

## **Post-Independent Administrative Reorganisation and Changes in Jurisdiction of Jalpaiguri District of West Bengal (1947-1997)**

**Arun Ghosh<sup>1</sup>**

### *Abstract*

*In 1947, during the time of independence of India, there was a plan of partition of Bengal by the British Colonial Government. So, a Boundary Commission was formed to decide the political boundary between two parts of Bengal province (West Bengal and East Bengal). This Commission was under the chairmanship of Sir Cyril Radcliffe and he was assisted by two Muslim and two non-Muslim members. During that time, there was tug of war situation between the Congress, Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League regarding the district of Jalpaiguri. However, after the publication of Radcliffe's Award this district was divided into East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and West Bengal (India). Five police stations of this district were added with East Pakistan, and rest police stations were added with West Bengal. With that partition, jurisdiction of this district compressed from its earlier position. After independence of India and partition of Bengal, till the 50 years of independence the district was administratively reorganised several times, whenever it needed. So in this way the reorganising process of the administrative level of this district took its place, which effected upon several aspects of this district.*

**Keywords:** *Partition, Boundary Commission, Jurisdiction, Reorganisation, Demography.*

### **Introduction:**

Jalpaiguri district is a district of the Indian state of West Bengal. Jalpaiguri is said to have derived its name from the olive (*Jalpai* in Bengali) trees which grew in the town. The suffix *guri* means a place. The name might as well as associated with Jalpes, the presiding deity (siva) of the entire region. This district situated in the northern part of West Bengal. In 1947, there was thought regarding the transfer of power to the Indian by the British Colonial Government. At that time, the plan of partition of Bengal province came into their mind. So, Bengal Boundary Commission was formed for demarcation of boundaries, under

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<sup>1</sup>The author is working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of History, Darjeeling Govt. College, Darjeeling.

Chairmanship of Sir Cyril Radcliffe. With the award of that Commission, Bengal was divided into two parts namely, East Bengal and West Bengal under two national Governments of East Pakistan and India respectively. After partition of Bengal the district of Jalpaiguri of West Bengal reorganised in administrative level, whenever it needed. During the time of partition of Bengal and demarcation of boundaries in 1947, there were claims and counter claims in between the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League regarding the district of Jalpaiguri. Though this district was predominantly non-Muslim majority district; the non-Muslim population of this district was 76.2% and out of seventeen police-stations only three had Muslim majority. Still the district of Jalpaiguri was claimed by the Muslim League on the ground that this district was catchment basin of the Tista river system, which would be useful for irrigation purpose as well as for the supply of electric energy. Apart from that this district provides tea, timber and forest produce, which helps to grow economy of any region. However, with the Radcliffe's Award, the district of Jalpaiguri was divided between East Bengal (East Pakistan) and West Bengal; out of seventeen police-stations five (two non-Muslim and three Muslim majority police-stations) were added with East Bengal and rest police-stations were added with West Bengal. So in this way the reorganisation in administrative level took its place, which had also been changing whenever it needed. In this political background of Bengal, the paper attempts to analyse about the political, geographical and administrative condition of the district of Jalpaiguri of West Bengal state of India during the time period of 1947 to 1997. It means the period from independence and partition of Bengal in 1947 to the time period of 50 years of the partition of Bengal and the independence of India. It highlights about the tug of war regarding the district of Jalpaiguri between the Muslim and non-Muslims during the time of partition of Bengal of 1947. It also highlights the administrative reorganisation and changes of jurisdictions after independence of India and partition of Bengal till its completion of 50 years.

#### **Formation of Bengal Boundary Commission:**

After the end of Second World War (1939-45), the British politicians realized that the colonial rule in India could no longer be sustained. On 20<sup>th</sup> February 1947, Atlee, the British Premier, declared that they want to transfer power to the responsible Indian. At that time, there was a thought about partition of Bengal and Punjab by Mountbatten, last Viceroy.<sup>2</sup> In 1947, during the time of independence of India, and partition of Bengal, Bengal Boundary Commission was formed for demarcation of boundaries, under Chairmanship of Sir Cyril Radcliffe, he was neither an officer of the Indian administration nor a person with prior experience in adjudicating disputes of this type. Along with Radcliffe, there were two non-Muslim and two Muslim members in the Commission. Two Hindu members of Bengal

Boundary Commission were Justice Bijan Kumar Mukherjee and Justice Charu Chandra Biswas, they both were Justice of Calcutta High court. The other two Muslim members were Justice Abu Saleh Mohamed Akram and Justice S. A. Rahman. As a notification of 30<sup>th</sup> June from Delhi, they were appointed. It was declared that Commission will demarcate boundary of non-Muslim (Hindu) and Muslim majority area as their terms of reference. During the time of demarcating, Commission will take care of the contiguous areas of the habitations of both community and as well as consider the other factors.<sup>3</sup> In this way the Bengal province was divided into India and Pakistan as West Bengal and East Bengal (East Pakistan). The Radcliffe's Award had changed the jurisdiction of northern part of Bengal or North Bengal and shaped the boundaries of the region.

