

Preface

Transport and communication system is one of the key factors which determines various developmental issues of a region. This research works aims at assessing the growth and development of transport and communication system of North Bengal or northern part of West Bengal from the term of mid nineteenth century to the end of the Sino-Indian War of 1962. Though the discussion follows with quantitative description of the transport and communicational development of the said region, some related issues like phase wise Government strategies and their consequences behind the developmental process have also been studied. Whether there was any sub regional variation in that field has been investigated. Side by side, the indigenous reaction as well as impact on regional economy due to introduction of modern transport and communication system in North Bengal has also been examined in this thesis. Though postal system is a part of communication, it has been excluded from the area of research.

North Bengal as a region has been characterised by unique identities from geo-climatic, economic and strategic perspectives. Many of the administrative and other set ups of this region have been introduced considering the issues. Therefore, the transport and communicational set ups of this region might have been influenced by these factors also. In this thesis an attempt has been made to search for the influences of these factors on the transport and communication system of North Bengal. Simultaneously, historical events might have influenced the transportation system of North Bengal. Hence, the period of study has been chosen within the limit of 1854 to 1962. While the first was important due to establishment of Public Works Department, the sole public agency for maintaining transport and communication system of Bengal; the last was important due to advent of Sino-Indian War. In this thesis, an effort has been made to look at the

development of transport and communication of North Bengal from these geo-climatic, economic, strategic and historical perspectives.

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No work can be claimed as errorless. I am solely responsible for errors or omissions in this thesis.