

### Chapter III

#### Place of Industry in North Bengal.

The industries of any country reveals the varying size groups which may broadly be classified as small medium or large, measured by a common acceptable denominator. The presence of units of varying sizes, despite the innumerable difficulties generally faced by those of relatively smaller size, is to be found the "advanced or industrially developed and backward or industrially less developed areas in the world."<sup>1</sup> Turning to North Bengal, it may be observed at the very outset that no definite estimate can be made about the over-all structure of industrial organisation with respect to the unregistered establishments or the unorganised sector, the employment provided by them, or their total turn over. However, an attempt is made in this chapter to give a general idea from scattered data collected from different reliable sources.

In understanding the position of industries in the economy of North Bengal, engagement of population in different economic activities may be taken for classification (Table-31).

(Fig. 12)

Table - 31<sup>2</sup>

Distribution of workers engaged in different economic activities in North Bengal-Census 1971

Name of the district	Total workers	Workers engaged in agriculture	Percentage of the total	Workers engaged in industry	Percentage of the total
Cooch-Behar	390,502	326,255	83.54	15,958	4.08
Darjeeling	282,442	111,837	39.59	13,725	4.85
Jalpaiguri	544,686	272,406	50.01	23,407	4.29
Malda	436,873	347,421	79.52	23,559	5.39
West Dinajpur	520,375	443,792	85.23	15,958	3.06
Total for North Bengal	2,748,78	1,501,711	69.04	92,587	4.2
Total for West Bengal	12,368,944	7,227,108	58.42	1,739,411	14.06

Table-31 shows that the workers engaged in industrial activities comprise only 4.2 per cent of the total workers engaged in the whole of North Bengal whereas agricultural activities engage 69 percent of the total workers. While in the state the over all percentage workers engaged in industries is 14.06. Considering these facts it becomes clear that from the point of economic development North Bengal's industries are still small employers.

In order to understand more clearly the present position of industries in North Bengal it is necessary to evaluate the locational factors of the industries. Locational factors refer to particular conditions giving rise to industrial activities at certain points enjoying greater advantage than others. The conditions governing such locations may be of several kinds, e.g. availability of resources, assemblage of the other factors helping in the entire process from production to distribution at a reasonable price at that point. In Weber's Locational Factors are best determined by the advantages of cost in the production of the finished goods.

Looking at North Bengal the development of industrial activities has taken place on the basis of the following factors : (a) Site and the availability of capital. The choice of site has a great influence and the availability of land for establishing the factory or mill has never been a problem in the region.

On the other hand, while local capital has always been far from adequate to meet the needs of the large industries, capital required to fulfil the demands of small and cottage industries has not been too shy to support such industries. (b) As it will be seen availability of raw materials - Jute, Mango, Tobacco, Silk, Wood etc. and supply of power from different sources, though inadequate, played an important role in location industries in the region. It further implies that the raw materials must be present either at the place of

production, or they should be within easy reach of the place of production. It has to be borne in mind that the prices paid for the raw materials, and the power generating fuel together with the expenses of transporting both of them enter into the cost of production which finally determines the market price of the commodity.

(c) The transportation system with its various types size and capacity has taken an important role in the assembling of the raw materials and transporting the finished products.

(d) Labour needed at every stage of the industrial activity largely;

(e) Similarly, the region has always provided a local market for the products from the various industries, making most of the units economically viable.

Taking all these factors into account a locational analysis of the industries in North Bengal is made in the following paragraphs.

Apart from the northern portion of Darjeeling district and north-eastern part of Jalpaiguri district, almost the whole of North Bengal has plain land, suitable for establishing the factories. But it has to be admitted that, considering the capital investment facility the region is much backward or rather very poor. The remote situation of the region kept it merely isolated from the main stream of economic life of the state for a long time. As a matter of fact ready capital in large amount was not available till 1970, and it is from 1971

that the Central and the State Government have taken a real in this direction, interest giving financial assistance for industrial development through several agencies like The District Industrial office, The Nationalised Banks, The West Bengal Financial Corporation, The Co-operative Banks and Societies, The Khadi Gramudhyaga etc.

