

CHAPTER – V

BACKGROUND OF URBANIZATION IN THE POST COLONIAL PERIOD IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT: (Administrative, Political & Economic):

The process of urbanization in Jalpaiguri district in the post colonial period is clearly linked with its administrative, political and economic background. These three aspects brought the desired changes in the total administration of the district. The researcher makes through review hereunder periodically.

ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUND

The district Jalpaiguri is in the northern most districts in North Bengal. The northern area of this district is carpeted with tea, deep forests and other greeneries which give added beauty to this locality. The eastern and southern areas of this district have fertile plain land. The district so formed in 1869 A.D. is bounded in the north by the Darjeeling district and Bhutan, in the east by Assam, in the south by Rangpur district in Bangladesh and Coochbeher district and in the west by Darjeeling district and part of Bangladesh. The total area of this district is 6245 sq.km¹. The census of 1971 the district had a population of 17,50,159 and showing a percentage increase of 28.90 over the decade beginning with 19,612². The preview of the study finds the district comprising of two Sub-divisions – one is Jalpaiguri Sadar and another is Alipurduar. But now for administrative convenience a new Sub-division Malbazar was setup on 1st April 2001. So now the district comprised of three Sub-divisions – Jalpaiguri Sadar, Alipurduar and Malbazar which have varied from decade to decade as will appear from table-5.1.

The Sub-division sadar or Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar bear the same name as their head quarters. Jalpaiguri is also headquarters of the district and of the division of the same name. The sadar sub-division consists of the police stations of Jalpaiguri, Rajganj, Mainaguri, Dhupguri, Nagrakata, Mal, Matiali, while the Alipurduar sub-divisions consists of the police stations of Madarihat, Falakata,

Kalchini, Alipurduar and Kumargram³. Zill Parishad came into being on 23rd Oct, 1964. There are 13 Anchalik Parishads, 93 Anchal Panchayets and 575 gram Panchayets⁴. The total number of Mouza is 802 of which 14 mouzas have been fully included in the urban areas. But in 2001 it is recorded that the district has 13 Anchalic Parishads, 146 Anchal Panchayets and 756 Mauzas or Gram Panchyets.

Table – 5.1

Varition in Area, Village, Population in Jalpaiguri District: 1921 – 1971.³

	1921			1971		
	Area in sq. miles	No. of Villages	Population	Area in sq. Km.	No. of villages	Population
JALPAIGURI DISTRICT	2427	412	6,95,946	6245 (2440-sq. miles)	754	17,50,159
SADAR SUB – DIVISION	1396	266	4,50,825	3,373.7(1317 - sq. miles)	411	10,15,437
ALIPURDUAR SUB – DIVISION	1030	146	2,43,231	2,787.5(1088 - sq. miles)	343	7,34,722

2001			
	Area in sq. Km.	No. of Villages	Population
JALPAIGURI DISTRICT	6227	732	34,01,173
SADAR SUB – DIVISION	2245.47	236	15,53,175
ALIPURDUAR SUB – DIVISION	2667.28	338	13,37,575
MAL SUB – DIVISION	1150.84	168	5,10,423

Source: West Bengal District Gazetteer, Jalpaiguri, Ed – Barun Dey, 1981,

According to the census of 1971, there are six non-municipal towns or Mufassal towns like Alipurduar Railway Junction, Dhupguri, Falakata, Domohoni, Mainaguri and Mal except two municipal towns (Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar)⁵. But in records of census report it was raised in fourteen in 2001 and thirty five in 2011.

From the 1869 the district underwent an administrative change. The Commissioner of the Coochbehar division was at first the controlling authority of the district. The district was included under the different divisions successively for administrative convenience which have varied in different years as will appear from Table-5.2 and 5.3.

Table – 5.2
Divisions Controlling Jalpaiguri District
(1883 – 1963)

Year	Name of the division	Headquarter	Remarks
1875	Raajsahi – Koch Bihar	Jalpaiguri	The change occurred on 10 th sep, 1875 when the two commissionerships of Rajsahi and Koch Bihar were placed under a single commissioner.
1883	Rajsahi	Jalpaiguri*	In October 1883 the Maharaja of Koch Bihar attained majority and took charge of his state on and from 8 th Nov. 1883. Hence, Koch Bihar-Rajsahi Division was abolished.
1883	Presidency	Calcutta**	The charge took place during the partition of India – the new division was formed with effect

			from 17 August 1947.
1963	Jalpaiguri	Jalpaiguri	From 4 th March 1963.

* In 1885 the headquarters was temporarily shifted to Rampur Boalia in Rajshahi as the office at Jalpaiguri was gutted by fire. It was taken back to Jalpaiguri in 1888.

** There was a second headquarters at Jalpaiguri for northern districts.

Table – 5.3

Changes in Internal Jurisdictions in Jalpaiguri District

(1870 – 1935)

Year	Type of Changes	Remarks
1870	Area comprising Patgram police station included in the Falakata subdivision of the district	From 1st April, 1870
1874	Subdivisional headquarter removed from Falakata to Buxa and the name changed to Buxa (Bhalka) subdivision	18th April, 1874
1876	Subdivisional headquarter removed from Buxa to Alipur Duar and renamed Alipur Duars subdivision	
1888	Nagrakata outpost transferred from Alipur Duars subdivision to Sadr subdivision, the revenue jurisdiction remaining within Alipur Duars subdivision	25th July, 1888
1895	Portion of Thana Salbari lying west of the rivers Duduya and Rehti was transferred to Sadr subdivision. The two rivers formed the boundary	2nd September, 1895

	between the two subdivisions	
1896	Duduya, Kalua and Rehti declared to be the boundary between the two subdivisions	27th July, 1896
1935	Sadar subdivision was declared to include the area of the police stations of Boda, Pachagarh, Debiganj, Rajganj, Titalya, Patgram, Mainaguri, Nagrakata, Dhupguri, Mal and Matiali	22nd January, 1935

Source: West Bengal District Gazetteer – Jalpaiguri
Editor: Barun Dey, 1981, Calcutta Publishers, P – 5 & 6

Dooars is a very important and integral part of the Jalpaiguri district. The terms ‘Dooars’ means pass (gate). It is the low tract which acts as a gate way to Bhutan. Thus a much wider meaning has become attached to the word than that which etymologically belongs to it. The Dooars region was conceded to the British Government by the Bhutias in the year 1865 (Sinchula Pact). The district part of the Dooars region is about 86.75 miles in length from the river Sankush in the east to the river Teesta in the west. The region is about 38 miles in breadth from northern boundary of Bhutan to south mid-land of the district. The total area by the present survey has been found to be 3268 sq. miles excluding tea lands and forest lands which form no part of this settlement. This part of Jalpaiguri district is also known as Western Duars⁶.

However, until the constitution of India came into force on 26 January, 1950, the Western Dooars of the district like the Darjeeling district was included in the list of Scheduled Districts under the Scheduled District Act of 1874⁷. The Dooars extends further east covering the northern stripes of Goalpara and Kamrup and around north western portion of Darrang district of Assam. From west to east the ‘Dooars’ are named Dalimkote, Moinaguri, Chamurchi, Luchki, Buxa, Bhalka, Guma, Chirang and Bagh⁸.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

Due to political compulsion the Partition of India or 2nd partition of Bengal was inevitable in 1947. Geographically the district Jalpaiguri is bounded by the East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in south and south–west, on the east by Assam state and on the north Bhutan and Nepal. Thus the 2nd Partition of Bengal led to a massive infiltration of refugees from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) to West Bengal. Millions of displaced persons poured into West Bengal which hastened the process of urbanization in the various districts of the state and the Jalpaiguri district is one of them. Apart from this, due to ‘Bangalee Khedao Andolon’ of Assam in 1960 – 62 and the continued infiltration of displaced persons from Nepal and Bhutan, the population of Jalpaiguri increased rapidly in the 6th, 7th and 8th decades of the 20th century. According to the 1961 Census total 21,8,341 displaced persons were numbered in Jalpaiguri district, out of them 1,71,617 were settled in the rural areas and 46,724 in urban⁹. Among these displaced persons some of them found shelter amongst their nearest relatives and neighbors before partition. Another section of such population rehabilitated in Government camps and colonies in different corners of the district – such as Alipurduar, Falakata, Malbazar, Jalpaiguri sadar etc. The present town Malbazar grew totally out of such displaced persons. So, the refugee colonies, thus, drastically changed the urban scenario of Jalpaiguri.¹⁰

Role of Refugee Rehabilitation Department (RRD)

Refugee Rehabilitation Department (RRD) in West Bengal was set up in 1947 when the East Bengal Refugees infiltrated into West Bengal in large number. During this time the R.R.Dept. issued only cross–border pass to the refugees to take in West Bengal as they could manage themselves. Thereafter the 1st refugee camp was set up in 1952 at ‘Chandmari’ near Kalyani in Nadia district. In the following year the famous refugee camp – ‘Coopers Camp’ was founded to accommodate a huge number of refugees migrating from East Bengal¹¹. The then West Bengal Govt. provided both food, shelter and all necessary medical facilities to the distressed refugees.

During the years 1953 to 1957 West Bengal State Govt. and the Govt. of India underwent land survey to estimate the requirement for the refugees. In some cases both Central Govt. and State Govt. made joint survey to acquire sufficient land for the refugees. Thereafter they made four categories of colonies making them as 607, 998, SPL (special) and GS (General Survey)¹² :

- i) 607: In 1987 the Central Govt. approved the number of 607 colonies for providing land and shelter for the refugees in West Bengal.
- ii) 998: Thereafter in 1995 the West Bengal State Govt. approved the number of 607 colonies for the same purpose in West Bengal.
- iii) SPL: Shortly after the 1995 the State Govt. of West Bengal made another Special Survey to acquire a vast area of land refugees to rehabilitate.
- iv) GS: Soon the Central Govt. of India forwarded their support to the State Govt. made joint survey for providing shelter and livelihood to the refugees migrated from East Bengal. After all the refugees were categorized from time to time and provided the needs.

However, in Jalpaiguri district the R.R.Dept. came into existence in 1952 as the records available from the Jalpaiguri R.R.Dept. The 1st refugee colony in Jalpaiguri district came into existence on the bank of the river Teesta which are locally called 'Teesta Char' near Jalpaiguri town¹³. Countless refugees rushed to the colony in search of earning and shelter. Primarily their settlements were not official and systematic. In a word they usurped the plots of land and as they found and took possessions ignoring official support of the local authority of the State Govt. Thus there arose a huge chaos among the refugees who were not under any administration. Hereunder given the colonial pictures with tabulation and calculation authenticated by the table no. 5.4, 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7 (a&b).

