

Chapter-6

Cultural Changes

Culture is a very much big spectrum to study. Culture is generally defined as the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs of a particular group of people at a particular time. So in study of demography the aspect of culture must come in the way of discussion and the demographic changes also leading to the cultural changes drove us to examine and indicate those changes so that any crisis or question emerged from that changes may be conciliated indicating the basics of those changes. In this context the study of cultural change from historical perspective is of a great significance. As we have seen a voluminous and characterized changes in demography happened throughout a long period of 120 years from 1871 to 1991 census year, there might be changes happened in the cultural ingredients of the people of North Bengal. Religion, Caste, language and literature are regarded the basic ingredients of culture. S.N.Ghosh, Director of Census Operations, West Bengal wrote that 'Religion is an important and perhaps the basic cultural characteristics of the population.'¹ On the other it has been opined by Sri A. Mitra that 'The caste system provides the individual member of a caste with rules which must be by him observed in the matters of food, marriage, divorce, birth, initiation, and death.'² This exemplifies the role of Caste in cultural practices in human life. In this chapter I shall examine the changes in religious and caste composition of demography of North Bengal for the whole period of my discussion and highlight over the changes in numerical growth of persons speaking different languages and then I shall try to indicate to the changes in cultural habits and practices of emerging North Bengal people.

I

Like the other parts of Bengal North Bengal also constituted by the bulk of two major religious communities- the Hindus and the Muhammadans. Mr. Adam, in his report on 'the state of vernacular education in Rajshahye district' in 1836 wrote that "Before visiting Rajshahy, I had been led to suppose that it was a peculiarly Hindu district. Hamilton on official authority (the estimates of 1801), stated that the proportion to be that of two Hindus to one Musalman and in a work published by the Calcutta School Book Society for the use of Schools the proportion is said to be that of ten Hindus to six Musalmans."³ However further investigations by Mr. Adam led him to infer the proportion 'seven to three in the proportion of 1000 Musalmans to 450 Hindus.'⁴ In fact, thannah to thannah this proportion varied which led the investigators to make different opinions. It may be said the Muslim capitals in Bengal may represent most numerous number of Muhammdans. But the cases of investigation did not find it. In case of North Bengal Maldah with the city of Gour represented only 46 percent population of Muhammadans whereas in Dinagepore Muhammdans were found more than half of the population. So it was

rightly concluded in the Census of Bengal, 1872 that “This circumstance again seems to point to the conclusion that the existence of Muhammadans in Bengal is not due so much to the introduction of Mughal blood into the country as to the conversion of the former inhabitants for whom a rigid system of caste discipline rendered Hinduism intolerable.”⁵ This is very true in context of North Bengal that the Muhammadans in this region at the time were mostly converted from the Hindus of this region.

Francis Buchanan in his account of Rungpore said that “the faith in Muhammad seemed to be daily growing ground owing to converts who no longer could have been received in their original castes.”⁶ However though he found Musalmans in Julpigoree fewer but in Dinagepore no less than 70 percent of the total population as Muhammadans. However the Hindu landlords and their agents being aware of the fact of Muhammadan majority, made efforts the district to be settled by their coreligionist Hindus. So Buchanan estimated half of the Hindus of the district constituted by the Hindu people from other parts of India especially from Kamrup. It may be assumed here that local people of this region had a good traditional and cultural relation with that of Kamrup leading their settlements in the district. This probably led to the estimation of Muhammedans in the district to 53 percent during the census operation of 1871-72. The Census of 1872 also reflected a large number of SemiHinduised aboriginals in North Bengal, barring whom the population in North Bengal as a whole might be framed by the Muhammadans. Besides the Buddhists, Jain, Christians and animists also constituted a significant part of the population of North Bengal at the time. The following chart will provide a clear picture of the religious composition of present day North Bengal during 1870s.

Table-6.1
Population of North Bengal with reference to religion
1872

District/state	Hindus	Mahomedans	Buddhists and Jains	Others
Dinagepore	702,235	793,215	295	5,908
Maldah	356,298	310,890	....	9,195
Darjeeling	69,831	6,248	1,368	16,709
Julpigoree	182,375	144,980	8	586
Cooch Behar	...	....	....	....

Source: The Report on the Census of Bengal, 1872, p.8

From the above table it may be seen that the total number of Hindus including Semi Hinduised aboriginal tribe in North Bengal were 1310739 (barring Koch Bihar State) among total population of the four districts 2691727 containing 48.70 percent during 1870s. On the other hand in the four districts the Muhammedans numbered 1255333 with a 46.64 percent of total

population. If we take the population of Koch Bihar district and the others, stated in religion's list of the report, who were mostly Hindus the Hindus will become in large number than the Muhammadans. Whereas the other religious groups like native Christians (396), Buddhist and Jains (1671) were not in a significant proportion.

If we analyze the census data it will be noticed that the religious ingredients of Maldah district population were Hindus, Muhammadans, aboriginals, Vaishnavs and in a very small proportion the Brahmos and Christians. The following Chart will represent religious demography of Maldah district in 1870s.⁷

Table-6.2
Police station wise population description by Religions, 1872
District of Maldah

Subdivision	Thanhah	Hindus	Muhammadans	Buddhists	Christians	Others
Sudder	English Bazaar	54831	30,579	...	19	273
	Maldah	34,402	15,375	...	...	786
	Gorgoriba	45,888	15,541	...	...	4,119
	Khurba	53,350	37,559	...	...	1,102
	Gajole	40,504	14,049	...	...	770
	Kaliachuk	60,966	58,287	...	2	120
	Gomashtapore	19,051	29,294	...	7	647
	Sheebgunge	27,082	78,823	...	11	301
	Nawabgunge	20,224	31,890	...	4	1077
	District Total	356,298	310,890	...	43	9,195

Sources: Compiled from Bengal Census, 1872, pp.liv-lv

Table-6.3
Police station wise population description by Religions in Percentage to Total Population
Maldah District

Subdivision	Thanhah	Hindus	Muhammadans	Buddhists	Christians	Others
Sudder	English Bazaar	64.0	35.7	...	...	.3
	Maldah	68.0	30.4	...	...	1.6
	Gorgoriba	70.0	23.7	...	...	6.3
	Khurba	58.0	40.8	...	...	1.2
	Gajole	73.2	25.4	...	...	1.4
	Kaliachuk	51.1	48.8	...	...	.1
	Gomashtapore	38.9	59.8	...	...	1.3
	Sheebgunge	25.6	74.1	...	...	.3
	Nawabgunge	38.0	60.0	...	...	2.0
	District Total	52.7	46.0	...	...	1.3

Sources: Compiled from Bengal Census, 1872, pp.liv-lv

The census of Bengal 1872 enumerated 356298 number of Hindus in Maldah district, who formed the 52 percent of total population. This obviously included the semi Hinduized aboriginals, 135562 in number, the Vasihnava 5849 in number and Gosains 843 in number and the Brahmans. The Brahmosamajists had no hold in the district as the Collector accounted six number of Brahmosamajists in the district, even who were not the natives of Maldah.⁸ The Muhammedans of Maldha district in 1872 was found 310890 in number constituting 46 percent of the district population. The Statistical Account of Hunter described them thus, "They are for the most part an active and energetic race, a fact which may be due to their being largely descended from the conquerors of Gour and Panduah. A number of the Muhammadans were from Farazi and Wahabi sects in the district."⁹ The aboriginal tribes coined as 'other' in the Census report numbered 9195 persons comprising 1.35 percent of the total population. This 'other' aboriginals were mainly constituted by the immigrants of the Chhutia Nagpur hill region. Among the different thannahs of the district Gomasthapore, Sheebgunge and Nawabgunge were largely populated by the Muhammadans and English Bazaar, Maldah, Gorgoriba, Khurba, Gajole were largely populated by the Hindus. Kaliachuk was constituted almost by the equal proportion of Hindus and Muslims.