The Hindus demanded to form West Bengal with Presidency Division including Kolkata and whole Burdwan and Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur, Maldah and the Hindu majority areas of Bakharganj and Faridpur districts and also the areas which are interested to unite with India. But it was clear that if the partition would be in the basis of religious majority then many of the demands should be rejected. So that, Hindus remembered the contiguity and other factors mentioned in terms of references of Commission to the authority. In a meeting of 'MurshidabadJatiyaBangaSammelan' held on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1947, in the Grand Hall of Berhampore, Maharaja of Kashimbazar, Srish Chandra Nandy, President of Reception Committee of that *Sammelan*, told for the rationality of the demand of Hindus that, they want to establish National Bengal with Burdwan and Presidency Division, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling Districts, and Maldah and some parts of Dinajpur from North Bengal.<sup>4</sup>

On the other side, in May 1947, a Congress sponsored body called the West Bengal Provincial Committee put out a pamphlet entitled 'The origin and progress of the partition movement in Bengal'. According to its authors, in January 1947, the Congress Provincial Committee had split over the boundaries proposed for West Bengal. After the split, break way dissidents in the committee formed the '*JatiyaBangaSangathanSamiti*', with JadabendraPanja of the Burdwan District Congress Committee as President and AtulyaGhosh (secretary of the Hoogly District Congress) as Secretary. This organisation lobbied to give away to Pakistan not only the Muslim-majority districts but also Hindu majority districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri on the ground of contiguity.<sup>5</sup> In 1947, in striking contrast to the wild claims of the Hindu Mahasabha and other parties, they insisted that less was best. Their extraordinary proposals thus needed to be considered, to see which areas they proposed to include, which they were ready to jettison, and the reasons why. The dissidents' proposal deserves particular mention because, it would have surrendered to Pakistan the tea-growing districts of North Bengal. This frontier tract in the north was vitally important to Bengal's economy. It produced

practically all of India's finest teas and was potentially a significant source of revenue for the new state.<sup>6</sup>

As soon as the decision of partition was declared, both the Hindus and the Muslims disputed for self-interest and final political promptness started. It was seemed that in the Radcliffe Boundary Commission, Hindu and Muslim member should never be agreed. Being compelled to, Hindus (as Government language non-Muslim) and Muslims submitted two separate report. The report of Justice Mukherjee and Biswas was submitted on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1947. The report of Justice Akram and Rahman was submitted just before a day, i.e., 28<sup>th</sup> July 1947.<sup>7</sup>

For the assistance of the task of the members of the Boundary Commission, Government had divided the undivided Bengal district wise and allotted 16 districts for East Bengal. But in the beginning of Commission's work, it was understood that if administrative unit should accept as the unit of division for partition of country, many stoppage and disadvantages may be seemed and the process of partition of country may be completed mechanically in spite of realistic necessity. But according to non-Muslim members, if one unit like district should be rejected by considering as an unusual vast area then the village units (*Mauzas*), smallest division of rural autonomy of the administration should be accepted as the main unit of partition. According to Muslim League, to decide the majority of the Hindu and Muslim population, Commission should prepare the figure according to the village unions. But the Congress thought that continuing process by this small unit, there might come confusions in the load of various information and as the Commission was said to submit the report in the very short time, was almost impossible. It should also be kept in mind that the Commission was directed to begin the work in the basis of the Census Report of 1941. But in this report, though the figure of villages and unions were taken but those were not officially published.<sup>8</sup>

On these grounds the non-Muslim members of Commission decided to reject the union as a basis for ascertaining the communal distribution of population in Bengal. In their opinion, the only possible unit to adopt for this purpose would be the *Thana* or Police Station, this being the smallest unit for which published figures and maps were available and which gave a well-defined picture of the relative distribution of the two communities in the province. Then, when the proposal of union wise division was refused by the Congress, the Muslim League in their memorandum said that if the union would be rejected, the sub-division should be adopted as the unit. The non-Muslim members, however, considered the sub-division to be the equally unacceptable for several technical reasons.<sup>9</sup> However, *Thana* or Police Station was accepted as the unit of division for partition of country.

According to the terms of reference of Boundary Commission which was directed in the time of formation of Boundary Commission, Commission should demarcate boundaries between Hindu majority (non-Muslim) and Muslim majorities. In this demarcation Commission should observe that the contiguous Muslim and non-Muslim areas should incorporate in same block and they should also give importance upon other factors as well as the population density.<sup>10</sup> According to the Census of India of 1941, the communal percentage of the Muslims and non-Muslims of the district of Jalpaiguri were 23.8% and 76.2% respectively.<sup>11</sup> From the Census report, it had been clear that the district was a non-Muslim majority district and it should be given to West Bengal. But on the basis of contiguity, it was difficult to decide that the district would be incorporated with which state.

