Reforms Office. Consequently, the land survey which was done by the Sub-divisional land reforms office in 1964 remained full of defects. So a major problem was created to introduce land reforms in Islampur Sub-division. The then Bihar Government had distributed nine acres of land to many people belonging tribal and backward communities in order to reclaim waste land under the section 4, of Bihar waste land reclamation Act, 1951. Later the Bihar Government had recorded the lands of those beneficiaries.

On the other hand, the West Bengal Government wanted to vest lands and collect patta on one acre of land to each of those land owners without abolishing Bihar waste land Reclamation Act officially. Kutai Sing—a man of Gunabari mouza under Islampur police station had requested earnestly the High Court against the vesting orders. The High Court restricted the Government from vesting that lands.⁴⁵ On the other side, left-peasant organizations claimed for vesting those lands when the West Bengal Government vested the land of intermediary ryots, the problem was created. Owing to these problems Panjipara B. L.&L.R.O office had to adjourn the operation Barga.⁴⁶

Most of the cultivable lands of the refugees of SriKrishnapur Colony had come with Bihar after demarcation of the boundary between Bihar and Bengal. The Bihar Government allotted those lands to the tribals of Bihar after transfer of Islampur. Consequently, a tension arose between the tribal and the refugees of Sri Krishnapur colony. When the matter was raised in the parliament, the Home Department of Bihar investigated the issue and said that those areas of land had already been returned to 580 refugee families, but the original fact was that no refugee families of Sri Krishnapur colony had yet received any land.⁴⁷

During the period of Bangladesh Independence movement a large number of Hindus from East Bengal migrated to Islampur Sub-division. They had possessed by force not only the vested lands but also the retained lands of the jotegers. In this context an enquiry commission was formed to investigate the matter. After a long investigation the commission suggested that the migrants had illegally occupied only 25% to 30% retained land of the Jotegers. The commission also suggested that the Jotegers should be compensated sufficiently. There was about 600 acres of such land in Gaisal colony under Islampur thana. Consequently there was no possibility of the government either to give allotment of pattas or to collect rent from the Jotegers, because most of the Jotegers were Muslims and land disputes turned into communal violence.⁴⁸

Taking advantage of this chaotic condition in land scenario a section of wealthy persons had occupied agricultural, tribal and vested land for the tea-planting purpose. Thus about 2005 tea- gardens out of which only 449 tea-gardens had “no objection certificate” 24367.92 hectares of vest lands and 795.13 hectares of tribal land came under the occupation of the tea-planters.⁴⁹ Even the Teesta Project also came under the grip of the Tea-planters. In this context it can be noted that most of the land of the Jotegers had been sold by the tea-planters in the real sense of the term. The tribal and other backward communities possessed these plots land.⁵⁰As a result a large number of tribal people were evicted, which had also created socio-economic problem.

According to the Census of 1961 there were maximum numbers of Urdu-speaking people in Islampur sub-division. They were majority in Blocks Goal-Pokhor, Islampur and Chopra. Urdu is the second language in Bihar. But in Bengal Urdu was not regarded as official language. So the Urdu speaking students of this sub-division had to face a host of problems in Higher education and other side.⁵¹ In this connection it is interesting to note that Urdu–Hindi Bhasa Community is claiming for declaration of Urdu as second language for Islampur Sub-division.⁵² If it is compared to other parts of present Uttar Dinajpur district, it can be said that the rate of literacy of Islampur is very poor. The literacy rate of Islampur Sub-division is only 38.5%. On the other hand, this rate is 58% in Raiganj Sub-

division. In Goal-pokhar this percentage among women is only 19.8%, which is the poorest percentage in Uttar Dinajpur district.⁵³

Under this atmosphere Transferred Area Suryapur Organization was formed. Its president was Dr. Chitta Ranjan Sinha and Secretary was Golam Hamid. About 1,300 members belong to Taso. Among them 88% are Muslims, 10% Rajbanshis and 2% of backward communities. Taso's main aim is to put in practice the recommendations of the State Reorganization Commission.⁵⁴ During the period of transfer the State Reorganization Commission had suggested that the Government of West Bengal should maintain the linguistic and cultural homogeneity of the transferred area. Side by side, the Government should also set-aside further rehabilitation of the migrants from East Bengal in the transferred area.⁵⁵

In order to keep linguistic and cultural homogeneity of the transferred area TASSO is claiming that Islampur should be announced as a separate district and the total Sub-division should be taken under one parliamentary constituency. Formation of Islampur parliamentary Constituency will co-operate fully to state the problems of transferred area in the parliament and at the same time M.P fund could be properly used for the welfare of Islampur Sub-division.⁵⁶

In the educational view point TASSO is demanding for the implementation of local Kamata, Urdu and Hindi languages at the primary level. State Reorganization Commission has also suggested that the mother language should be the medium of instruction at the lower primary level.⁵⁷ TASSO is also demanding that every school should have one Hindi and one Urdu teacher in this Islampur Sub-division. TASSO also claims that all vested and tribal lands should be recovered by the Government which was illegally occupied by the tea-planters. But this does not mean that TASSO is against the establishment of Tea-gardens. Originally, objection to the establishment of tea gardens was made by the outsiders. TASSO is not in favour of the implementation of West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955 for fulfilling the interests of the local Joteders and intermediary ryots.⁵⁸

Taso's main activity is based on two points mainly. Firstly it is demanding O.B.C Certificate for all Nasya Sheik and Shersabadi Musalmans of Islampur Sub-division. Secondly, total Islampur Sub-division is about 22 kilometers away from the Bangladesh border. The district and Sub-divisional administration had adjourned the distribution of new Ration Cards for reasons well-known to them. But, owing to constant pressure and agitation of TASO the administration had taken an endeavor to give new Ration Cards to legal Indian citizens. These two activities have strengthened the mass base of TASO. It had made its relation deeply with UTJAS UTTAR BANGA YATTA SHASHAN MANCHA, SAMAJBADI JANA PARISHAD, C.P.I.M.L and JHARKHAND SANGARSHA SAMITY. TASO is also demanding an autonomous council for the development of North Bengal.⁵⁹

TASO's mass base is situated only in Goal pokhar-1, Islampur and Chopra Blocks, where the number of Urdu-speaking people is comparatively high. TASO is also taking part in general election to propagate its demand among the people. TASO's movement has been successful in obtaining O.B.C certificate for the NASYA Muslims and issuing of Ration Cards among the genuine Indian citizens, which have extended its mass base. It's another achievement is the introduction of Urdu Honours in Islampur College. TASO is also claiming for supplying Urdu text books in the non-formal schools. Simultaneously, TASO is acting as a link between the other Sub-regional movements of North Bengal and the Sons of the Soil of Islampur.⁶⁰

References

1. J.C. Sengupta (ed). West Bengal District Gazetteers-Maldah , p-62
2. Govt. of West Bengal (here after GOB), poll conf. FN 622(1-2)1926; Wood to Jarvin, 18 Dec 1926.
3. Ibid, enclosure 1, Report of Maldah, S.P.26 Dec, 1926.
4. Ranjit Guha Sub- altern Studies (vol-4), p-137.
5. Govt. of India (here after GOI) Home Poll 1-2 /1928.Fortnighly Reports, second half of September 1928.
6. Amrita Bazar Patrika , 24th July 1928.
7. Sidhartha Guha Roy –Malda, p-62.
8. Ibid, p-63.
9. The Statesman, 16 December 1932.
10. Ibid.
11. Calendar of Events of Local Importance used in helping the Respondent Determine Age by 1961 Census in Malda, in Paul Greenough, Political Crisis and the death of Charismatic leader in Twentieth Century Bengal, 2nd Draft for SAFE-III Conference, December 1982.
12. Carter. M.C. –Final Report on the survey and settlement operation in District of Maldah 1928-35, pp 84-85.
13. Cited in Subaltern Study, p-149.
14. Recorded in GOB, Poll conf. FN 622(82) 1926.
15. GOB, Poll conf. FN 629(1-3) 1926.
16. W.J. Culshaw and W.G. Archer. ‘The Santal Rebellion in Man in India, Vol. XXV (December, 1945), p-215.
17. Ibid.
18. Kunwar Suresh Singh Birsa Munda and his movement (1874-1901) ch.-6.