The population of Dinagepore district composed mainly composed of Hindus and Muhammadas during the census period of 1872 with a handful number of Buddhists, Jains, Christians and animists. The Hindus comprised 702,235 numbers of people in the districts in 1872 with 46 percent of entire population. The greatest number of population was comprised of the Muhammadans numbering 793215 with 52.8 percent of the total population in the district. Regarding the growth of Muhammadans of the district W.W.Hunter wrote that "The mass of the Muhammadan population are the descendents of converts from Hinduism."¹⁰ Numbering 25 were recorded as Brahmos who actually belonged to Dacca and the eastern districts employed in Dinagepore. There were 295 Buddhists consisted of 151 males and 144 females in the district in 1870s. The total number of native Christians in the district were 250 and in total 271 in 1872. However a good number of people returned their aboriginal religious faiths (animists) whose number was not less than 5,908 as a whole. F.W. Strong wrote "the Muhammadans of Dinagepore are chiefly the descendants of Rajbanshis converted by force to Islam or who adopted that religion during the days of Muhammadan rule from motive of policy"¹¹ The following chart show the statistics for Dinajpore district in 1870s:

Table-6.4
Police station wise population description by Religions, 1872
Dinagapore District

Subdivision	Thanhah	Hindus	Muhammadans	Buddhists	Christians	Others
Sudder	Dnajepore	6,604	8,863	...	99	81
	Rajarampore	87,677	109,208	...	1	220
	Beergunge	79,593	70,408	...	...	96
	Kaliagunge	66,649	28,036	...	...	43
	Hemtabad	50,427	36,611	...	...	51
	Bungsihari	41,234	36,897	...	6	151
	Gungarampore	41,707	33,330	...	...	159
	Pateram	32,441	32,209	...	69	2,147
	Putneetolla	46,641	73,928	...	...	2,131
	Porsha	14,679	33,699	295	...	130
	Chintamun	16,324	34,826	...	...	312
	Hubrah	17,842	45,524	...	41	...
	Nawabgunge	10,004	36,456	...	...	293
	Gorghat or Raneegung	3,450	13,432	...	...	43
	Peergunj	50,338	38,908	...	55	...
	Raneesunkoil	36,436	42,242	...	...	18
Thakurgaon	101,689	119,143	...	...	33	
	District Total	702,235	793,215	295	271	5,908

Sources: Compiled from Bengal Census, 1872, pp. liv-lv

Table-6.5
Police station wise population description by Religions in Percentage to Total Population
Dinagapore District

Subdivision	Thanhah	Hindus	Muhammadans	Buddhists	Christians	Others
Sudder	Dnajepore	42.2	56.5	...	.8	.5
	Rajarampore	44.5	55.4	...	...	.1
	Beergunge	53.0	46.9	...	...	.1
	Kaliagunge	70.4	29.5	...	...	.1
	Hemtabad	57.9	42.0	...	...	.1
	Bungsihari	52.7	47.1	...	...	.2
	Gungarampore	55.5	44.3	...	...	.2

	Pateram	48.6	48.2	...	...	3.2
	Putneetolla	38.1	60.2	...	...	1.7
	Porsha	30.1	69.1	.8	...	.2
	Chintamun	32.1	67.3	...	...	.6
	Hubrah	27.6	72.3	...	.1	...
	Nawabgunge	21.4	78.0	...	...	.6
	Gorghat or Raneegung	20.4	79.3	...	...	.3
	Peergunj	56.4	43.6	...	...	...
	Raneesunkoil	46.3	53.7	...	...	...
	Thakurgaon	45.8	54.2	...	...	...
	District Total	46.8	52.8	...	...	.4

Sources: Compiled from Bengal Census, 1872, pp.liv-lv

The district of Darjeeling in 1872 comprised largely by the Hindu population numbering 69831 consisting 73.72 percent of the entire population. The Muhammedans in this district were in marginal number 6,248 in total with 6.6 percent of total population. During the time the Buddhists were 1368 in number and there were aboriginal tribes recognized as others who numbered 16,708 with 17.64 percent of the total population. The aboriginal mainly inhabited in the Terai region of the district. The following chart will give a picture of religious demographic scenario in of Darjeeling in 1870s.

Table-6.6
Police station wise population description by Religion, 1872

Darjeeling District

Subdivision	Thannah	Hindus	Muhammadans	Buddhists	Christians	Others
Sudder (Hill territory)	Darjeeling	29,129	1,027	1,368	544	14,659
	Karsiang					
	Total	29,129	1,027	1,368	544	14,659
Terai	Terai	40,702	5,221	...	12	2,050
	District Total	69,831	6,248	1,368	556	16,708

Sources: Compiled from Bengal Census, 1872, pp.lvii-lviii

Table-6.7
Police station wise population description by Religions in Percentage to Total Population
Darjeeling District

Subdivision	Thannah	Hindus	Muhammadans	Buddhists	Christians	Others
Sudder (Hill territory)	Darjeeling	62.3	2.2	2.9	1.2	31.4
	Karsiang					
	Total	62.3	2.2	2.9	1.2	31.4
Terai	Terai	84.3	10.9	...	...	4.8
	District Total	73.7	6.6	1.6	.6	17.5

Sources: Compiled from Bengal Census, 1872, pp.lvii-lviii

The Jalpaiguri district was comprised dominantly by the Hindus, Muhammedans and with a marginal number of Brahma Samaj followers, Christians and others. The total number of Hindu people in the permanently settled part of the district was 182375 having 55.6 percent of total population. The Muhammedans were also in bulk quantity numbering 144980 with 44.2 percent of entire population of the district. Besides, there were 8 Buddhist, 36 Christians and 586 in 'other's list. Among the different thannahs Mynagoree and Patgram showed much greater number of Hindus in compare to Muhammedans. In other parts the difference was not very high.¹² The religious demography of Jalpaiguri may be understood from the following chart.