**Report of the non-Muslim members regarding the district of Jalpaiguri:**

According to the report of the non-Muslim members, there was an important fact which they must not lose sight of, namely, that the division that was to be made was not an administrative or internal division between two provinces, or between two units of a federation. The boundary will be an international boundary, separating two independent sovereign states. Such boundary marked the limit of the region within which a state can exercise its sovereign authority, and with its location, various matters relating to the immigration and restriction on visitors, imposition of custom duties and prevention of smuggling and contraband trade, were bound up. The boundary should undoubtedly be drawn up in such a manner as would obviate chances of friction and clashes in peace time, in addition to this peace time functions, the requirements of military defence would also have to be considered. Natural boundaries were certainly to be preferred, but when they were not available recourse could not but be had to artificial boundaries.<sup>12</sup>

The non-Muslim members had to pass on to the Rajshahi Division, and proceeding from the extreme north starts with the districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri. In Jalpaiguri district, the Muslims constitute 23.8 percent. of the total population. Out of seventeen police-stations, only three had Muslim majority, namely, Tetulia, Pachagar and Boda. Pachagar was not contiguous to Domar police-station in the district of Rangpur which has a Muslim majority; as between them, the non-Muslim majority police-station of Debiganj intervenes. Both Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri had been placed in the non-Muslim block by the notional division of the Viceroy, and on the principle of contiguity and majority of populations, no portion of this districts could be claimed by East Bengal.<sup>13</sup>

**Report of the Muslim members regarding the district of Jalpaiguri:**

The Muslim League claimed Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts on the ground that they were the catchment areas of the Tista river system. It was argued on the behalf of the other parties that the Tista is a snow-fed river, and the catchment areas of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri were not essential for its existence. This contention had not much substance in it. Deforestation in these areas would undoubtedly affect the dry season flow of water in Tista and the other rivers, the physical and economic health of the territories comprised within this region would be entirely dependent on a proper resuscitation of these rivers beside the Tista. They therefore considered that the claim of Muslim League for the control of the catchment areas was well founded.

Another very important reason why two districts should formed part of East Bengal is that the Tista Dam project, which was a multipurpose scheme, involves the building of dams in the Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts on the Tista, and this scheme could only serve the interests of the Muslim majority areas that would be included in east Bengal. The water of Tista would be harnessed to provide electric energy for the areas of East Bengal which had neither coal mines nor any other source of power. All the coal mines were situated in West Bengal areas. The scheme also visualizes the prevention of floods, and the provision of irrigation facilities for North Bengal areas. Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts had no contiguity with the main west Bengal non-Muslim area. They were on the other hand contiguous to the main Muslim majority block in East Bengal. In view of the special factors outlined above these districts should, in their opinion, formed part of East Bengal. Their means of communication were also through Muslim majority areas of North Bengal, and the bulk of their part passes along those routes. The upshots of the above discussion is that if a natural boundary would be considered desirable, the Leagues claim could not be described as unreasonable.<sup>14</sup>

**Sir Cyril Radcliffe's Award and the district of Jalpaiguri:**

According to Sir Cyril Radcliffe, he did not attend the public sitting in person, but made arrangements to study daily the record of the proceedings and all materials submitted for consideration. After the close of the public sittings the remainder of the time of Commission was devoted to clarification and discussion of the issues involved. Their discussions took place at Calcutta. The question of drawing a satisfactory boundary line under their terms of references between East and West Bengal was to which the parties concerned propounded the most diverse solution. The province offers few if any satisfactory natural boundaries, and its development had been on lines that did not well accord with a division by contiguous

majority areas of Muslim and non-Muslim majority. In his view the demarcation of the boundary line between the East and West depended on the answers to basic question that, which states claimed ought to prevail in respect of the district of Jalpaiguri, in which the Muslim population amounted to 23.8 percent. of the whole in case of Jalpaiguri but which constituted an area not in any natural sense contiguous to another non-Muslim area of Bengal? Radcliffe's colleagues, after much discussion found that they were unable to arrive at an agreed view on any of these major issues. His colleague assented to the view at the close of their discussions that he had no alternative but to proceed to give his own decision. The demarcation of the boundary line was described in detail in the schedule which forms Annexure A to this award. According to the Annexure A of Radcliffe Award, a line should be drawn along the boundary between the *thana* of Phansidewa in the district of Darjeeling and the *thana* of Tetulia in the district of Jalpaiguri from the point where that boundary met the province of Bihar and then along the boundary between the *thanas* of Tetulia and Rajganj; the *thanas* of Pachagar and Rajganj, and the *thanas* of Pachagar and Jalpaiguri, and should then continue along the northern corner of the *thana* Debiganj to the boundary of the State of Cooch Behar. The district of Darjeeling and so much of the district of Jalpaiguri as lies north of this line should belong to West Bengal, but the *thana* of Patgram and any other portion of Jalpaiguri district which lies to the east or south should belong to East Bengal.<sup>15</sup>

Jalpaiguri district was incorporated to West Bengal except some areas like Tetulia, Pachagarh, Boda, Debiganj, Patgram. It is referred in the District Gazetteers of Jalpaiguri that, "Under the Radcliffe Award the areas within the southern police station of Tetulia, Pachagarh, Boda, Debiganj and Patgram, comprising a total area of 672 square miles went to Pakistan." In the same place there is a description about its effect that, "A great influx of Bengali Hindu refugees from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) began which changed the demography, social, economic and physical aspects of Jalpaiguri district."<sup>16</sup>

