

Understanding Education System in Colonial Jalpaiguri Town (1869-1947)

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Abstract: *In the Colonial period Jalpaiguri was one of the well-known town. The British had formed Jalpaiguri district on 1st January 1869, through a Gazette notification for their administrative interest. After the district formation there spread of education started. In the Bengal State Conference, 1939, Dr. Charu Chandra Sanyal told, Jalpaiguri's educational ratio was 8% in between only 1% was women. But there had been gradual development in the education system from the pre-colonial period to colonial period. In colonial period the spread of education started through the primary schools, after that gradually established secondary school, colleges, libraries, girl's schools (women education also started). In that time some magazines also published. Jalpaiguri Municipality had also contribution in the spread of education in colonial Jalpaiguri town but certain area has not been touched. The proposed article intends to understand the nature of education system in Colonial Jalpaiguri town.*

Keywords: *Colonial, Jalpaiguri, Education.*

Introduction: In the colonial period Jalpaiguri was one of the well-known colonial town. The British had formed Jalpaiguri district on 1st January 1869 through a Gazette notification for their administrative interest. After the district formation Jalpaiguri district gradually started development works in different fields. In between one of the most important field was educational field, because the city is the source of intellectual hunger. Along with urbanization, institutions associated with intellectual thought also developed. In this case most important and basic institution was school.

Indigenous education system in colonial Jalpaiguri: Before the coming of the Britishers education system of Jalpaiguri district was as like others areas of Bengal as well as India. There was no proper education system. It was completely indigenous education system, which was based on Pathsala, Muqtab. And Toll. The method of teaching in those institutions were primitive and clumsy. All these institutions were provided completely elementary level of education. Teachers of this institutions known as Guru in the society. The gurus were paid by the students and they were entirely depend on this fees for their livelihood. The fees (Guru Dakshina) had 1 to 4 anna per student. The children were used to go to the school at the age five.

Background: The Britishers came in India for their business or commercial purpose. They established there different trading companies (like East India

Company). The main motive of these companies was plunder the vast wealth of this country. But after the victory of Plassey the Britishers get the taste of political power and they gradually tried to establish their own political power as well as commercial interest and they completely own the political power of India. But initially they did not bother about education system of India. After some time, the charter act of 1813, introduced in a new era the Indian modern education system. By the charter act company decided spend first 1 lakh rupees for Indian education system. In addition, conditional Christian missionaries were allowed to associate with Indians and were asked to play a constructive role in the education of Indians. Until then, Christian missionaries could not legally enter the territories under the influence of the East India Company. Because the company initially thought that the free movement of the missionaries might cause resentment among the Indians against the company. The Company was also opposed to interference in the customs of Indian society in the early stages of its rise to political influence. However, the Charter Act of 1813 allocating 1 lakh rupees for the education of Indians and asking the missionaries to promote education, both these policies opened new horizons for the Indian education system. Then in 1823 '...a committee of public instruction...' was formed. The objective of this committee was to promote the education system and higher education. But till then no constructive steps could be taken. During the period of William Bentick, emphasis was placed on higher education and English education and in 1837 Persian was abolished as the official language. After that in 1842, public instruction committee replaced as education council and in 1854 Educational Dispatch came, which was one of the most important step in Indian education system. By this Educational Dispatch English language chosen as medium of higher education. In 1855 the post of Director of Public Instruction for Bengal Presidency, some school inspector and assistant school inspector post were created, and lastly established regular department of public instruction. After that in 1872, George Campbell's educational reform proposal took a different dimension in the expansion of primary education system. George Campbell's reform were instrumental in improving education along with the expansion of primary education. Within a year of the implementation of Campbell's educational reforms, the government report of 1873-74 noted a jump in the spread of primary education. Since then the education system of Bengal gained a permanent and definite momentum. (Sarkar, 2021, P.-36-37).

Primarily, Jalpaiguri towns educational development depends on colonial education policy. After the district formation (by the Britishers, 1869) one of one educational institutions were established. In 1939, respected Dr, Charu Chandra Sanyal in his speech at the Bengal State Conference presented the overall of picture Jalpaiguri district's education system. According to him, the number of literate people in the district was 8 percent, out of this only 1 percent was women.

