

## Chapter-7

### Political Changes

The changing pattern of demography of North Bengal also led to the changing nature of political development of this region. With the coming of the British neo politico-administrative structure the led to an end in pre-colonial periodic political stature of this region and Cooh Biah –Baikunthpur-Bhutan political complications on the one hand on the other the permanently settled area of Southern North Bngal began to develop in their own ways. However, in this apolitical development of this region the large volume of demographic constriction happened and with this new political ideas also infiltrated. Thus the peoples' reaction and responses in national political development came to notice. The different trends of movements differently influenced the different communities. Thus the Congress, Nationalist, Communist, politics of the Planters' association tried to mobilize the people from their own ideology. With this the partition came down upon and the continuous process of in-migration led to the changes in political orientation of the migrants and he people of this region. Here in this chapter I shall examine the political orientation, participation, mobilization and move of the people of this region from colonial period to post-colonial period to post-Bangladesh liberation period.

I

The district of Malda was influenced by the wave of national movement and that was led by the people originally from other parts of Bengal or India. However, the Hindus and Muslims both moved unified against the British rule. This trend was found in the spread of Wahabi movement in Malda under the leadership of Rafique Mandol and his son Moluvi Amiruddin. <sup>1</sup> When the Muslims in Malda organized a strong base of Wahabi movement in Malda the Hindus of lower castes led a strong movement against the oppression of indigo planters. The indigo peasants of Malda made complain against the Assistant Magistrate Morris forcing for cultivation of indigo. In Bakrabad, Kumbhira and Baishnabnagar there was happenings of setting fire and vandalizing the *Nilkuthis* in Malda. However, this incident mostly was influenced by the internal disputes of the Zamindar families of the region. The Narayanpur Nilkuthi in Kaliachak police station was attacked under the leadership of Rafique Mandol. <sup>2</sup> The national movement under the Indian National Congress also had repercussion in Malda. Radhesh Chandra Sheth from a rich weaving family founded the Maldaha Sabha in Malda. He had associations with the Indian National Congress and he participated in the third annual conference of the INC in Madras. During the anti-partition and Swadeshi movement the District Magistrate of Malda issued a circular in 1905 against the students' participation in the political agitatiion. <sup>3</sup> But Binay sarkar and Radhesh Seth, Haridas Palit, Bipin Bihari Ghosh walked throughout the district and collected students for

the national education and established number of secondary and primary national schools in the district. <sup>4</sup>Both the Hindus and the Muslims in the district participated in the anti-partition movement and Nur Bakhsh presided in a few anti-partition meetings. <sup>5</sup> The Anushilan and Jugantar samiti also worked in the district. Jiban Krishna Sanyal, Hangsa Gopal Agarwal, Harimohan Jha, Pashupati Jha, Narayan Chandra Saha, Kalikinkar Ghosh, Gopal Jha, Bhupendranath Jha, Deben Jha, Kaji Ajaharuddin Ahmed, Narottam Das, Dwarika Das, Giriya Mukherjee, Satyaranjan Sen, Sourindra Mohan Misra, Digindra Narayan Bhattacharya, Saryu Prasad Bihani originally from Rajputana and silk trader of Malda and many other had great contribution in the national movement in Malda. Beside the revolutionary movements the Gandhian Non-Cooperation, Civil Disobedience and Quit India Movements also had great repercussion in the district. During the Civil Disobedience movement a very important move was taken by Jitu Sardar unifying the Santals in 1932. <sup>6</sup> The communist movement also took hold in the district under the leadership of Manik Jha establishing Krishak Sabha in 1939. The Hinduized leader of Santals, Jitu Santal, the disciple of Kashiswar Chakraborty brought the Santals Hinduized and led a movement in 1932. The Quit India Movement in Malda in 1942 was led by Sri Subodh Kr. Misra of Pipla, Harishchandrapur assisted by Sri Bibhuti Bhusan Chakraborty. <sup>7</sup> So the national movement in Malda was organized mainly by the people of upper castes who in different times came into the district for different purpose. Even the non-Bengali origin people of the district also contributed greatly in the movement.

The Dinajpur district had also significant contribution in the national movement of India. Since the Sannyasi-Fakir movement in each and every movement against the British the people of the district had taken part. Under the leadership of Raghunandan Giri Goasain of Raiganj Bandar and Pir Buran Sayed of Ukilpara and Bindol (Baliagram) many of the Hindus and the Muslims participated in the Sannyasi-Fakir movement. It is also known that they fought against the British soldiers in Santoshpur of the district under the leadership of Darpadeb (Darpanaryan). The trend national movement in the line of INC was begun with the foundation of the Congress Committee in the district by Jogindndra Chandra Chakraborty with association of Kuladakanta Ghosh of Ukilpara of Raiganj. Mr. Kuladakanta Ghosh participated in the annual conference of the INC in 1904 at Bombay. Under his guidance the mass non-cooking day and fasting were carried on in Raiganj in the same line of the anti partition movement in Dinajpur and Balurghat. <sup>8</sup> Meetings were held against the partition move and Lal Mohan Ghosh, Maharaja Girija Nath Roy of Dinajpur took leading role. A National School was opened and the *Bratee Samiti* and the *Anusilan Samiti* were formed at the dawn of Dinajpur within 1908. <sup>9</sup> During Non-Cooperation Movement of 1921-22 Jogindra Chandra Chakraborty, Nishith Nath Kundu, Sureshranjan Chatterjee, Nalinikanta Adhiakari (Bagchi) took important role. During the famine of 1928 in the district Upendranarayan Basu, Upendranath Majumdar, Sukumar Guha, Nirmal Ghosh, Anchalbhusan Basu, Arunchandra Ghosh, Gopinath Saha, Kishanlal Ghosh played significant role in relief work. During the CDO movement important role was played by Sukumar Guha,

Umeshchandra Bhowmic, Shashadhar Bhowmic, Sudhamoy Pramanik, Banamali Das, Kulichandra Mitra, Durgapada Sarkar, Basanta Sidhanta from Raiganj and Sharatchandra Majumdar, Mahendra Bhadra, Taraprasanna Chakrabarti, Mahadeb Mairtra, Anchal Bhushan Basu, Arunchandra Ghosh and others. Bimal Chatterjee of Bindol, from Itahar Radhikajiban Basu, Naresh Basu, Barku Tudu, Durga Tudu, Kalipada Majumdar, Annadacharan Das, Ashutosh Das, Fanibhushan Mitra, Bamapada Acharya, Kamini Jha, GopiBrahma Acharya, Sushilkumar Acharya, Nani Acharya were involved in the Swadeshi Movement and many of the were associated with the Anushilan and Jugantar dal. During the *Biyallisher Andolan* Harinarayan Bhadra, Manoranjan Das and Sharatchanddra Majumdar of Kaliaganj played important role.<sup>10</sup> It is important to mention here that a mahila samiti, a Natiional School, an Arbitration Board, A National Sub-Registrar's Office were founded in Balurghat in 1920s. Another important phenomenon in the district was the success of the Swarajya Party having seats in the Balurghat and Dinajpur local bodies.<sup>11</sup> During the *Rin Mukub* (Debt repeal) movement the Jotdar, Zamindar and the money lenders tried to occupy the land of the cultivators. This led to the sharp economic movement. In 1940 when the Floud Commission about to acknowledge the demand of 'tebhaga' of the *Bargadars* the peasant movement became stronger. They also moved against the extra tax imposed by the *zamindars*. Basanta Lal Chatterjee played significant role in this movement. Mahi Bagchi of Dinajpur and Basantalal Chatterjee of Itahar gave leadership of this movement. There 22 peasants became martyrs male female together in the police firing at Khapur of Balurghat.<sup>12</sup> According to Bibhuti Guha Samiruddin, the Muslime peasant and Shivram, the Santal Adhiar was first peasant martyrs in Tebhaga Movement of Dinajpur.<sup>13</sup> In1942 Basantalal Chatterjee joined the Communist Party and played important role in *Tebhaga* movement. It should be mentioned here that he was elected as MLA of West Bengal State from Itahar. On the other the revolutionary organization Srisangha and the Raiganj Branch of Forward Bloc were founded by Sukumar Guha, Anil Nag and Rabindra Kumar Bhowmic and Sukumar Guha became the secretary of the Raiganj Forward Bloc Committee. Gradually Manoranjan Saha, Kalyankumar Goswami, Narendranath Das, Subas Guha, Rabi Gangopadhyaya, Anil Maitra, Chuni Chakaraborty, Abinash Datta, Satyaranjan Das, Manik Chakraborty and many others joined it. The student organization of the FB party was founded in Raiganj in the name of 'Chhatra Federation' and Satyaranjan Das was in the leading of the student organization for a long time.<sup>14</sup> There was an effort from the Muslim Jotdars of Parbatipur police station to communalize the peasants to turn the direction of the Tebhaga movement. But the communist leadership, the solidarity among the Hindu-Muslim peasants could not make the plan possible.<sup>15</sup> It is very important that in 1946 the North Bengal conference of the INC was conferred in Raiganj with the great efforts of Sumumar Guha, Rabi Bhowmic and Anil Nag in assistance of Nisith Nath Kundu. The secretary of the welfare committee of this conference was Brajendra Lal Banerjee, the lawyer. It was presided by the revolutionary leadership Leela Roy. Among the other leaders who were present in the

conference important were Dr. Atindranath Basu, Khagen Dashgupta, Deben Jha (Maldah), Shashadhar Kar, Jyotish Joardar, Prafulla Tripathi, Malabika Datta, Labanyaprabha Dashgupta etc. <sup>16</sup>The Santals, during the months of June and July 1932, in Gangarampur police station of Balurghat under the leadership of Kashiswar Chakrabarti, as the secret government records say, took important role in CDO movement stopping paying tax and defying the authority of the government. They, even resisted arrest some of their co-villagers in which the police opened fire. <sup>17</sup> A committee of the Muslim League was established in 1937 in Raiganj. The members of this committee were Hamidur Rahman (Lawyer), Afuj Ali, Gani Mohommad, Raj Mohammad. They continued their activities up to 1947. However, after the independence there was no existence of this party or committee. Many of the members joined the Congress later on. . <sup>18</sup>

It is well known that as the State of Cooch Behar was the feudatory state under the British so there was no possibility of national movement in the State. However the State was the hide out and shelter of revolutionists of the British Indian land. <sup>19</sup>On the other for various privileges large number of students from different parts of Bengal, particularly of North Bengal and eastern Bengal used to admit in the Victoria Collage of the State. Many of them were influenced by the nationalist activities of their homeland and responded with the happenings of the national incidents in different times in the State as they were studying there. Besides, good number of nationalist leaders and revolutionists also tried to organize their movements against the British Raj in the State. Thus Charuchandra , Pulin Bihari Das, Dr. Suresh Ch. Bandyopadhyaya, Kalimohan Ghosh were associated with Anushilan Samiti of Cooch Behar. <sup>20</sup>In fact, with the foundation of Victoria College in 1888 the State was opened for the national awareness. With this in the Northern part of Bengal including Eastern India the State was turned into the heart of secret revolutionary movement. <sup>21</sup> The swadeshi movement had influence on the study, teaching and learning of Jenkinse School and Victoria College. Satyendranath Majumdar, the editor of Ananda Bazar Patrika was influenced by the idea of Swdeshi in his student life. Revolutionist Taraknath Das was the student of the Victoria College at the time. The political activists such as Shym Sundar Chakrabarty, Satish Chandra Das also became associated with the Swadeshi movement during their study in Jenkinse School. An important aspect of the influence of swadeshi movement among the students of Cooch Behar was most of them were from the British districts of Barishal, Dhaka, Maymansingh, Pabna, Rangpur, Jalpaiguri where the movement was in higher phase.