Table – 5.4

Distribution of Lands in Different Categories

District – Jalpaiguri

Sl No	Name of The Colonies	Group/ Category	P.S	Sl No	Name of The Colonies	Group/ Category	P.S
1	Sukantapally	998	Bhaktinagar	38	Surjasen Colony	Spl	Dhupguri
2	Netajinagar	607	Bhaktinagar	39	Arabindanagar	607	Kotwai
3	Bankimnagar	607	Bhaktinagar	40	Dada Bhai	Spl	Bhaktinagar
4	Amtala	998	Bhaktinagar	41	Gokulbhita	998	Bhaktinagar
5	Ashighar	998	Bhaktinagar	42	Nabagram	998	Bhaktinagar
6	Patkata	G.S	Kotwali	43	Paresnagar	Spl	Bhaktinagar
7	Baghajatin	607	Kotwali	44	Bhaktinagar	607	Bhaktinagar
8	Fatapukur(E)	G.S	Kotwali	45	Pandapara	G.S	Kotwali
9	Ghopara	Spl	Dhupguri	46	Pilkhana	998	Kotwali
10	Teachers col	998	Mal	47	Mohitnagar	G.S	Kotwali
11	Ajay Ghos Sq. Col	607	Banarhat	48	Bamanytar	Spl	Dhupguri
12	Maskalaibari (ORG)	G.S	Kotwali	49	Netaji Udbastu	607	Mal
13	Suryasen	607	Bhaktinagar	50	Belacoba	G.S	Rajganj
14	Nowkaghat	607	Bhaktinagar	51	Saktigar	G.S	Bhaktinagar
15	Santinagar	607	Bhaktinagar	52	Niranjannagar	607	Bhaktinagar
16	Saratpalli	607	Bhaktinagar	53	Sitalapara	607	Bhaktinagar

17	Harekrishna	607	Bhaktinagar	54	Narayanpara	998	Bhaktinagar
18	Mashkalaibari (EXTN)	G.S	Kotwali	55	Chayanpara	998	Bhaktinagar
19	Subhas Unnayan	998	Kotwali	56	Panbari	Spl	Mainaguri
20	Goralbari	G.S	Kotwali	57	Bamantary (nutan)	Spl	Dhupguri
21	Mujibghar	998	Kotwali	58	Berubari	G.S	Kotwali
22	Ramkrishna	607	Mal	59	Indira Gandhi	607	Kotwali
23	Rajganj Udbastu	998	Rajganj	60	Saktigar (Exn)	G.S	Bhaktinagar
24	Ashoknagar	607	Bhaktinagar	61	Teestachar	G.S	Mal
25	Samarnagar	998	Bhaktinagar	62	Dhumdangi	607	Rajganj
26	Bejoynagar	607	Bhaktinagar	63	Barivasa	Spl	Bhaktinagar
27	Thakurnagar	607	Bhaktinagar	64	Rabindranagar	607	Kotwali
28	Anandanagar	607	Bhaktinagar	65	Dhakeswari	607	Bhaktinagar
29	Chakiabhita	998	Bhaktinagar	66	Vidyachakra	Spl	Bhaktinagar
30	Karala Char	998	Kotwali	67	Dasarathpalli	Spl	Bhaktinagar
31	Mahamaya	607	Kotwali	68	Dhaka Udbastu	607	Bhaktinagar
32	Talma	G.S	Kotwali	69	Mal col	Spl	Mal
33	Baghajatin	607	Dhupguri	70	Suryasen	607	Dhupguri
34	Adarshapalli	998	Mal	71	Pares Mitra	998	Kotwali
35	Adarshapalli	607	Banarhat	72	Jagganath	998	Kotwali

36	Baribasha	Spl	Bhaktinagar	73	Padmadighi	998	Kotwali
37	Bidhanpalli	Spl	Mal	74	Fatapukur (W)	G.S	Rajganj

Source: District Rehabilitation Office – Jalpaiguri

Table – 5.5
Distribution of Lands in Refugee Families
(District – Jalpaiguri)

Sl. NO	Name of the colony	Location	No of displaced person's families	Area under occupation of displaced persons in Areas	Rural of Urban	Public Land of Private land
367	Bhaktinagar Sq. Colony(182)	Dabgram, P.S. Rajganj	228	15.48	Rural, Non-Agri	Govt. Land
368	Harekrishna Sq. Colony	Do	27	1.25	do	do
369	Sarat Pally Sq. Colony	Do	55	2.32	do	do
370	Bankimnagar Sq. Colony	Do	6	6.00	Rural, Agri	Do
371	Sitalpara Sq. Colony	Do	29	3.30	Rural, Non-Agri	Do
372	Thakurnagar Sq. Colony	Do	86	26.00	Rural, Agri	Do
373	Anandanagar Sq. Colony	Do	102	45.00	Non-Agri	Do
374	Mahamaya Sq. Colony	Do	141	29.46	Do	Do
375	Dacca Udbastu Sq.	Do	62	75.00	Rural, Agri	Do

	Colony					
376	Dhumdangi Sq. Colony	Do	18	32.00	Do	Do
377	Bijaynagar Sq. Colony	Do	332	50.00	Do	Do
378	Dhakeswari Sq. Colony	Do	61	20.00	Do	Do
379	Suryasen Sq. Colony	Do	390	30.48	Rural, Non-Agri	Govt. 18.33 Public 12.15
380	Niranjannagar Sq. Colony(1,2,3,4)	Dabgram, P.S. Rajganj	513	32.025	Rural, Non-Agri	Govt. Land
381	Netajinagar Sq. Colony	Do	225	16.405	Do	Do
382	Nokaghat Sq. Colony(Noaghata)	Do	116	10.03	Do	Do
383	Santinagar Sq. Colony(1&2)	Dabgram, P.S. Rajganj	119	8.06	Rural, Non-Agri, Govt.	Do
384	Ashoknagar (1&2)	Do	44	2.45	Do	Do
385	Ajoy Ghosh Palli Sq. Colony	Gairkata, P.S. Banarhat	83	10.00	Do	Do
386	Banarhat Adarsha Palli Sq. Colony	P.S. Banarhat	150	16.00	Do	Do
387	Mal Netaji Bastuhara Colony (i & ii)	P.S. Mal	290	23.85	Do	Do
388	Ramkrishna Colony	Do	192	10.80	Do	Do
389	Baghajatin Colony	P.S.	30	6.00	Do	Do

		Dhupguri				
390	Indira Gandhi Colony	P.S. Kotwali	373	40.72	Rural& Urban Non-Agri	Do
391	Baghajatin Colony	Do	94	6.00	Urban Non-Agri	Do
392	Rabindra Nagar Colony	Do	249	22.29	Do	Do
393	Arabindanagar Sq. Colony	Do	52	7.50	Rural, Non-Agri	Do
394	Hamiltonganj (Rabindranagar)	P.S. Kalchini	180	14.40	Do	Do
395	Bidhanpalli	P.S. Alipurduar	31	2.50	Urban, Non-Agri	Do
396	Anandanagar	Do	25	25.00	Rural, Agri	Do

Source: District Rehabilitation Office – Jalpaiguri

Table – 5.6
Comparative Data of Refugees in Different Districts of
West Bengal: 1961

Area	Total	Rural	Urban
West Bengal	30,68,750	15,07,220	15,61,530
24-Pargona	7,86,661	2,97,164	4,89,497
Calcutta	5,28,205	5,28,205
Nadia	5,02,645	3,81,009	1,21,638
Cooch Bihar	25,2,753	2,27,628	25,125
Jalpaiguri	21,83,341	1,71,617	46,724
West Dinajpur	1,72,237	1,25,135	47,082
Burdwan	1,44,704	81,841	62,863
Hoogly	1,30,951	38,663	92,288

Sources: Census – 1961

Table – 5.7 (a)

Change in Number of Urban in Migrants in Districts of
West Bengal. (in'00)

Districts	1951 - 1961			1961 - 1971			
	Inter Dist.	Inter State	From Pakistan	Intra Dist.	Inter Dist.	Inter State	From Pakistan *
Darjeeling	33	101	70	-30	51	13	47
Jalpaiguri	37	36	122	31	24	13	33
Cooch Behar	19	34	34	-12	25	-21	21
West Dinajpore	30	85	233	23	38	-3	123
Malda	16	19	15	14	23	-2	38
N.D.W.B.	135	275	474	26	161	0	262

Murshidabad	16	10	-36	-24	76	-3	84
Nadia	99	26	309	31	102	-4	-28
24-Parganas	152	-172	1,235	-274	597	-137	852
Calcutta	-33	26	-1,575	-	-923	-1,450	-2,415
Howrah	271	1,118	-11	-254	-304	-580	-243
Hooghly	409	371	426	-84	28	-169	2
Midnapore	43	-124	44	74	46	24	-12
Purulia	-	-	-	48	64	47	12
Bankura	29	14	6	-23	-4	-14	-7
Birbhum	90	71	23	15	19	2	-32
Burdwan	296	254	245	-190	427	18	136

*Includes present day Bangladesh.

‘-‘ Not available

¹Intra district rural-urban migration only.

Source:-

(1) Census of India 1951, Vol.- 6 (West Bengal and Sikkim) District Census Handbooks.

(2) Census of India 1961, Vol.16 (West Bengal) Part – 2 D (i) and (ii) Migration Tables.

(3) Census of India 1971, Series 22 (West Bengal) Part – 2 D (i) and (ii) Migration Tables.

Table – 5.7 (b)

Change in Number of Urban in Migrants Expressed as percentage of base year urban population in the District

Districts	1951 - 1961			1961 - 1971			
	Inter Dist.	Inter State	From Pakistan	Intra Dist.	Inter Dist.	Inter State	From Pakistan*

Darjeeling	3.5	10.7	7.4	-2.1	3.5	0.9	3.3
Jalpaiguri	5.6	5.5	18.4	2.5	1.9	1.1	2.6
Cooch Behar	3.8	6.9	6.8	-1.7	3.4	-2.9	2.9
West Dinajpore	7.1	20.2	55.6	2.4	3.8	-0.3	12.4
Malda	4.5	5.4	4.3	2.8	4.4	-0.3	7.4
N.D.W.B.	4.7	9.6	16.7	0.6	3.3	0.0	5.3
Murshidabad	1.2	0.7	-2.6	-1.2	3.9	-0.1	4.3
Nadia	4.7	1.3	14.8	1.0	3.2	-0.1	-0.9
24-Parganas	3.3	-1.3	9.0	-1.4	3.0	-0.7	4.2
Calcutta	-0.1	0.1	-6.2	-	-3.2	-4.9	-8.2
Howrah	5.2	21.4	-0.2	-3.1	-3.7	-7.9	-3.0
Hooghly	10.4	9.4	10.8	-1.4	0.5	-2.9	0.0
Midnapore	1.7	-4.9	1.7	2.2	1.4	0.7	-0.4
Purulia	-	-	-	5.1	6.9	5.1	1.3
Bankura	3.1	1.5	0.7	-1.9	-0.3	-1.1	-0.5
Birbhum	13.0	10.3	3.3	1.5	1.9	5.1	-5.2
Burdwan	9.1	7.8	7.6	-3.4	7.6	0.3	2.4

*Includes present day Bangladesh.

‘-‘ Not available

¹Intra district rural-urban migration only.

Source:-

(1) Census of India 1951, Vol.- 6 (West Bengal and Sikkim) District Census Handbooks.

(2) Census of India 1961, Vol.16 (West Bengal) Part – 2 D (i) and (ii) Migration Tables.

(3) Census of India 1971, Series 22 (West Bengal) Part – 2 D (i) and (ii) Migration Tables.

ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

In the post–Independence period people of rural belt inclined to urban life. It was due to easy livelihood and more modern amenities. This concept also applied to the economic growth of Jalpaiguri district.