Table-6.8
Police station wise population description by Religions, 1872
Jalpaiguri District

Subdivision	Thannah	Hindus	Muhammadans	Buddhists	Christians	Others
No distinction made	Silligoree	34,700	29,543	...	4	306
	Fakeeragunge	29,389	24,768	8	32	269
	Mynagoree	6,419	3,003	...	...	9
	Boda	76,608	64,897	...	...	2
	Patgram	35,250	22,769	...	...	...
	Total	182,375	144,980	8	36	586
	Western Doars	...	...	...	...	...
	District Total	182,375	144,980	8	36	586

Sources: Compiled from Bengal Census, 1872, pp.lx-

Table-6.9
Police station wise population description by Religions in Percentage to Total Population
Jalpaiguri District

Subdivision	Thanhah	Hindus	Muhammadans	Buddhists	Christians	Others
No distinction made	Silligoree	53.8	45.7	...	...	.5
	Fakeeragunge	53.9	45.5	...	.1	.5
	Mynagoree	68.1	31.8	...	...	.1
	Boda	54.1	45.9	...	...	...
	Patgram	60.8	39.2	...	...	...
	Total	55.6	44.2	...	...	.2
	Western Doars	...	...	...	...	...
	District Total	55.6	44.2	...	...	.2

Sources: Compiled from Bengal Census, 1872, pp.lx

H.N. Chudhury in his “The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlements” wrote “The people are generally composed of two elements, Hindus and Musalmans. Besides these there are some Meches, Garos, and other animistic tribes, who are however, grouped under Hindus”¹³ The Census Report of 1872 recorded only the adult for religions enumeration in Koch Behar the then feudatory state. This resulted in about 127928 or 72 percent of Hindus of the total adult males of the State and 48086 or 27 percent Muhammedans among the total adult males of the state. The Muhammedans of the state were the frequent overrunning of the state by the Musalman troops, a number of whom began to reside there followed by their co-religionists. However, conversion played a great role in increasing Muhammedans in the later census records.¹⁴

Before going to the discussion of the phenomenon of religious demography of North Bengal during the following decades up to 1901 that is the last three decades of nineteenth century it is better to look into the statistics of the phenomenon. So I shall present the statistics first and then analyze those statistics in the historical contexts. The statistics have been compiled from data provided in tables, for distribution of population according to religion, of each census year of 1881, 1891 and 1891.¹⁵ I have taken mainly the Hindus, the Muhammedans, the Buddhists, the Jains, the Christians and remaining all like Sikhs, Jews, Snthals, Kols, Animists under the single head ‘others’ though the heading has not been used none of these census tables.

Table-6.10
Population Description in North Bengal Districts by Religion
For the Census year 1881

Districts/Feudatory state	Hindus	Muhammedans	Buddhists	Jains	Christians	Others
Maldah	379153	329525	-	-	26	1744
Dinajepore	716630	795824	-	-	457	1434
Darjeeling	126717	8204	18775	-	842	641
Jalpaiguri	367891	208513	486	66	159	4507
Cooch Behar	427478	174539	-	144	48	-
Total of North Bengal	2017869	1516605	19261	210	1532	8326

Source: Report on the Census of Bengal 1881, J.A. Bourdillon, Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, 1883,

Table-6.11
Population Description in North Bengal Districts by Religion
for the Census year 1891

Districts/Feudatory state	Hindus	Muhammedans	Buddhists	Jains	Christians	Others
Maldah	409036	384651	-	-	-	21034
Dinajepore	713663	756188	-	-	-	10619
Darjeeling	171171	10011	40520	-	1502	-
Jalpaiguri	449161	222236	2509	-	-	6295
Cooch Behar	406528	170746	-	-	-	-
Total of North Bengal	2149559	1543832	43029	-	1502	37948

Source: Census of India, 1891, Volume, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, C.J. O'Donnell, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1893,

Table-6.12
Population Description in North Bengal Districts by Religion
for the Census year 1901

Districts/Feudatory state	Hindus	Muhammedans	Buddhists	Jains	Christians	Others
Maldah	440398	424969	-	-	-	18476
Dinajepore	724429	776737	-	-	-	62913
Darjeeling	187869	9227	44044	-	4467	3431
Jalpaiguri	534625	228487	6321	-	2396	15236
Cooch Behar	397946	168236	-	-	-	-
Total of North Bengal	2285267	1607656	50365	-	6863	100056

Source: Census of India, 1901, Volume VIB, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, E.A. Gait, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1902

In 1881 the total number of Hindus in Maldah district was 379153 containing 53.37 percent of the entire population. The Muhammedans of the district numbered 329525 comprising 46.38 per cent of the total population. Among the other religious groups the Christians (26), Brahmos (3), Jews (7) and the Santhals (1734) were very marginal in number in 1880. In this census period the thannahs of Shibgunj, Gomshtapur and Nawabgunj continued as the Muhammedan dominated areas and Maldah, Kharba, newly acquired Ratua, Gazol and EnglishBazaar remained Hindu majority thannahs. On the other Kaliachak remain in same status from religious composition of the people. **[Separate table for thannahwary description of Maldah district for the year 1881 is given in Appendix of this chapter]**

In 1891 the total number of Hindus in Maldah district enumerated was 409036 comprising 50.19 percent of entire population of the district. On the other the Muhammedans in the district comprised 384651 in number with a percentage of 47.20 of total population in the district. At this time the Animists were a very significant numbering 21034. **[Separate table for thannahwary description of Maldah district for the year 1891 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** This obviously signifies the growth of aboriginal tribal people in the district. Those animists were mostly found in Gazol and Old Malda thannahs. In this period the thannahs of Gomashtapur, Nawabgunj, Shibganj remain Musalman majority area whereas English Bazaar, Khurba, Old Maldah, Gazol and newly created Tulsihatta and Manikchak represented the Hindu dominated regions.

In 1901 the Hindus numbered 440398 in Maldah district which contained the 49.82 per cent of whole of the population of the district. The Musalmans in this census period in Maldah district became 424969 in number with 48.07 percent of the entire population. At this census period the animist became large in number in Tulsihatta and Old Maldah thannas of the district. **[Separate table for thannahwary description of Maldah district for the year 1901 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** In the same tradition Gumashtapur, Nawabganj, Shibganj and now also Kaliachak became dominated by the Musalman inhabitations. Not only this in Kaliachak and shibganj the growth rate of Muslims became very high for 1881 to 1901 period. On the other in some way English Bazaar, Khorba, Ratua, Tulsihatta, Old Malda, Gajol and Manikchak the Hindus remained dominated. It is also notable that the growth rate of Hindus was in Old Malda and Gazole though not as like as the growth rate of the Muslims in above said thannahs, in both cases as said earlier, was due to the large number of in-migrants like Muhahammedans from Murshidabad in Shibganj, Kaliachak, Nawabganj and Gomastapur and Animist immigrant into Gazol and Old Maldah.¹⁶