During this time a number of revolutionary groups worked in North Bengal and the State of Cooch Behar was not out of their activities. Even the interior area of Mathabhanga was also witnessed by the revolutionary activities. The writings of Jogendranath Gupta on Matsini and biography of Garibaldi and the 'Sipahi Bidroher Itihas' by Rajanikanta Gupta were traced in Mathabhanga. Upendra Nath Barman in his boyhood at Mathabhanga joined the Anushilan Samiti. <sup>22</sup> Mathabhanga School Boarding became the center of secret political activities. This

was because it was easy to run away to Rangpur or Mayngauri, Falakta of Jalpaiguri district if the State police approached them. The Maharajas of the State, though did not permit any national movement in the State, various incidents reflected their sympathy towards nationalist movements and the nationalist leaders.<sup>23</sup> Kamal Guha, Jiban De, Arun Maitra, Arun Kr. Bhattacharya, Durgesh Niyogi, Souring Bhattacharya were involved with various political activities in the State. The Cooch Behar Peoples Association and The Great Swadeshi Emporium shortly known as G.S. Emporium became the center of political ideas leading to the growth of national thought in the State of Cooch Behar.<sup>24</sup> In the district of Jalpaiguri a new picture of politically aware demography is observed from the records of the participation of the people of the district in the national and political movements. The district Gazetteers is of opinion that the movement in the district was an urban middle class movement and led by the lawyers, doctors and teachers and the students belonged to these families.<sup>25</sup> A good number of Rajbansi people, the tribal people, the non Bengali immigrant people, Bengali immigrant people and others responded to the national repercussion in the district and also against the oppressive measure of the tea planters and the government in the district. However, of many of them there is no written records in history and do not have the honour of national fighters. On the other among the pensioners of freedom fighters mostly were born of present day Bangladesh and most of them came into the district after independence. This is not to disrespect or making any division among the nationalist patriots but to highlight of the historicity of the demographic changes in the district in post partition period with a new political culture.

In 1883 the Land Holders' Society was set up in the district by the Jotdars who also were of nationalist minded and provided fund to the Congress. There was an effort by Umagati Ray to found the Branch of the INC in 1893 in the district. In the annual conference of the INC or the year of 1886 Dr. Tamijuddin Ahmed represented the district of Jalpaiguri. In the Calcutta Conference of the INC in 1896 Jagadindradeb Raikat, Umagati Raoy and Tarinipraasad Ray attended. They were also present in the Calcutta Conferences of the Congress in 1909. With the founding of National Muhammedan Association in 1878 Abdual Wahab, the Magistrate of Jalpaiguri district and Safiuddin; the Collector of Alipurduar joined the organization. In 1904 the Swadeshi Institution Aryanatya Samaj was founded in Jalpaiguri. The Kshatriya Samity of the Rajbanshis was also founded in the district in 1910. Jagadindradeb Raikat, Madhusudan Ray were the members of the Samiti who were also the supporter of the Congress in the district. Another important feature of the political demography of the district was that the upper caste Hindus, the indigenes Muslims, the Marwari community and even the tribal community all were united under the banner of INC in national struggle in the district.<sup>26</sup> However, in response to the all national repercussion in Bengal and India level there was good response from the district of Jalpaiguri. In 1905 in Beneras Conference of the INC Trailokyonath Moulik and Annada Charan Sen attended from Jalpaiguri district. During this time the anti-partition movement with swadeshi was led by Srinath Hore, Makhallal Bhowmic, Kishori Moulik, Akshay

Moulik, Ramesh Chandra Chakraborty, Chunilal Pramanik, Jyotirindranath Sing, Munsii Md. Sonaulaha, Priyanath Goswami, Chandi Chakraborty, Adyanaath Misra, Annyada Biswas, Jogesh Chandra Ghosh etc. The national sentiment grew greatly among the youth which was reflected in arranging of different cultural practices in the district by the youth. In 1907 the National School was established in Arya Natya Samaj by Sahsikumar Niyogi, Tarini Prasad Roy, Joychandsra Sanyal, Trailokyonath Moulik and Sureshwar Sanyal. Jatin Singha Roy, Kishori Moulik from Faridpur and Chunilal Pramanik, Panchanon Chakraborty, Bankubihari Das and later on Jyotish Chandra Sanyal took the duty of teaching.<sup>27</sup> The district gazetteer reported thus that the middle class Hindu gentry of the Jalpaiguri town set up a National School. Even some of those 'gentlemen' planned of opening of a swadeshi textile mill in the town.<sup>28</sup> Durgadas Chakraborty and Adynath Misra were arrested for burning the Biliti Kapad (foreign cloth). During this time the armed revolutionary trend in North Bengal was joined by Panchanan Niyogi, Stish Ghosh, Purna Das, Annada Biswas, Mahendra Sarkar, Dharendra Chandra Gupta, Durgadas Chakraborty, Sitanath Pramank, Jogendra Dasgupta, Madhab Sanyal, Annada Charan Sen and Jogesh Ghosh. It should be mentioned here that Jagadindra Raikat denounced the title 'Honorary Magistrate' given by the British in opposition to the Jalianwalabag Massacre.<sup>29</sup> He also made an informative discussion on the role of the Rajbansis in the national movement.

The trend of revolutionary movement also reached in Duars region. In the tea gardens 'kurukh dharam' was preached to start the purified practices among the Oraons. The anti-British songs, slogans were raised in Duars. Khagendranath Dasgupta and Abani Goswami went to Duars to hide their arms. The movement was so strong that the garden owners were directed not to recruit the Oraon labourers. A procession was made in the district against him Jalianwalabag massacre. The Non-cooperation movement in the district led to the emergences of great national awakening. The armed revolutionists also became active. The district Congress Committee was established with Jagadindradeb as President and Jyotish Chandra Sanyal as the Secretary. In Boda, Debiganj, Pachaggar, Tetulia, Dhupguri, Maynaguri, Madarihat, Falakata and Alipurduar regional level leaders were selected and given responsibility of the Party activities. In 1929 the district Students' Conferences was held in which secretary were Charu Chandra Sanyal and the Secretary of the Welcome Committee was Atul Chandra Sen. the CDO movement led by M.K. Gandhi had great repercussion in the district of Jalpaiguri. In June, 1930 Sriram Uroan Ganga was arrested from Ramsai during picketing. Soma Vagat and Gatharu Vagat were also arrested from the same place. In July, 1930 Bhagi Das, Bikhani Das, Kshekumram Das, Dheku Das, Ekao Das, Khutia Das, Gedhang Das, Satyaram Das, Basanta Das, Dakua Das, Samaru Das, Asaru Das, Atiya Das Manua Das, Baithaya Das, Dheku Das were arrested during disobeying the civil laws at the hat of Pachagar. From the same place 27 Rajbansi youth were arrested. From Jagaddal hat Pandit Rajan Misra, Puran Das and fourteen other Satyagrahis were arrested. In August, 1930 four tribal youth from Dhupguri and Karabasa Barman, Dhairya Narayan

Barman, Tilak Barman, Kashinath Barman, Darpa Narayan Barman, Paniya Barman from Pachagar were arrested. Besides, large numbers of persons from the different places of the district were arrested during the CD movement.<sup>30</sup> The congress movement is regarded as the movement of the urban upper caste and it was after Gandhiji's advent in the Indian political scene the necessity was felt for the support of the masses and with this realization the leaders of the Jalpaiguri District Congress Committee went to the villages and the plantations to having the support of the peasants, plantation workers and the Muslims. But till then those mass people were apathetic towards the politics of the Hindu educated gentry of the urban areas.<sup>31</sup> However, in 1928 the Congress Party in the district became deemed as her local leaders acknowledged it.<sup>32</sup> In Jalpaiguri town the CDO movement had great repercussion. A great numbers of movmenteers were arrested for 'rajdroha' (movement against the government). They were Biren Datta, Ajit Chakraborty, Charu Chandra Sanyal, Sashadhar Royk, Sachin Datta, Swaprakash Datta, Bhupati Chanda, Jatin Roy, Anil Bagchi, Bijay Hore, Rajat Guhathakurata, Bhabaranjan Ganguli, Khagendranath Dasgupta, Satishchandra Lahiri, Jogesh Datta, Niren Bagchi, Bhawani Chakraborty, Aghore Sarkar, Nripeb Moulik, Niren Sanyal, Sachin Dasgupta, Arun Chakrabroty, Satyagopal, Dablu Basu, Satrughna singha, Asutosh Das, Biren Basu, Shankar Sanyal, Berendra Krishna Bhowmic, Narendra Krishna Bhowmic, Akhilesh Sanyal, Deben Deb, Keshab Datta and many others. Swedshi trend with national sentiment grew rapidly and spread everywhere in the district.<sup>33</sup> The conference of Bengal Provincial Congress in 1932 was an important incident in the district. The Amrita Bazar wrote (February,4) that 'Dr Charuchandra Sanyal, Chairman of the Reception Committee welcomed the delegates. His welcome to Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose, the President-elect of the Indian National Congress was loudly cheered by the entire assembly.'<sup>34</sup>