The backbone of economy of Jalpaiguri district is mainly tea, timber and tobacco. Tourism flourished here from 80's in the 20th century. So, the business class invested their lions share to promote tea and tourism and this concept helped to enlarge the towns or urban centers of their district. Besides these, after 90's huge vegetable production specially potato production of plainland of the district mainly Dhupguri, Falakata, Maynaguri have made the sound economy of the district.

Tea Plantation

Tea is the most profitable and influential cash crops of the post colonial regime in the Jalpaiguri district (specially Western Duars). Thus, few plantation have a far reaching impact on the commercialization of agriculture and the process of commercialization made impression not only in the economy of Jalpaiguri but also in West Bangal and India too. The cultivation and maintenance of plantation economy needed active support from the colonial Government before and after independence. The Government had the biggest stage in this enterprise because earning from tea export played a vital part in 'Indian International Trade and Capital–Flow Relation'.

Gazaldoba, a village in Western Dooars where the first tea plantation established in Jalpaiguri district started in 1874 by Dr. Brougham¹⁴. As manager of

Gazoldoba Tea Estate he was the pioneer of tea industry in Jalpaiguri district¹⁵. The district record suggests that Brougham took the first lease of 996 acres land in Gazaldoba on 16-02-1876¹⁶. Fulbari was the next place to be planted. In 1877 Bhatiabarrie, Bamandanga, Ellenbari, Damdim and Washabari tea gardens came into being. In the next year Goodhope, Ranicherra, Manabari, Kalabari, Altadanga, Chael and Batabari started growing. However, in short time in 1881 the number of gardens raised upto 55 in Jalpaiguri district¹⁷. It means the number of tea gardens increased about four times and the area of land under tea cultivation increased more than seven times in just five years.

Table – 5.8

Number of Tea gardens, Area and Production of Tea in Jalpaiguri District
(1951 – 2001)

Years	No. of Tea Estates	Area (Figures in Hectares)	Production (quantity in 100 kg.)
1951	--	54,609	63,944
1961	155	54,756	66,898
1971	151	59,485	80,840
1981	154	63,418	1,00,251
1988	162	63,280	1,14,066
1993	163	67,510	1,25,906
1999	532	70,996	1,33,803
2001	548	70,200	1,30,739

Source : <http://jalpaigur.nic.in>

Hereunder through the table–5.9 the research scholar gives a mathematical picture of growth and development of tea plantation since 1879 to 1910¹⁸. Most of the indigenous companies and tea cultivation group invested a huge amount for the growth and development of the tea industry in Jalpaiguri district. It is known to all concerned that the British Government also took much initiative for tea cultivation in this area. Tea gave a high margin of profit and extension of cultivation in the 80's and early 90's of the 20th century. This encouraged the indigenous cultivators as well as investors and their British counterparts for the growth of tea plantation. Shortly it gives a wide vista or recruitment of labourers and systematic growth of plantation and thereafter a healthy market of trade and commerce.

Table – 5.9

Name of Indian Companies, Year of Origin and the
Amount of Total Capital Invested.

Name of the Company	Year of Origin	Original Capital in Rs.
Jalpaiguri Tea Co. Ltd.	1879	50,000
Northern Bengal Tea Co. Ltd.	1882	1,00,000
Gurjanghora Tea Co. Ltd.	1882	85,400
Anjuman Tea Co. Ltd.	1889	2,25,000
Chamurchi Tea Co. Ltd.	1881	50,000
Katalguri Tea Co. Ltd.	1895	75,000
Chuniajhora Tea Co. Ltd.	1896	75,000
Atiabari Tea Co. Ltd.	1900	75,000
Ramjhora Tea Co. Ltd.	1907	1,30,000
Devpara Tea Co. Ltd.	1909	1,35,200

Diana Tea Co. Ltd.	1910	1,24,200
Total Capital Invested		Rs. 11,24,800

Source: ‘Economic history of tea in Jalpaiguri’ (article), Economy of North Bengal, Ed – D.C. Roy, NL Publishers, Shiv Mandir, 2013, P – 181

Gradually the local people specially who were less interested in agriculture, stepped forward to tea cultivation. They are till date known as small growers of tea. Thus, the tea cultivation has occupied an important place in terms of earning livelihood. In Jalpaiguri the cultivation of C.T.C. (Crush, Tear, Curl) category tea has been much encouraged and it is giving a wide scope of earning foreign money also. Many gardens in Dooars like – Gazoldoba, Soongachhi, Needam, Malnudy, Aibheel, Neora, Baradighi, New Glencoe, Gurjang Jhora, Ingoo, Murti, Zurantee, Mogalkata, Haihaipathar, Chengmari, Kurti, Nakhati, Ranichera, Manabari and many others are now capable of producing export quality tea.

For extension of tea cultivation and taking the quality high some tea experts of the British origin took much interest in tea cultivation in Dooars. To exchange views and ideas on quality tea production the European Cultivators formed an Association called –‘Dooars Branch of Indian Tea Association’ (DBITA) and ‘Dooars Planters Association’ (DPA) towards the end of the 2nd decade of the 20th century. Later the same has been named as Tea Association of India (TAI) established in 1964. Among these Associations DBITA and TAI both are still working and making constant research from all angles for extension of tea industry in Dooars. Mr. Ram Avtar Sharma, notable tea–researcher, writer and Secretary of TAI (Dooars Branch) has given his expert opinion on alround development of tea cultivation in Jalpaiguri and Dooars extensively. He demands “Tea is the identity of Dooars”. He gives alround expertise right from plantation to marketing of tea specially of CTC category. Mr. Sharma is one of the best tea growers in this area.

Growth and Development of Tea in Jalpaiguri from 1875 – 1968:

A close observation has been made since the beginning of tea in Dooars. It is thought and resolved that without the progress of tea cultivation in Dooars the civilization would not progress so rapidly as found to day. One of the most important sources earning in Dooars is invariably tea. More than 75% population of the Dooars depends upon tea for their livelihood and related progress in lifestyle. Here in table–5.10 shown the growth of tea plantation in Jalpaiguri from 1875 to 1968¹⁹. In table–5.11 number of tea gardens and quantity of land used for tea²⁰ and in table–5.12 the total number of tea gardens, land under tea cultivation and quantity if production.

In the table no. 5.10 it is shown that first Tea Estate in Dooars or in Jalpaiguri district is Gazoldoba Tea Estate, estd. in 1874 which is 16 km. west of Malbazar. Thereafter it is found in 1876 Fulbari, Rungamutee, Bagrakot, Gandhabheel and Dalimkote Tea Estates were established. In the same way from 1877 – 1881 numerous Tea Esatates were set up. But in 1884 the highest number of tea gardens (20 gardens) remarkably grew up in different places in Dooars. However, from 1875 – 1915 numbers of tea gardens increased day by day. But from 1917 – 1934 the rate of growth of Tea Estates became slow.

Table – 5.10

Tea Estates in Jalpaiguri from 1875 to 1968

Year	Name of the Tea Garden	Year	Name of the Tea Garden
1874	Gazoldoba	1876	Fulbari Rangatee Bagrakot Gandhabheel Dalimkote

1877	Jaldhaka Baintbari Bamandanga Ellenbarie Damdim Kumlai Washabari	1878	Kalabari Good Hope(Sishubari) Ranichara Money hope(Phulbari) Manabari Ballarie Altadauga Chael and Patabari(Leash River)
1879	Mogulkata Rupnee Soongachi Nagrakata	1881	Haihaipathar Odlabari Neora Nadi(Upper Neora) Mogalkata Bataigool
1882	Needam Carron(Mujnai Grant)	1883	Toonbari
1884	Youngtong Chalauni Nagaisuree Ingo Zurantee Moortee Aibheel Kilcott Nedcem(Needeem Tea Co. Ltd) Matelli Chalsa	1885	Baitguri Rangakothe Chengmari Kurti Nakhati Indong Chupaguri (Needeem Tea Co. Ltd)

	<p>Sundree</p> <p>Alston (Nedeem Tea Co. Ltd)</p> <p>Meenglass</p> <p>Chengli</p> <p>Bhuttabaree</p> <p>Ranikhola</p> <p>Sathkhaya</p>		
1886	<p>Springfield</p> <p>Sukhabari (Dooars Tea Co. Ltd)</p> <p>Hope</p> <p>Tondoo</p> <p>Jitee</p> <p>Malnuddy</p> <p>Rangutee (Nedeem)</p> <p>Gurjong Jhora</p> <p>Nagrakata</p> <p>Gatea</p> <p>Bhogatpur</p> <p>Looksan</p> <p>Forest Hill (Nedeem)</p> <p>Chalauni</p>	1887	<p>Glenco</p> <p>Patharjhora</p>
1888	<p>Kujih (Carron)</p> <p>Haldibari</p>	1889	<p>Chengmari</p> <p>Grassmore</p> <p>Saugaon (Bagrakot)</p>
1890	<p>Telipara</p> <p>Gairkata (Angrabhasa Huntapara)</p>	1991	<p>Makrapara (Anjuman Co.)</p> <p>Huntapara</p>

	Mujnai (Anjuman Co.)		
1892	Bundapani Lankapwa Chamurchi Totapara (Nuddia)	1894	Chunabhati Hartalguri Newlands Doodoomari (Assam Dooars) Gandrapara Chuapara
1895	Rangamatee (Imperial Tea Co.) Toorsa (Needee) Kathalguri Banarhat (Chapaguri Grant) Carbala Jointee	1896	Huldibari (Assam Dooars Tea Co.) Chuniajhora Baradighi Drlah Guabari Palashbari 1 st (New Dooars) Hasimara (7 Granta) Kalchini Rahimabad Birpara(Birpiti & other Grants)
1897	Garganda Muktijhora Mateejhora Lakhipara Reti Shyamjhora (?) Kalchini Dalgaon Dalmoni(Needeem)	1898	Binnaguri Debpara Lankapara Ahabari Phaskhowa (Kalikhola Grant)

	Dalsingpara Bhutan Duars(X) Raidak		
1899	Galupara	1900	Gandrapara Chuapara Rangamati Ranga Tea Estate 2 nd ?
1902	Nagrakata Dimdima Baintbari Gandabheel (Fulbari Tea Co.) Chuniajhora Kalchini Hatipota Imperial Tea Co. Dhoala	1903	Tashati Dalmoni (Needeem) Bhatkhawa (Date of Incorporation of the Co. Was 03.09.1900) Kumlai
1904	Emerabad (Assam Dooars Tea Co. Ltd) Rupai(?) Atiabari	1906	Bataigole
1907	Dumchipara	1908	Ambari
1909	Dima Dalmora Ramjhora	1910	Turturi Rajabhat
1911	Damdim Debpara Daina	1912	Lakhipara
1913	Gopalpur Hossainabad	1915	Paitkapara Dhowlajhora

	Jay Birpara Dheklapara Nimtijhora Palashbari Rheabari Radharani		Kohinoor
1917	Saraswatipur(in Baikunthapur area)	1918	Sanny Valley
1919	Majherdabri Satali Mathura(Sarada) Bitri(Hantupara) Barron Moraghata	1922	Red Bank
1923	Nangdala	1924	Ethelbari Hartalguri
1926	Batabari Jadabpur	1927	Malhati Anandapur Sreenathpur
1928	Kadambini	1929	Madhu Laxmikanta Rahimpur
1930	Saudamini Gopimohan	1933	Nepuchapur
1934	Surendranagar	1968	Dharanipur

Source: 'Economic history of tea in Jalpaiguri' (article), Economy of North Bengal, Ed – D.C. Roy, NL Publishers, Shiv Mandir, 2013, P – 183 to 186.