Primary education: After the district formation, the town was started urbanised and education scenario also slowly started change. Primary schools was played important role in the spread of primary education. The first primary school of the town was Paharipara Primary School. In 1885 the school was established by Mohammad John Hak Choudhry. Rajbaripara Jagdishwari primary school was also established in that time but the school was destroyed by the storm and never rebuilt. In contemporary Adarpara primary school was established by Azizul Hak Saheb, the school was managed by the municipality. Characteristics of this school was that the boys and girls of the families of the neglected class of the society studied in this school. The school is managed by the municipality. From the minutes of the municipality, it is known that on January 7, 1893, a donation of 2 rupees was given to the three Pathshalas of Moranga, Beldar Patti and Rajbari by the municipality. Apart from this, a grant of Rs. 210 was provided by the municipality in the same year for the development of Model School and Girls School which were subsequently upgraded to District School and Sadar Girls School. In 1894 Khenpara Pathshala was given 15 ruppess. In 1926-27 the Pathshalas distributed as a grant of approx 106 ruppess by the Municipality were (1) Indrajmal Free Model Pathshala, (2) Paharipara Pathshala (Established, 1885 AD), (3) Jagadishwari Pathshala, (4) Adarpara Pathshala, (5) Deunia Para Pathshala, (6) Khenpara Pathshala, (7) Anand Model Primary School (Established, 1922 CE), (8) Marwari Girls Primary (Established, 1933 CE) and (9) Saberla Maktab. ' In 1926 Umagati Vidyamandir was established in Raikat Para with the grant and initiative of Umagati Ray. In 1928, a school was established at Nayavasti under the initiative of the municipality. In the same year, advocate Vishnuprasad Mishra paid 1,200 rupees to the municipality to set up the 'Vishnuprasad Free School' at Kadamtala. In 1928, on the initiative of late Madhusudan Roy's daughter Bimala Roy and Anupama Devi, another school was established with 10-12 girls in Madhusudan Roy's living room. By 1935 the number of grant-aided primary school within the municipal limits increase of 14. Besides, several primary schools were established in the city during the colonial period. Notable among them are Jalpaiguri District Primary School (Established, 1876 CE), Marwari Boys Hindi Primary (Established, 1908 CE), Sonulla Primary School (Established, 1921 CE), Pandapara Junior Basic Primary School (Established, 1930 CE), Soudamani. F. P. School (Established, 1932 CE), Shishuniketan Primary School (Established, 1941 CE), Raikatpara R R Primary School (Established, 1942 CE), Mahadev Hindi Primary School (Established, 1943 CE), Shishumahal Junior Basic (Established, 1944 CE), Adarpara F. P. Primary School (Established, 1946 CE). Education is one of the means of improving civic life. Municipal aided and government aided primary schools played an important role in the development of primary education in the city. (Sharma, 2009, P.- 33)

List of Municipality Grant Aided Primary Schools

Number	Name of schools	Rupees
1	Jagdishwari primary school	8
2	Paharipara primary school	22
3	Sonaulla primary school	20
4	Dinbazar Marwari primary school	16
5	Karimbox primary school	8
6	Saberia primary school	12
7	Kharibachipara primary school	10
8	Kadamtala primary school	28
9	Marwari girls school	10
10	Ramsundar primary school	8
11	Soudamoney primary school	12
12	Umagati primary school	15
13	Maranger par primary school	5
14	Indrajmal primary school	5
15	Total	179

(Source: Sharma, Umesh. (2009), *Jalpaiguri Pourosohba: 125 Bochorer Itibritto*, p.-38-39)

Higher education system: The demand in higher education and growth in primary education has lead to higher educational institutions one after another. Here, Jalpaiguri Rashtriya Vidyalaya has played an important role in the progress of higher education. This school later came to be known as Jalpaiguri District School.