The peasant movements also began in the district agains 'tola-gandi' collection in which all the peasants both from the Hindus and the Muslims joined the movement. There was demand of half of the produce, to collect the crops in the peasants' kholan (home-yard) and against the interest of the money lendses. In 1938 the Congress Socialist Party was established and the Krishak Sabha was formed. The president of the Samiti was Chunilal Basu and the General Secretary was Gurudas Roy. In the Annual Conference of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee in 1939 in Jalpaiguri town the provincial leaders of Krishak Sabha spoke about agrarian problems and planted the seed of left-wing politics among the young workers leading to the formatioin of the district committee of the CPI. Then the leaders began to organize the peasants, plantation workers and the students.<sup>35</sup> Thus the Adhiar movement began and spread in Haribhasa, Garalbari, Belakoba and other regions. Mukulesh Sanyal gave a long list of the communist workers in the district.<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, the Congress won the Jalpaiguri Municipality and the District Board was also in the hand of the Congressmen. But during the QIM the Congressmen resigned from the Municipality and District Board. At the time in 1940 the district committee of the Muslim League came into being in Jalpaiguri with Nawab Mosarraf Hossain as

the leader. There was at least one member of the League in each Muslim house of the district.<sup>37</sup> In the same year the district committee of the Hindu Mahasabha was also formed in Jalpaiguri with a few old Congressmen at the leadership. It should be mention here that the Swarjist trend of nationalist movement had hold in the district and Jyotish Chandra Sanyal upheld the Sawarajya Party view point in his Janamat, the Bengali weekly in the district.<sup>38</sup> In this situation the socialists and the communist took the advantages and the tebhaga took a revolutionary form in the district. Huge number of women participated in the movement. Professor in an article elaborated the issue of the tebhaga movement in Dooars.<sup>39</sup> In 1942 the District Committee of the Forward Bloc party was formed with Shashadhar Kar as president and Sushil Basu as secretary. The district Congress Office turned into Bloc office. Rabindranath Sikdar etc. the congressi followers of FB became ousted Congressmen in the district.<sup>40</sup> During this time Jogendranath Mandol was humiliated by the Bloc activists during his sabha with the scheduled caste people. During this time of Second World War Duars became hotbed of anti-British national movement with procession, sabhas and picketing. The Marwari community also came ahead participated by Tansukhlal Mahesri, Sheudeo Sharma, Babulal Sharma, Indarajmal Agarwala, Ramdin Daga, Satyanarayan Kanodia, Naren Daga, Sitaram Kalyani with leading role. Though the wave of the Hindu-Muslim riot of 1946 created disorder in the district but the Forward Bloc activists preached against communal riots. Nalinikanta Chakraborty, Nirmal Basu, Sachin Lahiri, Ajit Chakraborty, Prabhat Basu, Mani Nag, Rathin Roy, Amarendra Kundu, Mukulesh Sanyal, Ramapada Bandyopadhyay, Mohit Sanyal, Badal Samajdar, Manas Sanyal, Arun Sanyal, Ranjit Basu, Milu Datta, Prativa Chakraborty, Reba Sanyal, Kumud Ghosh, Sadhan Bandyopadyay, Prabhat Dasgupta, Jagadish Dasgupta and Niranjan Datta were the members of the Forward Bloc party.<sup>41</sup> The demography of the hill tract was constituted by the Nepali migrants initially by the landless laborers. They were mostly under the control of the tea-planters. Educational backwardness and economic uncertainty did not give them space for growing national sentiment. Geo-administrative separation from the main stream Indian culture also prevented to grow national movement in the region. Most importantly the socio-economic structure in other parts of India constituted by the Jamindary or Jotdary system, ownership of land and the land-man relationship could not be emerged in the Darjeeling hill region. Thus the absence of this socio-economic-demographic structure due to the tea-garden centric socio-economic morphology prevented for the emergence of strong middle class. So when the national trend of movement in other parts of India was emerging in relation to the middle class participation in the movement could not be happened in this hilly tract of Darjeeling district. In spite of this instances are found of engagement of hill people in the national movement from the district though much from the Terai and Plains of Siliguri.

During the turning of the nineteenth century when anti-partition and swadeshi movement took challenging form in different parts of Bengal then Darjeeling was totally out of its track with only exception of Khagendranath Roy who made efforts to influence the hill Nepali people to



use of native products instead of foreign products. Denouncing the foreign cigars many of the workers showed their response to the Swadeshi. In this context the Amritaibazar wrote 'The Swadeshi spirit has penetrated into the very heons of Nepaulese of the remote interior and it would...one day penetrate into Nepal itself.'<sup>42</sup> Some local political associations also were formed in the district. In 1917 'Hill Men's Association was formed under leadership of S.W. Ladenla. In the second decade of the twentieth century the Gorkha Samiti was formed in Darjjeling which was renamed as Gorkha Association under the secretary ship of Agam Sing.

However, the national movement in its true form began in 1920 with the leadership of Dalbahadur Giri. With his sole efforts the national movement in Darjeeling hill region got tremendous support. He participated in the annual conferences of INC at Amritasar in 1919 and at Nagpur in 1920. Being inspired by M.K. Gandhi he established the Kalimpong branch of INC in 1921. Sabiri Devi, nicknamed as Helen Lepcha, was greatly influenced by him and joined the Congress National Movement. Bhakata Bahadur tamang, Prtiman sing Lama, Agam Sing Giri, Manbahadur Giri assisted him to run the national movement in Darjeeling. Bhaktabir Lama, a follower of Dalbahadur Sing propagated for non-cooperation movement in different parts of Mirik. Jangbir Sapkotar, another follower of Dalbahadur, was engaged in organizing the tea laborers against the British tea planters. After death of Dalbahadur he continued the Congress movement in Darjeeling. He made khadi movement here during the Quit India Movement of 1942. Gaga Chhiring and Putali Maya Devi played important role in the movement. However, there was no armed revolutionary movement in the hill of Darjeeling as the part of the national movement. After Dalbahadur another eminent political activist in Darjeeling was Dmbar Sing Gurung who won in the election of 1937 for the Bengal Provincial Legislative Assembly even defeating the British missionary and Lepcha supported candidate of Peoples' Social Union. He founded the Akhil Bharatiya Gorkha League in 1943 with the assistance of Ranabir Subba, Rupnarayan Sinha, Abibahadur Gurung, Jangbir Thapa etc. In its third annual conference in 1946 they expressed their support on the Congress leadership.<sup>43</sup> There was also the communist movement in the district at the time. During 1945 under the leadership of the Jalpaiguri District committee the communist activist Sushil Chatterjee from Nadia was engaged in spreading communist ideology in the hill tract of Darjeeling. With the assistance of Ratanlal Brahman he organized workers' movement in the tea gardens of Darjeeling. At the same time the drivers' union, municipal workers' union, Students Federation were also formed. To implement various workers' acts and trade union acts the Darjeeling Chia Kaman Majdur Union was formed in 1945 with Ratanlal Brahman as President and Bhadra Bahadur Hamal as the secretary.<sup>44</sup> In the election of Legislative Council in 1946 Ratan Lal was given candidature. Bhadrabahadur Hamal, Ganeshlal Subba, Madan Chhetri and Bhim Bahadur worked with him. Satyen Masjumdar, Pangmal Chhetri also organized the tea workers' unions. Thus Ratan Lal won the election even defeating the candidates supported by the Tea planters. The Congress leader Saryu Prasad Poddar also tried to form workers' Union but with not much success. However, the Gorkha

League could influence the workers to some extent. Taking the privilege the Planters followed the divide and make weak policy and supported the Gorkha League. This led to the conflictual relation between the Gorkha League and the Communists in the district.<sup>45</sup> Siliguri was influenced by the national movement under Indian Association during 1880s. During anti-partition movement an attempt of repercussion was taken in Siliguri under the leadership of Khagesndranath Roy, a Rajbansi youth. An organization for the interest of the Nepali, Lepcha and other workers of hill was formed under presiding of Lt. Gobardharn Gurung. It was also against oppression of the British tea planters. A general strike was organized in Siliguri in 1919 on the occasion of British Duke of Kent's India visit. At the time Shiu Mangal Sing and Sabitri Sengupta were arrested. Basudeb Ojha, S.S. Lama, Dilbahadur Brahman, Jagadihs Gupta, Umadata Sharma moved ahead the national movement in the district. During 1930s Siliguri greatly responded in CDO movement under the leadership of Brjendra Kumar Basu Roychoudhury. Many youths participated in the movement in Siliguri. In 1940s the Congress movement became strong under Shiu Mangal Sing, Brajendra Kr. Basu Roy Choudhury, Bireswar Majumdar, Dhirendranath Roy, Biren Roy Sarkar, Sharnakamal Dasgupta, Pratul Maitra and others. The communist movement in Siliguri was also strengthened by Sushil chatterjee, Satyendra Naryan Majumdar, Nripen Basu, Atin Basu, Bhupen Bhowmic, Charu Majumdar, Biren Basu who organized the tea-garden workers in union. In the Uttarbanga Jatiya Mahasabha of 1947 people belonged to the tribes and all others irrespective of race, sect and creed joined in it.<sup>46</sup> The people of Darjeeling gradually began to support the partition in objective of forming Hindu majority State with the Bengali linguistic people. The Darjeeling Bar Association on 26<sup>th</sup> March, 1947 took the decision that as the Muslim League in Bengal had been determined to separate Bengal from the rest of India, then the Bar Association might have full support the demand for the creation of a separate province comprising the Hindu majority areas in Bengal to be constituted as an integral unit of the All India Union. During this time the Uttarbanga Jatiya Mahasabha was formed and the Rajbansis, the Gorkhas, the Santals, the Meches, the Garos, the Oraons joined. Though initially they were not in support of partition but in circumstances they began to support partition later on. The Bengali Association of the district also supported the proposal of Hindu majority Bengali linguistic State.<sup>47</sup> The tea planters never wanted the spirit of nationalism infiltrate into the Darjeeling hill area. For economic profit they never permitted nationalist upsurge or any demands as the workers of the other parts of India by the tea labourers. On the other initially the elite class Bengali people who and the highly posted Bengali Babus looked the hill people down upon. Taking this social division between the Bengalis and the Nepalis of the hill the Tea planters tried to separate the Darjeeling hill area from the rest of Bengal. So the Planters' Association and the European Association in 1907 forming the 'Citizens of Darjeeling Hills' made the demand of separation of Darjeeling from Bengal. Even in the name of Hillmen Association in 1917 they again demanded to form 'North Eastern Frontier State' with northern part of Darjeeling-Jalpaiguri and some

parts of Assam. In 1929 also they raised the same demand. But due to the national and international political condition such as 'Russo-phobi', phobia of Tibeto-Nepali alliance, rise of communist radicalism in India the British Government did not dare to take a step like portioning of Bengal. So the planters' demand could not be meet up with. In fact if we scrutinize the linguistic table of Darjeeling hill area for the census year of 1901.1931 and 1941 then it will be apparent that the people purely belonged to Nepali language, though in Majority as single linguistic community, was in minority in compare to the people of other languages together. On the other the new Bengali professional classes with national spirit in their pockets tried to spread it among the mountainous area. In recognition of Nepali language as the medium of education by the Calcutta University in 1916 there were the influences of the Bengali intellectuals. So in this within this new social atmosphere the move of the planters for separation the hill from the plains could not become success.