Table – 5.11

Number of Tea-gardens and the amount of land there of in the district of Jalpaiguri (1874 – 1951)²³

Year	No. of gardens	Land under tea-garden. (in acres)
1874	1	---
1876	13	818
1881	55	6,230
1892	182	38,583
1901	235	76,403
1907	180	81,338
1911	191	90, 859
1921	131	1,12,688
1931	151	1,31,074
1941	189	1,31,770
1951	158	1,34,473

Source: Dr. Sailen Debnath – Economic History of Tea Industry in jalpaiguri District (artical), ECONOMY OF NORTH BENGAL, edited – D.C. Roy, P – 186.

Table – 5.12

Number of Tea Gardens, Area under Tea Cultivation, Amount of
Production and Tea Labourers in Jalpaiguri

Number of Tea Estates

1951	1961	1971	1981	1988	1993	1995	1997	1998	1999
54609	54756	59485	63418	63280	67510	69175	69630	70479	70996

Area under Tea

(Figers in Hectors)

1961	1971	1981	1988	1993	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
155	151	154	162	163	168	191	191	423	532

Year - Wise Production of Tea

(Quantity in Thousand Kgs)

1951	1961	1971	1981	1988	1993	1995	1997	1998	1999
6394	6689	8084	10025	11406	12590	12142	12976	14713	13380
4	8	0	1	6	6	0	0	3	3

Production of Green Tea

(Quantity in Thousand Kgs)

1951	1961	1971	1981	1988	1993	1995	1997	1998	1999

2086	4110	2899	3043	3043	1770	1899	1926	2755	2221
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Average Yield

(Figurs in Kg. / Hectors)

1951	1961	1971	1981	1988	1993	1995	1997	1998	1999
1711	1222	1359	1581	1801	1865	1755	1864	2088	1885

Source: Dr. Sailen Debnath – Economic History of Tea Industry in jalpaiguri District (artical), ECONOMY OF NORTH BENGAL, edited – D.C. Roy, P – 186.

Again in table–5.13, 5.14, 5.15, 5.16 and 5.17 the researcher shows the quantity of land used in tea cultivation and production, number of total healthy tea estates in North Bengal, region – wise division like hills and plains, quantity of production in different regions following change of topography, climate, communication, availability of labourers and some other related factors. The area of tea cultivation in Dooars covers 1,09,400 hectors of land and currently produces about 200 million tons of tea per annum. It accounts for 20% of area under tea cultivation in India and more than 5% area under tea in the World. The statistics says the land used for tea in Dooars is more than the total land used for tea in Srilanka (18,88,971 hectres)²¹. The quantity of tea grown in Dooars is at per the total production of Kenya which makes the tea planters in Dooars and stimulant.

It is already mentioned that CTC category tea is cultivated in Dooars and Terai. The production of this tea varies from year to year due to various reasons. It has been observed from table no.–5.13, 5.14, 5.15, 5.16 and 5.17 that the growth is not same in all the years in all gardens. There has been a remarkable increase in production of tea. In 1971 th area of cultivation was 88,499 hectres while it reached to 1,89,841, hectres in 2002²². It means there has been and increase of

20,901 hectares in 2002 over the last 31 years. There are obviously ups and downs in production but the overall resultant is growth in tea cultivation in Dooars. Growth in tea means economic growth which encourages the locals to bring sophisticated lifestyle among them also. They remain absorbed in tea but dream of extension of quantity and quality of the same.

Table – 5.13

Area and production of tea in Jalpaiguri
(1876 – 1907)
(Area: in Acre, Production: in kg.)

Year	No. of Gardens	Area	Production
1876	13	818	29,520
1881	55	6230	10,27,117
1892	182	38583	1,82,78,628
1901	235	76403	3,10,87,537
1907	180	81338	4,51,96,894

Source: Gazetteer of Jalpaiguri,

Table – 5.14

Area & Production of Tea in North Bengal
(Area: in Hector, Production: in Tonnes)

Year	Area	Production
1971	88,499	1,04,087
1981	93,931	1,28,259
1990	1,01,170	1,49,753

1994	99,967	1,58,825
1995	1,01,190	1,57,522
1996	1,02,650	1,64,768
1997	1,03,008	1,70,158
1998	1,05,624	1,93,789
1999	1,07,430	1,75,975
2000	1,07,479	1,81,536
2001	1,08,802	1,86,876
2002	1,09,400	1,89,841

Source: Various issues of Tea Statics & Tea Market Annual Report and Statics,
J.Thomas & Company Private Ltd. 2003.

Table – 5.15
Number of Tea Estates in North Bengal
(1971 – 2001)

Year	Darjeeling	Doors	Terai	North Bengal
1971	97	151	48	296
1981	103	154	48	305
1990	102	163	92	347
1995	83	168	92	343
1996	80	191	182	453
1997	80	191	182	453
1998	85	423	607	1,115

1999	85	532	834	1,451
2000	85	545	910	1,540
2001	85	548	921	1,554

Source: Various issues of Tea Statics

Table – 5.16

Area under Tea in Different Regions (1971 – 2002)

(Area: In Hectors)

Year/Area	Darjeeling	Tarai	Dooars	North Bengal
1971	18,245	10,769	59,485	88,499
1981	20,308	11,314	63,418	93,971
1993	19,324	13,655	67,510	1,00,489
1994	19,180	12,908	67,779	99,967
1995	18,932	13,083	69,175	1,01,190
1996	17,551	15,351	69,748	1,02,650
1997	17,760	15,618	69,630	1,03,008
1998	17,830	17,315	70,749	1,05,894
1999	17,604	20,118	69,708	1,07,430
2000	17,228	20,548	69,703	1,07,479
2001	17,318	21,467	70,017	1,08,802
2002	17,400	21,800	70,200	1,09,400

Source, various issues of Tea Statistics

Table – 5.17

Production of Tea in Different Regions of North Bengal

1971 – 2002 (Prod. in Tonnes)

Year/Area	Darjeeling	Tarai	Dooars	North Bengal
1971	10,293	12,954	80,840	1,04,087
1981	12,226	15,782	1,00,251	1,28,259
1990	14,499	21,130	1,14,124	1,49,753
1994	11,092	24,636	1,23,097	1,58,825
1995	11,289	24,804	1,21,420	1,57,522
1996	10,614	28,901	1,25,253	1,64,768
1997	10,054	30,344	1,29,760	1,70,158
1998	10,253	36,403	1,47,133	1,93,789
1999	8,653	42,521	1,24,801	1,75,975
2000	9,281	43,291	1,28,964	1,81,536
2001	9,742	46,395	1,30,739	1,86,876
2002	10,727	36,491	1,42,623	1,89,841

Tea – Marketing:

It is widely known that tea is a commercial crop. It needs a good and reasonable marketing status in all the seasons of the year. Tea is marketed in two ways – I) Private Sale and II) Auction Sale. In private sale tea is marketed a lower quantity during a long period of time²³. In this way a huge quantity of tea can not be sold or marketed. The producers suffer from monetary loss through the system of sale. Naturally they resort to auction for their huge quantity of tea sale. The auction sale is controlled by public at large and government (Tea Board of India) also. In North Bengal tea is sold mainly through the Siliguri Auction Centre and there by Kolkata though there are altogether six tea auction centres across the country.

North Bengal Tea or CTC accounts for about 25% of the total tea production of India and is equivalent to the total South Indian Production²⁴. The private sale is not negligible in Dooars. more than 90% people are accustomed to drinking tea. As a result 50% of total production is marketed through private sale. Remaining 50% is auction and sold to the highest bidders at Siliguri and Kolkata Auction Centre²⁵. The researcher take much interest to show the production and auction of Dooars tea in table no.– 5.18 and – 5.19.

According to tea statistics (1970 – 1971), in West Bengal there are altogether 302 tea estates out of which 154 are in Jalpaiguri district (also known as Duars), 102 are in Darjeeling Hills and employed 2.19 Lakhs Labours and produced 124 million Kilograms tea per annum²⁶. The area under tea in Duars alone is 134,473hectars area employing 1.76 Lakhs labours²⁷.

However, tea in Duars has been earning immense wealth, both for the people and the Government. It is employing nearly three Lakh labourers and more than one Lakhs outside people, with work connected with tea-trade²⁸. Practically one-third of the population of the whole district is getting a scope to earn from the

business connected with tea. Still some more may be had from the tea, e-g manufacture of tea-seed oil and caffeine²⁹.

Table – 5.18

Production & Auction of Dooars Tea (1971 – 2003)

(Production: In Tonnes)

Year	Production	Auction	%
1971	80,840	33,237	41.11
1981	1,00,251	35,678	35.59
1990	1,14,124	82,700	72.47
1994	1,21,420	73,341	60.40
1995	1,21,420	67,080	55.25
1996	1,25,253	66,442	53.05
1997	1,29,760	53,642	41.34
1998	1,47,133	58,622	39.84
1999	1,24,801	70,081	56.15
2000	1,28,964	68,449	53.08
2001	1,30,739	62,052	47.46
2002	1,42,623	60,748	42.59

2003	1,47,851	72,865	49.28
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Source: various issues of Tea Statistics

Table – 5.19

Production & Auction of North Bengal Tea (1971 – 2003)

(Production: In Tonnes)

Year	Kolkata Auction Sales			Siliguri Auction Sales			Gowahati Auction North Bengal	Total Auction	production	Auction as % of Production
	Darjeeling	Dooars	Terai	Darjeeling	Dooars	Terai				
1971	8535	33237	4553	0	0	0	0	46325	104087	---
1981	9396	35678	2331	0	0	0	0	47405	128259	44.51
1990	8436	11484	557	100	71216	16271	0	108064	149753	36.96
1994	6733	7307	551	10	66034	15270	9818	105723	158825	72.16
1995	5689	6838	165	50	60242	13869	7569	94422	157522	66.57
1996	6191	6425	72	56	60017	18070	7961	98792	164768	59.94
1997	5897	6860	24	63	46782	15588	0	75214	170158	59.96
1998	5138	7015	64	75	51607	16760	0	80659	193789	44.20
1999	5263	9725	236	65	60356	23146	0	98791	175975	41.62
2000	5243	10745	297	10	57704	19374	0	93373	181536	56.14

2001	4704	11212	202	0	50840	19735	1	86694	186876	51.43
2002	5270	10892	822	4	49856	21841	0	88685	18984	46.39
2003	5326	13252	1378	0	59613	26369	0	105938	200595	---

Source: various issues of Tea Statistics

From the above geographical discussion it is clear to one and all that tea plays a very significant role in building stronger the economy of the district Jalpaiguri and entire North Bengal. The northern part of the Jalpaiguri district depends totally upon tea. It gives a sound economic support to the growth and development of the newly born Mufassal towns like – Malbazar, Nagrakata, Banarhat, Odlabari, Binnaguri, Birpara, Madarihat, Hanshimara and Hamiltongonj. These towns are being coming important centres of trade and commerce with the neighbouring country Bhutan also.