The region lacking in basic mineral resources is quite rich in some agro-based and forest-based resources like, Tea, Raw-silk, Tobacco, Jute, Orange, Mango, Pineapple, Zinger to name only the important ones, besides a large variety of forest products. But all these resources have not yet induced any industrial activities in an organised manner or to an appreciable extent. Power needed for industrial function is mainly available from hydroelectric plants harnessing from a number of hill streams of the region namely : Jaldhaka, Rangit, Kalindri. The total thermal power produced in the region amounts to 64,803,412<sup>4</sup> kwh of which only 43.1 percent is consumed by the industry and the rest goes for domestic and other consumption. The supply position of power is not satisfactory here. Non-industrial consumption makes a heavy demand and the power produces, thus limiting the scope for industries load-shedding to a great extent. Besides, it takes a long time for any industry to get a connection with the power grid, has further aggravated the problem.

The roads in North Bengal are well developed for the collection and distribution of raw materials and industrial

goods and there is about 16.20 km. road for every 100 sq. km. area while the corresponding figure for West Bengal is 15.20 km. National Highways No. 34 and 31 pass through the main Urban Centres of the region establishing direct links with Calcutta in the south, Assam in the east and Sikkim in the north. Side by side both broad gauge and metre gauge railway lines, also connect North Bengal with Calcutta, Assam and Bihar.

Both skilled and unskilled labour are recruited from the rural and urban areas of the five districts of North Bengal where the population increased significantly during the last few decade thus providing large number of workers who are generally attracted by the industries. A <sup>decennial</sup> ~~decadal~~ variation in population since 1951, brings out it clearly ( Table 32).

Table-32

Decennial  
~~decadal~~ variation in population in North Bengal.

Year	Persons	Decade variation	Percentage decade variation
1951	3,959,775		
1961	5,549,458	+ 1,589,683	+ 40.15
1971	7,418,663	+ 1,869,205	+ 33.68

Source : West Bengal Census - 1971

It represents the rate of population growth during each decade, between 1951-61, with it increased to 40.15 percent while the percentage being 33.68 between 1961-71.

As a result, regular supply of labour for industrial use has never been a real problem in the region.

It thus appears that the over all situation has not all been very much encouraging for the development of industries on a large scale which however does not mean that North Bengal lacked the potential for industrial development. The flow of capital, technological know how enterprise has always been low due to the remoteness of the region resulting mainly from continued apathy and negligence on the part of past administration. This also has been mainly responsible for the absence of a proper market closely tied up with urban development which has remained too slow in this region for a long time. In spite of all these major handicaps industrial activities have gone on a full swing during all this period, giving rise to small units working on local resources and attaining specialisation serving the needs of the local population both in the rural and urban environments. And it is highly interesting to note that specialisation achieved in different industries makes the major identifying feature of many of these small and cottage industries, some of them having a good market outside the region for a long time. This particular feature is brought into focus in the remaining chapters.

Registration. The industries that are now functioning in North Bengal are mostly registered units. Before proceeding further it is necessary to clarify, the term "registration". Generally the SSI (Small-Scale Industry) Registration is granted to the small scale and cottage industries as a recognition for certain assistance given under various schemes both by the Government and other institutions. Originally the registration was given by the Directorate of Industries but subsequently the scheme has been decentralised under a Government order no. 90/50 stat Dt. 22.10.65. Since then the District Industrial officer has been issuing registration certificates to the Small Scale Industries and Cottage Industries under his jurisdiction.

The assistance programme of the Cottage and Small Scale Industries - Directorate, Government of West Bengal has made following provisions :

A. Finance

1. Loan under BSAI Act. (Bengal State Aid to Industries Act.).

The District Industrial officer is empowered to disburse upto Rs. 2,000 to a single unit. This power has been provided by the Government, since 1967.