## II

During the post-partition period there was open conflict between the Communists and the Congress followers in the districts of North Bengal. In the communist meeting at Birnagar of Raiganj in 1950 there was a clash with the opponents. In the incident the populist leaders such as Manas Roy, Jamini Majumdar, Shasthi Ghosh (Anil Ghosh) were wounded. When the communist leader Jyoti Basu came to preach against the incident in Raiganj the opponents also created problems in arranging his meeting Sabha. However, in spite of this the incidents increased the popularity of the communist movement in the district.<sup>48</sup> The movement of the refugees aggravated it more.

The movements for the refugees in the district of West Dinajpur went on in two fold ways. One was led by the 'Udbstu Kalyan Samiti' under the Congress and the Peoples' Socialist Party for 'dry dole' to the refugees. The stream of the movement was led by Dr. Prafulla Mukherjee, the Chairman of Raiganj Municipality of the period, advocate Jogesh Dash and the PSP leaders Nishith Nath Kundu, Krishnalal Ghosh and Dr. Brindaban Bagchi and others. On the other under the banner of UCRC the communist leaders Biren Bhattacharya, Jatin Kar, Jagajjiban Chakraborty, Jiban Biswas, Manas Roy, Asit Ghosh led the second stream of the movement for the right and interest of the refugees in the district. However, at the time of anti-Banga-Bihar merger movement the communists, the PSPs and the Congress men came together for the interest of the district. In district level it was led by the PSP leader Dhiren Banerjee and the Communist leader Jamini Majumdar. Besides the communist leaders Biren Bhattacharya, Manas Roy, Jatin Kar and the Congress leaders Prafulla Mukherjee, Sudhir Moulik, Nilkamal Debnath, Gopal Majumdar joined together in the struggle.<sup>49</sup> In 1950s the Krishak Sabha movement was getting much importance in the districts of North Bengal. Pijush Das, Asit Ghosh, Shanti Das, Nani Gopal Roy and Krishna Barman began to organize the peasants. This initiative got a momentum during the scarcity of rice all over Bengal. So the food movement 1959 broke out and repercussion in all the districts of North Bengal was found heavily. The movement was mainly led by the Communists against the Congress Government's failure to meet up with the problem. The elaborative scrutiny and documentation of the movement may be studied in Suranjan Das's 'Food Movement of

1959' <sup>50</sup> Rabindra Nath Bhowmic, Sudhir Sarkar, Kshitish Chandra Majumdar, Subrata Majumdar, rabi Putatundu, Sona das, Manas Roy, Pijush Das, Khukudi, Aswini das , Swadeshi Chaki organized and participated the food movement disobeying the laws in different parts of the district of Dinajpur. There were committees of Operation Food, Famine Prevention and Prevention of Price Hike temporarily. <sup>51</sup> Even in 1966 movement large number of people participated in the against the food scarcity. The students such as Kisan Chatterjee, Dilip Bagchi, Pabitra Pani Saha, Harisadhan Ghosh, Prabodh Sarkar, Ranjit Chattopadyay, Ashok Nanda, Amit Sen, Kumkum Bhattacharya and many others joined the movement. <sup>52</sup> The students' movement also was geared up during 1960s. The workers' movement also got momentum during this time. The State Transport Employees movement became example in the line of employees' movement. The political parties were trying to dominate over the movement. In Cooch Behar the Congress and the Forward Bloc and in Raiganj the Communist became dominated in the Transport Employees' movement. The Bus Owners' Syndicate was formed in Balurgahat and Kaliaganj. In 1966 Biren De Sarkar organized the State Transport Employees and in Dinajpur it was done by Manas Roy and Jnanaranjan Chattopadhyay. In 1967 the West Dinajpur Jute Bailing and Processing Workers' Union was formed under the leadership of Sahadeb Jadab and Shyamal Chakraborty. In 1967 and 1969 twice the United Front Government was formed in West Bengal but for a short time. During 1968 the communist leaders of North Bengal were being humiliated and attacked. With the formation of CITU in 1970 the NBSTEAs were included with it. <sup>53</sup> The movement for recovering the benami lands from the Jotedars and Jamidars achieved greater form in North Bengal and the communist leaders played the leading role in it. In Islampur Bachcha Munsai, Sherketu Sing, Nandmohan Sing led the land occupation. During the second United Front Government the movement expanded in Sonapur, Handiagachh, Majhiali, Lakshmipur, Sujali, Chutia Khor, Daspara, Ghirnigaon areas. In occupation of Benami land of P.C. Lal and other Jotedars in Islampur Sunit Kr. Chakraborty, Adhir Biswas, Deben Roy, Jainuddin took the leading role. <sup>54</sup> However, the movement led to the loss life of people from both the sides of Jotedars and peasants. In 1970 the occupied land was distributed to the peasants. In 1977, after the forming of the Left Front Government in West Bengal the programme of Operation Barga was taken and spread all over North Bengal districts under the leadership of the Communists.

During post-partition period huge number of displaced and refugees came into the district of Darjeeling, specifically in the plains and terai region of the district. This affected the balance of political organization. There emerged conflict among the old members and the new comers for the domination in the Congress. On the other taking the issue of national sovereignty conflict arose in the communist party of the district leading to the division among the youth members of the party. However, it may be mentioned here that communal conflict did not happen in Siliguri. Barring the Government officials did not leave Siliguri. A few rich Muslims went to Pakistan by exchanging their properties. <sup>55</sup> However, during the post-partition period the ethnic issue got momentum in the district. Because very importantly in the general election of 1952 the Gorkha League won in the two seats of hill and one seats of Siliguri and on the other the Congress won the reserved seat in Siliguri. In Kalimpong though initially the communist candidate got the seat but in by election the Gorkha League Candidate won it. However, in Terai tea gardens area the communist expanded their influence and in 1955 in 55 gardens strike happened on different claims for the tea workers. The Gorkha League also supported the strike. After

the acts of 1953, 1955 and 1959 the communist began to move for rescuing land of benami. During the Indo-China war of 1962 most of the communist leaders were arrested. During 1964 in time of the division of the CPI, the members of the communist party of Darjeeling remained in the Communist Party of Marxist line (CPI(M)). Meanwhile a radical line of the movement began in the district in 1967 popularly known as Naxal Movement. But the armed movement with government suppressive policy could not survive long.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand on the question of national self-determination, the only anti-Bengali preaching of the Gorkha leaders, the joining of the Gorkha League MPs in Congress, the Gorkha League Secretary's joining in United Front Government as a minister led to the alienation among the emerging educated middle class Nepalese. Thus in 1970s the Gorkha League became disintegrated and 'Prantiya Parishad' and 'Nilo Jhanda' appeared. The emergence of GNLF under Subas Ghising thus occurred and within 1980 all the political organizations came under the banner of Gorkha National Liberation Front.<sup>57</sup> After the formation of the Left Government in the State of West Bengal the first Panchayet election was held in 1978. The Zila Parishad of Darjeeling district was formed by the Congress, Gorkha League and the Independent party. The Leftists were in opposition. Panchartna Pradhan was the Sabhadhipati and P.P. Rai was the Saha-Sabhadhipati. In 1983 election in the same way the Board was formed with Panchartna Pradhan as the Sabhadhipati and Tapan Sinha of Congress as Saha-Sabhadhipati. But the difference between the Gorkha League and the Congress led them away and the League-Left Bord was formed with Panchartna as the Sabhadhipati and Anil Sinha from CPI (M) as the Saha-Sabhadhipati. Meanwhile in 1986 the violent movement of the GNLF began and the P.R. Pradhan resigned from the Board leaving it in the hands of the left. In 1988 the Panchayet election could not be held in Darjeeling district. Finally in a tripartite discussion among the movementeers of hill, the Central Government and the State the 'Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Coouncil' with Subhash Ghising as the Chairman and 'Siliguri Subdivisional Council' or 'Siliguri Mahakuma Parishad' with Anil Saha as Sabhadhipati were formed.

After the independences of India there was some dichotomy in the State of Cooch Behar in relation to its joining with Indian Union and later on with the States of West Bengal. The most of the members of the State Council were of the opinion to continue the independences of the State. The Hitasahdani Sabha, consisted mainly by the elected members of the Council and Dowager Maharani Indira Devi were against the merger of the State with the Indian Union.<sup>58</sup> But the Maharaja Jagddipendra Narayan Bhupbahadur signed the Instrument of Accessiion and merged the State with the Indian Union. Again the Muslim members of the Sabha were in support of joining with Pakistan. Khan Choudhury Amanatullah and Satish Singha Roy gave speech on keeping the State out of Indian Union and to destroy the State Congress.<sup>59</sup> During this time the Praja Mandal of Cooch Behar and the Cooch Behar Peoples' Associatiion led a movement for joining the State of Cooch Behar with the State of West Bengal. But the members of the Hitasahdani Sabha were in effort to join with the State of Assam or Pakistan. However, finally with the moves of the Praja Mondal, the Peoples' Associaton and the State Congress, Communist Party, Forward Bloc and with the effort of Sharat Chandra Basu finally the State was merged with State of West Bengal.<sup>60</sup> As post-partition period witnessed a large volume of landless immigrants into North Bengal, so the Rajbansi Kshatriya Samiti claimed the Government Acquisition and ceased land to be distributed Amon the landless Ranjbansi people.<sup>61</sup> But it did not hppen fairly and the land was going in the hands of 'outsiders' more than the Ranjbansis. This alienated them and the ethno-based movement

was organized by forming 'Uttarakhand Dal' in 1969. It also claimed the members of the 'Uttarkhand Dal' to be included in the North Bengal Development Council which the Congress opposed.<sup>62</sup> This led the Uttar Khand Dal to participate in the State Assembly Election of 1972 and 1977 but only in defeat due to the Changing position of demographic scenario of North Bengal. Then they turned to move aligning with the Scheduled Tribe people of the region forming UTJAS or Uttarbanga Tapashili Jati O Adibasi Sangsthan against the domination of the scheduled caste refugees in the government privileges of caste in compare to the so called indigenous scheduled caste and tribe people and they demanded for special safeguards from the Government. This trend of movement later on took the radical shape under the Kamtapur Peoples Party (KPP) movement.