In census of 1891 total number of Hindus recorded in the district of Dinajpur was 713663 comprising 45.87 percent of the entire population of the district. On the other the Muhammedans constituted 48.60 percent of total population numbering total 756188 in Dinajpur district in 1890s. **[Separate table for thannahwary description of Dinagepore district for the year 1891 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** The number of aboriginal religious people was 10619 (0.68 percent) were recognized as animist in the census of Bengal, 1901.¹⁷ The 1881 census recorded total number of 716630 (47.32 percent) of Hindus, 795824 (52.55 Percent) of Muhommedans, 457 number of Christians and 1434 number of Santhals. **[Separate table for thannah wary description of Dinagepore district for the year 1881 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** The thannahs like Dinagepore, Rajarampore, Putneetolla, Porsha, Chintaman, Hubrah, Nawabgunge, Gorghat, Raneesunkail, Thakurgaon which were Muhammedan predominant also continued to be same in 1881,1891 and 1901 barring disappearance of Hubrah and Gorghat and with additional Parbatipur and Mahadebpur in 1881 being predominated with Muslims. On the other the thanahs like Beergunge, Kaliagunge, Hemtabad, Bunshihari, Gungarampur, Peergunge continuously remained predominant by Hindus from 1872 to 1901 period. In 1901 the total Hindus of district were 724429 comprising 46.23 percent, total Muhammedans 776737 containing 49.57 percent and Animists 62913 embracing 4.02 percent of the entire population. **[Separate table for thannah wary description of Dinagepore district for the year 1901 is given in Appendix of this chapter]**

In 1881 the total number of Hindus in the Darjeeling district was 126717 acquiring 81.66 percent of entire population. The Sikhs numbered only 3 and the Muhammedans were very marginal numbering 8,204 with 5.29 percent of whole population. The number of Christians were only 24. However the Buddhist grew much in number with 18775 in total and having 12.10 percent in entire population of the district. **[Separate table for thannah wary description of Darjeeling district for the year 1881 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** It continued in same tradition during 1891 and 1901 census year. The Hindus numbered 171171 (76.65 percent) in 1891 and 187869 in 75.41 percent in 1901. On the other the Musalmans represented total 10011 (4.48 percent) in 1891 and 9227 (3.70 percent) in 1901 in the district. **[Separate table for thannah wary description of Darjeeling district for the year 1891 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** But the Buddhists grew in number in both the decades numbering 40520(18.14 percent) in 1891 and 44044 (17.68 percent) in 1901. **[Separate table for thannahwary description of Darjeeling district for the year 1901 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** Presence of Christians (4407) and aboriginal religious groups (3431) were also noticed in 1901. LSS O'Malley reported that 44000 Buddhists were mostly constituted by the Lepchas, Bhotias and Murmis.¹⁸ Hunter wrote "Divided according to religion, the majority of the population of this district were Hindus, the remainders consisting of Muhammedans, Buddhists, Christians, a very few Brahmo Samaj followers and a sprinkling tribes still professing their primitive forms of faith."¹⁹

In 1881 census the total Hindus were recorded 367891 in number having 63.25 percent in total population. The Muhammedans were returned 208513 in number consisting 35.85 percent in total population. Among the other group of religious people were the Christians (159), Buddhists (486), Eastern Aborigines (3213) or Animists and others and unspecified (1295). **[Separate table for thannahwary description of Jalpaiguri district for the year 1881 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** At this time Mynaguri, Alipur and Salbari became thickly dominated by the Hindus. In other Thannahs Muslims were also in an important position in compare to the Hindus.²⁰ In 1891 the Hindus became 449161 in total number with 65.98 percentage of the entire population and the Muhammedans became 222236 in number with 32.64 percent of the total population. . The Buddhists in this period were 2509 and Animists 6295 was becoming significant. **[Separate table for thannahwary description of Jalpaiguri district for the year 1891 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** In 1901 the Hindus recorded 534625 in total number with 67.90 percent of total population of the district and the Muslims numbered 228487 with 29.02 percent of the total population of the district. **[Separate table for thannahwary description of Jalpaiguri district for the year 1901 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** The Buddhists and the Animists both grew in number in that decade showing 6321 and 15236 91.24 percent in total number in the district.²¹ Thus during the period between 1872 and 1901 the Muhammedan people in Jalpaiguri district declined fast from 44.2 percent to 29.02 percent. The Muhammedans were consisted by Shekhs and Nasyas. They were probably converted from the aboriginal Koch and Meches of the district. Grunning assumed this with his anthropometric theory.²²

In 1881 total number of Hindus in Cooch Behar was recorded to 427478 having 70.94 percent share in the total population whereas the Muhammedans increased to 174539 with a share of 28.96 percent in total population of the State. . **[Separate table for thannahwary description of Cooch Behar district for the year 1881 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** Among the others there were few number of Christians (48) and Jains (1440) in the State.²³ In 1891 the total number of Hindus recorded in Cooch Behar were 406528 with a percentage of 71 in total populations whereas the Muhammedans numbering 1,70,746 occupied 29 percent of total populations. **[Separate table for thannahwary description of Cooch Behar district for the year 1891 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** In 1901 the Hindus recorded 397946 with 70 percent share in the total population of the State. On the other the Muhammedans counted were 168236 with 29 percent share in the total population. There were some Jains (373) and a few Buddhists (5) in the State in 1901. **[Separate table for thannahwary description of Cooch Behar district for the year 1901 is given in Appendix of this chapter]** If we go through the thannah's accounts only the Haldibari thanah was lightly dominated by the Muhamedans and in all other parts the Hindus were predominant in 1881, in 1891 and in 1901 census also this tradition continued.

So from the above statistical account it becomes apparent that in reference to religion the growth of population in present day North Bengal as a whole at the time from 1871 to 1901 that is in the last three decades of the nineteenth century was in soft steady process and even. But it varied, if we analyze the statistics from different perspective. The Hindus increased of 131690 souls during the period 1881-1891 containing 6.53 percent growth within the community and having 56.61 percent in 1881 and to 55.77 percent in 1891 in respect of total population indicating a slight decrease in totality. The Muhammedans in this period increased of 27227 souls containing 1.80 percent growth within the community and having 42.55 percent in 1881 to 40.05 percent in 1891 share with a slight decrease in total population. On the other the peoples under 'others' including Buddhists, Christians, Animist and others increased 56150 souls in number containing 198.21 percent growth within the community and having progressed from 0.79 percent share in 1881 to 2.19 percent share in 1891 in respect of total population. During the period from 1891 to 1901 the Hindus in North Bengal as a whole represented an increase of 135708 souls containing 6.31 percent growth within the community and having 55.77 percent in 1891 to 56.36 percent in 1901 in respect of total population indicating a slight increase compare to 1891 but still decrease slightly compare to 1881. The Muhammedans in this decade reflected a growth of 63824 souls containing 4.13 percent growth within the community and having 40.05 percent in 1891 to 39.65 percent share of total population again with a slight decrease. The people grouped in 'others' showed an increase of 72805 souls containing 86.18 percent growth within the community having a share growth from 2.19 percent in 1891 to 3.88 percent in 1901 in respect of total population. So though there was growth in number among both the Hindus and Muhammedans communities of North Bengal during the period 1891-1901 it was in both cases a slight downward in respect of totality. So the growth may be taken as the natural growth of the people and excess growth among the Hindus than the Muslims during 1881-91 was due to the larger Hindu immigration which was compensated by the Muslims immigration in the latter decade as the community growth among Muslims increased. The statistics of the growth does not prove much conversion of the people to Muhammedanism in this period as different records earlier to this told. But the sticking feature is the growth of the 'others' consisting of aboriginal tribes and mostly by the immigrants as the growth statistics proved it. The phenomenal growth of this people occupying a significant share in the total population in both the last decades of nineteenth centuries led the two major religious communities to be decreased in percentage of share among total population of North Bengal. However, number of questions may arise here regarding the natural growth of population of the period both on the basis of total and religious community and number of immigrants on the basis of religious communities. But in later portion of the chapter the problems will become under more fruitful discussion.