The Deputy Commissioner may sanction BSAI Act loan cases involving Rs. 2,000 to 10,000. The cases for such loans are sanctioned after an investigation made by the District Industrial officer into the feasibility and economic viability of the schemes.



II. There is also provision for extending financial assistance to cottage and small scale industrial units through Banking Institutions.

III. Other Financial Institutions.

West Bengal Finance Corporation, offering financial assistance to small and cottage industry, has been carrying out their activities from Calcutta office. In the later part of August, 1972, two Branches of the Institution have been opened at Siliguri and Malda.

B. Raw Materials.

The following raw materials are generally provided to SSI Registered units at reasonable rates on a quota system by the Block Office.

1. Aluminium Sheets.
2. B.P. Sheets.
3. G.P. Sheets.
4. Iron & Steel.
5. Billets for rolling mills.
6. Coconut oil.
7. Palm oil.
8. Zink.
9. Paraffin wax.

C. Machine on Hire Purchases.

The SSI units may get machines for industry under Hire Purchase scheme.

D. Assistance to Industrial Co. operative.

The Industrial Co-operative societies of the districts have been rendered the managerial subsidy, working capital loan and Government share participation for tools and equipments.

F. Other Activities.

Besides the services, mentioned above, facilities are also available in obtaining :

1. Assistance in obtaining power supply;
2. Assistance in obtaining Telephone connection;
3. Import licence for scarce raw materials and machinery;
4. Subsidy @ 2% interest on Bank-loan for a working capital upto Rs. 50,000.
5. Subsidy on power supply to the units having motor with a production capacity of 50 HP.
6. Assistance for allotment of Cement through the Deputy Commissioner;
7. Arrangements for the marketing of products;
8. Assistance for marketing and exhibition.
9. Recognition to Handicraft artisans by organising Handicraft competition;

10. Assistance for an economic survey of the district giving an over all picture of the industrial development;
11. Grant in aid for the training Institutions.

A concrete idea about the relative position of the Registered factories in North Bengal may be obtained from Table-33

Table-33

Registered working Factories in North Bengal  
(Excluding Defence Factories)

Name of the districts	1963	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
Cooch-Behar	12	13	13	15	14	14
Darjeeling	176	159	157	155	156	157
Jalpaiguri	228	241	234	239	234	241
Malda	4	11	7	7	7	7
West Dinajpur	33	34	34	31	31	29
Total for North Bengal	453	458	449	447	454	448
Total for West Bengal	5,653	5,677	5,619	5,629	5,688	5,626

Source : Chief Inspector of Factories, West Bengal.

Table gives an idea about the actual trend in the growth of registered factories in North Bengal between 1965 and 1975. In 1965, 453 factories were registered and within ten years 2241 more factories have been registered, the percentage of growth rate being 17 only, where as in West Bengal the growth of registered factories between 1965 and 1975 was 96 percent. It is thus clear that, from the point of view of registered factories, the position of North Bengal in comparison to West Bengal is not at all satisfactory.

As it has already been discussed, the industries developed, and functioning now in North Bengal are mostly of small scale and cottage based in their size in employment, in annual investment of capital and the annual installed capacity of production of the units. The general distribution and figurative position of these industrial units are given in Table-34. and 35.

Table-34<sup>6</sup>

Distribution of Small scale and cottage industries in North Bengal by employment - Registered up to 31.12.1975.

Name of the district	No. of Units	No. of Employment
Cooch-Bihar	1,313	7,615
Darjeeling	2,177	6,966
Jalpaiguri	1,779	7,294
Malda	1,246	5,109
West Dinajpur	1,573	5,034
<b>Total for North Bengal</b>	<b>8,088</b>	<b>32,018 (3.95)*</b>
<b>Total for West Bengal</b>	<b>89,822</b>	<b>629,367 (7.0)*</b>

\*Figures in the brackets represent average employment per unit.