An important aspect of the political demography of North Bengal during post-partition period was the political orientation of the refugees. In fact the people living in Eastern part of Bengal had mixed affiliation to the political trends of the period. There was little existence of the leftists there before 1938, though the middle class people influenced by the Yuganar and Anushilan groups had pro-left inclination during the pre-partition period.<sup>63</sup> However the tebhaga movement and some peasant discontentment led to little room for the leftists. Thus some pockets of communist influence in Noakhali, Susang area of Mymensingh, Jessore, Khulna, Chittagong, Dinajpur and Rajshahi districts were there in East Bengal. But during immediate post-partition period the East Pakistan's oppression to the Communist Cadres and Party's decision for the followers not to migrate and single party for both the sides led the communist influence diminish. The displaced, naturally being lost every things became dependent on the Government help coming into Indian side of Bengal and the Congress's assurances of careful treatment to the partition affected evicted people from East Pakistan turned to the pro-Congress political orientation. But the changing attitude of the Congress under the leadership of Nehru treating the Bengali refugees as foreigners turned the partition affected East Bengali Hindu immigrants from 'dependence' to 'disillusioned.' The Communists of the State of West Bengal took the advantage and infiltrate the leftist trend among the refugees in a planned way and the incidents like TFERC movement of 1953, the Food Movement of 1959 and 1966 paved the way of rising of the left in association with the Refugee movement. Prof. Chakrabarti has nicely presented the plot of the rise of the Left in power in these circumstances in his monumental work.<sup>64</sup> However, unlike the other parts of Bengal the communists had strong hold in North Bengal districts as we have seen in previous discussion based pre-partition demography and the post-partition political scenario also developed with post-partition demographic development. That may be seen from the proceeding discussion.

### III

Prior to the Act of 1919 (Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms) the provincial councils had been playing the role of advisory body the provincial Government. With the passing of the Act the first general election was held in 1920, the first Council (1921-23) election being fought without any party candidature. In the Muhammadan constituency Maulvi Yakunuddin Ahmed was elected from Dinajpur and Maulvi Shah Muhammad Chaudhuri was elected from Malda-cum-Jalpaiguir constituency. In regards to the non-Muhammadan constituency Mr. Prasanna Deb Raikat came from Jalpaiguri and Rai Sahib Nilmani Ghatak from Malda. The second Council (1924-26) became more influential and larger in number of

elected members with 52 out of 75 in numbers in the candidature of Swarajya Party within the Congress. Among the members of the Muhammadan Constituency, Maulvi Kader Baksh came from Dinajpur and Maulvi Musharruf Khan Bahadur from Malda-cum-Jalpaiguri. Regarding the member of the the Non-Muhammadan constituency Babu Jogindra Chandra came from Dinajpur, Mr. Prasanna Deb Raikat from Jalpaiguri and Babu Ramesh Chanddra Bagchi from Malda.

After the death of C.R. Das the Hindu-Muslim rupture in Bengal came to an end and the Muslims of Bengal were moving away from the Congress. At the time the Bengal Muslim Council Association was formed by A.K. Fazlul Haq. Another three Muslim Parties were formed under the leadership of Akram Khan, A.K. Ghuznavi and H.S. Suhrawardy. At the time in the Third Council (1927-29) the members of Muslim constituency were Maulvi Kader Baksh from Dinajpur, Nawab Musharruf Hossain Khan Bahadur from Malda-cum-Jalpaiguri and from Non-Muhammadan constituencies there were Babu Jogin Chakraborty from Dinajpur, Mr. Prassanna Deb Raikat from Jalpaiguri and Babur Romes Chandra Bagchi. In 1929 the Nikhil Banga Praja Samiti was formed under the presidentship of Sir Abdur Rahim. In the fourth Council (1929-36) members from the Muhammadan Constituencies were Maulvi Hassan of Dinajpur and Nasab Musharuf Hossain Khan Bahadur and from Non-Muhammadan constituencies were Babu Jogindra Chandra Chakraborti, succeeded by Baby Premhari Burman and Maharaja Jagidhsh Narth Ray; Mr Prosanna Deb Raikat of Jalpaiguri and from Malda was Babur Romes Chandra Bagachi succeeded by Mr. Narendra Kr. Basu and Mr. Shanti Shekhareswar Roy. The succession was due to the vacancy for resignation during CDO movement.

Up to 1935 the Bengal Legislative Council was a mixed body with elected representatives of the people and the nominated officials. But the Government Act of 1935 enacted only the elected representatives as the members of the Legislative Council. Thus the general election was held for 250 members of the Bengal Legislative Council in 1937 with new allocation of reserved seats for the Scheduled Castes (30). The Legislative Assembly was formed by the members from North Bengal Municipal as General-urban Surendra Mohan Moitra of Congress(G), as General Rural from Malda Atul Chandra Kumar of Congress, Tarini Charan Pramanik (SC) as Independent, from Dinajpur Premhari Barma (SC) as Congress (G), Nisith Nath Kundu as Congress (G), Shamaprasad Barman (SC) as Independent, from Jalpaiguri-Cum-Siliguri Khagendra Nath Dasgupta as Congress (G), Upendra Nath Barman (SC) as Independent and Posanna Deb Raikat (SC) as independent, from Darjeeling Dambarsingh Gurung as Independent. On the other from the Muhammadan constituencies members were Moulvi Mofiguddin Choudhury of KPP from Balurghat, Moulvi Hafizuddin Chowdhury as Independent from Thakurgaon, Moulavi Abdul Jabbar of M.L. from Dinajpur Central East, Mahatabuddin Ahmed Khan Bahadur of M.L. from Dinajpur Central-West, Nawab Musharruf Hossain Khan Bahadur of Independent from Jalpaiguri-cum-Darjeeling, Zohur Ahmed Choudhury of M.L. from Malda North, Idris Ahmed Mia of KPP from Malda South and most importantly as the Trade Union-Labour from Tea Garden Labour of Bengal Dooars (Western) Sardar Babu Lita Munda Oraon of Independent party. In the General Election held in between 17-23 March of 1946 the members for Legislative Assmebly of Bengal from North Bengal constituencies were as follows: from Dinajpur Nishith Nath Kundu of Congress (G), Rup Narayan Roy (SC) of Communist and Harendra Nath Roy (SC) of Congress (G); From Jalpaiguri-cum-Siliguri Mohini M. Burman (SC) of Congress (G) and Pasanna Deb Raikat (SC) of Independenet; in Muhammadan Rural from Balurghat Mozaffar Rahman Chowdhury of ML;

form Thakargaon Moulvi Hafizuddin Chowdhury of ML; from Jalpaiguri-cum-Darjeeling Nawab Mussaraf HOssain of ML; from Malda North Mohammad Sayeed Mia of ML; from Malda South Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury of ML and from Tea Garden (Labour) Darjeeling Ratanlal Brahmin of Communist. This is important that during this time the Muslim League members were dominant in North Bengal districts and two members came on the votes of the communists in North Bengal.

During immediate post-partition and post-independent period the West Bengal Legislative Assembly became consisted of 90 members of 72 constituencies. The members of North Bengal in the Assembly with their political orientation were as follows: for General Seats from Jalpaiguri-cum-Siliguri Khagendra Nath Dasgupta and Janeswar Roy who was succeeded by subsequently Mohini Mohan Burman and Birendra Nath Roy Sarkar; from Darjeeling Damber Singh Gurung subsequently succeeded by Sheo Kumar Rai,; from West Dinajpur-cum-Malda Shyama Prasad Barman (SC), Kiran Sanakar Roy succeeded by Sourindra Mohon Misra; in Muhammadan Seats from Jalpaiguri-cum-Darjeeling Musharruff Hossain; from Malda Md. Sayeed Miah; from Darjeeling Tea Garden Tatan Lal Brahman of Communist. As per the States Merger order of the Governor two representatives of the people of Cooch Behar Satish Chandra Roy Singh Sarkar and Umesh Chandra Mandal were nominated in the Assmebly.

After independence the first general election for parliamentary House of the People ,Lok Sabha, was held in 1952. In the election from North Bengal districts there were five seats for Lok Sabha three from North Bengal constituency comprising Cooch Behar, Jalapiguri and Darjeeling, one from the district of West Dinajpur and one from Malda. In the three seated constituency seats were reserved one each for the SC and the ST. From North Bengal constituency all the three seats were occupied by the Congress party the Candidates being Upendra Nath Barman (having 20.60 % polled vote) as SC candidate, Birendra Nath Katham (having 18.98 % polled vote) as ST candidate and Amiya Kanta Basu (18.40 % of polled vote) as General candidate. In both the constituencies of West Dinajpur and Malda the seats were won by also the Congress party respectively by Sushil Ranjan Chattopadhyay (having 59.45 % polled vote) and Surendra Mohon Ghosh (having 56.09 % polled vote). The FBR (8.96 %) and the KMPP (7.79 %) achieved good proportion of polled votes. From the following table descriptions of total electors and total votes polled may be observed in North Bengal constituencies. On the other in State Assembly election of 1952 there were six seats for the SC, five seats for the ST out of total 36 seats in North Bengal districts. In Darjeeling district out five seats three were won by the Independent Party namely Dalbahadur Singh from Darjeeling, Shiv kumar Rai from Jore-Bunglow and Gerog Mahbert. In Kalimpong the CPI candidate Lalit B. Kharga got the seat and the general seat of Kurseong Siliguri was taken by Congress candidate Tenjing Wangdi. However, in by-election for the seat of Darjeeling Lalit B. Kharga was replaced by Nar Bahadur Gurung from Independent Party. So in Darjeeling both the Congress and the CPI lost their foot hold and the hill people in the name of the Independent party were politically becoming dominating. The voting acquaintance may be observed from the following table.

In Jalpaiguri district in 1952 there were 10 seats for State's Assembly in which 2 for SC and 3 for ST. in all the ten seats the candidates from Congress Party became the winners. The winners were Khagendra N. Das Gupta, Asrumati Devi, Sasadhar Kar, Surendra N. Roy, Rabindra N. Sikdar, Pijush Kanti Mukherjee, Bhirendra Brahma Mondal, Bhagat Mangal Das and Jaineswar Roy. However, the leftists in the form of Communists, Socialists, KMPP, FBR, RSP got good hold in the district. In the district of Cooch Behar out



of six seats two were reserved for the SC candidates. In all the six seats the Congressmen S.P. Chatterjee from Mekhliganj, Sarada Prasad Pramanik from Mathabhanga, Umesh Chandra Mondal and Satish Ch. Roy Singha from Dinhata and Maziruddin Ahmed and Jatidnranath Singha Sarkar from Cooch Behar Sadar were elected. In Dinhata and CoochBehar Sadar the left in the form of CPI, KMPP and FBM achieved good score. In the West Dinajpur district there were one SC and One ST seats out of total six seats. Following the same line in all the seats the Congressmen were elected such as Shyma Prasad Barman and Gulam Haraidur Rahaman from Raiganj, Banamali Das of Itahar, Satindra N. Basu fo Gangaampur, and Saroj Ranjan Chattopadhyay and Lakshman Hasda from Balurghat. In this district also the left ideology in the form of FBR, CPI, KMPP, RCP, RSP, FBM got good hold. It is important that in Itahar constituency the vote of the CPI and FBR together was above the Congress Candidate. In district of Malda out of nine seats only one was reserved for the SC. Here the CPI got one seat in Gazole, the Independents got two seats in Malda and Kaliachak North. In other six seats the Congress candidates were elected.