In Radcliffe Award, there was less justice for Jalpaiguri district as expected. A huge non-Muslim inhabitant part of this district was allotted unreasonably for East Bengal by separating from this district. The M.L.A. of Jalpaiguri district, Khagendranath Dasgupta, mentioned this injustice and informed the editor of Anandabazar that the British imperialism strikes upon the district of Jalpaiguri before the farewell from India. In spite of non-Muslim majority (77%), this district was divided. Five *thanas* from Jalpaiguri district had been allotted to Pakistan. This area was one-fourth of the whole district. That means non-Muslim majority area was included in Pakistan. And it was against the planning of 3<sup>rd</sup> June of British Government.<sup>17</sup>

It was also complained that the police-station of Patgram was non-Muslim majority and surrounded with non-Muslim areas. But still this *thana* was incorporated to Pakistan. The economic centres of this district were separated from West Bengal and it was apprehended that there might start chaos in the economic system.<sup>18</sup> The intellectual sections doubted that the districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri were geographically separated willingly from the province in spite of including it in West Bengal and districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri was separated from West Bengal by planning. Campaigning started from interested communities for the separation of *Gorkha* society from West Bengal. This campaigning would be encouraged to separated Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri from West Bengal.<sup>19</sup>

### **Administrative reorganisation of the district of Jalpaiguri after Independence and Partition of Bengal, 1947**

The district of Jalpaiguri, with the rest of India attained independence on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947, as a part of India. With the Government Notification of 55 G.A., dt. 17.08.1947, Jalpaiguri was declared as one of the fourteen constituent districts of the province of West Bengal. Under the Radcliffe Award the southern police stations of Tetulia, Pachagarh, Boda, Debiganj and Patgram, comprising a total area of 672 square miles were transferred to East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The limits of the district were included the local areas of the police stations of Jalpaiguri, Rajganj, Maynaguri, Nagrakata, Dhupguri, Mal, Matiali, Alipurduar, Kalchini, Kumargram, Falakata, Madarihat, by the Notification of 64 G.A., dt. 17.08.1947.<sup>20</sup> The district of Jalpaiguri had two subdivisions, namely, *Sadar* (Jalpaiguri) and Alipurduar with their Head-quarters at Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar respectively. Jalpaiguri is also the Head-quarters of the district and of the division of the same name. By the Government Notification of 65 G.A., dt. 17.08.1947 the limits of the *Sadar* subdivision of the district were included the local areas of the police stations of Jalpaiguri, Rajganj, Maynaguri, Nagrakata, Dhupguri, Mal, and Matiali.<sup>21</sup> The district of Jalpaiguri was comprised within the Jalpaiguri-West Dinajpur Sessions Division with effect from 17.08.1947, by the Notification of 5235 J., dt. 26.08.1947. According to the Notification of 9483 Jur., dt. 27.09.1947, it was further declared that the area comprised in the police stations of Jalpaiguri, Rajganj, Maynaguri, Nagrakata, Dhupguri, Mal, Matiali, Alipurduar, Kalchini, Kumargram, Falakata, Madarihat, hitherto forming part of the district of Jalpaiguri in the province of Bengal had created a new district of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal. The district of Jalpaiguri was included in the Presidency Division with effect from 17.08.1947, by the Notification of 9487 Jur., dt. 27.09.1947.<sup>22</sup> It is to be mentioned that, the district of Jalpaiguri had many administrative changes since its formation in 1869. The district was included under different Divisions successively for administrative convenience. Atfirst it was under Cooch Bihar Division; in 1875 it was included

in Rajshahi-Cooch Bihar Division with Head-quarter in Jalpaiguri; in 1883 this district had gone under the Rajshahi Division with Head-quarter in Jalpaiguri.<sup>23</sup> The district was declared to be one of the fourteen constituent districts of the province of West Bengal on and from 26.02.1948, in supersession of Notification No. 55 G.A., dt. 17.08.1947, by the Government Notification No. 544 G.A., dt. 23.02.1948.<sup>24</sup> Apart from this, in 1949-1951 the border indicating pillars between Bhutan and Jalpaiguri which was erected during the British period, specified by British Captain G. B. Hodgson, Mr. J. H. O'. Donel, Mr. C. O'. Donel, Mr. J. Newton and others was reorganized in some place.<sup>25</sup>

Since 1950 some changes have also taken place in the jurisdiction of the district. Some of the enclaves of Cooch Behar have been transferred to the district of Jalpaiguri. 17 *Chhits* of the Haldibari police station were transferred to the Jalpaiguri police station in 1952.<sup>26</sup> With the Government Notification No. 2427 Pl./PIJ-4/52, dt. 27.06.1952, the *Chhits* bearing Nos. 39, 40, 43, 61-72, 74, 81 of Haldibari police station in Cooch Bihar district, namely, Shingimari, Shingimari Part-I, Shingimari Part-II, Shakati 62-70, Binnaguri 61, 81, Daikhata 39, 40, 43, were transferred to and was included in the Jalpaiguri police station of the district of Jalpaiguri.<sup>27</sup>