Table-35<sup>6</sup>

Investment of Capital and Annual Installed capacity of production of Small Scale and Cottage Industries in North Bengal Registered upto 31.12.1975.

Name of the district	No. of Units	Total Capital investment (in Rs. '000)	Annual Installed capacity (in Rs. '000)
Cooch-Bihar	1,313	15,230.0	61,054.5
Darjeeling	2,177	30,478.0	70,317.1
Jalpaiguri	1,779	28,819.8	1354,752.8
Malda	1,246	7,974.4	28,782.6
West Dinajpur	1,573	5,034.0	27,055.6
<b>Total for North Bengal</b>	<b>18,088</b>	<b>87,537.0</b>	<b>4,41,962.6</b>
<b>Total for West Bengal</b>	<b>89,822</b>	<b>30,52,628.0</b>	<b>1,98,78,206.2</b>
Average per unit in North Bengal	10.82		54.64
Average per unit in West Bengal	33.99		221.26

It may be noted here that the figures presented in Tables-34 and 35 represent mainly of those the small scale and Cottage Industrial establishments falling outside the perview of the Factories Act. At the same time the data obviously will not tally with the total number of units existing and functioning in North Bengal as because the registration covers only a very

small fraction. Of the actual number in operation. This is, perhaps, due to the fact that, the Cottage Industrial units located in the remote rural areas of the districts have reservations about registering their units, though it may be helpful to them. This inherent drawback of the system is probably due to the lack of proper organisation and publicity on the part of the authorities. Moreover, limited finance and security are also responsible for the unenterprising habits of the owners of the Small Scale and Cottage Industrial units.

The object of furnishing the above tables is to find out the regional pattern of employment and capital investment in Small Scale, and Cottage Industry in North Bengal. It is interesting to note that the employment comes down to 3.95 persons per unit, while per unit average for West Bengal is 7.0 persons. The same is the case for average capital investment and annual installed capacity per unit. The average capital investment per unit is Rs. 33.99 in case of West Bengal but it is only Rs. 10.82 in North Bengal. Again, it is Rs. 221.26 for West Bengal and Rs. 54.64 for North Bengal, while the annual installed capacity is concerned. Thus, North Bengal, sharing only 2.86 percent of the total capital invested in small scale and cottage industry in West Bengal, is really lagging behind.

To form an idea about the types of industries in North Bengal, a district-wise distribution of the different units now functioning under the registration act of the District Small Scale and Cottage Industry Department is given in Tables-36-41.

Table-36<sup>7</sup>

Small Scale Industrial units in Cooch-Bihar  
District - Registered upto 1974

Name of the Industry	No. of Units	Total Employment	Percentage of employment to total employment in districts.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1. Food & Beverages	116	657	11.3
2. Tobacco	29	857	14.7
3. Textiles including textile wearing apparel	316	3083	53.1
4. Foot wear	13	42	7
5. Wood products	56	438	7.5
6. Furniture	26	77	1.3
7. Printing & Allied Industries	14	52	0.9
8. Chemical Products	27	117	2.0
9. Non-metallic mineral products	11	79	1.3
10. Basic metal industries	19	89	1.5
11. Manufacturing of metal products	6	33	6
12. Manufacturing & repair of transport equipment	43	139	2.4
13. Miscellaneous	47	159	2.7
<b>Total :</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>8819</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Average per unit</b>		<b>8</b>	

Table -36 shows the employment in different types of industries in the district of Cooh Behar. It is found that the Textile Industry takes the leading position among all the industries with 63.1 percent of the total employment in industry, Tobacco takes second position with an employment of 14.7 and Food and Beverages come third having an 11.3 percent on its pay-rolls followed by Wooden products, Foot wear, Manufacturing and Transport Equipment, Chemical products, etc. In the total number industrial units again, the Textile Industry takes first position numbering 316, while Food and Beverages rank second with 116 units, followed by Wood Products, Manufacturing & repair of Transport Equipment, Tobacco, Chemical products, Furniture etc. Textile Industry, Tobacco, Food & Beverages and Wood products have thus taken a dominant role in the industrial activities of the District of Cooh Behar, maintaining a higher level of production than other types of industries functioning in the district.