From the detail record of the candidature of the political parties both in Parliamentary constituency and in Legislative Assembly no Muslim candidate was given for contesting the election in the district of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and West Dinajpur. In Cooch Behar legislative constituency one candidate of the Congress from Cooch Behar Sadar and in Malda Congress Muslim candidate in Kharba, in Ratua Independent Muslim candidate were elected. But the Independent Muslim candidate in Gazole, KMPP Muslim candidate of Kharba, KMPP Muslim candidate in Harishchandrapur, Congress Muslim candidate in Kaliachak North could not become elected. Another important thing is that barring Cooch Behar and Malda in other districts there was no candidate belonged to SC or ST community to contest the election in general seats during the 1952 General Election in the State of West Bengal.

During the parliamentary election of 1957 there were two seats in Cooch Behar together with Jalpaiguri, One two seats in West Dinajpur, One in Darjeeling and one in Malda. In all the six constituencies Congressmen were elected. Thus Santaosh Banerjee (32.21 % vote) and Upendra Nath Barman (SC, 28.67 % vote) from Cooch Behar Constituency, T. Manen (43.27 % vote) from Darjeeling, Salku Mardy (ST, 29.12 % vote) and Chapalakanta Bhattacharya (26.18 % vote) from West Dinajpur, Sm. Renuka Ray (46.47 % vote) from Malda were elected. Votes were polled 47.34 % in Cooch Behar, 41.67 % in Darjeeling, 41.28 % in West Dinajpur and 51.11 % in Malda. One Independent candidate was given in Malda from Muslim community.

During the State's Assembly election of 1957 there were one ST seat out of total five seats in the district of Darjeeling. Very importantly one Independent candidate Narbahadur Gurung in Kalimpong, one GL candidate Deo Prakash Rai, two CPI candidates Bhadra Bahadur Hamal from Jore-Bunglow and Satyendra Naryan Majumdar from Siliguri and one Congress candidate T. Wangdi (ST) from Siliguri were elected. In Jalpaiguri there were two SC and two ST constituencies out of total nine. Among those the seven seats were occupied by the Congress candidates such as Khagendra Nath Dasgupta and Sarojendra Raikut (SC) from Jalapiguri, Budhu Bhagat (ST) from Mal, Janjneswar Roy (SC) from Mainaguri, Debendra Nath Brahma Mondol (ST) and Smt. Anima Hoare (W) from Kalchini and Pijush Kanti Mukherjee from Alipur Duars. On the other one seat was acquitted by the CPI Candidate Mangru Bhagat (ST) from Mal and one by the PSP candidate Jagadananda Roy from Falakata. In Cooch Behar out

of total seven seats three were reserved for SCs. In all the seats the Congress candidates were elected. In all cases the communists were the good contestants of the Congressmen in the district. In West Dinajpur taking one SC and two ST there were ten constituencies for Legislative Assembly. Among them in eight constituencies the Congress candidates got elected, in one RSP from Balurghat and one CPI from Ithar were elected. In Malda out of nine seats one for the SC and one for the ST were reserved. Among them one was elected from WPI in Harishchandrapur, one was from Independent Party from Sujapur and remaining seven candidates of Congress party were elected.

It is important that in 1957 Parliamentary election from Malda one Independent Muslim candidate (S. Rahaman) and one HMS candidate ((Hariprasanna Misra) were given though failed to achieve success had good share of votes (28.66 % and 11.08 % respectively). In case of Legislative Assembly GL directly achieved a seat in Darjeeling hill area. As the HMS got hold in Malda in 1952 it got foothold in 1957 Assembly election in Mekhliganj constituency of Cooch Behar. On the other in Kalimpong, Darjeeling and Jore-Bunglow all the Parties like the Congress, CPI and PSP gave candidature exclusively to the hill men and good number of hill people stood as Independent candidate there. One Rustam Ali was an Independent candidate of Jore-Bunglow and got 1317 votes in the election. There was no Muslim candidate from Jalpaiguri district. In Cooch Behar the Congress candidate Maziruddin Ahmed was from Muslim community. In West Dinajpur Majedar Rahaman, an Independent candidate from Gangarampur General seat secured 15.26 % of the polled vote and remained in third position among the nine candidates. The congress candidates Hazi Badiruddin Ahmmad, Mahammad Affaque Choudhury, Muzzafar Hussain were elected respectively from Raiganj, Chopra and Goalpokhar constituencies. There were Independent Muslim candidates in Itahar and Karandighi and PSP Muslim candidates in Goalpokhar and Karandighi of West Dinajpur. In Malda CPI supported Independent Candidate Golam Yazdani from Kharba, WPI candidate Elias Razi in Harishchandrapur Congress Muslim candidate Mahibur Rahaman Chowdhury from Kaliachak were elected. Besides, there were Congress Muslim candidate in Harishchandrapur and in Sujapur and Independent Muslim candidate in Ratua, Sujapur and Kaliachak. Another important aspect of the political demography during this time was the aboriginal SC domination in candidature in Cooch Behar- Jalpaiguri belt whereas non-aboriginal SC domination in Malda-Dinajpur belt.

During the 1962 Parliamentary election of India Dibendra Nath Karjee (56.32 % vote), the FB candidate from Cooch Behar SC constituency, Nalini Ranjan Ghosh (45.40% vote), the Congress candidate from Jalpaiguri, T. Manaen (35.03 %), the Congress candidate from Darjeeling, Chapala Kanta Bhattachary (42.51% vote), the Congress candidate from Raiganj, Sarkar Murmu (51.85% vote) the CPI candidate from ST constituency of Balurghat, Sm. Renuka Roy (43.74% vote), the Congress candidate from Malda were elected. Votes were polled in Cooch Behar 48.62 percent, in Jalpaiguri 51.95 percent, Darjeeling 46.97 percent, in Raiganj 43.88 percent, in Balurghat 57.79 percent and in Malda 52.51 percent. Hazi Abdus Sattar, an Independent Muslim candidate got 28.28 percent vote in Malda constituency.

During 1962 Legislative Assembly election in the State of West Bengal there were three SC seats out of total seven seats in Cooch Behar district. Very interestingly in six of the seven seats were won by the left candidates such as FB candidate Aamarnedra Nath Pradhan from Mekhliganj, FB candidate Bejoy Kumar Roy from Sitalkuchi (SC), FB candidate Kamal Kanti Guha from Dinhat, FB candidate Sunil Basunia from

Cooch Behar South (SC), FB candidate Sunil Das Gupta from Cooch Behar North and CPI candidate Jiban Krishna Dey from Tufanganj. On the other the only Congress candidate Mahendra Nath Dakua won the seat of Mathabhanga (SC). In Jalpaiguri there were two Seats for SC and two for ST out of total nine in Jalpaiguri. Among them in seven seats of Alipurduars, Falakata, Mainaguri (SC), Kharia (SC), Jalpaiguri, Nagrakata (ST) and Mal the Congress candidates were elected. In Kalchini and Madarihat (ST) the RSP candidates were elected. In Darjeeling among the five seats one was reserved for ST. Importantly in four of the five seats the GL candidates contested and in Kalimpong and Darjeeling hill the GL candidates Lakshmi Ranjan Josse and Deo Prakash Rai respectively were elected. In Jore-Bunglow the CPI candidate Bhadra Bahaur Hamal and in Siliguri and Phansidewa (ST) the Congress candidates Jagadish Chandra Bhattacharjee and Tenzing Wangdi respectively secured the win. In West Dinajpur out of ten seats one for the SC and two for the ST were reserved. Among them the Congressmen were elected in Chopra, Karandighi, Raiganj, Kaliaganj (SC), Balurghat and Itahar. On the other the lefts like the PSP won in Goalpokhar, the CPI in Kushmundi and Gangarampur (ST) and the RSP in Tapan (ST). In Malda out of nine one each for the SC and ST were reserved. Among them the Congress candidates were elected in Harishchandrapur, Ratua (SC), Manikchak, English Bazar and Sujapur. The Independent candidates were elected from Kharba and Kaliachak. The CPI candidates were elected from Habibpur (ST) and Malda.

From Cooch Behar there was only one Muslim Candidate in Cooch Behar North. In Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling there was no Muslim candidature. In the district of West Dinajpur there were five Muslim candidates among the seven contestants in Chopra, all the four Muslim contestants in Goalpokhar, one in Karandighi, two among four in Kushmandi one in Itahar. Among the Muslim candidates Md Afaque Choudhury of Congress in Chopra, Mohammad Hayat Ali of PSP in Goalpokhar, Khalid Sayed of CPI in Kushmandi and Joynal Abedin of Congress from Itahar were elected. Like the previous election most of the SC candidates were of aboriginal people in Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri districts. But in West Dinajpur-Malda most were of non-aboriginal. In case of Darjeeling hill most of the candidates were of hill people and in plains of the district most were of Plains people.

In the election of Parliamentary Constituency in 1971 from Cooch Behar(SC) Benoy Krishna Das Chowdhury (having 43.38 % vote) of Congress (R), from Jalpaiguri (ST) Tuna Oraon (having 39.17% vote), from Darjeeling Ratanlal Brhman (having 33.19 percent vote) of CPI(M), from Raiganj Siddhartha Sankar Roy (having 49.55 percent vote) of Cong (R), From Balurghat (SC ) Rajendra Nath Barman (having 47.58 % vote)and from Malda Dinaesh Chandra Joardar (having 58.61 % vote) of CPI (M) were elected. It is very important that from Darjeeling GL candidate Dr. G.S. Gurung shared 28.36 % of the polled vote. There were Muslim candidates of Congress (O) and PSP from Raiganj and Congress (O) and CPI Muslim Candidates from Malda in the election. In the election in Cooch Behar 63.60%, in Jalpaiguri 62.66%, in Darjeeling 53.53%, in Raiganj 54.83%, in Balurghat 70.42% and in Malda 69.11% vote was polleld.