A further adjustment of the district boundaries between Cooch Bihar and Jalpaiguri has taken place in 1955;<sup>28</sup> and 34 *Chhits* were transferred to Jalpaiguri from Cooch Bihar.<sup>29</sup> The *Chhits* bearing nos. 152, 152 of Mekhliganj police station of Cooch Bihar district, namely, Panisala, *Thak* No. 152-Chit Nos. 152/M, 152/N, were transferred to and included in Maynaguri police station of the district of Jalpaiguri. The *Chhits* bearing nos. 82-111 of Mathabhanga police station of Cooch Bihar district, namely, Magurmari-82-88, Gosairhat-89-102, Godang-103-111, were transferred to and included in Dhupguri police station of the district of Jalpaiguri. The *Chhits* bearing nos. 138, 139 of Tufanganj police station of Cooch Bihar district, namely, Chikliguri (Part-I)-138, Chikliguri (Part-II)-139, were transferred to and included in Alipurduar police station of the district of Jalpaiguri,<sup>30</sup> by the Government Notification No. 2115 Pl./PIJ-2/53, dt. 20.05.1955.<sup>31</sup> With the Government Notification No. 3014 Pl./PAR-19/57, dt. 10.07.1958, the villages of DakshinMatiali (118); DakshinChakMaulani (119); Adabari (120); ChakMaulani (121); Uttar Matiali (122); JharMatiali (123); Lataguri (124); of Matiali police station of the district of Jalpaiguri were transferred to and included in Mal police station of the district.<sup>32</sup>

With the Government Notification of 765 Pl., dt. 01.03.1960, a fragment of Gen J. L. No. 58 (c.s. Plot Nos. 2443 to 2446 of 1931-33 survey) of Maynaguri police station of the district of Jalpaiguri was excluded from the district and transferred to and included in Mekhliganj

police station of Cooch Bihar district. A fragment of Gen. J. L. No. 174 (c.s. Plot Nos. 1346 to 1350 of 1932-34 survey) of Alipurduar police station of the district of Jalpaiguri was excluded from the district and transferred to and included in Tufanganj police station in Cooch Bihar district by the Notification No. 766 PL, dt. 01.03.1960.<sup>33</sup> Jalpaiguri division has been formed in 4<sup>th</sup> March 1963, with the Government Notification No. 998 G. A., dt. 04.03.1963.<sup>34</sup>

Birpara police station had been formed with the villages of Nepania, Riti Forest, Dheklapara Tea Garden, Joybirpara Tea Garden, Bandapani Tea Garden, Garochera Bandapani, Makrapara Tea Garden, Lankapara Tea Garden, Lankapara Hat, Ramjhora Tea Garden, Dumchi, Gopalpur Tea Garden, Hosainabad Tea Garden, Dalmore Tea Garden, Birpara Tea Garden, Nangdala Tea Garden, Dimdima Tea Garden, Dangapara, Rahimpur Tea Garden, Sarugaon, SishaJumra, bearing J. L. Nos. 1-7, 10-11, 33, 41-51, (J. L. No. 8, village Tulsipara Tea Garden has been amalgamated with villages: Lankapara Tea Garden, vide, Notification No. 5398-L. Rev., dt. 08.04.1961) from Madarihat police station. Madarihat police station was reconstituted with the villages bearing J. L. Nos. 9, 12-32, 34-40 of the Madarihat Police Station by the Notification of 162 PL/P4P-15/65, dt. 10.01.1967.<sup>35</sup>

Banarhat police station had been formed in 19.09.1974 with the villages of Red Bank Tea Garden, Ambari Tea Garden, Chamurchi Tea Garden, Chunachati Tea Garden, Haritalgari Tea Garden, Diana Tea Garden, Debpara Tea Garden, Chapaguri, Kathalguri Tea Garden, Piabari Tea Garden, Palasbari Tea Garden, Lakshmipara Tea Garden, Prayagpur, Jalapara, Totopara Tea Garden, Mogalkata Tea Garden, Chapaguri Khanda, Uttar Salbari, Chanadipa, DakshinSalbari, Madhya Salbari, Gendrapara Tea Garden, Maraghat Forest, Banarhat Tea Garden, Karbala Tea Garden, Binnaguri Tea Garden, Maraghat Tea Garden, Haldibari Tea Garden, Telipara Tea Garden, Gairkata Tea Garden, Gairkata, Sakejhora, Uttar Jhar Altagram, DakshinMunkhawadanga, Bhatipara, Fatakari, Chamtimukhi, PurbaDuramari, Red Bank (4 pieces) bearing J. L. Nos. 131-138, 140-145, 147-153, 155-161, 163, 164, 165, 181-187, 288 of Dhupguri police station (J. L. Nos. 135 and 139 amalgamated to form one *Mauza*; J. L. Nos. 146 and 148 amalgamated to form one *Mauja*; J. L. Nos. 161, 162 amalgamated to form one *Mauza*) and villages of Jaldhaka Altadanga Tea Garden, Khairkata, Uttar Munkhawadanga, Dhona Simla, Dhumpara, Kalabari Tea Garden-I, Kalabari Tea Garden-IV, Kalabari Tea Garden-II, Kalabari Tea Garden-III, Angrabhasa, Kalabari, Hridaypur, Upar Kalabari, Diana Forest, bearing J. L. Nos. 92, 94-106, of Nagrakata police station (91-93 to form one *Mauza*), by the Notification of 5706 PL, dt. 07.08.1974.<sup>36</sup>

