

PREFACE

The topic under investigation is the Industrial Development of North Bengal and the reason for its selection is that so far no comprehensive study has been made on this by any individual or respective concerns. It is needless to say that the true picture of the economy of a region cannot emerge without taking its industrial activities into consideration. North Bengal, basically an agricultural region, depends to a certain extent, on its small scale and cottage industries which traditional as they are, reflect the Individuality of the region. Among the major industries that now functioning in North Bengal are mainly at the small scale and cottage level, like, the Saw Mill, the Ply Wood, the Handloom, the Rice Mill, the Fruit processing, the Bakery products etc. to name only the important ones. Tea Industry the most basic of the region has however not been included in the present study as by its sheer size and complexities it makes altogether a separate study. Besides, initiated by foreign enterprise and capital - at least in the earlier period - tea industry does not fit in with traditional needs of the people of this region.

The introductory part is devoted to a comparative assessment of Small Scale and Cottage Industries functioning in North Bengal and West Bengal, giving an analysis of the terms like "Large Scale", "Medium Scale" and "Small Scale".

Chapter I refers to the Geographical, Occupational and Economic background contributing to development of the characteristic industries in North Bengal.

Chapter II investigates into the infrastructural facilities as available in the region and having their roles in industrial development.

Chapter III covers the places of Industry in North Bengal analysing the various locational advantages responsible for the diversification of the Registered Small Scale and Cottage Industries.

Chapter IV puts emphasis on the need of field survey, its objectives and scope for North Bengal, thus revealing a central contrast between 97 small scale and 140 cottage industrial units of the surveyed sample bringing into surface that all of the former, except ~~for~~ 4 (2 oil Mills, Cigar Cheroot, Sodium Silicate), are located in the important urban centres of North Bengal, whereas the cottage units are in smaller towns or villages. This geographical contrast no doubt, helps to explain some of the differences in the marketing characteristics and utilisation of capacity of the respective types of establishment.

Chapter V analyses^A the location, structure and operative conditions of the industries, with reference to the composition of fixed and working capital, employment and production capacity, providing a basis for banks or other financial institutions in adopting norms for loan-management.

Chapter VI and VII give details about the major industries, like, Saw Mill and Ply Wood Industry and Handloom Industry.

The concluding chapter focusses on the problems inhibiting the growth of industries in North Bengal and points out the remedial measures with suggestions for future development.

The principal aim of the present study has been first, to analyse the existing industrial character and its position, second, to assess the resource potentiality; and third to establish the priority of the speciality industries that can be given a better scope for further development which ultimately will strengthen the regional as well as the national economy.

A part of the results of this thesis obtained through persistent field investigations has been published in the form of 3 research papers the details of which are given below.

1. Indian Silk, Central Silk Board, Bombay
"Malda : Premier Silk District of West Bengal", Vol. XVI
No. 5 pp. 21-25, September, 1977.
2. Banmahal, Uttar Banga Banabyabasayee Sammilita Sanstha,
Jalpaiguri, "Flywood Industry in North Bengal", Vol. III,
No.7 pp. 23 - 26, March, 1978.
3. Indian Geographical Studies, Geographical Research Centre,
Patna "Development and Growth of Wood Based Industry in
North Bengal" Vol. II pp. 45 -50, September 1978.