19. Cited in Subaltern Studies Vol.-4 pp 163-164.
20. Kamalesh Chakraborty –Sadhinata Sangrame Balurghat (Article in Madhuparni), p-15.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Social Mobility movement among the Rabhas of North Bengal –Man in India vol.– 50, March 1970, pp 89-97.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. A Mitra –District Hand book, Malda (census 1951)
27. Ibid.
28. Dr.Sunil Mandal –Paschim Banger Chain Samajer Bhasa Samaskriti. pp 6-7.
29. Ibid.
30. A cordial letter from Tulsi Charan Mandal (founder of C.S.U.S)
31. F.A. Strong – Eastern Bengal District Gazetteers Dinajpur,Reprint Siliguri 2003 p-1
32. Dharendra Nath Das—Regional movements ethnicity and politics, Delhi 2005 p- 28
33. Ibid p—37
34. Nehru—Roy –Panth Jyoti Basu’s correspondence –Sree Saraswati press, Calcutta 1984 pp 24-26
35. Government Notification No. 3858 G.A. dated 01.11.1956
36. Government Notification No. 3875 G.A. dated 02.11.1956
37. Government Notification No. 6176 G.A. dated 20.05.1959.

38. Partha Sen – ‘Pashim Dinajpur Ziller Sange Islampur.Mahakumar Sanjuktikaran- Itihas O Mullayan in Madhuparni, Bises Paschim Dinajpur Zella Sankhya , 1399 B.S. edi Ajitesh Bandopadhyay, Balutghat p -8.
39. P.C. Roy Chowdhury—Bihar District Gazetteers Purnia, Patna 1963 Cal 1965. P-2
40. Jatindra Nath Sengupta –West Bengal District Gazetteers, West Dinajpur,Cal. 1965.P-2
41. Bihar Government Political Special Department Vide their letter no. SR/TT-07/G.O-4326.dated the 18th January, 1961.
42. P.C. Roy Choudhury, op cit. p-110
43. Booklet of Transferred Area Suryapur organization p-2
44. Partha Sen op cit. p-3
45. Civil Revenue Cases No. 1079 (W) and 1082 (W) 74 of 1974.
46. Partha Sen—Chirosthayee Bandobasta Suryapur Parganar Antarbhukta Islampur Mahakumar Bhumi Rajasya Babastha Samasya in Itihas Anushandhan, edi- Goutam Chattopadhyay Cal-1987 p- 97.
47. Sang Bartica 15th issue 1985 edi. Partha Sen, Utathya Bandopadhyay, Islampur, West Dinajpur.
48. Parth Sen –Paschim Dinajpur -O- Islampur Mahakumar Krishi O Bhumi Sankar karma Suchi--Akti Parjalochana in Paschim Dinajpur Zilla Parishad Samrak Grantha, Balurghat 1986.
49. Md. Pasarul Islam, Uttar Banger Anagrasar Muslim Samaj, TASO, Islampur, 2004 p-19
50. G.O –No 73-58/ B-C-W. Dated 20.01.98. In this report it has been mentioned how 18 tribal people were uprooted from 30 acres land by the tea-planters in Kachugachchi Mouza under Islampur Police Station. Jotdar Mazhrul Haque sold these lands to the tea-planters.

51. Jatindra Chandra Sengupta op.cit. p-60
52. Suryapur Barta, 15th November, 2001 issue.
53. District Statistical Hand Book, Uttar Dinajpur Govt. of West Bengal p-67.
54. Partha Sen –Transfer of Islampur Sub-division from Bihar to Bengal p-263-An Article edi. By Dr. Sailen Debnaath—Social and Political Tensions in North Bengal Siliguri, 2007.
55. S.R.C's Report p-73 para 553.
56. Booklet of Transferred Area Suryapur Organization
57. Snehamay Chakladar – Sub-Regional Movement in India, Kolkata 2004 p-2.
58. Partha Sen-op cit. p-264.
59. Suryapur Barta, 15th November,201 issue op.cit.
60. Booklet of Transferred Area Suryapur Organization. Op.cit.

Conclusion

North Bengal, in the real sense of the term, is an area of many people of diverse ethnic, linguistic and religious groups namely the Bengalees, Nepalese, Lepchas and several small tribes of Tibeto-Burman descent. The Political map of the region was altered by the British Government who brought more changes in this demographic identity. Side by side, the western education and culture deeply influenced the people of North Bengal. As a result, different types of Samitis and organizations sprang up in Hill North Bengal (Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong) and plain North Bengal (Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar, Maldah and Dinajpur) for Promoting social and cultural awareness of people.

North Bengal was partitioned during the great partition of India in 1947. After the partition one third of North Bengal was included to India and two-third, to East Pakistan.

In 1905 Bengal was divided into two parts- Purba and Paschim banga. But against this division the Swadeshi Movement started. As a result in 1911 Bengal was re-united but its capital was shifted from Calcutta to Delhi forever. The year 1911 was also an important landmark in the history of North Bengal. In that year the first caste and ethnic based social organization named the Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samiti was established under the leadership of Sri Panchanan Burma, the first post-graduate among the Rajbanshis.

The Rajbanshis belonged to the Indo-Mongoloid groups ethnically. There were dis-similarities between them and the rest of Bengal. The Rajbanshis thought themselves as Kshatriya. But in the social structure of Bengal the status of the Kshatriyas caste was not permitted. The Rajbanshis had been oppressed by Bengali majority people for centuries. Land alienation and other types of economic exploitation had augmented their anger. So the Rajbanshis began to think themselves as a separate identity. They started movement to obtain their Kshatriya status.

After independence the administrative and political scenario of North Bengal was totally changed and it created serious problems. The matter of re-organizing Bengal came to the lime-light in 1952. Dr. Bidhan Ch. Roy – the then Chief Minister of Bengal had summoned a press conference and vehemently said that some Bengali- speaking area of Bihar should come into Bengal for administrative and economic facilities and also for creating a link between Jalpaiguri , Maldah and Murshidabad. In order to serve the purpose the S.R.C. was formed in the year of 1955. On Monday, the 23rd. January, 1956 a historic joint statement was issued from Delhi by the Chief Minister of West Bengal and Bihar proposing merger of their status.

Against the merger proposal the mass of Bengal protested vehemently and an anti-merger movement started, which took the shape of a compressive national movement. In some districts of North Bengal (Raiganj, Balurghat (West Dinajpur), Dinhata (Cooch-Bihar), Malda, Jalpaiguri and Siliguri) the wave of the movement had reached.

The second burning question was Berubari movement. This name has expressed as News Headline day by day owing to Indian border problem. This problem had begun in 1954 regarding border demarcation between India and East Pakistan as the consequence of concluding Nehru-Noon Agreement in 1958 by the Government of India and Pakistan. By this treaty India decided to give the Southern half of South Berubari to Pakistan. Against this decision the South Berubari Pratiraksha Committee started a popular movement which was ended by concluding the treaty of Indira- Mujib Agreement in 1974.

On the other hand, Enclave problem is an off-shoot of Indo- Bangladesh border problem. After independence and partition Rangpur district was transferred to Pakistan. Consequently, about 130 enclaves remained in the district of Rangpur (East Pakistan). On the other hand, 95 enclaves remained in the district of Cooch-behar. They were called Chhitmahal dwellers in other word. The Chhitmahal dwellers were deprived of various facilities such as education, voting rights etc. Recently on 31st. July, 2015 the Chhitmahal has been transferred between India and Bangladesh.

After many years of struggle, India attained freedom on 15th August, 1947. The partition of Bengal during independence of India made possible for influx of millions of People into the bordering districts of North Bengal and these people were mainly Hindus. In 1964 again owing to Martial Administration another second influx of Bengalese occurred. In 1971 the Independence movement of Bangladesh not only formed a new nation but at that time a large number of people came to various places of North Bengal. These large influxes of people to North Bengal brought a demographic change of the region. The original indigenous people of the region became full of annoyance about their own identities. They had been transformed into marginal men.

The partition of India created a large number of different social groups on the basis of communalism and ethnic identities, which corrupted the whole atmosphere of North Bengal. At this moment North Bengal became witness of various socio-political movement in the post colonial period.

As the sons of soil (Rajbanshis) were deprived of their natural rights on land and other professions, they started movement and demanded separate state named Kamtapuri. In order to serve the purpose they had formed a separate political party named Uttara Khand Dal in the year of 1969. Generally, this party was known as the party of Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samaj and formed the base of different ethno-political movements in North Bengal.