The role of many government officials such that Commissioner of the District to the Education Inspector of the Rajshahi Division, they were able to make the government aware of the need for an English school at Jalpaiguri district with the use of official letters. Prior to this the condition of the education system of the district was very bad. In 1870 Cooch Behar Division Director of Public Instruction, approached the Government, Atkinson agreed with the then Commissioner and stated the need of higher education system in Jalpaiguri. In spite of all these government was not ready at all to take initiative regarding the matter. After millions of hardship and re-appealing by the commissioner, the government decided and informed that the proposal to establish a school would be considered only if funds were available. After the decision declared by the government, In 1872 government for the establishment of a school talked to the Commissioner to proposed a plan for setting up a school. Therefore, after all this a proposal to set up a third class school on a grant of Rs 150 was submitted. Again the proposed plan continued to be cancelled due to non-compliance of the financial grant for the new school.

Afterwards the same year the school inspector of the northeastern division Mr. J. Bellet highlights the necessity of establishing a school in Jalpaiguri. After all the effects done by Inspector of school and commissioner then the Deputy Commissioner raised money at the local level and sent for the necessary permission to establish the school. Regardless of all this efforts done by the governmental authorities the government again with hesitation did not grant the permission to establish the school.

After looking the multiple attempts done by the government and multiple government applications for setting up Jalpaiguri District School did not bring any particular benefit then afterwards in 1876 after the plan of setting up a school raised by the district people failed again and again Rajshahi Division School Inspector Mr. The Clerk asked the Commissioner of Jalpaiguri to submit an application to the Government of Bengal for setting up a district school. They have decided and Plans have been implemented to set up one district school in each district except Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri. Also the various arguments have been kept up for setting up the school in the Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and soon it will be implemented.

The importance of development has made the need of setting up the school so strong and powerful. Where the condition of the present Anglo-Vernacular school is good but the schools are not capable of meeting the educational needs of all people. The demand among parents for better education of their children is increasing day by day but they are not being able to meet up to the expectations of the people around them. After detailed survey the Deputy Commissioner informed the Government that due to lack of good education, efficient clerks are not being produced and as a result administrative efficiency is getting hampered. But after receiving the application, the government did not get the necessary permission to set up the school.

Again, on April 14, 1876, the inspector of schools wrote an application that there was a need to establish a school in the new district of Jalpaiguri, but due to lack of funds, the school could not be established. But within a month of this application submitted by inspector of schools in 1876 they saw a sudden change in government policy and in consultation with the Inspector of Schools. The Government of Bengal confronted to establish a district school at Jalpaiguri and allowed a grant of Rs. 200 per month. Therefore, so after many applications and after a lot of hardships finally Jalpaiguri Rashtriya Vidyalaya or later Jalpaiguri District School was established in 1876. The first headmaster of the school was Shri Nilamani Pal. Another one of the most important school was Fanindra Dev Institution. In 1878 the school became Madhya Bengali Vidyalaya and in 1910 Madhya English Vidyalaya and the name was changed to Jalpaiguri Municipal middle school. One of the additions to the progress of higher education in the city was the establishment of Sonaula Institute on 3rd July 1921. One of the another important school was Anando Model High School, which was established in 2nd January 1922.

Women education: In other hand, Sadar Girls' school played a leading role in the spread of women education. The school started journey in 1871 as a 'Normal school' at the behest of Jalan couple. In 1878 school became Sadar Madhya Vidyalaya and after that in 1927 the school was recognised to hold the matriculation examination. Kadamtala Girl's High School also played important role in the spread of women education in colonial period. Marwari Girl's School was one of the another women's educational institute of Jalpaiguri. After, much hesitation, its finally made its debut in 1933. Marwari Girl's School said to have been established from the point of view that the girls of the Marwari society bounded by relatively conservative social ties at that time should not fall behind in education in any way. Likewise one after another many higher education institutions were established and it not only led in spreading of knowledge also helped in development of Jalpaiguri district.