Tables-37 and 38 present a picture of the district of Darjeeling. The industries within the district belong to two categories : the project Area Industries and the Non-project Area Industries.

#### 1. The Project Area.<sup>8</sup>

The project area is under the Rural Industries project scheme comprising five development Blocks viz. Kalimpong I, Kalimpong II, Siliguri - Nazalbari, Phansidewa - Kharibari,



and Darjeeling - Pulbazar established with a view to promote the development of rural industries more intensively. The project was launched in this district in 1965 along with 48 others in various parts of the country. The rural Industries Project is a direct scheme included in the Central Sector on the Plan and executed by the Directorate of Cottage and Small Scale Industries, Government of West Bengal.

2. The Non-Project Area.<sup>8</sup>

This includes the municipal areas in the towns of Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong, Siliguri and five development Blocks viz. Kurseong, Mirik, Sukhiapokhri, Jore Bungalow, Garubathan and Ranglirangliot.

Industries functioning in these two areas are given in the following Table.

Table -37<sup>9</sup>

Small scale Industrial units in the  
project Area of Darjeeling District.

Registered upto 1971.

Name of the Industry	No. of Units	Total Employment	Percentage of employment to total employment in the district.
1. Food products	33	210	21.5
2. Textiles	8	13	1.33
3. Beverage Industries	3	10	1.02
4. Chemical & Chemical products	5	39	3.99
5. Foot wear & other wearing apparel	39	104	10.65
6. Wood work other than furniture	2	21	2.15
7. Furniture	11	36	3.68
8. Metal products	14	43	4.40
9. Building Materials	5	236	24.13
10. Handicraft	9	32	3.27
11. Miscellaneous	53	231	23.66
Total :	182	976	100.00
Average per unit	-	5.36	-

Table-38<sup>9</sup>

Small Scale Industrial Units in  
the Non-Project Area of Darjeeling  
district Registered upto 1974

Name of the Industry	No. of Units	Total employment	Percentage of the employment to total employment in the district
1. Food products	80	1564	45.87
2. Textiles	7	20	0.58
3. Beverages	7	26	0.76
4. Chemical & Chemical products	33	175	5.13
5. Foot wear & other wearing apparels	111	456	13.37
6. Wood work other than furniture	23	189	5.54
7. Furniture	19	145	4.25
8. Metal products	75	217	6.36
9. Building Materials	3	16	0.46
10. Handicrafts	6	133	3.90
11. Miscellaneous	127	468	13.72
Total :	491	3409	100.00
Average per unit	-	6.94	-

An employment character of the different types of industries have been tabulated in the above two tables for the project and Non-project Areas of Darjeeling district. In order of the strength of employment, the Food products tops the list both in the project and the Non-project Area with 21.5 percent and 45.8 percent respectively of the total employment in industry.

In the project area Building Materials take the next important position among the industries with an employment of 24.13 percent of the industrial workers and a group of industries lumped together. Food Products rank third 21.5 percent of the total employment followed by Foot wear and other wearing apparels, Metal Products, Chemical & Chemical Products, Furniture, Handicraft, Wood work other than Furniture, Textiles and Beverages Industries. Considering the number of units functioning under each type, Foot wear of other wearing apparels maintains the first position with units 33, followed by Food Products 33, Metal products 14, Furniture 11, Handicrafts 9, Textiles 8, Building Materials 5, Chemical & Chemical products 5, Beverages Industries 3 and Wood work 2. Food Industries, therefore, dominates the scene in the project Area of Darjeeling district. When both number of units and employment are taken into consideration followed by Foot wear & Other Wearing apparels, Metal products and Furniture, in order of importance.