ওরা থাকে ওখানে। ভারতীয় ছিটমহলের বাসিন্দারা নাগরিকত্বের দাবীতে লংমার্চ করে এলে ভারত সীমান্তে তাদের আটকে দেয় বি.এস.এফ।



আসতে তাদের মানা। ওরা ব্রাত্য ভারতীয় ছিটবাসী। মূল ভূখণ্ডে আসার অধিকার ওদের নেই।



সীমান্তে গেট



তিনবিধা কড়ির দিয়ে বাংলাদেশী ছিটমহল দহগ্রামে যাতায়াতকারী মানুষজন।



তিনবিধা কড়িডরের পাটগ্রাম (বাংলাদেশ) মুখী রাস্তা



তিনবিয়া কড়িডর



দূর পানে চেয়ে। অতদূর প্রহরায় সীমান্তরক্ষী বাহিনীর জওয়ান।



কোচবিহার জেলাশাসকের দপ্তরের সামনে বিক্ষোভরত ভারতের অভ্যন্তরস্থ বাংলাদেশী ছিটের মানুষজন।



সীমান্তে কড়া নজরদারী



কোচবিহারের রাজপথে বাংলাদেশী ছিটবাসীদের মিছিল।

Appendixes

APPENDIX-A

Memorandum of the Hill men's Association-submitted to the Chief Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal, dated 8th November 1917.

The Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

The humble memorial of representative of the Darjeeling District.

Dated 8th November, 1917.

Respectfully Sheweth,

That we the undersigned Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalese representing the opinion of the people of the Darjeeling District gratefully respond to the invitation issued by the Government to the people of India to make representations to be laid before the Secretary of State for India during the coming visit.

What prompts us too approach Government is not any feeling of discontent or dissatisfaction with the present system of Government. On the contrary we are perfectly contented. We have hitherto abstained from all political agitation and we have treated the movement for Home Rule with neglect and even disfavor. But now that the British Government has definitely stated that Home Rule is the ultimate goal towards which it desired that India should gradually proceed, we felt it our duty to safeguard an future position by presenting Government with a statement of our views an one point which seems to us of vital importance.

At present the Darjeeling District is one of the many districts of the Bengal Presidency with the centre of Government in Calcutta. This intimate connection with the plains of Bengal, however is but of comparatively recent origin and it only exists because of the common relationship of lands under the same British rule. There is moreover no real affinity between the peoples of this Himalaya and Sub-Himalaya region and these of the plains of Bengal and our plea is that it may now be established as a settled principle in any arrangement for the realization of the Home Rule for the people of the plains of Bengal that this district should be excluded from them and that

the evolution of our political life should be towards a district local government of our own on such lines as may be approved by the British Government.

We live in an absolutely different world from the rest of the people of Bengal Geographically no greater contrast is possible than between the Mountainous Darjeeling District and the plain of Bengal. Racially there is an equal dissimilarity for the great mass of our population in Mongolian and Akin to the people beyond the Himalayas rather than to those of India Historically we have until recent years lived a life entirely apart. The Darjeeling District except the Kalimpong Sub-division was gifted by or annexed from the kingdom of Sikkim last century, the Kalimpong Sub-division and the Dooars were Bhutanese till about fifty years ago and the Nepalese have immigrated from Nepal in recent years. Religiously we are, as regards the Lepchas and the races of Tibetan origin as well as number of Nepali castes, quite distinct from the people of the plains and even the religious customs of the Nepalese who are classed as Hindus very largely from those of the Hindu of Bengal. Linguistically we have no alliance with the rest of Bengal. Even the lingua franca of our courts and schools is Hindi and non Bengali, while the great mass of the workers on the tea gardens of the Dooars and the Terai are immigrants from Bihar and Orissa and Nepal which fact in addition to the geographical and historical arguments makes it natural and fitting that the Tea District of the Dooars should be linked up with the Darjeeling District rather than with Bengal.

A further argument in favour of a separate Eastern Himalayan Government is based on health considerations. The plain are entirely unsuited to hill people who are unwilling to go to the plain to live. This makes it essential for the future welfare of the district that it should be as far as possible self contained. In the matter of education, to give me important illustrations, we look forward to having our own colleges and other institutions for professional training. At present those are in the plains and this has acted as a greater barrier to the higher education of our peoples. But although higher education is backward, primary education is more general than in any other district of Bengal and we have therefore to hand the true basis for a natural and satisfactory educational advance.

Our humble petition therefore is that in laying down plans for the future, the Government should aim at the creation of a separate unit comprising the present

Darjeeling District with the portion of Jalpaiguri District which was annexed from Bhutan in 1865.

The creation of this separate unit may be objected to the ground that it would be very small as compared with our probable unit of Government in India. The population of the Darjeeling District is now only 300,000 that of the Jalpaiguri District are larger. But fifty years ago the population was not a tithe of what it is now and the phenomenal increase is likely to be maintained the district are capable of large development. The possibilities through the use of hydro-electic power alone are immense. More over the District has an importance disproportionate to its area in that it is vital frontier district. Our people are the natural guardians of the frontier and we would welcome the privilege of keeping ourselves ever ready to fulfill this function. A small but significant incident, illustrative (in this connection) of the drawback from our relations with the organization suited to the plains, is found in the recent call for recruits for Indian Defense. Very few felt able to respond because of large periods of training at centers in the hills, we are convinced that volunteers in large numbers would have been forth-coming and we are confident that, if the Government wished it, then practically all the able bodied men of our hill communities could be enlisted in a Force to defend the Frontier.

It is Possible, indeed, that the Government might consider it wise to create a still North Eastern Frontier province to include in addition to this District the Assam Dooars and hill territories which lie to the East of Bhutan and whose people have affinities with our people.

We should be grateful if the Government of Bengal will arrange to give us the privilege of sending a deputation of our members to present these views personally to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India during his coming visit.

1. Sd/-S.W. Ladenla.
2. Sd/-Khadga Bahadur Cheetri.
3. Sd/-Dr. Yeasin sitling.
4. Sd/- Prem Sing Kumai
5. Sd/-Meghbir Singh.
6. Sd/- Lachman Singh.
7. Sd/- Nar Prasad Kumai.
8. Sd/-Deonidhi Upadhaya &others.

APPENDIX-B.

Memorandum of the Hill men's Association – submitted to Sir Samuel Hoare, P.C.G.B.E, C.M.G, Secretary of State for India. London, dated 25th October 1930.

The Right Honorable Sir Samuel Hoare, P. C., G.B.E., C.M.G.
Secretary of State for India, London.

The humble Memorial of the Gorkhas settled and domiciled in British India.

1. The humble Memorial of the Gorkhas domiciled in British India consisting of Military Pensioners, Government Servants, Traders, Farmers and Plantation labourers are about 3 million, most of whom are settled at Darjeeling (in Bengal), Shillong (in Assam) Dehara Dun(in United Provinces) and in Burma and the rest are scattered all over British India.
2. That the Gorkhas although in minority in the provinces of British India are not a negligible element and in view of their services to Government in Military, civil and other department of Government they (Gorkhas) have played no mean part in the preservation of the solidarity of the British Empire. The Gorkhas although domiciled in British India still cherish the customs and traditions of their ancestors and are quite a distinctive social unit and dare jealously preserving up till now their own social solidarity in spite of the fact that are in such a minority in British India.
3. That with the advent of the new constitution, which is being framed the Gorkhas are apprehensive that their claims may be ignored and that eventually they may have to be merged with the rest of India, for causes beyond their control.
4. That so far the Gorkhas have been able to evolve on their own lines of civilization under the protection of the British Government but unless some special reservations are made for the Gorkhas in the new constitution it would be extremely difficult for them to preserve their social solidarity with the consequent loss to the British Government for once the Gorkhas are forced by circumstances beyond their control to make a common cause with the Indian the British will undoubtedly lose of one of their best supporters and comrades in arm.