Bhaktinagar police station was formed in 07.04.1986 with the villages of Jungle Mahal, Dabgram, Binnaguri, Simulguri, Lalitabari, Mantadari, Chakiabhita, Kamarbhita,

Mehendigachh, AmbariFalakata, Gadheganj, Jugibhita, bearing J. L. Nos. 1-6, 16-19, 22, 25 of Rajganj police station by the Government Notification of 1739-PL/PB/23/84., dt. 25.02.1986. Jaygaon police station had been formed in 15.08.1989 with the villages of Uttar Barajhar Forest, Par Malangi, Nilpara Forest, Saudamini Tea Garden, Madhya Satali, PaschimSatali, SataliMandal Para, Uttar Satali, Madhu Tea Garden, Satali Tea Garden, Malangi Tea Garden, Beech Tea Garden, Bharnobari Tea Garden, Dalsingpara Tea Garden, Torsa Tea Garden, MechiaBasti, Gopimohan Tea Garden, Jaygaon, ChhotaJaygaon, GaburBachhra Forest,<sup>37</sup> bearing J. L. Nos. 1-6, 16-19 from Kalchini and Jaygaon police station, by the Notification No. 5871-PL/PB/4P-39/86, dt. 11.07.1989. With the Notification No. 73-PAR (AR), dt. 28.02.1992, the district of Jalpaiguri was comprised in the Jalpaiguri Division. It is to be mentioning that at first Jalpaiguri district had been two sub-divisions, namely, *Sadar* and Falakata separated, by the Jaldhaka River.<sup>38</sup> In 1876 Falakata subdivision was replaced by Alipurduar subdivision. However, after 1992, till 1997 or till the 50 years of independence of India and partition of Bengal in 1947, there was no major change in the administrative structure of the district of Jalpaiguri. The year 1997 is important for India and Indians, because this is the Golden Jubilee year of independence of India and as a part of Indian Territory this is also important for Northern region of West Bengal state of India.

### **Conclusion:**

During the time of partition of Bengal in 1947 with the Radcliffe's Award there was come disaster to Jalpaiguri district. But Radcliffe was not alone responsible for the disaster. Many people of our country made dirty tricks during the period of partition. The Nawab of Jalpaiguri, NawabMosharefHossain, was very much hankering to curve out Jalpaiguri from the map of India and was eager to incorporate it with Pakistan. But ultimately Jalpaiguri remained in India though some of its *thanas* (Boda, Pachagarh, Debiganj, Tetulia and Patgram) went to Pakistan. The Indian flag was hoisted on these five *thanas* of Jalpaiguri district on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947. But unfortunately, within 2-3 days they were incorporated with East Bengal. It was rumored that the Boundary Commission was bribed by the *Nawab*. But the strange thing is that after partition the *Nawab* remained in India and was nominated as a nominee of the Governor in the Legislative Assembly. JogendranathMandal, the Schedule Caste leader was the chief of the *Namasudra* community of East Bengal. If he did not join with Pakistan, West Bengal would have received more areas where Schedule Caste Hindus were in majority. But the irony of history is that JogendranathMandal and many other Schedule Caste people came back to West Bengal and Assam of India within a decade.<sup>39</sup>

Sir Cyril Radcliffe had started the demarcation of boundaries from Delhi, only once he visited Calcutta. He had got only one and half months' time period to finish this job; as a result of that he had to complete this demarcation as fast as possible, based on few maps and report by staying in Delhi, and it resulted creation of so many *Chhits* (enclaves) in the district of Jalpaiguri and Cooch Bihar which were surrounded by the territory of East Pakistan. This resulted sufferings *lakhs* of inhabitants of *Chhits* (enclaves), because the dwellers of that region did not enjoy any kind of facilities or identity, provide by the Nation of India. So, several movements were shown, because of that problem.

In the frontier areas some complexity had been created. As a result of that Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India and Firoze Khan Noon, Prime Minister of Pakistan, met for a deal in 10<sup>th</sup> September 1958 to solve these problems. In the Agreement, it was also mentioned that, exchange of old Cooch Bihar enclaves in Pakistan and Pakistan enclaves in India without claim to compensation for extra area going to Pakistan was agreed to. That means, except four *chhits* of total 130 Indian *chhits*, 31 square miles area of 126 Indian *chhits* would be exchanged with 19 square miles area of 95 Pakistani *chhits*. As a result of that Pakistan would get extra 12 square miles area and India would get no compensation for that.<sup>40</sup> But that problem did not solve.