During the turning of twentieth century accounting religious composition of the people, like other parts of Bengal, became also complicated also in North Bengal districts. It was instructed

by the Census commission of 1911 that religion returned by the asked person should be taken and in case of the aboriginal tribe with no recognized religion the name of the tribe was to be entered and they all were represent in Census Report as the Animists.²⁴ Complication more arose when the supervisors belonged to upper Hindu case declined to include the borderline castes like the tribal as Hindus. However, with all these difficulties statistics were made from which the following scenario of North Bengal religious demography may be observed.

Table-6.13
Population distribution in North Bengal
In reference to Religion
1911

District or State/Province	Hindus (per10000 population)	Musalms (per10000 population)	Animists (per10000 population)	Others (per10000 population)	Christians (Actual Number)
Bengal	4543	5234	158	85	129746
Maldah	4634	5033	326	5	430
Dinajpur	4499	4884	904	12	1964
Jalpaiguri	6063	2631	1152	154	5501
Dajeeling	7141	256	405	2006	7689
Cooch Behar	6906	3079	8	12	90
Total of North Bengal	5848	3176	559	454	3134

Source: Census of India, 1911, Volume V, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Sikkim, Part-I, Report, L.S.S.

O'Malley, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1913, p.257

In 1911 the Hindu population in whole of the Bengal Province represented as 44.43 percent of the total population whereas the Muslims represented 52.34 percent of the total population of Bengal. In compare to Bengal, North Bengal, under our discussion, contributed 58.48 percent Hindu population and 31.76 percent Muslim population. An important feature in this context was the large number of Animists and Others returned by the North Bengal Population against the Province's contribution of 1.58 percent and 0.85 percent respectively. Total number of the Christian people in North Bengal was 3134 against 129746 of the province not a significant part.²⁵

During this decade Malda became dominated by the Muslim population. It crossed the percentage of Hindu population of 46.34 and attained a Muslim population of 50.33 percent in 1911. The Hindus were proportionately greatest in the North and west the Muslims were dominated in the South of the district.²⁶ In the previous decade the Muslims were less than the Hindus. In this census period a large number of people in Malda returned themselves as the Animist (3.26 percent of the total population of the district). Others were only .05 percent and the Christians numbered only 430 souls in the district. Dinajpur continued as the land of Majority for the Muslims following the previous decade and contributed 48.84 percent of persons as Muslims against the Hindus having 44.99 percent in the total population of the district. The Animists in Dinajpur also represented a progressive rise to 9.04 percent from the previous decade's 4.02 percent. Hindus and Muslims were fairly and evenly distributed all over the district. Only Kaliyaganj and Raiganj thanas was Hindu dominated and the thannas of Parbatipur, Posrsa and Nawabganj were predominated by the Muslims. A large number of Christians were found in Patiram police station in 1911 who were mostly converted from the Santals.²⁷ An important picture in religious development in the districts of North Bengal was the emergence of Fakirs, who were regarded as the 'compromise between Muhammadanism and Hindu Jogism.'²⁸

Darjeeling as usual remained as the Hindu dominated region having 71.41 percent of Hindu population against 2.56 percent of Muslim population. In compare to the last decade it was a decrease in both cases of the Hindus (75.41 percent in 1901) and the Muslims (3.70 percent). This was due to the increase in the group of Animists in which the Buddhists contributed a large number in Darjeeling district. Both Jalpaiguri district and the State of Cooch Behar continued as the land Hindu majority as usual having 60.63 percent and 69.06 percent of Hindu population respectively. On the other 26.31 percent of Muslim population was contributed by the district of Jalpaiguri and 30.79 percent Muslim population by the State of Cooch Behar. In both cases lesser number showed by the district of Jalpaiguri was due to its contribution in greater number of Animists containing 11.52 percent in total population of the district. This was decline both the cases of Hindus and the Muslims in Jalpaiguri district in compare to the previous decade. The Hindu population decline caused due to the enrolment of the tribal people as Animist s in large number. On the other the decline of the Muslims was caused by the less conversion of the Hindus into Muhammedan faith.

So though in the natural division of North Bengal the Muslims were pronounced in number having 59 percent of the total population, this was 31.76 in the case of North Bengal of our discussion where the Hindus were in preponderant by having 58.48 percent of total population. In fact barring Malda in all the four administrative divisions of Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling district and in Cooch Behar State of the time the Muslims were minority. It is very interesting that during this time the Muslims predominated throughout Bengal, except the

extreme north and the extreme south-east.²⁹ It was reported that the growth of the Hindus in Bihar were same as in Bengal that was below in case of Muslims than in Bengal. There may be emigration of Bihari Musalmans, particularly from Purnea and Kishanganj into Bengal which caused deficiency from one side and increase from another side of the Muslims.³⁰

An important Animistic religious center in 1911 was Malda-Dinajpur-Jalpaiguri tract of North Bengal. The number of the Animists here in 1911 was over 238000. In Malda-Dinajpur region they were comprised mainly by the Santals from the Sonthal Prganas as we have seen earlier. On the other the Animists in Jalpaiguri were mainly from the Chhoto Nagpur region employed or recruited as the coolies in tea gardens. So the phenomenon of immigration was responsible for the rise of the Animists in te Malda-Dinajpur region on the other in Jalpiguri this was the culmination of immigration, natural growth and important one was the returning by the aboriginal tribes as Animists instead of Hindus as had been showed previously. Besides, there were large number of people who returned themselves as Buddhists residing in Darjeeling district racially consisted by the Nepalese, Bhotias and Lepchas. However, all these Animists and Buddhists followed a mixed of culture mingling Animism with Hinduism.³¹ There were also a few number of Sikhs and Jains In North Bengal districts under our discussion. They were mainly consisted of people immigrated from North Western India who had come her e basically for trading purpose. A large number of Christians in Jalpaiguri district was seen during this time who were mainly the Anglican Christians and embraced or converted from the people belonged to the Santals immigrated into Western Duars region. Thus it became a Christina colony in the region consisting by the 1500 Christians with other 500 colonists. However, they also could not overcome their animistic practices and rituals of life. There were also some Baptists and Presbyterian Christians in North Bengal districts particularly in the Tera of Darjeeling and Duars of Jalpaiguri districts.