5. That it is with a view to avoid this contingency something must be done for the preservation of the social solidarity of Gorkhas under the new constitution and an attempt was made to 1919 by the Hillmen's Association of Darjeeling to do this. They suggested to Mr. Montague, the then secretary of state for India, that a North-Eastern Frontier Province should be created consisting of a district of Darjeeling, the Dooars and some part of Assam, where the Gorkhas predominate, and it was then strongly urged that this would be an additional protection to British India from the military point of view as they commanded all the passes in the Himalayas from the eastern border of Nepal to Burma. But somehow the proposal did not materialize and the district of Darjeeling only was excluded from the operation of the Reforms.
6. The another proposal was then subsequently submitted by the Gorkha League at Dehra-Dun suggesting various matters of importance for the Gorkhas, but so far nothing has been done.
7. That as the new constitution for India is under consideration of the Parliament the Gorkha think it opportune to place again their views and to start with, they suggest that the district of Darjeeling, they suggest that the district of Darjeeling, where the Gorkha population predominate, should be excluded from Bengal and be treated as an independent administrative unit with the Deputy Commissioner as an Administrator vested with much more powers than that of a District Magistrate assisted by a small Executive Council (like the Provincial Governor's Executive Council), representative of all interests, in the administration of the area. The judiciary the police and all other Departments of Government should also be under him so that they (Departments of Government), may be independent of the control of the Provincial Government, but should be directly under the imperial Government. In the judiciary the Deputy Commissioner administrator of the Area should be vested with the powers of an appellate Court vested with the powers of District and sessions judge. The Sub-Divisional Magistrate so far as practicable. All appeals from the decision of the Deputy Commissioner should be to the Hon'ble High Court at Fort William in Calcutta. The service too for this Area should be independent of the province of Bengal and separate from it and should recruit from local people. Of course these may be

occasions when the services from the Bengal Provincial Services may have to be borrowed but this should be under special circumstances and for a short period.

The financial aspect of this scheme presents some difficulty and on careful analysis it will be found that the expenditure under P.W.D especially for roads and bridges will present some difficulty as the revenue from the Area may not be adequate to meet it. In this connection it may be respectfully suggested that the imperial Government is maintaining the frontier roads and bridges in Sikkim which is roads at Darjeeling are in continuation of these roads in Sikkim and for the same considerations (from military stand point) they should be a charge on the Imperial budget.

The administrative unit of Darjeeling should be placed directly under the Government of India the governor of Bengal acting as the agent for the Governor-General as in the case of excluded Area recommended by the Simon Commission. Darjeeling should continue to be the summer seat of the Governor of Bengal as in the case of Simla for the Governor of Punjab and United Provinces. This is a rough outline only and details can be easily work out Darjeeling should also get a seat in the Imperial Legislatures whether Federal of otherwise as recommended for Excluded Area by the Simon Commission.

8. All Legislation passed by the central Legislation should not be applicable to the administered area, without the same being certified by the Administrator and the Council that it should be extended to Darjeeling.
9. That for the rest of British India where there are appreciable number of Gorkha population they should have special representation (as provided for minority communities) in the respective Provinces where they are. These are the minimum requirements for the preservation of the Gorkhas as a nation within British India and Gorkhas most emphatically urge that in view of their past service and sacrifice for Empire this request should be granted by Parliament and thus earn the eternal gratitude of the Comrade in Arm.

H.P. Proadhan (Rai Saheb), President, Hillmen's Association, Kalimpong.

Lt. Gobardhan Gurung, President, Gorkha Officer's Association.

P. M/ Sundar, Secretary, Karseong Gorkha Library.

N. B. Gurung, Secretary, Hillmen's Association, Kalimpong.

P.P. Pradhan, Secretary, Hillmen's Association, Kalimpong.

Dated 25th October, 1930.

APPENDIX-C

Memorandum of the Hillmen's Association –submitted to Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary of State for India. London & Sir John Anderson, Governor of Bengal dated 6th August, 1934.

The Right Honorable Sir Simuel Hoare, P.C, G.B.E, C.M.G.,Secretary of State for India. London.

The Right Honorable Sir John Anderson, P.C, G.B.E. G. C.L.E.- Governor of Bengal.

The humble Memorial of the Hillmen's Association of the District of Darjeeling in the province of Bengal.

Most respectfully Sheweth,

1. That your memorialists represent the hill people of the district of Darjeeling in the province of Bengal consisting of the Gorkhas, Bhutias and Lepchas, who from the majority to the population of the district and are its original inhabitants,
2. That during the latter part of the nineteenth century this district was carved out by annexations from the neighboring states of Sikkim and Bhutan, and the advent of British rule in the district the hill people have enjoyed the sweet harvest of peace and prosperity.
3. That owing to the loose affinity of the people of this district to the neighboring independent State of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim the hill people of this district still cherish the same traditions and are guided by the same social and religious practices as they prevail in the home of their origin.
4. That it was for this reason and being a frontier district it has hitherto remained as an Excluded Area directly under the Governor of Bengal and no legislation passed by the Indian Legislatures Central or Provincial is applicable to that district unless certified by the Governor of Bengal so that this district has always enjoyed the privilege of a fostering case of the British Crown whose representative in the province is its Governor. As a result so far all cultivable land, excepting the tea garden areas, has remained an exclusive reserve for the hill people, who have also enjoyed preferential treatment in the Government services as well in the district to a great extent and the hill people by their unquestionable loyalty and devotion to the British Crown have amply justified the trust reposed on them.

5. That your memorialists beg to draw your attention to the memorial dated the 25th October 1930 in which your memorialists urged that in the Reforms Scheme it should be with proper safeguards for the protection of the interests of the hill people and in submitting this memorial. Again your memorialists beg to emphasize the same and respectfully urge that the matter may not be overlooked especially when there was no one at Round Table Conference and subsequent Select Committee in London to voice the cause of this little band of loyal and devoted people living in the mountain fastnesses on the spurs of the Himalayas.
6. That all minority communities in India have received due consideration of their respective claims and they are perhaps finding their due place in the Statute Book but your memorialists are not aware if the same consideration has also been extended to the hill people, who, although in the majority in the district, are a small minority in the Province and your memorialists pray that the privileges and reservations made for the majority communities in the constitutions should also be extended to the hill people in the Province of Bengal.
7. That with a view to safeguard the interests of the hill people in the district and mainly for the purpose of maintaining status quo in the Revenue administration (Land Revenue) of the district and especially in view of the fact that a representative from the hill people at the Provincial and Central Legislature; will be in a hopeless minority it is essential that no legislative enactments passed by any of such legislatures be applicable to this district without being certified by the Governor of the Province and the wholesome provision in the Statute Book should not be disturbed.
8. That your memorialists have reasons to fear that adequate funds for carrying on the administration in the district may not be voted by the new Legislatures and the local services in the hills may also be swamped by the people from the plains for want of adequate representation of the hill people in Legislatures and administration in the district may therefore suffer. Being a frontier district it requires special treatment and for political reasons your memorialists urge that the Governor of the Province should have provided adequate educational facilities, for reserving Government contract and Excise settlement for hill. Adequate provision may therefore be kindly made in the Statute Book regarding

this matter also. Those are in brief the minimum safeguards your memorialists think absolutely necessary for the protection of the interests of the hill people.

9. In the event of the permanent safeguards being not granted, your memorialists emphatically urge the District of Darjeeling should be totally excluded from Bengal by creation of an independent Administrative unit with an Administrator at the head of the area assisted by an Executive Council representative of all interests in the Area and the Area should be placed directly under the Central Government the Governor of Bengal acting as Agent to the Governor General. No legislation passed by the Central Government should apply to the area unless certified by the Administrators in consultation with his Executive Council. As a financial aspect of the proposal, the area being not self-supporting, your memorialists submit that in view of the political and Military importance of the area the communications in the area should be an imperial charge for the same reason as the Central Government is maintaining the Highway Road to Tibet in Sikkim, which is outside British India. The communications in the area are actually an integral part of the Highway to Sikkim and Tibet and as such should be an imperial charge. The services of the Area in all its administrative Departments such as Executive, Judiciary, Police, Forests, Education etc. should also be locally recruited and should be independent of the Bengal Provincial Service. This is however an outline; the details will be worked out when required. The town of Darjeeling may still continue as the Summer Capital of Bengal as in the case of the Punjab Government who has their summer capital at Simla. Delhi is another instance of a small Administrative unit in British India.
10. Your memorialists therefore humbly and respectfully pray that adequate provisions be made in the Statute Book for the protection of the interests of the hill people by way of safeguards suggested in the memorial or in the alternative the prayer in para-9 above. And for which act of kindness your memorialists ever pray.

Sonam Wanger, Landenia, president Hillmen's Associations, Darjeeling.
Gobardhan Gurung, Vice President, Hillmen's Associations, Darjeeling.
Madam Thapa, Secretary, Hillmen's Associations, Darjeeling.