Many schools and colleges have been setup at different places for the overall development of society and civilization. Most of the schools are multilingual where atleast arrangements of study in two media have been made available. This academic development is the key to the total development of localities. Tea–centric and tourism–centric subjects also have been introduced in the educational curriculam for the growth of local people. Now this view clearly prevails in these localities of Jalpaiguri district. Bright probality is also there for rapid growth of the said places here turned at Mufassal towns or semi–urban centres.

Timber Plantation

Apart from tea timber also provided a strong money-tarry support to the development economy of jalpaiguri district. Timbers were produced from the forests which were necessary for making tea–chests, railway sleepers, house buildings, bridges etc. with establishment of the Indian forest service as per the Government Forest Act of 1865 first a definite policy took shape in respect of the Indian Forest and specially of the jalpaiguri Forest areas.

The Sal was the most important tree in the jalpaiguri district. The whole jalpaiguri district forest area was of three types – 1) Sal bearing areas. 2) Sissu bearing areas and 3) Khair bearing areas³⁰.

The Sal trees dominate the forests which have an average annual rainfall of 144". These and other trees cover an area of 4,35,000 acres comprising over one-fourth of the district³¹. Hill forest covers 6% of the entire forest areas, the plains forest covering the rest. The forest area of Jalpaiguri district covered 1824 sq km. in 1961 A.D³². But now the forest area of the district are decreased day by day and finally in 1991 the forest area of Jalpaiguri district covered 1790 sq. km. and it was only 28.75% of the entire geographical area in the district. This picture appeared in the Table–5.20.

Table – 5.20
Forest Area in Jalpaiguri District: 1941 – 1961

Year	Total Geographical area, (sq.km.)	Area under (Sq. km.)	Percentage of forests to Geographical area	Percapita forest area in hectares
1941	6,534	1,803	27.59	0.21
1951	6,079	1,823	29.99	0.20
1961	6,234	1,824	29.26	0.13
1991	6,227	1,790	28.75	---

Source: Govt. of West Bengal Forest Directorate West Bengal Forest; centenary commemoration volume: 1964, Calcutta, 1966. P – 263, 269 and in 1991 report.

However, the Sal of Jalpaiguri district is the best quality in India. The percentage of Sal per unite area in the bests forests in the Buxa Division is 60 – 75%, where as in the Jalpaiguri Division it is 90%³³. More than 80% of Sal timber

was exported by the Bengal Dooars Railway and the North Western Railway from the Jalpaiguri forest areas.

The Major part of these forests is now administered is reserved forests. The following the table–5.21 shows the areas under forest in the district in 1969 – 1970³⁴.

Table – 5.21
AREAS UNDER FOREST IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT EXCLUDING
ALIPURDUAR: 1969 – 1970
(IN ACRES)

State Forest	Baikunthapur	Jalpaiguri	Buxa
Reserved	16,365	89,554	1,68,446
Protected	52,459	187	1,558
Unclaped	34	5,027	1,764
Private forest mostly in teagardens	5,890	Nil	4,908
Total	74,748	94,768	1,76,676

Source: Central Bank of India, Siliguri, Lead Bank Survey Report: Jalpaiguri district 1972, P–8. Alipurduar has been mixed up with Kochbiher Division and so separate figures are not available.

Jute Cultivation

Through the colonial period jute became an important cash crop in jalpaiguri district. Certain factors introduced the cultivation of jute in the district. At first with the growth of world trade a simultaneous demand for packaging grew. Secondly, the emergence of Marwari community as owner of Jotes in jalpaiguri districts who could see better prospects in investment in land than in traditional money lending business. Thirdly, southern part of the district has a fertile land and heavy rain falls, a prerequisite for the jute cultivation exist. On the whole, jute is more profitable crop than rice. Apart from these the farmers' had no hesitation in advancing loans at high interests to the jute cultivators. All these factors prompted the jute cultivation in the district.

The most striking advancement of jute cultivation took place in a vast area in the whole southern plain land of the district which is too fertile by the numerous rivers which flow from north to south. The table-5.22 shows in 1967 the total area under jute was 43,300 hectors and the total production is 2,69,200 tones in the district³⁵. The crop grew mainly in the Falakata, Dhupguri, Maynaguri, Jalpaiguri Sadar (except municipality area), Kranti, Madarihat and Rajgang area. Although the best quality of jute was grown in the Rajgang block, in the whole district the condition of fiber was good.

However, from the 80's of the 90th century the jute cultivation slowly decreased due to the fluctuation of price which affected the cultivators, jolders and small peasants who invested so much capital for the cultivation of jute and got nothing in return. This reality forced the peasants to opt for rice and other cultivation.

Table – 5.22
Area and Production of Jute Cultivation of Jalpaiguri District
(1966 – 1972)

Year	Area of land in Hectors	Total Production in Tonns

1966 – 67	43,300	269,200
1970 – 71	42,100	270.700
1971 - 72	41,900	273,600

Source: District Statistical Hand Book – 1971 and 1972 combined.

Tobacco Cultivation

Tobacco is also an important commercial crop which is cultivated in the Southern plain land in the Jalpaiguri district. The best quality of tobacco grew on the lands lying between the Teesta and Torsa River. The table–4.23 shows in 1966 – 67 the total area production was 1,400 tons in the district³⁶. But in 1999 – 2000 it was decreased and produced only 403 tonnes. The chief markets for sale of tobacco were – Dhupguri, Falakata and Maynaguri. This crop was exported to Bhutan, Assam and also to Dhaka and Calcutta.

Table – 5.23

Area and Production of Tobacco Cultivation of Jalpaiguri District
(1966 – 1972)

Year	Area of Land Hectors	Production In Tonnes
1966 – 67	2,200	1,400
1970 – 71	1,300	800
1971 – 72	1.300	600
1999 – 2000	990	403

Source: District Statistical Hand Book – 1971, 1972 and 2000 Combined.

So, from the above mentioned plantation and cultivation of the districts it is clear to us that the tea plantation enterprise is the most influential factor for urbanization in the district. Second influential factor is timber. The climatic condition of the region and the cheap availability of timbers made the local urban population to opt for wooden based business and activities. It is also true that the other agricultural products in the district are not negligible.

TOURISM

‘Tourism’ now has become an important means of economic transformation. It has been now accepted by all countries. Thus, tourism has been recognized as an industry (Sharply & Telfer et al, 2006)³⁷. Tourism has become a strong means of economic growth and development in and around North Bengal including the hilly regions of Darjeeling. Needless to say the scenic beauty of North Bengal is external and internal appeal to the tourists of land and abroad.

The greenery of tea-belts in North Bengal and Dooars is a centre of tourist attraction. The tea gardens and their locations in different altitudes welcome the tourists at optimum level. The tourists cannot resist the call of the tourism in plains and hills. The exciting scenic beauty in various forms has a majestic appeal. The tourists are in true sense mesmerized by the soothing climate, lush green dense forest and the small rivers and rivulets such as – Teesta, Torsa, Jaldhaka, Dudua, Mujnai, Neora, Leesh, Gheesh etc.³⁸ their zigzag course across the hills and plains gives an added beauty to the locality. The greenery including the tea-plantation and natural vegetation has given the locality an important position on the tourism map in the World. Undeniably this scenic beauty has become a strong and permanent source of income of the Govt. of India and the State Govt. as well as the tour operators of the locals. They satisfy the wander-

thirst of the tourists, whoever comes from any place lying within the country or outside.

Tourism in Jalpaiguri District

Jalpaiguri is an Administrative District as well as Divisional town of North Bengal. It comprises a vast locality connecting plains and hills together. So from the panoramic view point the district offers a look that only welcomes the visitors and tourists but never gives farewell. Till the 80's of the 20th century Jalpaiguri district was rich in 'Three – Ts' i.e. Tea, Timber and Tobacco. Fortunately after 80's the tourism has been treated as one of the most important and enchanting locality from the tourists' view point. Naturally tobacco was replaced by tourism. The increasing appeal of tourism in different places of Jalpaiguri district like – Garumara National Park, Jaldapara Wildlife Sanctuary, Buxa Fort and Tiger Reserve, Jainti, Raja Bhatkhawa, Jaldhaka, Samsing, Murti, Jalpesh etc. has become one of the most genuine factors for the growth and development of economy as well as modern amenities.

Garumara National Park–Green Gateway:

Garumara National Park is situated at Lataguri under the Sub–division and Police Station of Mal. It is 11 km. away from Malbazar and 60 km. from Jalpaiguri. The area of Garumara National Park is 79.45 sq. km³⁹. It was declared a Wildlife Sanctuary in 1949 and National Park in 1992⁴⁰. This area is covered by dense forest with the trees of moist sal, simul, sirish, khair, segun (teak) etc. Most of the area is in the flood plain of the River Jaldhaka and Murti. Tourists here come to see and enjoy the deep greeneries and numerous wildlives such as – rhino, elephant, bison, leopard, pig, beer, sambar, barking–deer and hog–deer etc. Besides these, many migratory birds specially 'Kulik' birds come here from different parts of the globe in every winter. Birds' chirping breaks the silence of the nature which makes new enthusiasm.

In the Garumara Sanctuary there is a rescue centre where there is the rehabilitation camp of wounded and orphan animals. To spread out the 'Eco–

tourism' and 'Nature–study' of the students of schools and colleges a 'Nature Interpretation Centre' has also been opened here. Apart from these, there are two Rhino Observation Point cum Watch–towers from where every one can see the wild animals. Finally in 1995 the Sanctuary was declared as the 'Fourth National Park' of West Bengal. However, due to the beauty of greenery it may be called 'A Green Gateway of Dooars'.

Jaldapara Wildlife Sanctuary:

Jaldapara Wildlife Sanctuary is another natural vegetation in the district Jalpaiguri. The Jaldapara Wildlife Sanctuary has made the district more important to the tourists in North Bengal. This very famous sanctuary lies between the rivers Malangi and Torsha on the east and the west. The area of the sanctuary is 114.59 sq. km. having a good variety of flora and fauna⁴¹. Truly speaking Jaldapara has become now the richest tourist spot in Jalpaiguri district. It is about 124 km. from Siliguri and 88 km. from Jalpaiguri by route. The NH–31 divides this Sanctuary into two halves. Different wildlives like – rhino, elephant, bison, leopard, pig, bear, sambar, barking–deer, hog–deer, python etc. roam freely in the sanctuary. The variety of wildlife and greenery are the main objects of tourist attraction. The one–horned rhinos are the special attraction of this sanctuary. But unfortunately poaching has become a threat to the wildlife today.

However, based on this sanctuary tourism has developed considerably in this locality. Tourists from land and abroad visit this locality throughout the year. The tourists also can have 'Jungle Safari' by jeep by taking permission from the Forest Office at Lataguri. The scenic beauty of Jaldapara has culminated to a satisfactory position in perspective of global tourism today. Depending upon this greenery and sanctuary the probability of extension of tourism is becoming brighter every day. The famous 'Halong Banglaw' in the deep into the forest is another lucrative attraction to the tourists. Staying there tourists can watch different animals and there movements specially at moon–lights.