In North Bengal, the British called then lower Bengal; there was a great variety of aboriginal or semi aboriginal tribes. During the process of Aryanization they became with the contact of the Aryan Hindus and with this they gradually became partially civilized. Living together for a long period they acted and interacted and adopted many of the Hindu rites and Hinduism in North Bengal also became debased from its Vedic monotheism. So Hinduism practiced in this region also became under influence of the Nadia Pandits or the Pandits from other parts of India. The Bauris, Bagdis, Chandals, Kochs and Paliyas, Dosadhs and many others belonging from aboriginal extraction followed Hinduism remaining in their cultural fold. Even Buddhism, as I said earlier, had some affinity with Hinduism. So Kali was worshipped by both the Hindus and Buddhists. Narayan and Siva were worshipped by Buddhists as Lokeswar, Jagannath and Sayambu.³² However to Brahmins the Santal, Hari, Naga, or Dom were mlechchha or

untouchable, so as Mr. Gait wrote in 1901 that the Hinduism was not only a religious belief but also a social organization.

As the earlier decade in 1921 census the population of Bengal was divided under the heads of Indo-Aryans having subheads of Hindus, Brahmos, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists; Sematcs having subheads of Christians, Jews and Muhammdans; Iranians (Parsis); Primitives (Animists) and miscellaneous as other minor religions as the people returned their religious practices. In general as like as Bengal in North Bengal also there was increase in numerical strengths of people professing each religions in compare to the last enumeration. During this time the Muhammedans became preponderance over the Hindus in both the natural division of census Eastern Bengal, three to one, and North Bengal, two to one. However during the period between 1881 and 1901 there was slight decrease in the growth of the Muhammedans in Northern Bengal natural division. But we have seen in case of North Bengal under our discussion there was no such deterioration. So we shall see the changes of 1921 in perspective of the districts under our scrutiny. The following table of the religious distribution of the population of the North Bengal district of our discussion will present the scenario of the religious demography for the region.

Table-6.14
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion in North Bengal
For the Year 1921

District/State	I-Indo-Aryan					
	Hindu	Brahmo	Sikh	Jain	Buddhist	
Bengal	20808148	3284	2380	13369	275758	
Dinajpur	751861	4	1	450	2	
Jalpaiguri	515162	8	6	460	6098	
Darjeeling	201316	40	28	84	51969	
Malda	400520	5	-	171	-	
Cooch Behar	397925	32	1	497	8	
North Bengal	2266784	89	36	1662	58077	
District/State	II-Iranians	III-Semitic			IV-Primitive	V-Miscellaneous
	Parsi	Musalman	Christian	Jew	Animist	Minor Religions
Bengal	770	25486124	149069	1851	849045	1663
Dinajpur	9	836803	5009	-	111214	-
Jalpaiguri	11	231683	8726	-	174175	-
Darjeeling	36	8516	8098	-	12681	-
Malda	-	507685	548	-	76738	-
Cooch Behar	3	193034	128	-	861	-
North Bengal	59	1777721	22509	-	375669	-

Source: Census of India, 1921, Volume V, Bengal, Part-II, Tables, W.H. Thompson, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot., Calcutta, 1923, compiled from Table IV, pp.28-29

The total number of the Hindus in 1921 in Malda district was 400520 which were 40.63 percent of total population of the district. On the other the Muhammedan in the district numbered 507685 having share of 51.51 percent in the total population. Malda showed decrease in the growth of Hindu population by 5.71 percent from the last decade and there was also a slight decrease in Muslim population by 0.83 percent. This was due to the decline in total population of the district as said above. However, the larger scale decline in Hindu population and increase in Animistic population led us to assume that a large number of the tribal population who enumerated themselves as Hindus in the last decade represented them as belonged to the Animist faith. [The tabular analysis of the thanawary distribution of population by religion has been given in the appendix of the Chapter].³³ The police stations of Khurba, Harischandrapur, Kaliachak, Sibganj and Gomastaur were preponderantly Muslim dominated. Ratua, the Revenue *thana* as a whole was Hindu dominated to some extent. But due to formation of Hindu Majority *thana* of Manikchak it became Muslim dominated. Like wise Hindu dominated Engrazabad revenue *thana* was cut off into Hindu dominated Englishbaazar and Muslim dominated Bholahat police stations. Thus the Muslim dominated Nawabganj revenue *thana* was divided into Muslim dominated Nawabganj and Hindu dominated Nachole Police stations. On the other hand even after dividing Gajol Revenue *thana* into Gajol and Bamongola and Malda into Malda and Habibpur police stations they remained Hindu majority police stations though in Bamongola the difference was not so much.³⁴ In Malda thannahs of Gajol became largely Hindu dominated and Kaliachak largely Muslim dominated. On the other the Animist became concentrated in the police stations of Gajol, Bamongola, Malda, Habibpur, Nachol and Gomastapur.

In Dinajpur the Hindu population constituted 44.09 percent of the total population having numerical strength of 751861 and this was slight decline (0.90) percent from that of the previous decade. The Muslim population was in the district was 836803 being larger than the Hindus and having share of 49.07 percent in entire population of the district. This was a slight increase of 0.23 percent in compare to last decade. A good number of people returned their religion as Animist numbering 111214 during this time. This was a decline of 2.52 percent from the previous census year. This decline happened as per the line of decline of whole of the district in context of growth rate. There were 5000 Christians in Dinajpur district who were mostly converted from the immigrated tribal persons. [The tabular analysis of the thanawary distribution of population by religion has been given in the appendix of the Chapter]³⁵ In Dinajpur the police stations of Parbatipur, Nawabganj, ghoraghat, dinajpr, Patnitola, Dhamoirhat, Posrha, Phulbari, Thakursgaon, Bakiadangi,, Atwari were predominantly Muslim dominated. On the other hand the police stations of Raiganj, Bansihari, Kushmundi, Gangarampur, Tapan, Haripur, Pirgnj, Bochaganj, Birgang were Hindu dominated thannas. The

Animists were concentrated in Nawabganj, Ghoraghat and in all the police stations of Balurghat subdivisions.

In the district of Darjeeling as usual the Hindus were preponderant over the Muslims the Hindus being 201316 in number and the Muslims being only 8516 in number. The Hindus gathered a 71.20 percent share of the total population of the district which a little bit (0.21percent) decline from the earlier enumeration. Though small in number the Muslims grew from the earlier enumeration. The Animist had a little rise during this time having increased the share from 4.05 percent to 4.48 percent. The Buddhist was reflected by 51969 in number during this period. In the last decade the Buddhist were shown under the head of other religion in which almost 20 percent population of the district was included. [The tabular analysis of the thanawary distribution of population by religion has been given in the appendix of the Chapter].

³⁶ The district of Darjeeling as a whole was Hindu dominated. Among the Muslims people most of them were resided in Siliguri Subdivision region.

Mention should be done for the Buddhist in Darjeeling district. In fact the Buddhist of early time did not have any survival during the time in Bengal or in this Himalayan district. Little bit existence of Buddhist was turned into Tripura during Muhammadan invasion in Bengal. At the time the existence of the Buddhists in the Himalayan district of Darjeeling and in Jalpaiguri are either Tibetan origin or Sikkimes and Bhutanese origin. For the tracts Sadar and Kurseong subdivisions were ceded from Sikkim and Kalimpong from Bhutan which comprised the district.³⁷ During this time the Lepchas and Bhutias became converted into Buddhism, though some of them also converted into Christianity. However, gradually the Nepalese immigrants outnumbered them though the Buddhist shared about quarter of the population in this region in 1920s. It will be clear from the following table.