Dated Darjeeling, the 6th August, 1934.

APPENDIX-D

On March 1st Dr. Roy wrote a lengthy letter to Prime Minister Nehru giving his own reaction to the merger scheme and seeking clarification on certain point which had been agitating his mind.

Calcutta
March 1st, 1936

My dear Jawahar,

Your letter on February 27 which you wrote after your meeting with the M.P.S. Yesterday's paper had a report that besides telling these members that there could be no imposition of any scheme on the people and that no final decision will be taken suddenly, you also told them that if desirable the right to session within a period may also be provided in the Bill.

As you are aware, between the date 24th January, 1956 when the merger resolution of the Working Committee was reported in the press, and the 31st January when after receiving your note I issued a press statement, the people in Bengal, even congressmen were amazed at the suddenness of the announcement made on the 24th when they were all wondering what the decision of the Government of India would be on the recommendation of the States Reorganization Commission regarding Bengal-Bihar borders. To make the confusion worse, there was a press report published in Calcutta on the 12th January that at the instance of the Bihar Government, the Government of India had reduced by half the area proposed to be transferred from Bihar by the State Reorganization Commission. How this news was published in the papers I cannot say. I wrote to you about this on the 13th January. You asked me to come on the 15th (Sunday). When we met in Delhi on Sunday the 15th, I found out that no such decision by the Government of India had been taken. But how quickly such news gets credence is exhibited by the fact that Congress committees all over Bengal were alerted after the 12th of January against the supposed decision of the Government of India.

On the 15th January we discussed about the proposals of the Government of India on the S.R.C recommendation Sri Babu (Dr. Sri Krishna Sinha). Anugraha Babu (Anugraha Narayan sinha) and Krishna Ballabh shahay were there. Sri Babu proposed

a merger and I accepted it. This proposal formed the basis of the resolution of the Working Committee issued on 23rd January. During these days the people of Bengal and even Congress men were excited over the changing phases of the proposals regarding Bengal and Bihar.

I am sure, if I had the opportunity of consulting about the merger proposal with the people here, possibly the shock would not have been so intense. But where was the time for it? The offer of Sri Babu was sudden. It seemed to me to be a beacon light in the prevailing gloom and I accepted it.

When I returned to Calcutta on the 24th of January most people here were not aware of the contents of the merger proposal. My press note appeared on the 1st of February. Many people who were opposed began then the people were suffering from a sense of grievance that Bengal which had often been divided was now called upon to merge itself into Bihar. I therefore in my note suggested the word 'Union' instead of the word 'Merger'. But the resistance was still there.

On the 20th of February, I was replying to the criticisms on the Governor's Address. One of the opposition members placed one amendment before the House which ran thus.

“But regret that there is no mention of any effective measures taken by the Government in order;

- (i) To recognize the boundaries of the State on the basis of language.
- (ii) To encounter the move to amalgamate Bengal and Bihar.

I asked the Speaker to put (i) and (ii) separately and I challenged the Opposition to demand a division on (ii) so that the House may declare whether it is in favour of the proposal of union.

The amendment was put separately to the vote but the opposition did not call for a decision and the original Motion of Thanks was passed by 151 votes to 48. My Chief Whip immediately issued a notification, saying that in view of the above position, the Government did not wish to bring the resolution before the House on the 24th February, as previously announced.

Even so, it was a negative vote, and I have therefore asked my Congress members of the Assembly to put their signatures on favour of the merger. We have 237 members of the House excluding speaker. Out of this we have 171 members belonging to our party. I have obtained signature from over 150 members and I am sending the paper of Govinda Ballabh.

The people in Bengal appear to be belonging to the following groups:

- (a) The Communists, R.S.P etc. whose job is to create confusion and chaos. The C.P.I wants the reorganization on the basis of language. They want a separate area for the Gorkhas in Darjeeling. They do not want Bengal to have a part of Purnia because the people there do not desire it. They want the scheme of linguistic reorganization to be taken even to villages so that there might be chaos everywhere. I do not worry about their antics.
- (b) There are many honest Congressmen and other who feel for the country and they have been feeling that the political situation, which was so much in favour of the congress before might find difficulty in facing the next election. A few of the smaller municipalities held their election within the last fortnight and the Congress has lost in many places. The Congressmen are bewildered and have not been able to steady themselves yet. I feel on the other hand that Congressmen have been running into a State of complacency and this proposal suddenly woke them up.

I and my friends have been working hard to encounter this sense of ennui. The Hartal on the 21st was called by the Leftist Groups to try and provoke issues. I refused to take the bail. They are only sparring for a fight. If there had been police action they would benefit. There are some people who feel otherwise and think that we should have resisted the Hartal. I allowed the incident to pass because I wanted to gain time to explain the proposals to the people. I feel the tide is turning and I have to plod on. Given a little more time, we hope to convince people that this is the only solution for keeping the Congress alive and the country united.

I would ask you, however, to consider three points:-

- (a) Can the two states secede after a time or within a period?

(b) If they do so, whether the provisions of the State Reorganization Commissions recommendations as modified by the Government of India then come into force. Obviously, there cannot be a vacuum. If the merger ceases to operate, the proposal of S.R.C must be renewed.

How do you think the Regional Council provide for agencies for implementing the Five years Plan?

These are questions which should be answered as early as possible.

I have sent you a long later. I hope I have been able to put the case clearly.

Calcutta
The 4th May, 1956.

Dear Sri Babu,

I am enclosing a statement which I should to the press yesterday. This statement is based upon the bare fact that in the North Calcutta Parliamentary by-election Congress was defeated. The issue which was made prominent by the opposite party was the question of Union of West Bengal and Bihar. As you will see I have accepted the verdict and withdrawn my proposal for the union of West Bengal and Bihar.

I have written to Sri Govind Ballav Pant also.

Yours sincerely
B.C.Roy.

APPENDIX-E

Cooch-Behar Chhitmahal in Bangladesh.

Sl.No	Thana including Cooch-behar	Chhit. No	Name of the Chhit.	Name of Thana in West Bengal	Approximate area.
1	Pachgarh	78	Goroti	Haldibari	968.66
2	Pachgarh	79	Goroti	Haldibari	1.74
3	Pachgarh	80	Goroti	Haldibari	73.75
4	Pachgarh	77	Goroti	Haldibari	18.00
5	Pachgarh	76	Goroti	Haldibari	79
6	Pachgarh	75	Goroti	Haldibari	58.23
7	Pachgarh	73	Singimari	Haldibari	6.07
8	Notice No.	68	Shokhati	Haldibari	95.23
9	2427 pt.	63	Shokhati	Haldibari	1012.38
10	Pl 14/52	62	Shokhati	Haldibari	197.24
11	Date 27.6.52	61	Binnaguri	Haldibari	763.30
12	Accordingly Handed over to Jalpaiguri District	40	Dalkhola	Haldibari	34.19
13	Pachgarh	39	Dalkhola	Haldibari	1640.11
14	Pachgarh	81	Binnaguri	Haldibari	
15	Pachgarh	60	Najirganj	Haldibari	.52
16	Pachgarh	58	Najirganj	Haldibari	14.22
17	Pachgarh	57	Najirganj	Haldibari	8.27
18	Pachgarh	59	Putimari	Haldibari	122.80
19	Pachgarh	56	Najirganj	Haldibari	54.08
20	Pachgarh	54	Najirganj	Haldibari	3.87
21	Pachgarh	53	Najirganj	Haldibari	1.02
22	Pachgarh	52	Najirganj	Haldibari	1.04
23	Pachgarh	51	Najirganj	Haldibari	.77
24	Pachgarh	50	Najirganj	Haldibari	5.05
25	Pachgarh	49	Najirganj	Haldibari	49.05
26	Pachgarh	55	Najirganj	Haldibari	12.18
27	Pachgarh	48	Najirganj	Haldibari	73.27
28	Pachgarh	47	Najirganj	Haldibari	3.89
29	Pachgarh	46	Najirganj	Haldibari	17.95
30	Pachgarh	45	Najirganj	Haldibari	1.07
31	Pachgarh	44	Najirganj	Haldibari	53.47