On the other hand Foot Wear of other wearing apparels rank second in the Non-project Area of Darjeeling district. Whereas Metal products occupy third position in employment

followed by Wood work other than Furniture, Chemical & Chemical products, Furniture, Handicrafts, Beverages, Textiles and Building Materials.

But, when the number of units are taken into account, the foot wear & other wearing apparels take leading position followed successively by Food products, Wood work other than furniture, Furniture, Beverages, Textiles, Handicrafts and Building Materials. Thus, both the Project and the Non-project area, the predominating industry is found to be the Food Industry closely followed by Foot Wear & other wearing apparels, Metal products, Wood work other than Furniture. Altogether they jointly have 56 percent of the total industrial units and employ 63.9 percent of the total industrial worker of the district.

Industrial position of the district of Jalpaiguri may be observed from the following table.

Table-39<sup>10</sup>

Small Scale Industrial Units in Jalpaiguri District, Registered upto 1973.

Name of the industry	No. of Units	Total employment	Percentage of employment to total employment in the district
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1. Food & Beverages	139	2547	45.36
2. Tobacco products	21	116	2.06
3. Textiles including wearing apparels	79	272	4.84
4. Leather & Leather products	11	51	0.90
5. Wood products (Except furniture)	44	699	12.45
6. Furniture	20	92	1.63
7. Printing & Allied Industries	19	84	1.49
8. Chemical & Chemical products	99	548	9.75
9. Non-metallic mineral products	19	318	5.66

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
10. Manufacture of metal products	47	339	6.03
11. Manufacturing & repairing of machinery (except electrical)	16	195	3.47
12. Manufacturing & repairing of electrical machinery	10	26	0.46
13. Manufacturing & repairing of transport equipment	56	195	3.47
14. Plastic or Polythene	3	22	0.39
15. Manufacture & repair of watch & clock	8	21	0.37
16. Manufacturing of photographic & optical	7	11	0.19
17. Other industries not elsewhere classified	18	78	1.38
Total :	616	5614	100.00
Average per unit	-	9.11	-

Among the 17 industries in Jalpaiguri district Food & Beverages come first in order of both employment and number having 45.36 percent and 139 units respectively.

The second place in employment is obtained by the Wood products (except furniture) a percentage of 12.45. The Chemical & Chemical products rank third with an employment of 9.75 percent of the total industrial workers followed by Metal products, Non Metallic Mineral Products, Textiles including wearing Apparels. Manufacturing & Repairing of Machinery, Manufacturing & Repairing of Transport Equipment, Tobacco products, Furniture etc. Apart from these, other Industries included in the table take a rather insignificant role both in their employment as well as in the number of total units functioning under each category.

An idea about the industrial situation in the district of Malda may now be obtained from the Table-40.



Table-40<sup>11</sup>

Cottage and Small scale units in Malda district,  
Registered upto 1969.

Name of the industry (1)	No. of units (2)	No. of employment (3)	Percentage of employ- ment to total employ- in the district. (4)
1. Handloom	4,532	9,600	56.32
2. Carpentry (manufacturing furniture, cartwheel etc.)			
3. Blacksmithy (making agricultural implements)	125	398	3.26
4. Pottery	183	472	2.76
5. Village oil (processing mustered oil) Ghand	211	538	3.15
6. Basketry cane of Bamboo processing	58	1,117	6.55
7. Fishing net	1,400	1,800	10.56
8. Tailoring	750	970	5.69
9. Shellac (shola)	62	144	0.84

Contd.