After the insurgency of 1971, and creation of Bangladesh, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh MujiburRahman and Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India prompted to solve the border problems by discussion. Government of India placed a proposal to the Government of Bangladesh to solve Berubari and *chhit* problems. In this proposal it was told that the southern half of Berubari Union No. 12 and adjacent four *chhits* would remain in India, measuring an area of 2.64 square miles and in exchange of this Bangladesh would retain the Dahagram and Angarpota enclaves. India would lease in perpetuity to Bangladesh an area of 178 meters x 85 meters near *Tinbigha* to connect Dahagram with Panbari *Mauza* (P. S. Patgram) of Bangladesh.<sup>41</sup> 126 *chhits* of remaining India would be exchanged with 93 Bangladeshi *chhits*. On 16<sup>th</sup> May 1974 Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi and Sheikh MujiburRahman, Prime Minister of Bangladesh signed Land Boundary Agreement, which called as Indira-Mujib Agreement. It was also told in the Agreement that the Indian enclaves in Bangladesh and Bangladeshi enclaves in India should be exchanged expeditiously, excepting the enclaves mentioned above without claim to compensation for the additional area going to Bangladesh.<sup>42</sup> Though there was started dissatisfaction within the dwellers of Cooch Bihar regarding the Tinbigha corridor and they started movement. Though the movement was outside of Jalpaiguri district, but Jalpaiguri was the epicentre of the movement. In 7<sup>th</sup> October 1982 Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi and Hussain Muhammad Ershad,

President of Bangladesh took action to reconsider Indira-Mujib Agreement of 1974 and to materialize this Agreement. Both the Minister of External Affairs of these two countries observed several aspects of possibilities. Then P. V. NarsimhaRao, Minister of External Affairs, India, A. R. Samsud Doha, Minister of External Affairs, Bangladesh, signed a lease about *Tinbigha* Corridor. Though, strong movement started against the lease.<sup>43</sup> Some articles of this Agreement were debatable.<sup>44</sup> But in the pressure of the movement, Government of India added a new solution in Indira-Ershad Agreement. It was told in the Agreement that a flyover or a tunnel would be constructed for the people of Kuchlibari for going to Mekhliganj. Later Government of India under NarsimhaRao amended the Agreement. It was told then that the people of Kuchlibari can access or come and go by the land route of *Tinbigha* Corridor not by flyover.<sup>45</sup> But the important matter was that the main theme of the Agreement of 1958, 1974, and of 1982 was the exchange of *chhits*. This did not become effective. Later in the discussion between Prime Minister NarsimhaRao and KhaledaJiya of 1991 the problems of the dwellers of the *chhits* was not solved.

In the presence of Prime Minister of India NarendraModi and Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries signed the instruments of the land exchange in 2015. With the Agreement, India received 51 Bangladeshi enclaves or *chhits* (covering 7,110 acres) in the Indian mainland, while Bangladesh received 111 Indian enclaves (covering 17,160 acres) in the Bangladeshi mainland. The counter-enclaves, together with Dahagram and Angarpota would not be exchanged when the Indira-Mujib Agreement of 1974 was finally implemented. However, the physical exchange of enclaves was to be implemented in phases between 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016. The enclaves stand exchanged on the midnight of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015 and the transfer of enclave residents was completed on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2015. After the Land Boundary Agreement of 2015, India lost almost 40 square kilometres to Bangladesh. The dwellers living in these enclaves without any nationality would allow choosing their nationality.<sup>46</sup>

The Radcliffe's Award and demarcation of boundaries brought another problem that is Berubari problem. This problem was created with the contradiction of a matter between the Radcliffe's Award and the map prepared by Bengal Boundary Commission. Though, in the Award of Bengal Boundary Commission, Berubari Union No. 12 of *Kotowali* police station of Jalpaiguri, had given to India, but because of showing the area within the Map of East Pakistan, which was prepared by Radcliffe Award, Pakistan demanded a part of Berubari Union. Along with this, there was another problem that, during the time of 1930's, there was slightly administrative reorganization in the jurisdiction of Boda police station. Few areas of Boda police station were included within the jurisdiction of *Kotowali* police station of Jalpaiguri

for administrative assistance, but these areas were not removed from the map of Boda police station. That's why, when Radcliffe's Boundary Commission had demarcated the boundaries, these areas were included in East Pakistan as a part of Boda police station. Because Boda police station was incorporated with East Pakistan. In this way the problem of Berubari was started, which evoked several movements for solved their problems. For the solving of these problems, there were several sittings between India and Pakistan. According to 'Nehru-Nun Agreement' of 1958, there was a plan of transfer the southern part of Berubari of Jalpaiguri district (previously of Cooch Behar) of India to East Pakistan, which creates several mass movements in that region. At last, according to 'Indira-Mujib Agreement' of 1974, approx. 2.64 square miles land of 12 no. union of Southern part of South Berubari kept within India and in exchange with that, Dahagram and Angarpota enclaves had been kept in Bangladesh.<sup>47</sup> In this way the problem of Berubari were solved to some extent. Apart from these, the Bangladeshi enclaves within India, the Indian enclaves within Bangladesh and enclaves within the enclave had been created several administrative problems. Surprisingly this problem is noticed mentionable only in India-Bangladesh borders of West Bengal, especially in Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar districts of Northern part of West Bengal. Along with these problems there were few problems regarding the distance between district headquarter in Jalpaiguri to Alipurduar. The residents of Alipurduar started movement demanding separate district. After so many movements and discussions Alipurduar district was formed in 2014 with some portion of Jalpaiguri district. With the formation of newly created Alipurduar district area of Jalpaiguri compressed from its earlier position, which effected upon geography, demography, politics, economy, society of Jalpaiguri district in several ways.