Sl.No	Thana including Cooch-behar	Chhit. No	Name of the Chhit.	Name of Thana in West Bengal	Approximate area.
32	Pachgarh	41	Najirganj	Haldibari	58.32
33	Pachgarh	42	Najirganj	Haldibari	434.29
34	Pachgarh	38	Najirganj	Haldibari	499.21
35	Pachgarh	37	Dalkhola Chhat.	Haldibari Thana	1188.93
36	Pachgarh	36	Shawlbari	Haldibari Thana	771.44
37	Pachgarh	32	Kajaldhighi	Haldibari Thana	162.26
38	Pachgarh	33	Natokotoka	Haldibari Thana	.26
39	Pachgarh	34	Natokotoka	Haldibari Thana	862.46
40	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	34	Part Bauyadanga	Haldibari Thana	862.46
41	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	35	Part Bauyadanga	Haldibari Thana	.83
42	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	3	Part BauyadangaChhatt.	Haldibari Thana	1752.44
43	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	2	Balpar khagrabari,	Haldibari Thana	2012.27
44	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	2	(Part) Katbangi	Haldibari Thana	
45	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	2	(Part) Katbangi	Haldibari Thana	
46	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	1	Dohata Khagrabari	Haldibari	2650.35
47	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	1 part	Dohata Khagrabari	Haldibari	
48	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	1 part	Dohata Khagrabari	Haldibari	
49	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	1 part	Dohata Khagrabari	Haldibari	
50	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	1 part	Dohata Khagrabari	Haldibari	
51	Debiganj(Bangladesh)	1 part	Baro Khonki	Haldibari	
52	Dimla(Bangladesh)	30	Kharija Gitaldah	Haldibari	7.71
53	Dimla(Bangladesh)	29	Kharija Gitaldah	Haldibari	36.83
54	Dimla(Bangladesh)	31	Nagarji Kabari	Haldibari	33.41
55	Dimla(Bangladesh)	28	Baro Khonki	Haldibari	30.53
56	Dimla(Bangladesh)	26	Kuchlibari	Haldibari	5.70
57	Dimla(Bangladesh)	27	Kuchlibari	Haldibari	2.04
58	Patgram(Bangladesh)	Jl.107	Baro Kuchlibari part.	Haldibari	4.35
59	Patgram(Bangladesh)	6	Baro Kuchlibari	Haldibari	5.24
60	Patgram(Bangladesh)	Jl.115 Part	1.Apan Chanki	Haldibari	.32
61	Patgram(Bangladesh)	7	Kuchlibari	Haldibari	44.04
62	Patgram(Bangladesh)	8	Votebari	Mekhliganj Thana	36.83
63	Patgram(Bangladesh)	5	Balapurkhri	Mekhliganj Thana	55.91
64	Patgram(Bangladesh)	4	Boro khangri	Mekhliganj Thana	50.51
65	Patgram(Bangladesh)	9	Boro khangri	Mekhliganj	87.42
66	Patgram(Bangladesh)	10	Chhat Bagdockra	Mekhliganj Thana	41.70

Sl.No	Thana including Cooch-behar	Chhit. No	Name of the Chhit.	Name of Thana in West Bengal	Approximate area.
67	Patgram(Bangladesh)	11	Ratanpur	Mekhliganj Thana	58.91
68	Patgram(Bangladesh)	12	Bagdockra	Mekhliganj Thana	25.49
69	Patgram(Bangladesh)	Jl.no.1 01	Part of Makhliganj	Mekhliganj Thana	.66
70	Patgram(Bangladesh)	15	Kharkharia	Mekhliganj Thana	60.74
71	Patgram(Bangladesh)	13	Kharkharia	Mekhliganj Thana	51.62
72	Patgram(Bangladesh)	14	Latamari	Mekhliganj Thana	110.92
73	Patgram(Bangladesh)	16	Votebari	Mekhliganj Thana	205.46
74	Patgram(Bangladesh)	16	A Kamat Changrabandha	Mekhliganj Thana	432.80
75	Patgram(Bangladesh)	17 A	A Kamat Changrabandha	Mekhliganj Thana	16.01
76	Patgram(Bangladesh)	17	Panishala	Mekhliganj	137.66
77	Patgram(Bangladesh)	18	Panishala	Mekhliganj	36.50
78	Patgram(Bangladesh)	Jl.153 (part of Mekhli ganj	Panishala	Mekhliganj	.27
79	Patgram(Bangladesh)	19	Panishala	Mekhliganj	18.01
80	Patgram(Bangladesh)	21	Panishala	Mekhliganj	64.63
81	Patgram(Bangladesh)	20	Panishala	Mekhliganj	51.40
82	Patgram(Bangladesh)	22	Lothamari	Mekhliganj	283.53
83	Patgram(Bangladesh)	23	Lothamari	Mekhliganj	98.85
84	Patgram(Bangladesh)	25	Dari kamari	Mekhliganj	39.85
85	Patgram(Bangladesh)	24	Dari kamari	Mekhliganj	45.73
86	Patgram(Bangladesh)	131	Dari kamari	Mekhliganj	56.11
87	Patgram(Bangladesh)	131	Buskata	Mekhliganj	22.35
88	Patgram(Bangladesh)	132	Buskata	Mekhliganj	11.95
89	Patgram(Bangladesh)	130	Buskata	Mekhliganj	21.07
90	Patgram(Bangladesh)	133	Dogramguri	Mekhliganj	01.44
91	Patgram(Bangladesh)	134	Buskata	Mekhliganj	07.81
92	Patgram(Bangladesh)	119	Buskata	Mekhliganj	413.81
93	Patgram(Bangladesh)	120	Buskata	Mekhliganj	30.75
94	Patgram(Bangladesh)	121	Buskata	Mekhliganj	12.15
95	Patgram(Bangladesh)	113	Buskata	Mathabhanga	57.86
96	Patgram(Bangladesh)	112	Buskata	Mathabhanga	315.04
97	Patgram(Bangladesh)	114	Buskata	Mathabhanga	29.20
98	Patgram(Bangladesh)	115	Buskata	Mathabhanga	33.22
99	Patgram(Bangladesh)	122	Buskata	Mathabhanga	33.22

Sl.No	Thana including Cooch-behar	Chhit. No	Name of the Chhit.	Name of Thana in West Bengal	Approximate area.
100	Patgram(Bangladesh)	127	Buskata	Mathabhanga	12.72
101	Patgram(Bangladesh)	128	Buskata	Mathabhanga	02.33
102	Patgram(Bangladesh)	117	Buskata	Mathabhanga	02.55
103	Patgram(Bangladesh)	118	Buskata	Mathabhanga	33.88
104	Patgram(Bangladesh)	125	Buskata	Mathabhanga	00.64
105	Patgram(Bangladesh)	126	Buskata	Mathabhanga	1.39
106	Patgram(Bangladesh)	129	Buskata	Mathabhanga	1.37
107	Patgram(Bangladesh)	116	Buskata	Mathabhanga	16.96
108	Patgram(Bangladesh)	123	Buskata	Mathabhanga	24.37
109	Patgram(Bangladesh)	124	Buskata	Mathabhanga	0.28
110	Sitalcoochi	137	Nalgram	Sitalcoochi	4.73
111	Hatibandha	135	Gotamari	Sitalcoochi	126.59
112	Hatibandha	136	Madankura	Sitalcoochi	20.02
113	Dinhata (W.B)	155	Bairagir Gach	Sitalcoochi	35.53
114	Halmanir Hat	151	Bhutukuthi	Sitalcoochi	217.29
115	Halmanir Hat	150	Dashiar Chhara	Sitalcoochi	81.71
116	Phulbari	156	Dakur Hat	Sitalcoochi	1643.88
117	Kurigram	141	Dakiner khuti	Sitalcoochi	14.27
118	Bhurungamari	153	Kalomati	Sitalcoochi	21.21
119	Bhurungamari	142	Sahebganj	Sheotiukrsha	31.58
120	Bhurungamari	143	Baroglechhuloka	Dinhata	45.63
121	Bhurungamari	147	Guchulka	Dinhata	39.99
122	Bhurungamari	146	Guchulka	Dinhata	.90
123	Bhurungamari	145	Dighaitari	Dinhata	8.92
124	Bhurungamari	144	Dighaitari	Dinhata	8.91
125	Bhurungamari	154	Chhithsheoraguri	Dinhata	12.31
126	Dinhata (W.B)	149	Chhotogurali Jhora	Dinhata	2.51
127	Bhurungamari	148	Chhotogurali Jhora	Dinhata	17.85
128	Bhurungamari	148	Chhotogurali Jhora	Dinhata	35.74
129	Jalpaiguri	43	Daikata	Dinhata	2.63

Selected Bibliographies.