During the 1967 election of Legislative Assembly there were four SC seas in total of eight seats in Cooch Behar. Among them the Congressmen were elected in five sears of Cooch Behar from Cooch Behar West (SC), Sitai, Cooch Behar North, Cooch Behar South and Tufanganj (SC). Rests of the three seats were won by the left from Mekhliganj (SC) by the FB Amarendra Nath Roy Pradhan, MathaBhanga by CPIM Dinesh Ch. Dakua and Dinhat by the FB Kamal Kanti Guha. Very importantly during this election out of 11 seats

three were reserved for SC and four were reserved for ST. Among the total seats the Congress got seven from Kumargram, Kalchini (ST), Madarihat (ST), Nagrakata (ST), Moinaguri (SC), Mal (ST) and Jalpaiguri. In other seats the RSP in Alipurduar and PSP candidate from Falakata (SC) and SSP from Dhupguri. In Darjeeling among the five seats including one of ST in three the Congress men were elected and in two the GL came forward. In Kalimpong, Siliguri and Phansidewa (ST) the Congress and in Darjeeling hill and Jore-Bungalow the GL won. In West Dinajpur among 11 seats two were of SC and one of ST reserved. The Congress acquired the seats of Chopra, Kaliaganj (SC), Itahar, Kushmundi (SC), Gangarampur and Kumaganj. On the other the PSP got seats in Goalpokhar, Karandighi and Raiganj and the RSP in Balughat and Tapan(ST). In Malda out of total ten seats including two ST, the Congress owned in Habibpur (ST), Gazol(ST), Ratua, Malda, Sujapur.

There were two Muslim candidates in Sitai constituency of Cooch Behar and one in Cooch Behar South independently. In Jalpaiguri there was only one Muslim candidate in Dhupguri independently securing a few votes. In West Dinajpur there were Muslim candidates three in Chopra, five in Goalpokhar, two in Karandighi, one in Raiganj, one in Itahar, one in Gangarampur and one in Kumarganj. In Malda there were two Muslim candidates from Kharba, one from Harishchandrapur, one from Ratua, one from Malda, one from English Bazar, one from Manikchak, three from Sujapur(Including winning candidate) and one from Kaliachak (the winning candidate). Like the previous election there was aboriginal SCs more in SC constituencies of Cooch Behar-Jalpaiguri and less in West Dinajpur-Malda. In Darjeeling hill area the hill people's candidature and in Siliguri-Phansidewa non-hillmen candidature is noticeable. There were also non-Bengali candidates in few of the constituencies of North Bengal during this time such as Janaklal Agarwala and Jainsuraj Karan from Siliguri, Vauralal Bothra in Karandighi and Saraf Durgaprasad from Ratua.

In 1969 Assembly election In Cooch Behar the Congress had six seats, the left two under the FB; in Jalpaiguri the Congress six, the Left two under RSP, One under SSP and one under CPI; in Darjeeling The GL four the Congress one; in West Dinajpur the Congress three, the left one under INDF, one under PSP, one under FB, two under CPM, one under BC, two under RSP; in Malda Congress five, the left two under CPI, two under IND(UF), one under WP. During this time there Muslim candidates two in Cooch Behar (Sitai and Cooch Behar South), in West Dinajpur four in Chopra, seven in Goalpokhar, one Karandighi, two in Itahar, two in Gangarampur and one in Tapan; in Malda two in Kharba, one in Harishchandrapur, two in Ratua, two in Malda, one in English Bazar, two in Sujapur, and three in Kaliachak. Very importantly the four among five in Darjeeling were occupied the GL party even in Siliguri, showing its popularity.

The communist party contesting general election became the largest numerical strength among the opposition parties. However during this time left oriented two electoral alliances were formed – one was the USO (United Social Organization) comprised by the FB, SRP, Bolshevik Party & INA and the PUSF (People's United Socialist Front) combining the FBR, Socialist Party, RCPI (Tagore) and RSP. In September 1952 the KMPP merged with the Socialist Party and formed PSP joined by the FBR. The Congress also gave birth SP (Swatantra Party) in 1959. Jana Sangha emerged in 1951 from RSSS and the NDF was formed with the JS, HMS and few Independents. During 1957 two left alliances were emerged named by ULEC (United Left Election Committee) with CPI, RSP, PSP, MFB and the other one was ULF (United Left

Front) with SUC (Socialist Unity Centre), BP (Bolshevik Party), RP (Republican Party). UDPF (United Democratic People's Front) was formed by the parties other the Left. In 1962 the communist oriented leftist parties formed ULF (United Left Front) combined with CPI, FB, BP, RSP and RCPI. In 1967 ULF (United Leftist Front) led by CPI (M) and PULF (Peoples' United Left Front) led by CPI (M) contested the Assembly. The PDF (Progressive Democratic Front) was formed by PC Ghosh resigning from the ministry of ruling United Front. This led to the Governor's rule in West Bengal in 1968. The second UF ministry was formed in 1969. But the resignation of Sri Ajoy Mukherjee led the net election of 1971. At the time the Congress became divided into Congress(R) and Congress (O) and the United Front became divided into ULF (United Left Front) with CPI (M), RCPI, MFB, BBC, WPI, BP and ULDF (United Left Democratic Front) with CPI, FB, SUC, SSP, PSP, GL and faction of BP&RCPI. In the election of 1971 the Democratic Coalition ministry was formed by BC (Bengal Congress), ML, GL, PSP and SSP with outside support of CPI, FB and Cong (O). But within two month it broke down and election of 1972 happened. From the following tables we may have ideas of Political Party position in parliamentary election and Assembly election of West Bengal since 1971.

**Table-7.1**  
**Party position in Parliamentary Election 1971**  
**North Bengal**

Total Seats	Congress	CPI
6	4	2

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata, 2012 (Sixth Edition), p.156

**Table-7.2**  
**Party position in West Bengal State's Assmby Election 1971**  
**North Bengal**

Party Won	Cooch Behar	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	West Dinajpur	Malda	Total
Congress-R	7	9	2	11	5	34
FB	1	-	-	-	-	1
RSP	-	1	-	-	-	1
CPM	-	1	1	-	2	4
GL	-	-	2	-	-	2
CPI	-	-	-	-	1	1
WPI	-	-	-	-	1	1
IND	-	-	-	-	1	1

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata, 2012 (Sixth Edition), p.445-450

**Table-7.3**

Party position in West Bengal State's Assmbly Election 1972

North Bengal

Party Won	Cooch Behar	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	West Dinajpur	Malda	Total
Congg	8	9	3	11	8	39
RSP	-	1	-	-	-	1
GL	-	-	2	-	-	2
CPU	-	-	-	-	1	1
CPI	-	-	-	-	1	1

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),p. 478-483

**Table-7.4**

Party position in Parliamentary Election 1977

North Bengal

Total Seats	Congress	CPI(M)	RSP	FB	BLD(Janata)	IND
7	1	1	2	1	1	1

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),p.

**Table-7.5**

Party position in West Bengal State's Assmbly Election 1977

North Bengal

Party Won	Cooch Behar	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	West Dinajpur	Malda	Total
FB	5	1	-	-	-	6
CPM	4	6	2	4	7	23
RSP	-	5	-	2	-	7
Cong	-	-	1	4	2	7
IND	-	-	-	2	1	3
GL	-	-	2	-	-	2
Jan	-	-	-	-	1	1

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),p. 503-509

**Table-7.6**

Party position in Parliamentary Election 1980

North Bengal

Total Seats	Congress	CPI(M)	FB	RSP
7	2	2	1	2

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),p.

**Table-7.7**

Party position in West Bengal State's Assmbly Election 1982

North Bengal

Party Won	Cooch Behar	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	West Dinajpur	Malda	Total
FB	5	1	-	2	-	8
CPM	4	6	4	2	5	21
RSP	-	5	-	2	-	7
GL	-	-	1	-	-	1
CONG-I	-	-	-	4	6	10
CONG - S	-	-	-	2	-	2

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),p. 539-544

**Table-7.8**

Party position in Parliamentary Election 1984

North Bengal

Total Seats	Congress(I)	CPI(M)	RSP	FB
7	2	2	2	1

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),p.156

**Table-7.9**

Party position in Parliamentary Election 1989

North Bengal

Total Seats	INC	CPI(M)	RSP	FB	GNLF
7	2	1	2	1	1

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),p.

**Table-7.10**  
Party position in West Bengal State's Assmbly Election 1987  
North Bengal

Party Won	Cooch Behar	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	West Dinajpur	Malda	Total
FB	5	1	-	2	1	9
CPM	4	6	4	6	10	30
RSP	-	4	-	3	-	7
CONG -1	-	1	-	-	-	1
CPI	-	-	1	1	-	2

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),p.570-575

**Table-7.11**  
Party position in Parliamentary Election 1991  
North Bengal

Total Seats	INC	CPI(M)	RSP	FB
7	2	2	2	1

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),p.

**Table-7.12**  
Party position in West Bengal State's Assmbly Election 1991  
North Bengal

Party Won	Cooch Behar	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	West Dinajpur	Malda	Total
AIFB	5	-	-	1	1	7
CPIM	4	6	2	5	8	25
RSP	-	5	-	3	-	8
INC	-	1	-	3	2	6
IND	-	-	1	-	-	1
GNLF	-	-	2	-	-	2

Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),p. 604-609

In the 1971 parliamentary election of 1971 the Congress Got four seats (Cooch Behar (SC), Jalpaiguri (ST), Raiganj, and Balurghat (SC) and the CPI(M) two seats (Darjeeling and Malda) from North Benga. In the Assembly electioin of the same year the Congress total 34 seats from North Bengal (7 in Cooch Behar, 9 in Jalpaiguri, 2 in Darjeeling, 11 in West Dinajpur, 5 in Malda. The FB (1), the RSP (1), the CPI (M) (4), the GL (2 in Darjeeling), CPI (1), WPI(1) and Ind. (1) in North Bengal. But the Democratic Coalition Ministry of Bangala Congress, M.L., G.L. PSP and SSP under Chief Minister Ship of Ajoy Mukherjee did not run long and it broke down within a short period and the next election was held in 1972. The Congress achieved more success in this election and achieved 39 seats (8 from Cooch Behar, 9



from Jalpaiguri, 3 from Darjeeling, 11 from West Dinajpur, 8 from Malda) from North Bengal. GL had its total domination in Darjeeling hill. However in the Parliamentary election of 1977 the left achieved five seats and the Congress only one with Independent also one. During the Assembly election of 1977 the Left Front supported two seats of GL, a new political balance began at the time. In the election the Left Front achieved great success having 36 seats in pocket excluding two supported seats of GL and one of Janatadal. In this the FB had five seats in Cooch Behar, One in Jalpaiguri; the CPM had four in Cooch Behar, six in Jalpaiguri, 2 in Darjeeling, four in West Dinajpur, seven in Malda. This unprecedented success of the Left is being described as the changing demography politics taking refugees voting in side. It was also true in case of North Bengal. For taking the various issues specially the scarcity of food a great movement was broke out in different parts of North Bengal and the incident of being death with the police firing in Cooch Behar also provoked the people taking side of the Left leading to all the seats in their pockets. The Congress at the time had only three seats two from West Dinajpur and one from Malda. The reflection was also seen in the Parliamentary election of 1980 in which the Congress could have only two seats and the left the remaining five from North Bengal.