List of Colonial Jalpaiguri Town High Schools

Number	Name of schools	Year of ESTD.
1	Jalpaiguri Zilla School	1876
2	Fanindradev Institution	1920
3	Ananda Model School	1922
4	Sadar girls' school	1927
5	Sonaulla Institution	1929
6	Kadamtala girls' School	1929
7	Marwari girls' School	1933

(Sources: Sarkar, Rupan, (2022), Teesta Parer Jalpaiguri, p.- 85)

Till 19th century, several high-schools were established in Jalpaiguri, but the problem started with the students of the city who had to migrate to neighboring districts for higher education. The demand for setting up colleges for higher education among the people of the city started increasing rapidly. To overcome with this situation some people of the city started taking initiative from the early forties and an 'Organizing Committee' was formed. In the meeting of this a college called 'Jalpaiguri College' was organized in Sonaulla High School for higher education. It was decided that teaching will be arranged in a systematic way that no child should face any difficulty with their higher education studies. Financial assistance from influential tea-owners was also obtained as an important preparation for this undertaking. But unfortunately this idea of setting up of college came to an end due to some procedural errors and interminable bickering of the 'Organizing Committee'. Again in a meeting held on 19th February 1942, of 40 members of the 'Organizing Committee' in the office of the School Board, an decision was taken to establish the college and according name was decided to be kept as 'Anand Chandra College' after Anand Chandra Rahut, the father of Nalinikant Rahut, the main sponsor of the establishment of the college.

In this meeting, Nalinikant Rahut donated 4 bigha of land and 22 thousand rupees in cash to establish a college after his father in the memory of his father. Ananda Chandra Mahavidyalaya, along with this, the newest addition to the development of higher education in the city of Jal, made its debut.

The plan to establish the college was implemented on 1st October 1942. Nalinikanth Rahut with Tarani Mohan Chakraborty and teacher Devendra Kumar Chand played an important role in establishing this college. From the year 1942-43 with a total of seven subjects including Bengali, English, Sanskrit, History, Logic, the course was launched. Also, Kshitish Chandra Dev Mahashay was appointed as the first principal of the college, his monthly salary was Rs.150. He joined the post of Principal on 17th September 1942.

Likewise, after few years along with the development of higher education, the trend of establishing libraries was also closely started. Also, if the history of libraries is not discussed with education, the discussion seems to remain incomplete. In 1949, UNESCO in its manifesto referred to libraries as "Living Force of Popular Education". Rabindranath called the library 'the people's university. It is from this realization that the people of Jalpaiguri took initiative in setting up schools, colleges as well as libraries. The city's first public library was established in 1890 in the post office located in present-day Dinbazar area. The first assistant librarian of this library was Shri Deenbandhu Banerjee. Another library named 'Union Club' was established in 1901 in a tin-roofed wooden two-storied building on the site of the present Gurjangjora Tea Company. In year 1912 this library was closed. Also, it's first unpaid librarian was Shri Sarat Sen Mahasha. During the Swadeshi movement this library came under the notice of the administration and eventually it was closed down in 1914. Similarly, Brahmo Samaj Library was established in 1904 and in 1906 a library for political workers was established at the house of Kalimohan Niyogi at Raikotpara, The librarian of the Brahmo Samaj library was the wife of the divine Jalal Mian. Public entry was prohibited in the Raikotpara library. Likewise, it also closed later. Again, Aryanatya Samaj library was established in 1907.

The Ramakrishna Ashram Library was established in 1912. The College and Ex-Students' Association library was established in 1914." The minutes of the Jalpaiguri Municipality state that in 1918, the first Pathchakra or library in the town 'Jalpaiguri Public Reading Room' received a grant of Rs. 5 from the municipality. The library "Association Act XXI of 1860" was registered accordingly. So, it can be assumed that the library was established sometime before 1918. The library was located somewhere adjacent to ITPA. The Indian Tea Planters Association was responsible for managing the library. The library was established as Jalpaiguri Institute. either in 1918, which was managed by the JYM authorities. Also, the Muslim Library (1923-24), Congress Library (1931), Sri Aurobindo Library (1939), Babupara Library (1944), Azadhind Library (1946) were the rendezvous of

the intellectual society of the city. field." All these libraries catered to the intellectual needs of the people of Jalpaiguri. The role of these libraries in the freedom movement of the country is undeniable. Manytime these libraries became meeting places for freedom fighters, due to which many of them came under the notice of the British rulers and were closed down. In this way colonial Jalpaiguri town's education system was developed, which was continue in post colonial period. On post colonial period also established various schools, colleges and libraries etc.

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