Primary Source:

A) Unpublished Official Records:

1. Record of the Home Department of the Government of India, Public Branch (Political Branch 1907). West Bengal State Archives. Calcutta.
- 2) Proceeding of the Government of Bengal. Appointments, proceedings of the Government of Bengal, General Department, Miscellaneous.
- 3) Records of the Political Department of the Government of Bengal, Political Branch Proceeding on Migration.

B) Official Publication:

- 1) Bengal Legislative Council Proceedings July 1921, Vol. III. Calcutta, Bengal Secretariat, Book Depot. 1921.
- 2) The Annual Report on the General Administration of the Cooch-behar State for the year 1942-43, Cooch-behar, State Press, 1943.

Government of West Bengal:

1. De. Barun, West Bengal District Gazetteers: Jalpaiguri, Calcutta, 1981.
2. De. Barun , West Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling. Calcutta, 1983.
3. Census 1971; West Bengal District Handbook : Jalpaiguri, Cooch-behar, Malda. Darjeeling and West Dinajpur.
4. Majumdar Durgadas- West Bengal District Gazetteers-Cooch-behar, Calcutta, 1977.
5. Chakraborty Monamohan – A summary of the Changes in the Jurisdiction of District in Bengal Calcutta 1999 – Revised and updated by Kumud Ranjan Biswas.

6. O Mally L.S.S. –Bengal District Gazetteers, Darjeeling 1907.
7. Sen Gupta J.C. – West Bengal District Gazetteers, Maldah, Calcutta, 1969.
8. Sengupta J.C.-West Bengal District Gazetteers, West Dinajpur, Calcutta, 1969.

Oral Evidence:

1. Interviews with Sri Gopal Chandra Laha (A renowned scholar, Maldah) dated, 03.05.04.
2. Interview with Dr. Prodyut Ghosh (Scholar, Maldah) dated,04.05.04.
3. Interview with sri Birendra Maitra (Former Agricultural Minister) dated. 12.05.04.
4. Interview with Radha Mohan Mohanta (Swadhinata Sanani and Ex. Reporter of the Ananda Bazar Patrika Balurghat) dated 17.05.04.
5. Interview with Sri Pratul Chadra Jha – A writer and former member of R.S.P. dated 22.05.04.
6. Interview with Sri Jatin Chowdhury-A renowned scholar of Chowdhury Zaminder family, Maldah, dated 31.05.04.
7. Interview with interview Sri .Kamal Chandra Basak A renewed writer of Maldah, dated, 01.06.04.
8. Interview with Sri Durga Prasad Sen – Swadhinata Senani, Maldah, dated, 02.06.04.
9. Interview with Sri Subhas Choudhury – A Political leader of Forward Bloc. Maldah, dated 03.06.04.
10. Interview with Smt. Debika Sanyal – (wife of Late Prof. Nirmal Sanyal) Malda College , Maldah dated 02.06.04.

Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis Paper

1. Bhattacharya Malay Sankar – Nationalist Movements and Freedom Struggle in some selected areas of Northern Bengal – N.B.U.1986.
2. Dasgupta Biman Kumar- The Dynamics of Social Mobility Movements among the Rajbanshis of North Bengal and Assam – Calcutta University – 1976.
3. Dasgupta Srinanda. Protest Movements and the Political Process; A study of their implications, in Contemporary Indian Politics – N.B.U. 1998.
4. Das. D.N.- Ethno – Political Aspects of Regional Movements – N.B.U.1999.

Secondary Source (Published) Books &Articles (in English)

1. Banerjee Shekhar- caste, Class and Census – Aspect of Social mobility under British rule in the late 19th and early 20th century Bengal (1872-1970) Centre for South East Asian studies C.U. Calcutta -700073.
2. Bandhopadyay Sekhar – Caste Politics and the Raj, Bengal 1872-1937 Calcutta 1990.Monohar Publication.
3. Banerjee Sekhar-Caste Protest and identity in colonial India-The Namasudras of Bengal (1872-1947). 2011 Monohar Publication.
4. Basu Swaraj – Dynamics of a Caste Movement – The Rajbanshis of North Bengal (1910-1947)-2003 Monohar Publication
5. Bayly Sushan–Caste Society and politics in India, Cambridge University Press, 2001.
6. Bhatt Anil – Caste, Class and Politics in West Bengal – Monohar Book Service 1975.
7. Bhattacharya Maloy Sankar-Political Movements in some parts of India Bangladesh (1857-1947) Indian Institute of Oriental Research-2007.
8. Bose Nirmal Kumar –‘Some Aspect of Caste of Caste in Bengal’, in M. Singer (edi), Traditional India: Structure and change, Philadelphia 1959.
9. Brass, Paul R- Ethnicity and nationalism, sage Publication, New Delhi 1991.
10. Chakraborty K. Prafulla –The Marginal Men (kalyani) W. B. 1990.
11. Chakraborty saroj – My Years with Dr. B.C. Roy – A Record up to 1902, A Documentary in – Depth study of Post Independence Period
12. Chatterjee Partha, The National and its fragments; Colonial and Past Colonial Histories, Delhi, Oxford University Press,1994.
13. Chatterjee Partha (edi) – States and Politics in India, Delhi Oxford University Press-1997.

14. Chattopadhyay Haraprasad – Internal Migration in India – A Case Study of Bengal K. P. Bagchi & Company, 1987.
15. Chaudhury B.B. (Agrarian Movement in Bengal & Bihar, 1910-32 in B.R. Nanda (ed), Socialism India (New Delhi 1972).
16. Danda A. K, Ethnicity in India, New Delhi – Inter India Publishers, 1991.
17. Das Amal Kumar, Das A.K. and Raha M.K – The Rabhas of West Bengal – Series No.- 9, 1967.
18. Das Gupta Biplab (edi), ‘Urbanization, Migration and Rural Change: A Study of West Bengal, Calcutta 1988.
19. Das Gupta Ranjit – Economic, Society and Politics in Bengal: Jalpaiguri (1869-1947), Oxford University Press, Calcutta -1992.
20. Debnath Dr.Sailen- Social and Political Tensions in North Bengal since 1947.N.L.publishers 2007.
21. Desai I. P – Caste, Caste Conflict and reservation – Ajanta Publishers (1985).
22. Dozey E. C – A Concise History of the Darjeeling District since 1935, Baranasi, Jestun Publishing House, 1991.
23. Dutta R. P – India Today – Monisha Calcutta 1970.
24. Esman M. J – Ethnic Politics, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1994.
25. Franda F. Marcus – Political Development and Political Decay in Bengal, Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta 1971.
26. Ghosal S.C (edi0- A History of Cooch-behar, Cooch-behar (1942)
27. Hasan S.M, The Adina Masjid at Hazrat Pandua (Dacca, 1970)
28. Hunter W.W, The Annals of Rural Bengal (London, 1938)
29. Hutton J. H – Caste in India – Cambridge University Press, 1948.
30. Kar C.K-Sub Regional Movement in India – A case study, Political History of the Gorkhas of Darjeeling District – Firma KLM Pvt. Ltd. Calcutta-12.

31. Keller; Stephen I: Uprooting and Social Change; The3 Role of Refugees in Development, Delhi Monahar Book Survive-1975.
32. Kothari Rajani (edi) – Caste in Indian Politics – Delhi; Orient Longmans,1970.
33. Lukacs G. – History and class consciousness – London, Merlin Press-1971.
34. Mitra A – The tribes & Caste of West Bengal Calcutta 1953.
35. Mukhopadhyay Rajat Subra –The Rajbanshis of North Bengal – A Demographic Profile 1951-81 – North Bengal University Review Humanities and Social Sciences 1947.
36. Nath Lopita, Ethnicity &Cross border Movements in the Notch East, Minerva Association Pvt. Ltd, 2003.
37. Pakrashi B Kanti – The Uprooted: A Sociological Study of the Refugees of West Bengal, India (Calcutta Editions Indian 1971)
38. Ranadive B. T – Gorkha Land Agitation – a part of Imperialist Plot in the East, 1986 National Book Agency (p) Ltd Calcutta – 12.
39. Risley H.H – Tribes and Castes of Bengal – Ethnographic Glossary, Government Printing Press Cal-1987.
40. Ray Rajat Kanta – Social Conflict and Political Unrest in Bengal (1875-1927) Oxford University Press Cal-1984.
41. Roy Chowdhury B.C – Social Mobility Movement among the Rabha of North Bengal – Man in India, Vol. – 50 No. 1, Ranchi 1970.
42. Samanta Amiya Kumar – Gorkha Land Movemnt – A Study in Ethnic Separatism A. P. H. Publishing Corporation-2000.
43. Sanyal Charu Chandra – The Rajbanshis of North Bengal – Asiatic Society Calcutta (1965).
44. Sanyal Hitesh Ranjan, Social Mobility in Bengal Calcutta 1981.