The success of the Left also continued during the election of 1982 in the state Assembly and they occupied 38 seats out of total 48 seats in North Bengal districts having all the nine seats from Cooch Behar, all the 12 seats from Jalpaiguri, four out of five from Darjeeling, six from West Dinajpur and five from Malda. On the other the Congress pocketed six from West Dinajpur and six from Malda. The GL achieved single victory in in Kalimpong. In the parliamentary election of 1984 and 1989 the Congress achieved two in each from North Bengal whereas the Left five and four respectively. Most importantly the GNLFF got political hold in the Parliamentary constituency of Darjeeling in 1989 having 56.49 percent of the polled vote defeating the CPI (M) leader (37.65 % vote). In the Assembly election of 1987 the Left swept all the seats of North Bengal 48 out of 49 leaving one for the Congress from Jalpaiguri. The political development continued in the same way in North Bengal but in 1991 taking small turn. In 1991 Parliamentary election the Congress procured the previous two seats and in Assembly election secured six seats one from Jalpaiguri, three from West Dinajpur and two from Malda. On the other most important turn was the securing of two seats in State's Assembly by the GNLFF.

In discussing the political composition of demography and political mobilization of the people I have relating with demographic profile of North Bengal I have used Electoral Records of Dilip Banerjee<sup>65</sup> Report of the first General Election and different Annual Report of the Election Commission of India. In the Report of the First General Election in India it was reported that in case of delimitation the Commission intended to form SC or ST constituency in the two-member constituencies.<sup>66</sup> But in the Report of third General Election the Commission accorded SC or ST seat even in the single member constituency in condition to the demographic profile of the constituency being 'more than one half of the total population' belonged to the SC and ST population.<sup>67</sup> And it was found by the Commission there were only three such single member constituencies to be reserved for the Schedule Castes and those were in West Bengal.<sup>68</sup> The North Bengal demography provided such constituencies. From the tables below we may observe that the Parliamentary Constituencies and Assembly Constituencies were greatly influenced by the changing demographic profile of North Bengal.

**Table-7.13**  
**Distribution of SC & ST Seats**  
**Assembly Constituency of North Bengal Districts**  
**1952**

Name of Districts	SC	ST	Total Seats
Cooch Behar	2	-	6
Jalpaiguri	2	3	10
Darjiling	-	1	5
West Dinajpur	1	1	61
Malda	1	-	9

Source: Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),P.307

**Table-7.14**  
**Distribution of SC & ST Seats**  
**Assembly Constituency of North Bengal Districts**  
**1957**

Name of Districts	SC	ST	Total Seats
Cooch Behar	3	-	7
Jalpaiguri	2	2	9
Darjiling	-	1	5
West Dinajpur	1	2	10
Maldah	1	1	9

Source: Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),P.337

**Table-7.15**  
**Distribution of SC & ST Seats**  
**Assembly Constituency of North Bengal Districts**  
**1962**

Name of Districts	SC	ST	Total Seats
Cooch Behar	3	-	7
Jalpaiguri	2	2	9
Darjiling	-	1	5
West Dinajpur	1	2	10
Maldah	1	1	9

Source: Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),P.362

**Table-7.16**  
**Distribution of SC & ST Seats**  
**Assembly Constituency of North Bengal Districts**  
**1967**

Name of Districts	SC	ST	Total Seats
Cooch Behar	4	-	8
Jalpaiguri	3	4	11
Darjiling	-	1	5
West Dinajpur	2	1	11
Maldah	-	2	10

Source: **Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),P. 388**

**Table-7.17**  
**Distribution of SC & ST Seats**  
**Assembly Constituency of North Bengal Districts**  
**1969**

Name of Districts	SC	ST	Total Seats
Cooch Behar	4	-	8
Jalpaiguri	3	4	11
Darjiling	-	1	5
West Dinajpur	2	1	11
Maldah	-	2	10

SWource: **Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),P.417**

**Table-7.18**  
**Distribution of SC & ST Seats**  
**Assembly Constituency of North Bengal Districts**  
**1971**

Name of Districts	SC	ST	Total Seats
Cooch Behar	2	-	8
Jalpaiguri	2	4	11
Darjiling	-	1	5
West Dinajpur	1	-	11
Maldah	-	1	10

Source: **Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),P.445-450**

**Table-7.19**  
**Distribution of SC & ST Seats**  
**Assembly Constituency of North Bengal Districts**  
**1972**

Name of Districts	SC	ST	Total Seats
Cooch Behar	4	-	8
Jalpaiguri	3	4	11
Darjiling	-	1	5
West Dinajpur	2	1	11
Maldah	-	2	10

Source: Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),P.478

**Table-7.20**  
**Distribution of SC & ST Seats**  
**Assembly Constituency of North Bengal Districts**  
**1977**

Name of Districts	SC	ST	Total Seats
Cooch Behar	4	-	9
Jalpaiguri	4	5	12
Darjiling	-	1	5
West Dinajpur	3	1	12
Maldah	1	2	11

Source: Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition),P.503

**Table-7.21**  
**Distribution of SC & ST Seats**  
**Assembly Constituency of North Bengal Districts**  
**1982**

Name of Districts	SC	ST	Total Seats
Cooch Behar	4	-	9
Jalpaiguri	4	5	12
Darjiling	-	1	5
West Dinajpur	3	1	12
Maldah	1	2	11

Source: Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition), P.539

**Table-7.22**  
**Distribution of SC & ST Seats**  
**Assembly Constituency of North Bengal Districts**  
**1987**

Name of Districts	SC	ST	Total Seats
Cooch Behar	4	-	9
Jalpaiguri	4	5	12
Darjiling	-	1	5
West Dinajpur	3	1	12
Maldah	1	2	11

Source: **Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition), P.570**

**Table-7.23**  
**Distribution of SC & ST Seats**  
**Assembly Constituency of North Bengal Districts**  
**1991**

Name of Districts	SC	ST	Total Seats
Cooch Behar	3	-	9
Jalpaiguri	3	5	12
Darjiling	-	1	5
West Dinajpur	3	1	12
Maldah	-	2	11

Source: **Compiled from Banerjee, Election Recorder: An Analytical Reference, Bengal , West Bengal (1862-2012), Revised Edition, 2012 Star Publishing House, Kolkata,2012 (Sixth Edition), P. 604-609**

The Parliamentary Constituency of Cooch Behar in 1957 was SC and two seats of this constituency in 1957 were reserved for SC candidate. Since 1962 to 1991 the constituency was always remained reserved for the SC candidate. Interestingly enough that barring a one or two exceptions all the contesting candidates belonged to the Rajbansi community since 1957 to 1991 parliamentary election. Jalpaiguri in 1967 and 1971 was reserved for ST and after creation of Alipur seats the Jalpaiguri seat remained unreserved from 1977 to 1991 and within this period Alipur Duar remained reserved for ST candidate. So the demographic profile of Jalpaiguri including Alipurduar constituency and excluding Alipur Duar may be realized. In 1962 Balurghat constituency was reserved for ST but in 1967 and 1971 it became reserved for SC. Afterwards Balurghat constituency from 1977 onwards (up to the period of my study) remained reserved for SC. On the other Raiganj remained unreserved during the period between 1962 and 1991. Though in most cases in Raiganj's unreserved seat the upper caste candidates were dominated, the Muslim candidates (from 1971) also were given in good number and persons belonged to SC community also contested the unreserved seats. On the other in the reserved seat of Baughat non-Rajbansi person also contested in the parliamentary election. Malda and Darjeeling remained unreserved since 1957 up to 1991. In case of Malda candidates from SC community both the Rajbansis and the non-Rajbansis and Muslim candidates contested in Parliamentary election. In case of parliamentary election both the hill men and non hill men contested the seat.

In the election of State's Legislative Assembly in 1952 out of total 36 seats in North Bengal total 11 seats were reserved (6 for SC and 5 for ST). In Jalpaiguri there were fifty percent seats were reserved 2 for SC and 3 for ST community. In 1957 out of total 40 seats in North Bengal districts there were 7 seats reserved for SC and 6 seats for the ST community. Cooch Behar had 3 seats for SC, Jalpaiguri had 2 seats for SC and 2 for ST. In West Dinajpur it was 1 was reserved for SC and 2 for ST. Malda had one for each reserved seats. In 1962 also in the same way out of 40 seats 13 were reserved for the SC and ST. In the Assembly election of 1967 out of total 45 seats 17 seats were reserved (9 for SC and 8 for ST). In Cooch Behar half of the seats (4) were reserved for SC. On the other in Jalpaiguri out of 11 seats 7 were (3 for SC and 4 for ST) were reserved. In 1969 and 1972 the distribution of the seats was same. In 1977 Jalpaiguri had large number of reserved candidates. Out of 12 seats nine were reserved (4 for SC and 5 for ST). In West Dinajpur out of 12 seats 4 were reserved (3 for SC and 1 for ST). In Malda 3 out of 11 became reserved (1 for SC and 2 for ST). During 1977-1991 periods the distribution remained more or less same. In 1982 on wards Assembly elections (up to 1991) it will be found that in Cooch Behar-Jalpaiguri region and also in Dinajpur region the SC seats were mostly contested by the Rajbansi people. On the other in the Duars of Jalpaiguri the ST seats have been contested by mostly the Santal-Oaon-Mech tribal people as it has been found in the ST seat of Darjeeling plain area. But during this period in Darjeeling hill the hill men mostly belonged to the Nepali community contested. In Chopra fifty percent, in Islampur and Goalpokhar sixty percent candidates contested by the Muslims. In Kharba, Manikchak, Kaliachak, Sujapur most of the contestants were Muslims. This indicates the political mobilization of the different communities in their dominating regions.

So the nature of participation of the people of North Bengal changes throughout the period of my study. During the colonial period the participation of the indigenous aborigine people was less and influenced by the trend of national movement with the leadership of upper caste people. However, during the immediate pre-partition period the ethno-cultural issue was influencing the political arena of this region which came from the different demands raised by the different communities regarding the politico-administrative status of North Bengal. This trend of political mobility reflected in the ethno-regional political development. This development again with the association of the different political parties was mobilized and de-mobilized in different ways. Thus, as we have seen, the changing profile of demography led to the emergence of demography based politics.

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