---

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
10. Shoe making & repairing	74	N.A.	N.A.
11. Bidi	153	N.A.	N.A.
12. Cycle repairing shop	71	N.A.	N.A.
13. Jewellery Goldsmith	221	N.A.	N.A.
14. Mango processing	1,017	N.A.	N.A.
15. Brass & Bell-Metal	44	N.A.	N.A.
16. Handpounding	1,800	1,450	8.5
<hr/>			
Total :	10,928	17,045	100.00
<hr/>			
Average per unit	-	1.55	-
<hr/>			

Note : N.A. not available

---

From the above table it is ascertained that Handloom Industry is the most important one both from the point of view of employment (56.32) and the number of units (4.532), next comes the Fishing net industry occupies the second position with an employment of 10.56 percent of the industrial workers of the district engaged in 1,400 units, in all Tailoring Industry takes the third position with an employment of 5.69 percent and having 750 units : Potery, Blacksmithy, Shellac etc. take less important positions with much lower employment. Mango processing industrial units numbering 1,017 but the figure on employment is not available. However, Mango processing ranks third in position in terms of the number of industrial units.

The names of industries functioning in the district of West Dinajpur is given in Table-41 showing their employment and the total number of plans under each type.

Table-41<sup>12</sup>

Small Scale Industrial Units in West Binajpur  
Registered upto 1971

Name of the Industry	No. of Units	No. of employment	Percentage of employment total employment in the district.
1. Agro based	529	2386	21.95
2. Textiles	459	1851	17.03
3. Engineering	138	739	6.78
4. Forest Based	90	2258	20.78
5. Chemical	97	419	3.84
6. Ceramic	141	2138	19.61
7. Leather	105	239	2.19
8. Miscellaneous	412	836	7.69
Total :	1971	10,866	100.00
Average per unit	-	5.51	-

The foregoing Table reveals that agro-based (food-products) industry having the largest number of the district engages the largest number of industrial workers in the district with about 21.95 percent of the total. Next in importance is the forest based industry, with 20.78 percent in employment followed by ceramic 19.61 percent, textiles, engineering, chemical and leathers. Again, the agro-based industry (food-products) tops the list in regard to the number of units (529) the Textiles come next with 459 units followed by Ceramic, Engineering, leathers, Chemical and Forest based industry. Main industries, therefore, functioning in the district are Agro-based (food products) Forest based, Textiles, Ceramic and so on.

At a glance at the tabular figures of the registered units of the five districts of North Bengal, we may come into the conclusion that industries, of varying nature, according to their locational advantages have grown up functioning at present here.

A rank-wise classification of industries (Table-42) operating under the 'Small scale Industrial Registered Units' throws light on the industrial character of the region. The picture that emerges is quite interesting. In North Bengal the most predominant place is taken by the Food Industries taking leading position among all industries in the three districts of North Bengal, namely Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and

and West Dinajpur. Industries coming under this category like Rice Mills, Oil Mills, Bakery, Confectionery, Dairy products, Fruit Processing etc., have developed largely on the basis of local resources and in response to the demand of the regional market. Next in regional importance are the Textile Industries, having first position among the industries of the districts of both Cooh Behar and Malda where long tradition in Cotton and Silk Weaving respectively has given them the most important place in the industrial activities of the districts. The third important position is taken by Wood Products, based largely on the local resources. Industries like Metal and chemical coming next in order take a much less important position compared to the three most characteristic groups of industries in the region.

Table-42

Rank-wise classification of Registered Small Scale Industrial units by employment and number of units in North Bengal.

Name of the District	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1. Cooch Behar	Textiles/Handlooms	Tobacco	Food products	Wood products
2. Darjeeling				
(a) Project Area	Food products	Foot wear	Metal products	Furniture
(b) Non project Area	Food products	Foot wear	Metal products	Chemicals products
3. Jalpaiguri	Food products	Wood <del>products</del>	Chemical products	Metal products
4. Malda	Textiles/ Handlooms	Fishing-net	Tailoring	Carpentry/ Wooden products
5. West Dinajpur	Food products	Forest products/ Wood based	Textiles	Ceramic/pottery