Table-6.15
Buddhists In Darjeeling District
1921

Subdivisions	Number of Buddhist	Proportion of total Population
Sadar	25595	24.01
Kalimpong	16795	27.9
Kurseong	9293	23.0

Source: **Census of India, 1921, Volume V, Bengal, Part-I, Report, W.H. Thompson, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot., Calcutta, 1923, p.166**

In Siliguri subdivision of the district and Jalpaiguri Sadar areas the Buddhists consisted only less than 0.4 percent of the entire population. In Alipur Duar Subdivision of the Jalpaiguri district they constituted much more 1.6 percent of the total population of the subdivision.

There was also a decline in Hindu population in the district of Jalpaiguri. The Hindus decreased from 60.63 percent in 1911 to 55.02 percent in 1921 losing 5.61 percent population in the

growth of Hindus. The Muslims in the district also declined from 26.31 percent in 1911 to 24.75 percent in 1921 losing 1.56 percent of population of the community. However there was a great rise in the population of animistic faith which increased from 11.52 percent in 1911 to 18.60 percent. This must be happened by returning of the increasing number of tribal people belonged to tribal faith who had returned themselves previously as Hindus and at the time of enumeration in 1921 were included into Animistic fold. However the continuous process of immigration still not withered away.³⁸ [The tabular analysis of the thanawary distribution of population by religion has been given in the appendix of the Chapter]. The Muslims were in Majority only in two police stations of the district of Jalpaiguri – Tetulia and Pachagar. In other the Hindus were in majority in number. Animists were preponderant in most of the police stations of Alipur subdivision and in Nagrakata, Dhupguri and Damdim police stations of the district.

The Cooch Behar district going in the same line of the other North Bengal districts showed a decline in Hindu population and followed Jalpaiguri in losing the strength of Hindus population. This was a decrease from 69.06 percent in 1911 to 67.16 percent in 1921 in the growth and a loss of 1.9 percent, a good number of people as a whole. In case of the Muslim population in the district numbering 193034 significantly grew from 30.79 percent in 1911 to 32.58 percent in total population in 1921. Though the increase was little bit of 1.79 percent or about 10,605 souls it was mainly imbalanced immigration of the Hindus from the then State to the contiguous districts. On the other following tradition of other decades there were number of Jains (498) in Cooch Behar. As per the tradition the Animists in the State was very insignificant in number in compare to the other districts whereas the Buddhists and the Christians in the State was always insignificant. But the exceptional feature is the existence of 32 numbers of Brahmos in the State which grew there under the royal patronage.³⁹ [The tabular analysis of the thanawary distribution of population by religion has been given in the appendix of the Chapter]. In the district only in one police station Haldibari had Muslims in majority number during this time. However in the police stations of Dinhata and Cooch Behar the Muslims were in a very large number though did not exceed the Hindus.

During the time of Census in 1930s instructions were given to the enumerators that “Enter here the religion which each person profess, as Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Jain, Christian, Buddhist, Parsi and the sect where necessary. In the case of Christians, the sect must always be entered. In the case of aboriginal tribes who are not Hindus, Muslims, Christians, etc., the name of the tribe should be entered in this column” it was also instructed that the returns of Jains, Sikhs, Brahmos and Aryas were also to be enlisted separately even with separate sub-sect in brackets like Digambar, Sthanakavasi, Swetambar, swetambar Terapanthi among the Jains if needed. In case of the Muslims besides the different racial groups and functional groups different sects also were to be enlisted separately if necessary like Sunnis or Shias. In cases of the tribal people

who professed Christians were to be entered in the lists of the Christians by their tribal name instead of Indian Christians, barring who professed Hinduism.⁴⁰ Thus we got a more details of the distribution of the population by religions than the previous decades. These will help us more analytically in understanding the cultural segments of people of the time in North Bengal. The following table will show the demographic scenario of North Bengal districts under study.

Table-6.16
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion in North Bengal
For the Year 1931

Religions	Malda	Dinajpur	Darjeeling	Jalpaiguri	Cooch Behr	Total of North Bengal	Bengal
Hindu	444406	793832	236913	664015	380073	2519239	22212069
Muslim	571943	886723	8391	235951	208756	1911764	27810100
Buddhist	5	11	58943	7503	1	66463	330563
Triabal	36158	67404	6963	60675	1382	172582	529419
Christians	1192	6981	8280	14767	172	31392	183067
Jain	62	465	80	267	502	1376	9669
Sikh	-	7	5	113	-	125	7334
Jew	-	-	7	-	-	7	1867
Zoroastrian	-	9	40	32	-	81	1520
Confucian	-	-	-	-	-	-	1447
Religion not Returned	-	-	13	34	-	47	283

Source: Compiled from the Census of India, 1931, Volume V, Part-II, Bengal Tables, Porter A.E., Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1933, Imperial Table XVI, pp.220-223

In 1931 Malda district returned 444406 numbers of Hindus having 42.17 percent share in the total population of the district. This was moderate growth of 1.54 percent from that that of the previous decade. On the other the Muslims in the district were 571943 having share of 54.28 percent of entire population of the district. This was a growth of 2.77 percent from the previous decade in compare to the share of Muslim population in the district. This share in the district was 12.11 percent greater than the Hindus. A great decline among the tribal people happened in the district during this time from the previous decade. Previously the census report recorded the tribal people as Animists. If all the Animists were reported as tribal in the 1931 census then they declined 4.39 percent in the total population of the district. This was either caused by the number of tribal people's entry in the Hindu list and instead of immigration reverse migration of the tribal people into their homeland or in the other parts of Bengal.

According to the police station wise distribution of the people based on religion the police stations of Kharba, Harishchandrapur, Ratua, Bholahat, Kaliachak, Nawabganj, Sibganj and Gomastapur were largely dominated by the Muslim population. The remaining police stations predominantly resided by the Hindus in major number. The religious demography in the district continued in the same trend of the previous decade. It is important that Ratua, Ratua was Muslim dominated but Manikchak was Hindu dominated. Again in Englishbazar Revenue *thana* Englishbazar was Hindu dominated and Bholahat was Muslim dominated police stations. And in Nawabganj Revenue *thana* Nawabganj was Muslim dominated and Nachole was Hindu dominated. It was the continuous trend from the previous decade.⁴¹

In the district of Dinajpur the Hindu population became 793832 in number having a share of 45.22 percent of total population of the district. It was 1.13 percent increase in the Hindu population of the district from the previous decade. On the other the Muslims were 886723 in number in 1930s which was 50.51 percent of the total population having a growth of 1.44 percent from the earlier decade. The growth of both the major community was almost in equal sequence. The tribal population like Malda district declined in large number also in this district having a decline of 2.68 percent. This was obviously happened due to enrollment some of the tribal people as Hindus and also due to the slow pace of in-migration if the tribal into the district.