Buxa Tiger Reserve:

Buxa Tiger Reserve lies in Buxa Duar which is in the midst of misty mountains in the North Eastern fringe of Jalpaiguri district bordering Bhutan. The area of Buxa Tiger Reserve (BTR) is 761.9 sq. km.⁴². Buxa Tiger Reserve was declared in 1983 as the 15th tiger reserve in India. It was declared Buxa Wildlife Sanctuary in 1992⁴³. Finally, the West Bengal Government declared it as the Buxa National Park with notification no. 3403 – For /11B – 6/96 dt. 05–12–1997⁴⁴. The height of Buxa is 2600 ft. from the sea level. Buxa National Park is virtually a trekkers' paradise. From Santarabari to Buxa Duar this 5 km. long area covered the hilly terrain with sub-tropical forests, a number of picturesque trekking routes lie scattered in the lofty Sinchula ranges.

However, this Reserve is the home land of tigers, a diminishing animal. Besides tiger, the tourists come to see bisons, barking–deer, hog–deer, leopard, wild Pig, pangolin, sambar, monkeys etc. Sometimes they see python lying on the forest floor. The silent movements of elephants towards water body fascinate every one at the end of the day. The faunal life of this Reserve Forest has been enriched by the numerous varieties of butterflies. Apart from these, variety of wildlives there is also dense forest with the diversity of trees such as – sal, segun (teak), sissoo, sirish, dhupi etc. A number of varieties of creepers, herbs, and grasses grow here. Among the grasses Eleohant Grass and Lemon Grass (it is tall grass and smells like a lemon) are available here. Thereafter the orchids of different colours bring an atmosphere of wilderness in the Buxa Tiger Reserve.

However, Buxa is the largest chunk of forest in West Bengal. The picturesque hilly land scape, bio–diversity and wilderness of the Buxa region is irresistible with its whispering forest, the roaring rivers and blooming Orchids welcomed several thousands of tourists from the country and abroad. A large number of Zoolozists, Botanists and nature lovers come here due to the richness of bio–diversity of the Buxa National Park.

Buxa Fort:

Buxa Fort lies in Buxa Duar and adjacent to Buxa Tiger Reserve which is 31 km. north from Alipurduar and located to Indo–Bhutan Border. The land scape is on

Sinchula range of lower Himalayas which is 2600 ft. above the sea level. The Buxa Fort is living historical evidence where there was a detention camp during the Colonial period. The freedom fighters specially Bengali freedom fighters of our country were imprisoned there. However, the Buxa Fort is a mile stone in Freedom Movement in India where the history whispers and air hums "*Vandemataram*". Numerous incidents of Freedom Movement are associated with this Fort. The hills and the decaying Fort echo the sounds of clanging swords of warriors. To get sentimental attachment with the heart and soul of detained freedom fighters a number of tourists come here every year.

Jainti:

Jainti is another important but small beautiful scenic place that lies in the lap of foliage of the Buxa forest. It is situated to the north of Rajabhatkhawa Railway Station in the Alipurduar Sub-division. Its scenic beauty is very attractive. In one side lies the deep jungles of green forests while in other side the River Jainti flows turbulently from north to south on hilly tract. The murmuring sound of the River Jainti, adjacent rocky tract and the deep greenery is fascinating the minds of the tourists who come to enjoy here. Thus, this soothing and pleasing climate specially in the time of spring and autumn to keep the physical comfort and mental peace many visitors come here.

Jainti is not famous only for her scenic beauty or as picnic spot, it also a pilgrimage centre. Where there is a cave of 'Lord Shiva'. This Cave–Temple is well reputed like Baidyanath of Bihar. It is known as 'Satipit'⁴⁵. In Hindu mythological belief, there are 51 'pits' (places) of the existence of 'Sati' across the country and Jainti is one of them. The Hindu people think one of the parts of Sati's body was dropped at Jainti and thereafter the belief grew the Jainti has an extra mythological significance to the locals as well as the visitors of far distance.

Jaldhaka:

It is a beautiful panoramic river valley and there is also a hydel power project named 'Jaldhaka Hydel Power Project'. It is situated very closed to 'Indo–Bhutan Border'⁴⁶. The ward 'Jaldhaka' owes its origin to the name of the river – Jaldhaka

of which the early name is –‘Dichu’. It is 99 km. away from Siliguri and nearly 105 km. from Jalpaiguri. In Jaldhaka Hydel Power Project there are two Sub-stations such as Jhalong–I and Jhalong–II where power produced by down stream force of the Jaldhaka River. Above 7 km. of Jhalong a dam has been constructed at Bindoo for power production.

However, Jaldhaka the hilly tracts area is a part of Darjeeling Hills in lower Himalaya. The adjacent hill ranges give it the added charms of wilderness. The entire area is decorated with the numerous small streams and deep greenery with sub-tropical trees on the slopes of surrounding hills. Overall it looks like as “Devine land on Earth”. Apart from these, the scenic beauty and the splendour of weather is one of the most enchanting aspects of the locality. The variation in climate and daily weather gives an extra importance to the place. Tourists from outside and uncountable picnic parties throng here during the winter and early spring. The natural beauty of this spot has given it an important place in the hearts of the tourists and travellers of different places of the country and beyond.

Rajabhatkhawa:

Rajabhatkhawa is an important tourists place adjacent to the Buxa Wildlife Sanctuary. There is also a ‘Nature Interpretation Centre’ (NIC). It is situated 16 km. north of Alipurduar. Rajabhatkhawa Natural Interpretation Centre was opened in 1995⁴⁷. The main objective of ‘NIC’ is to interpret the nature for people which set in natural surroundings of tropical moist deciduous forests. The NIC gives a glimpse of what the Buxa forests are alike. Rajabhatkhawa lying on the eastern part of Dooars earns a different beauty of nature. It lies between hills and plain region where the natural vegetation is rich in new species of flora and fauna. It has also an animale resource centre which saves the wildlife from the poachers.

Samsing:

It is another beautiful panoramic landscape where flouting clouds, meandering mountain streams and endless greenery give everlasting sense of satisfaction. Samsing is a small tourist spot which is 81 km. from Siliguri and 18 km. from Malbazar and very close to Chalsa (10 km.)⁴⁸. A pleasure ride from Chalsa to

Samsing through rippling landscape lying on full of tea gardens look like green carpet, sets the mood of the trips. Samsing is full of natural beauty that gives tourism an extra–dimension in Dooars. The linear fountains coming down from hill–tops give an everlasting beauty to visitors who aspire always to visit this hilly zone time and again.

Murti:

Murti is a small beautiful but an important landscape on the River Murti which lies on the lap of foliage of Garumara National Park. It is 73 km. away from Siliguri and 9 km. from Malbazar and very closed to Chalsa Railway Station (2 km.). The scenic beauty of Murti is very attractive. The eastern bank of Murti is covered by deep greenery with numerous trees. On western bank there is a Nature Study Camp where many students of several schools, colleges and the nature lovers come from the different parts of the country. The murmuring sound of the ripple of the River Murti, the roaming of the deer, the dance of the peacocks in rain and bath–game played by the wild tuskers at the time of sun down with the chirping of the home–bound birds presents a heavenly view to the tourists. These very views enchant every visitor beyond expression.

Chapramari:

For enjoying an incomparable tranquility Chapramari Sanctuary is another ideal place. It is 75 km. ride from Siliguri and very closed to Nagrakata (2 km.). The area of Chapramari Sanctuary is 8.81 sq. km.⁴⁹. It is a very dense forest with the Sal, Segun (Teak), Zarul, Sirish, Shimul, etc. A variety of wild animals like – elephant, bison, leopard, pig, sambar, deer, python etc. are found here. Apart from these, numerous Peacocks and migratory birds assemble here. The surrounding tea–belts are added beauty to the Chapramari Sanctuary region. Tourists having wander–thrust can hardly resist the call of this region specially at moonlit nights.

Jalpesh:

Among the religious field ‘Jalpesh’ has become the most important place in the district. It is situated nearly 70 km. from Siliguri and 6 km. from Maynaguri. The River Zorda is flowing north–west to south–east along this old historical temple.

This is the Temple of Lord ‘Shiva’, worshipped on the ‘14th lunar day’ of the month ‘Phalgun’ (Bengali month) in every year⁵⁰. On this occasion a fair is held here which is the 2nd largest fair of North Bengal after the ‘Ras Fair’ of Koochbehar. In this fair nearly 70,000 to 80,000 visitors come from the different corners of the district, North Bengal and even lower Assam also.

So far as known that Jalpesh Temple was founded by Koach Raja – Biswa Singha, nearly 350 years back. It was reconstructed by the erstwhile king of Koochbehar Sri Pranararyana in the year 1663. During the monsoon month (Bengali calander–month of Shravan) several thousands of pilgrims of North Bengal, Assam and Nepal around flock to Jalpesh Mandir for puja, chanting – ‘Bholey Bom’.

However, a temple committee (Jalpesh Temple Committee) was set up on 4th June in 1894 to maintain and run the activity of the temple smoothly. But in 1981 the Jalpaiguri Jela Parishad took the charge of the temple⁵¹. People from different corners irrespective of caste, creed and religion assemble here almost every day on the occasions of ‘Shiva Chaturdashi’ and without occasion also to offer puja. They visit the temple and pray to Lord Shiva for their welfare. This regular assembly and visit to the temple by different people has brought a change in economy and life style of the local people. This has become a centre of exchange of culture and tastes of different sections of the people. This gradually has given the local people a trend towards the change of thought and culture. They are now prone to education as well as modernization in trade and commerce leaving the profession of cultivation behind.

Revenue Earnings:

Undeniably Jalpaiguri as well as entire Dooars is a place of tourist attraction. Since the last three decades tourism has been developing day in and day out around this locality. Tourists are also very much interested to visit Dooars with much pleasure. They make tour programmes for visiting hills of Darjeeling and Sikkim and Dooars together. This expansion of tourism has become a permanent source of revenue earning for the ‘Tourism Development Corporation’ of West

Bengal as well as national income and private tour operators. It's a source of income for each and every one dwelling in the locality. Mention should be made that the 'Home-stay Tourism' is becoming more and more popular in this stage.

So, it is doubtless to say tourism now has been the world's largest employment generating sector. Directly and indirectly nearly 20 millions people get jobs in tourism segment globally now (Honey and Rome, 2000)⁵². In India there are 9 million people get direct employment in tourism. Besides, another 13 million engaged indirectly in this field. Thus, tourism is providing a livelihood to 22 million persons in India which contributes on estimated 2.4% of the gross national product⁵³.

Tourism in localities can enhance the economic growth at the local, regional, state and national levels. It has occupied a significant position in the national economy. Communication between the different parts of the country and Dooars has become comfortable and hazard-free. The nearest national airport is at Bagdogra, simply 75 km. from Dooars. The nearest and large railway station – New Jalpaiguri (NJP) is about 65 km. and route communication is also very fast and smooth. So, tourists can easily step at Dooars very comfortably and can feed their thirsty eyes with the natural views of hills and Dooars. All these provide a scope for healthy earning which give the locals a stable livelihood. Here the researcher shows in the table no.-5.24, the gradual changes of revenue earning year wise. In table-5.25 the researcher also shows the economic growth and benefit of tourism in perspective of GDP and employment generation.