45. Sanyal Dr. Jhuma Making a new space – Refugee in West Bengal Calcutta 1981.
46. Sarkar Sumit–Modern India (1885-1947) – Macmillan India Limited Delhi-1982.
47. Sarkar Sumit –Writing Social History – Macmillan India Limited Delhi-1999.
48. Sen Jahar, Darjeeling; A Favored Retreat New Delhi, Indus Publishing Company 1989.
49. Sen S.P. (edi) – Social and Religious reform movement in the 19th and 20th century – Calcutta, Institution of Historical Studies, 1979.
50. Singh Bhai Nehar, Singh Kirpal (edi) – History of All India Gorkha League (1943-1949) – Nirmal Publishers – New Delhi 1987.
51. Singh Kunwar Suresh – Birsa Munda and his Movement, 1874-1901. Calcutta –1983.
52. Sinha N.K. (edi) – The History of Bengal (1957-1905) University of Calcutta Second Edition, June 1996.
53. Srinivas M. N – Social changes in Modern India – Bombay: Asia Publishing House 1964.
54. Subba, T.B, Ethnicity: State and Development: A Case Study of the Gorkha Land Movement in Darjeeling, New Delhi, Har Ananda Publications in association with Vikash Publishing House 1964.
55. Tonkin; E.M and Chapman M- History and Ethnicity, London Rout lodge 1989.

Books & Articles in Bengali

1. Adhikari H.K.- Rajbanshi Kula Pradeep – Calcutta , 1314 BS.
2. Alam Md. Pasarul – Uttar Banger Anagraswar Muslim Samaj, Uttar Dinajpur 2004.
3. Bagchi Jatin – Jati Dharma O Samaj Bibartan Calcutta 1990.
4. Bandhopadhyay Alapan – (edi) – Prasanta Gorkha Land (Calcutta) 1987.
5. Bandhopadhyay Bhagawati Charan, Kooch Beharer Itihas, Cooch State Press, 1884.
6. Bandhopadhyay Hiranmay – Utbastu Sahitya Sangsal Calcutta 1970.
7. Barman Upendra Nath – Rajbanshi Kshatriya Jatir Itihas – Jalpaiguri 1966.
8. Barman Upendra Nath – Thakur Panchanan Barmar Jiban Charita – Jalpaiguri 1387.
9. Barman Upendra Nath –Uttar Banglar Sekal O Amar Jivan Smriti – Jalpaiguri (1985).
10. Basu Jyoti – Jatadur Mone pore – Rajnaitik Atmakathan – Calcutta Jalpaiguri (1985).
11. Basu Praddut Kumar – Ekti Janapader Kahini Silguri 1990.
12. Bera Anjan (edi) – Jyoti Basur Nirbachita Rachana Sanggraha – Calcutta 2002.
13. Bhattacharya Ajitesh (edi) – Madhuparni , Balurghat 1395.
14. Bhattacharya Ajitesh (edi) – Madhuparni Cooch-behar Jela Sankha Balurghat 1396.
15. Bhattacharya Ajitesh (edi) – Madhuparni – Darjeeling Jela Sankha Balurghat 1996.
16. Bhattacharya Ajitesh (edi) – Madhuparni – Jalpaiguri Jela Sankha Balurghat 1394.

17. Bhowmik Birendra Kumar – Mondol Commission Ki O Keno – Calcutta 1991.
18. Biswas Ratan (edi) – Uttar Banger Jati O Janajati – Calcutta 2001.
19. Chakraborty Bandiram – Bharat Ratna Bidhan Chandra –Calcutta 1982.
20. Chakraborty Bishwanath – Dinajpur Jelar Rajnaitik Itihas – Balurghat (1392) Baishakh.
21. Chakraborty Saroj – Mukhayamantrider Sange – Calcutta January 1977.
22. Chattapadhyay Partha – Itihaser Uttaradhikar, Calcutta Ananda Publishers, 2000.
23. Choudhury Kamal (edi) – Swadhinata Panchas Periya, Dej Publishing Calcutta 700073 – January 1999.
24. Choudhury Sri Nirmal Chandra – Swadhinata Sanggrama Rajbanshi Sanpradai – Jalpaiguri 1985.
25. Das Sukumar –Uttar Banger Itihas – Kumar Sahitya Prakashan – 1982.
26. Dey Amalendu – Bangladesher Janabinnash O Sankhalaghu Samasya ,Ratna Prakashan Calcutta 1992.
27. Dey Amalendu – Prasanga Anuprabesh – Calcutta B.S.1409 (1993)
28. Gangapadhyay Asoke – Uttar Banga Parichay – Grantha Tirtha (1999)
29. Ghatak Bijoy Chandra – Siliguri Saharer Itibritta – Siliguri (1984).
30. Ghosh A.G and Sanyal R.R. – Jalpaiguri Jelar Bibhinna Rajnaitik Daler Itihas (1869-1994) in Kirat bhumi , Jalpaiguri Jela Sankalan (1994).
31. Ghosh A.G ‘Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samajer Nabajagonaner Prekshapat, Dhupguri (Jalpaiguri) 1988.
32. Ghosh A.G – Uttarkhanda Andoloner Aithihasik Prekshapat in Itihash Anushandan (vol.- 5) –K. P. Bagchi & Company Calcutta1980.
33. Ghosh Atulya –Kashtakalpita (Ananda Publishers) Calcutta 1980.

34. Guha Kamal – amar Jiban Amar Rajniti (part- I) – Dip Prakashan Calcutta 2002.
35. Guha Roy Siddhartha – Malda (Subarnarekha) Calcutta 1318.
36. Jalil Muhammad Abdul – Bangladesher Santal Samah O Samaskriti (Dacca 1991).
37. Kabya Bhusan M. – Rajbanshi Kshatriya Dipak , Dinajpur 1318 B.S.
38. Kar Arabinda (edi) – Jalpaiguri Jela sangklan (1869-1994)- Jalpaiguri 1994.
39. Majumder R.C.-Bangiya Kulasastra (2nd edi.) – Calcutta 1989.
40. Mandal Sunil Chandra – Paschim Banger Chain Samajer Bhasha – Sahity O Samaskriti – Calcutta 2001.
41. Mukherjee A – Jatibhed Pratha O Unish Sataker Bangali Samaj – Calcutta 1980.
42. Mukhopadhyay Kaliprasad – Shi Karer sandhane B.S 1409 (2002)
43. Nag Soumen– Kanchanjanghai Asantir Agun, P.D. Publication (Ltd.)Calcutta- 95.
44. Roy Debes – Tista Parer Brittanta – Dej Publisher, Calcutta- 1988.
45. Roy Dhananjoy – Uttar Banger Dharma O Samaj Samaskar Andolon – North East Publication, Malda 1989.
46. Roy Nihar Ranjan – Bangalir Itihas (Adiparba) 3rd edi. Calcutta-1980.
47. Roy Barma N.C – Kshatriya Sangeet , Calcutta 1326 BS.
48. Sanyal Charu Chandra – ‘Jalpaiguri Saharer Ekso Bachar’ – in Jalpaiguri Jela Satabarsapurti Snarak Grantha , Jalpaiguri -1970.

News papers in English & Bengali

1. The Statesman.
2. Amrita Bazar Patrika.
3. Ananda Bazar Patrika.
4. Dainik Basumati.
5. Sambad Bartaman.
6. Sambad Pratidin.
7. Uttar Banga Sambad.
8. Aajkal patrika.

Weekly & Quarterly Paper

1. The Janamat.
2. Jalpaiguri Pakhsik Patrika.
3. The Uttar Darpan.
4. The Trissota.
5. Rupantarar Pathe.

Other Source

1. Desh (Monthly Partika).
2. Saptahik Bartaman.
3. Memorandum & Articles of Association – Kendriya Kshatriya Samiti.