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<sup>1</sup>BidyutChakrabarty, *The Partition of Bengal and Assam, 1932-1947*, Routledge Curzon, London, 2004, p.154.

<sup>2</sup>MonmohanChakrabatti, '*A Summary of the Changes in the Jurisdiction of Districts in Bengal, 1757-1916*', revised and updated by KumudRanjanBiswas, West Bengal District Gazetteers, Department of Higher Education, Government of West Bengal, Calcutta, 1999, p.167.

<sup>3</sup>Ladli Mohan Roychowdhury, *KshamataHastantar O DeshBibhag*, Dey's Publishing, Kolkata, January 2004, pp.98-99.

<sup>4</sup>JoyaChatterjee, *The Spoils of Partition: Bengal and India, 1947-1967*, Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, India, 2007, p.46.

<sup>5</sup>Dasgupta, Ranajit, *Economy, Society and Politics in Bengal: Jalpaiguri 1869-1947*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1992, pp. 5-26.

<sup>6</sup>Ladli Mohan Roychowdhury, *Op.Cit.*, p.100.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.105-06.

<sup>8</sup>MonmohanChakrabatti, *Op.Cit.*, p.176.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p.171.

<sup>10</sup>BidyutChakrabarty, *Op.Cit.*, p.158.

<sup>11</sup>MonmohanChakrabatti, *Op.Cit.*, p.176.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p.192.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 208-209.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.168-169.

<sup>15</sup>Abani Mohan Kusari, Barun De and others, *West Bengal District Gazetteers: Jalpaiguri*, Superintendent of Government Printing, Calcutta, 1981, p. 66.

<sup>16</sup>Ladli Mohan Roychowdhury, *Op.Cit.*, p.116.

<sup>17</sup>*AnandabazarPatrika*, (A Bengali daily Newspaper, published from Calcutta) Dated: 02.08.1947.

<sup>18</sup>*AnandabazarPatrika*, Dated: 20.08.1947.

<sup>19</sup>MonmohanChakrabatti, *Op.Cit.*, p. 313.

<sup>20</sup>Abani Mohan Kusari, Barun De and others, *Op.Cit.*, 1981, p.3.

<sup>21</sup>MonmohanChakrabatti, *Op.Cit.*, p. 313.

<sup>22</sup>Abani Mohan Kusari, Barun De and others, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>23</sup>MonmohanChakrabatti, *Op.Cit.*, p. 313.

<sup>24</sup>Abani Mohan Kusari, Barun De and others, *Op.Cit.*, p.4.

<sup>25</sup> B. Ray, Census 1961 West Bengal, District Census Handbook, Jalpaiguri, The Superintendent of Government Printing, West Bengal, Calcutta, p.10.

<sup>26</sup>MonmohanChakrabatti, *Op.Cit.*, p. 314.

<sup>27</sup> B. Ray, *Op.Cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>28</sup>Abani Mohan Kusari, Barun De and others, *Op.Cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>29</sup>MonmohanChakrabatti, *Op.Cit.*, p. 317.

<sup>30</sup> B. Ray, *Op.Cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>31</sup>MonmohanChakrabatti, *Op.Cit.*, p. 314.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 315.

<sup>33</sup>Abani Mohan Kusari, Barun De and others, *Op.Cit.*, p. 5; and *Paschimbanga, Cooch Bihar JelaSankhya*, Tathya O SangskritiBibhag, PaschimbangaSarkar, July 2006, p.340.

<sup>34</sup>MonmohanChakrabatti, *Op.Cit.*, p. 315.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 315.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 318.

<sup>37</sup>Abani Mohan Kusari, Barun De and others, *Op.Cit.*, p.3.

<sup>38</sup>Srabani Ghosh and Ananda Gopal Ghosh, 'Radcliffe Award and North Bengal: A Study in the Politics of Partition', *The Quarterly Review of Historical Studies*, Vol. XLVII, Institute of Historical Studies, Kolkata, 2008, pp.56-57.

<sup>39</sup>Debabrata Chaki, *Bratyajaner Brittanta: Prasanga Bharat-Bangladesh Chhitmahal*, Sopan, Kolkata, 2013, p.90.

<sup>40</sup>Abani Mohan Kusari, Barun De and others, *Op.Cit.*, p.8.

<sup>41</sup>Debabrata Chaki, *Op.Cit.*, p.52.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, p.92.

<sup>43</sup>Manomohan Roy, "Jalpaiguri Jela Simanta Samasya O Kichu Katha", *Kirat Bhumi, Jalpaiguri Jela Sankalan, Part-I*, Arabinda Kar (ed.), Jalpaiguri, 2009, pp. 410-411.

<sup>44</sup> Pamphlet of Tinbigha Sangram Committee, Dinhat, Cooch Bihar, 1975.

<sup>45</sup>[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/India%E2%80%9393Bangladesh\\_enclaves](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/India%E2%80%9393Bangladesh_enclaves), viewed on: 11.03.2017

<sup>46</sup>Abani Mohan Kusari, Barun De and others, *Op.Cit.*, p.8.