Table – 5.24

Foreign Exchange Earnings (in US \$ Million) from Tourism in India
(1996 – 2006)

Year	Earnings (in Rs. Crore)
1996	10,046

1997	10,511
1998	12,150
1999	12,951
2000	14,238
2001	14,344
2002	14,195
2003	16,429
2004	21,603
2005	25,172
2006	29,604

Source: Reserve Bank of India (2007)

Table – 5.25

Economic Benefits of Tourism

(Percentage share in total Employment)

Indicators	Year	India	World
Contribution of Tourism to GDP*	2003 – 03	5.83%	10.0% (2002)
	2003 – 04	5.90%	10.2% (2003)
	2004 – 05	6.11%	10.4% (2004)
	2005 – 06	NA	10.6% (2005)
Employment in	2002 – 03	38.0 million (8.27%)	198.09 million (7.8%) (2002)

Tourism Sector	2003 – 04	41.8 million (8.78%)	194.56 million (7.6%) (2003)
	2004 – 05	NA	214.69 million (8.1%)
	2005 – 06	NA	221.57 million (8.3%)

* Directs as well as indirect contribution of tourism

Source: 1) India figures: Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) 2002 – 03.

2) World figures: World Tourism and Travel Council (WTTC).

Employment Generation:

Tourism makes employment in several sectors of the economy of the local, regional, state and national levels with a rapid progress of tourism locals in different areas get job for livelihood. Some work as hotelier, some tour operators, some tourist guides, while some others provide accommodation locally. These give a source of earning to the people living in economically weaker condition. They give a good help during at least eight months of each year. They wait for the tourism season to earn their bread. This scope of earning is becoming wider day by day. Investors of tourism are showing uprising interest to provide more and more. Modern amenities like – 24 hours power supply, hassle free transport facility, security including medical facilities for the sake of tourism extension.

Development of Infrastructure at Regional Level:

There is no doubt to say that tourism now has become an important tool for regional development. The writers such as Selk (1936) and Christall (1954, 1964)⁵⁵ opined that tourism tends to develop the infrastructure of all regional levels by stimulating economic activities. In the same way the district Jalpaiguri obviously is trying to open a new epoch or vista for the development of tourism.

Tourism engaged local people as transport operators, tour guides, lodge owners or handicraft makers, shopkeepers and others. To get tourist attraction facilities like – construction and provision of smooth roads, buildings, hotels, electricity, gas supplies, water supply and sanitation have been made available for all the time. The researcher likes to represent here two places in Jalpaiguri district which have been developed primarily on tourism. These two places are Lataguri and Kunjanagar, Falakata.

Lataguri:

As to Lataguri, it is in between Chalsa and Maynaguri in the district of Jalpaiguri. Lataguri and Garumara National Park are synonymous from the real point of view. Lataguri has now occupied a significant position in the State and National tourism. At present there are about eight hundred resorts at and around Lataguri region. The tourism industry is developing here day by day because of variation of bio-diversity. There are so many resorts heaving ‘Three Star’ level hotel facilities for the tourists. Some of them are – *Sonar Bangla, Prime Murti, Wax pol, Green Lagoon, Green View* and many more. There has been a rapid development of infrastructure for the tourists since 2000. There is a comfortable arrangement for ‘Jungle Safari’ and ‘Watch Tower’ for the visitors. The tourist can visit the entire locality making Jungal Safari in open-hood jeep. These jeep give an extra look to the tourists. Certainly tourism has brought a healthy economic change at Lataguri centering upon the Garumara National Park with the progress of tourism handicrafts, tour operation and local trade and commerce have got a new dimension in Dooars. The researcher is here intense to show the rapid infrastructural development in tourism at Lataguri through the Table – 5.26, 5.27 and 5.28.

Table – 5.26

Infrastructural Development at Lataguri after 2000

Sources	Before 2000	2006-07
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Tourist Resort	Nil	22
Hotel (Only Fooding)	2	5
Transport (Maruti / Sumo etc)	1	49
Telephone Booth	Nil	8
Handicrafts Sales Centre	Nil	1

Source, Field survey by the author (2007-08)

Table – 5.27

Employment Generation at Lataguri after 2000

Sources	Before 2000	2006-07
Accommodation Sector	Nil	105
Transport Sector	Nil	70
Souvenir Industry	Nil	20
Employment as Guide	Nil	34
Members Engaged in Folk Dancing	Nil	40

Source, Field survey by the author (2008)

Table – 5.28

Revenue Generation from Lataguri after 2000

Sources	Before 2000	2005 – 06
Revenue from Tourist	Nil	20.92 Lakh
Guides	Nil	4.60 Lakh
Folk Artists	Nil	1.49 Lakh
Handicrafts	Nil	1.57 Lakh

Source, Treasurer, Resort Owners' Association, Lataguri (2007)

Kunjanagar:

Kunjanagar, Falakata is another tourist spot lying on the southern part of Jaldapara Reserve Forest. It is geographically now in the district of Alipurduar, six km. north of Falakata. The special attraction of Kunjanagar is its Leopard Rescue Centre (Khairbari). Tourists can enjoy the views of silent movement of wildlife travelling by soundless tourist vehicle, provided by the West Bengal Tourism Development Corporation (WBTDc). Here also tourism is growing at a fast pace. Tourists coming in North Bengal cannot resist the temptation of visiting this silent reserve area where they get a good number of wildlife like – bison, elephant, leopard, deer, sambar, peacocks, python and various types of birds. The researcher here also likes to show the economic progress from tourism at Kunjanagar through the table–5.29.

Table – 5.29

Income Generation from Tourism in Kunjanagar

Year	Income in Lakh Rupees
2002 – 03	8.46

2003 – 04	10.40
2004 – 05	10.50
2005 – 06	12.50
2006 – 07	10.50

Source: Kunjanagar Eco – Development Committee (2007)

For the rapid change and upgradation of the village areas at and around Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar tourism deserves a special appreciation. Small towns and growing towns like lataguri, Chalsa, Malbazar, Nagrakata, Madarihat, Banarhat, Gairkata, Birpara and many other places are developing depending upon tourism. These places have already occupied an important position in the more amenities for extension of education, health service, communication facilities and scope of employment and many more for their progress in the days to come. Naturally there is a rapid change of the places in this area. These are now considered urban localities for having the modern amenities.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION

Transport and communication system is the backbone of the economy of any region. Before the independence (1947) in the whole Jalpaiguri district except Western Dooars region the state of transport and communication system was almost non-existent. But in western Dooars the Colonial Government required to make a well devised plan for the improvement of communication system due to certain factors. The first factor obviously was the pressure from the tea planters. It was the bad road condition of the region that compelled the planters to make private roads. The planters came forward with heavy contribution for public roads and the district roads committee ensured an equal sum. The Government as the official guardian of the planters' interest could no longer ignore their demand. And

the second factor was the low agricultural price of the district and the dismal performance of trade in the region.

Railway Transport:

Before Independence and Partition (1947) the Dooars planters were fortunate in the sense that they started their enterprise in an age when India was very much railway minded and the Jalpaiguri district was benefited by this “progressive mood.” In the Jalpaiguri district the Eastern Bengal State Railway or as it was then called, the Northern Bengal State Railway and the Bengal Dooars Railway played a vital part in promoting the state of trade and commerce till 1968. Domohini was the Headquarter of the Bengal Dooars Railway (1893)⁵⁶ which came from Lalmonirhat Jn. (now in Bangladesh) and then extended towards Changrabandha, Maynaguri Road, Domohini Jn, Lataguri, Baradighi, and Mal Jn. One Railway has been found from Mal Jn. to Meteli via Chalsa. But the Chalsa to Meteli line is not seen now.

Another important line was built from Mal Jn. to Damdim, Odlabari and Bagrakote. But Dooars Railway much flourished when two important bridges were built on the river Teesta. One is in the hilly region near Sevok in Darjeeling in 1952 which connects Assam and Dooars with Siliguri and the rest West Bengal. Another important bridge is on the down flow of Teesta and in the middle of Domohini and Jalpaiguri (1969 – 1970) after the devastating flood of Teesta of 1968⁵⁷. This bridge is also connecting Assam, Dooars, North Eastern States with New Jalpaiguri Jn. and the rest of the country.

After introduction of Bengal Dooars Railway it benefited not only the British Planters in Dooars region but to all sections of tea-workers, local businessmen and others. Through this communication (BDR) Dooars has been connected with rest of the country. Thus a large scale of work field was opened and numerous sections of people came and lived here. After the Partition (1947) huge number of refugee’s onslaught had struck on Dooars. Thus the entire Dooars was developed within short period and emerged many Mufassal Towns such as – Dhupguri, Maynaguri, Mal, Birpara, Nagrakata etc. However, according to the

railway source, before the Partition (1947), the BDR was amalgamated with the Eastern Bengal State Railway in 1941⁵⁸.

Economically this railway was too sound and profitable. It (BDR) earned the 3rd highest amount of profit in the country. Through this railway useful daily goods such as – oil, rice, wheat, soap, dal, salt, sugar etc. were transhipped in Dooars. Through an interview Sri Subodh Ranjan Dey (Retired Senior Loco-Inspector of Mal Jn. and Secretary – Pensioners Association, Mal) says, till 1950 a train which was full of goods for marketing would come from Calcutta to Dooars named – ‘Bazar Gari’(mobile market in train).

After independence and Partition (1947) the BDR was going downward day by day. Due to partition Lalmonirhat to Patgram went to East Pakistan. Thereafter Assam Railway and Bengal State Railway were linked together and reappeared in the name of ARLP (Assam Railway Link Project) which runs from NJP to Bagaiogaon Jn. via Maynaguri – Dhupguri – Falakata and New Coochbehar. Through an interview with the present researcher Sri Subodh Ranjan Dey (former Senior Loco-Inspector – Domohini) says, “In 1958 Assam Railway, Bengal State Railway and a portion of BDR jointly formed a new railway project called – Assam Railway Link Project (ARLP). In the mean time NJP to Bangaigaon line was upgraded to broadgauge (BG) from metergauge (MG)”. Thus this railway (BDR) gradually lost its importance.

During the Chinese War in 1962 the development of Highway communication specially NH-31 B and C paralysed the needs of BDR. Finally in 1968 the BDR Line and its hinterland (heart) Domohini was totally collapsed by the devastating flood of the river Teesta⁵⁹. In the mean time all these railways were renamed as NFR (North Frontier Railway) and the head quarter was shifted from Domohini to Alipurduar Jn.

Road Transport System:

The road transport system is not well found during the period 1947 – 1977 as well as railway. Before independence for the own interest of the tea planters and the Jalpaiguri District Board took the initiative in maintaining some roads. Nine roads

in the Western Dooars region were maintained by Public Works Department (PWD). The nine roads which were under district supervision of P.W.D. were 1) Lataguri–Meteli Roads, 2) Ramshai–Sulka para Road, 3) Sulka para–Thaljhiora Road, 4) Nagrakata Feeder Road, 5) Banarhat–Chamurchi Road, 6) Ramshai–Gairkata Road, 7) Gairkata–Birpara Road, 8) Gairkata–Dhupguri Road and 9) Gairkata –Binnaguri Road⁶⁰.

The main Road NH–31 which we found from colonial ages extended from Siliguri to Eastern Dooars and Assam through Bagrakote, Mal, Chalsa, Maynaguri, Dhupguri, Birpara, Falakata, Sonapur, Koochbehar, and Bakshirhat.

After independence three important roads were built under LRP (Lateral Route Project) in connecting with NH–31. These are:

Section – 1: Kishanganj—Siliguri—Gangtok (NH–31A)

Section – 2: Chalsa—Nagrakata—Banarhat—Ethelbari (NH–31B)

Section – 3: Siliguri—Jalpaiguri – Maynaguri (NH–31C)⁶¹.

Besides these some important link roads were built at that time i.e – Dhupguri–Falakata Road, Sonapur–Alipurduar Road, Alipurduar–Koochbehar Road, Odlabari–Kranti Road, Maynaguri–Ramsai Road, Maynaguri–Bhutpatty Road etc. These all Roads were built in between 1955 – 1975⁶².

Road transport system of the district brought revolutionary change when two important bridges became fully operative on the river Teesta. One is the Sevok Bridge which also known as Coronation Bridge or Baghpool. This bridge was planned on occasion of Coronation of the king of England George–VI. On the entrance way of the bridge of both side Lion were inscribed which the symbol of British Power (Lion). Thus, it is known as the Coronation Bridge or Baghpool. The bridge is 300 ft. high from the riverbed and in Length 250 ft. According to engineering technical language it is R.C.C. Fixed Arch Bridge which is the second bridge in India after the Victoria Bridge in Darjeeling⁶³. In 1941 this bridge is open for the people and modern road communication of Dooars was started by this bridge.

The second important bridge was built on the downstream of the Teesta in between Maynaguri and Jalpaiguri. This bridge was built (1969 – 1971) to protect the Jalpaiguri town from the devastating flood of Teesta in various times. This bridge is 1000 mtr. long and possibly the second largest bridge in West Bengal after the Farakka till 1977⁶⁴. It is interesting to note that the bridge has two names. In eastern side it is known as ‘Teesta’ which is 600 mtr. After one year in western side another 400 mtr. bridge was built and connected with 600 mtr. is known as ‘Jalpesh Setu’. However this bridge connects Dooars, Assam and North Eastern States with Siliguri and the rest of the country.

Besides these numerous wooden bridges were replaced by concrete bridge specially on the Dhupguri via falakata – Sonapur – Alipurduar State High Way. These were built in between 2001 to 2011 on the rivers of Dudua, Gilandi and Shiltorsha. Among them Torsha Bridge is very important one. This bridge connects Alipurduar with the vast region of Falakata and Dooars.

River Transport System:

Geographically the Jalpaiguri district was split up by many rivers but few of the rivers were fit for navigation. The Teesta, Jalpaiguri and Kaljani were navigable by large boats. Specially, the rivers became the cheap transport way for the planters and merchants of Jalpaiguri who exported tea, tobacco, timber, rice and jute to Dhaka and other eastern markets. But with the development of railway line and road communication neumerous bridges were built for which this river–born communication slowly decreased.

Apart from these, there were 125 ferries in the district and among them 99 ferries were within the purview of the District Boards and rests of the ferries were within the provincial jurisdiction. The principal ferries were on the Teesta, Jaldhaka and Kaljani rivers and the most important ferry was the ‘Abden Ferry’⁶⁵ which was on the opposite side of the Jalpaiguri town and ‘King Saheber Ghat’ on the eastern side of the river⁶⁶. Both ferries were maintained and managed by the Bengal Dooars Railway Company. Other important ferries were situated at Paharpur, Rangdhamali, Baikunthapur, Kharchibari and Fulbari, Helapakri,

Kantimari, Boalmari etc. But the most important ferries were at the “point where the Jalpaiguri–Alipur, Ramshai–Gairkata and Ramshai–Sulkapara roads cross the rivers Shiltorsha and Jaldhaka”⁶⁷.

So, from the above discussion it is clear to us that during the Pre–partition period (1947) the Dooars Planters Association and the merchant community in the region were keen on the development of infrastructure by making railways, roads, and bridges. They also laid considerable pressure on the colonial government also provided the planters a liberal degree of assistance. But after Partition the geographical and demographical feature changed in the district. Due to the heavy influx of the refugees from East Pakistan, Assam and Nepal the population of the district highly raised within short period. So, local needs required better transport and communication system than before. In this way the urban centers in the district obviously got immense benefit for the development of transport and communication system.

Development of Mufassal Towns and Hat–Bazars

The Mufassal towns and hat–bazars have an immense contribution to the development of any region. Any urban centre is primarily an embryonic form which is called Mufassal towns, Ganjas of Hat–Bazars. The word Mufassal is relative term meaning inferior or subordinate in relation to Sadar or headquarters.⁶⁸ Calcutta was sadar in relation to Dacca, where as Dacca was sadar in relation to its dependent town Manikganj. In Jalpaiguri district context it can be said Jalpaiguri town was sadar in relation to Alipurduar town. There was a vast difference between a metropolitan town and a Mufassal town which is really a cross breeds between the villages and the cities. Thus, the Mufassal towns can be studied independently of cities or villages.

So, “the natural course in this country is that the market first attracts the people and then the people the market. It is astonishing how these Hats and Ganjas, in spite of everything, spring up sometimes in inconceivable short periods of time into flourishing towns, like exhalation, when well regulated under a

sensible superintendence, while the wrong-headed avarice of a different management reduces them in much shorter time to deserts and ruins”⁶⁹.

Basically, most of the Mufassal towns or small towns were fundamentally service towns born of the British system of the district administration. But the development of such kind of townships could not be taken place since the British authorities restricted its role to the collection of a fixed revenue and maintenance of law and order. Under such circumstances such kind of towns could hardly surpass the rural characteristics. So, there was no conscious town-planning in the Mufassal towns and everything was dependent on local topography, land ownership and social reformations. The pattern of town development thus took place of power and activities. During the 50’s and 60’s decades of the 20th century the core of the town was formed by the Courts and Kacharies – the two bedrocks of most Mufassal towns. Specially, Kachari area became the centre of the town at that time, with business and residential areas as the peripheral settlements. But the growth of population, communication system, trade and commerce, the steady rise of an educated middle class – all these factors were responsible for shifting the focal points to the business areas of the town.

The Nature of the Mufassal Towns

During the post colonial period it is quite pertinent to take a glance about the definition of a Municipal town A) if the three-fourths of the adult population mainly engaged themselves in some profession other than agriculture; B) if the population was not less than five thousand residents and C) an average number of population per square miles should not be less than one thousand. But such definition of municipal town was not above criticism. An official wrote “In the absence of my quantitative researches on this subject it is difficult to say, whether from the limited point of view administrative efficiency, ten thousand in an appropriate population figure for a municipal area. That no adequate provision of municipal services is feasible on the basis of such a small population is however more certain”.

Since 1947 Jalpaiguri district has six important Mufassal towns which have large impact on the district. These are – 1) Dhupguri, 2) Falakata, 3) Mal, 4) Domohini, 5) Maynaguri and 6) Alipurduar Railway junction (except Jalpaiguri Sadar and Alipurduar Municipal towns). Apart from these Mufassal towns the district has so many ganjas such as – Rajganj, Meteli, Nagrakata, Banarhat, Birpara, Binnaguri, Lataguri, Kamakhaguri, Kumargram, Madarihat, Kalchini etc. These ganjas have also immense contribution to the economy of the district.

The district has number of Hats, which became the nerve of the village economy. Till 1950 the number of Hats in Jalpaiguri district was 91. But from 1951 to 1974 it rose to 147. Simultaneously from 1972 to 1990 it became 320.⁷⁰ However, due to the growth of transport and communication, trade and commerce became more flourishing and thus number of hats is also increasing day by day. Due to the establishment of control on the hats then Government passed a Regulation Act. By this Act the total number of hats of the district was divided into four zones i.e. – 1) Dhupguri, 2) Belakoba, 3) Haldibari, and 4) Alipurduar. In 1975 two special market committees were formed – these are Dhupguri and Belakoba Market Committee. Aftermath Alipurduar and Haldibari Market Committee were also formed. Though Haldibari is in Coochbehar district but total marketing activities were controlled by Jalpaiguri district.⁷¹ According to the controlling authority the hats were divided into four groups i.e.-1) Government Controlled, 2) Privet Controlled, 3) Zilla Parisad Controlled and 4) Regulated Market.⁷² The important hats of the district were –

Block - Jalpaiguri Sadar: - Dinbazar, Berubari, Talmahat, Boalmari, Kadobari etc.

Block - Maynaguri: - Amguri, Barnishghat, Bhotpatty, Domohini, Jorpakri, Helapakri etc.

Block - Dhupguri: - Dhupguri, Banarhat, Gairkata, Daukimari, Nathuahat, Mogalkata, Totapara, Binnaguri, Sonatolahat (Jurapani) etc.

Block - Mal: - Bataigol, Baradighi, Odlabari, Lataguri, Kranti, Damdim etc.

Block - Meteli: - Kalabari, Mongalbari, Metelihat etc.

Block - Nagrakata: - Champaguri, Kalabari, Luksan etc.

Block - Falakata: - Falakata hat, Jateswar etc.

Block - Madarihat: - Hamiltonganj, Rajavatkhaoa, Kalchinihat etc.

Block - Alipurdua: - Damanpurhat, Bhatibari, Silbari, Salsalabari, Jashodanga, Samuktala hat etc.

Block - Kumargram: - Barabisha, Kumagram, Kamakhaguri, Valka hat etc⁷³.

However, the Mufassal towns, Ganjas, and hats have an immense contribution about the materialization in the process of urbanization. It is undoubtedly said that the Ganjas or village hat–bazars are the real economic backgrounds of urbanization. The daily needs of the people of urban centre i.e. Vegetable, food grains, fish and meat all are imported from the hats. So, the Mufassal towns became the link between urban centres and the district towns.

Table – 5.30

The Growth of Population in Mufassal Towns in Jalpaiguri District:

Name of Mufassal town	Year	Persons	Males	Females
Dhupguri	1961	10,637	6,126	4,511
	1971	16,808	9,181	7,627
	2001	61,327	31,856	29,471
Maynaguri	1961	10,950	6,046	4,904
	1971	15,808	8,523	7,285
	2001	27,106	13,883	13,223
Mal	1961	9,085	5,381	3,704
	1971	10,951	6,128	4,823
	2001	23,218	12,151	11,067
Domohini	1961	9,064	5,002	4,062
	1971	7,706	4,108	3,598
	2001	---	---	---

Falakata	1961	6,413	3,532	2,881
	1971	7,194	3,851	3,343
	2001	19,379	10,095	9,285
Alipurduar Rly Jn.	1961	---	---	---
	1971	17,787	9,712	8,075
	2001	15,899	8,013	7,886

Source: District Hand Book, 1974 and 2001

So, it is clear to us from the above mentioned chart (table no.-4.30) that the population of Mufassal towns in the district rapidly increased. Specially the population of Dhupguri and Maynaguri were highly noticeable. The development of agricultural activities by the refugee persons of these two regions was the main cause behind it. On the other hand the population of Domohini was decreased from 1961 to 1971. Due to the Partition (1947) some sections Bengal Dooars Railway went to East Pakistan and due to heavy devastating flood of Teesta in 1962, 1964 and 1968 the infrastructure of Bengal Dooars Railway of Domohini has collapsed and a section rushed to Jalpaiguri. Thus, the population of Domohini where before Partition was nearly 10,000, but in 1961 and 1971's Census it was 9064 and 7706. Now Domohini is treated merely a village.

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