The Muslims in the district were majority in Patnitala, Porsha, Phulbari police stations of Balurghat Subdivision and the Hindus were in majority in other Police stations of the district. Dhamoirhat, which was Hindu dominated in 1921 became Muslim dominated in 1931. In Sadar Subdivision the police stations of Parbatipur, Nawbgnj, Ghoraghat, Dinajpur and Chiribandar were Muslim dominated and in other the Hindus were preponderant. Dinajpur town was resided by the Hindus in major number focusing the urban agglomeration of the Hindus. In Thakurgaon Subdivision Thakurgaon, Baliadangi, Atwari, Ranisankail and Khansama were predominated by the Muslims. In other polices stations the Hindus were in majority. Haripur police station which was Hindu dominated became Muslim preponderant during this time.⁴²

Darjeeling following the earlier decade remained Hindu dominated district having 236913 numbers of Hindu people which shared 74.12 percent of the total population of the district. This was a moderate growth of 2.92 percent in Hindu population of the district. The Muslims in the district achieved 2.63 percent of the total population, a loss in growth from the previous decade. However, the Buddhists remained almost in same share 18.44 percent of total population in the district. There was a good number of Christians having 8280 persons in the list. Hindus were always predominant throughout the district. The small section of Muslims agglomerated in Siliguri subdivision and the police stations of Siliguri and Phansidewa and in

small number in Khoribari. The Buddhists were mostly agglomerated in the police stations of Drjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong.⁴³

In Jalpaiguri district the Hindus were 664015 in number in 1931 having 67.52 percent share in the total population. This was a growth of 12.5 percent from that of the previous decade. This was a large growth in the Hindu population in the district since 1901. On the other the Muslims reached to 235951 in number in total population of 983357 of the district having a share of 213.99 percent of the district population. This was a decline in the Muslim population of the district by 0.76 percent in compare to the previous census year. In fact, since the beginning of the twentieth century the conversion to Islam in North Bengal district was not significant. There was a little decline in tribal people from 6.52 percent in 1921 to 6.17 percent in 1931. This proved the stagnancy in the tribal immigration into the district. There were a good number of Buddhists numbering 7503 and Christians numbering 14767 in the district basically in the Duars region. Only Boda, Pahcagar and Tetulia were preponderantly dominated by the Muslims. Otherwise the district was throughout Hindu dominated.⁴⁴ It is very interesting that a number of people from certain castes returned their religious faith under the tribal religions in the district of Jalpaiguri. It may be seen from the following table.

Table-6.17
Certain castes Returned Under Tribal Religions
Jalpaiguri District

Name of the Caste	Total Number	Number of Male	Number of Female
Baraik	4458	2519	1939
Bediya	581	299	292
Ho	3	2	1
Kisan	124	64	60
Mehtor	3	2	1
Muchi	2	-	2
Musahar	70	34	36
Naiya	8	5	3

Source: **Census of India, 1931, Volume V, Part-I, Report, Porter A.E., Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1933, p.383**

In Cooch Behar State the Hindu population reached at 380073 in number having 64.32 percent share in the total population of the district. This was a decline in the growth of Hindu population by 2.84 percent from the previous census year. But regarding the Muslim population it was an increase from 32.58 percent in 1921 to 35.32 percent in 1931. Thus the Muslims in 1931 in the State of Cooch Behar became 208756 in number. The increase of Muslims in Cooch Behar had been explained by the fact that the Muslims immigrant from predominantly Muslim district of Mymensingh into Assam not having suitable land turned into

the States of Cooch Behar.⁴⁵ Only the Haldibari *thana* was Muslim dominated in the district. However, large number Muslims were enumerated in the police stations of Cooch Behar (41819), Dinhata (55282), Mathabhanga (20071), Sitalkuchi (16808) and Mekliganj (17137). Throughout the district the Hindus were dominated in number.⁴⁶

According to the Census Report the Muslim people in the Natural division of North Bengal got a small decline during the period between 1881 and 1901 and they had shown a small increase in 1931 and the Hindus formed the proportion of 36.4 percent. But in North Bengal districts of our study there was steady growth of the Hindus and Muslims as a whole. The Hindus grew from 50.34 percent of total population in 1921 to 53.57 percent of total population in 1931 and the Muslims growth was 39.8 percent in 1921 to 40.65 percent in 1931. However, decline was seen in case of the tribal people as a whole of North Bengal. The decline was 37.6 percent in the whole of Bengal. In the Natural division of North Bengal it was 52.1 percent. In case of North Bengal under our study the Animists or the tribal were reduced from 8.34 percent in 1921 to 3.67 percent in 1931. This decrease likely happened as per the trend of whole of the Bengal province. This indicated that the tribal people were returning themselves in other religious lists specially either in Hinduism or in Christianity. However, the Buddhists increased a little from 1.29 percent in 1921 to 1.41 percent in 1931 which is justifiable increase. In both the cases of Hindu and Muslim the growth was in a very slow progress whereas in case Bengal as a whole the progress was in case of Muslims 9.1 percent and in case of the Hindus it was 6.7 percent increase. As like the whole of Bengal province the Muslim's rise could not become still then the controlling factor of population growth of the districts of North Bengal under our study. Regarding the urban rural distribution of the religious group of the population the Hindus were predominant in the urban areas even in case of Muslim predominant police stations. The other communities remained in smaller proportion in urban areas only one exception in case of North Bengal was the Buddhists' agglomeration in the Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong urban areas. This was due to the extraction of them from the Buddhist of Sikkimese and Nepalese and these Tibeto-Himalayan people were infrequent in residing as cultivators outside the town. On the other the town agglomeration by the Hindus may be explained by their higher literacy growth, higher rate of service employment in the towns and as a result higher standard of living.

The decade intercepting 1931 and 1941 witnessed various changes in socio-political panorama of India relating with demands of the Indian people, communal development and government policies. In 1921 different sects of Christianity were returned in the census records. In 1931 this was extended to the tribal people who were represented by their tribal sectarian identity instead of their faith of Animism as previously done. In 1941 this was extended to the Hindu community of which attempt had been taken during the last decade enquiring public opinion by letters. So as an extended efforts of 1930s in 1941 the Hindus were returned under the

Subheads of Scheduled castes, Caste not Returned and Other Hindus and in Caste table showing the other Hindus in Non-Scheduled Castes including the Brahmans and others. Besides in the religious table the Jains, The Muslims, The Indian Christians, Tribes and Others columns were given. Thus by this pattern the Census of 1941 returned Hindus for total of Bengal 25801724 in number with 41.28 percent of share in total population in the province. Whereas the North Bengal districts of our study represented 2339356 numbers of Hindus having 44.42 percent share in total population of the region. This was 10.84 percent of total Hindu population of Bengal as a whole. On the other when Bengal represented a 61460377 numbers of people as Muslims sharing 54.29 percent of total population North Bengal under our discussion contributed 5266175 numbers of Muslim populations with a share of 41.22 percent of total population which was 6.50 percent of total Muslim population of Bengal. However, if we were to take the previous natural division of North Bengal or Rajshahi division taken as a unit in 1941 census the percentage of Muslim population would have been much greater. In context of tribal populations North Bengal under our discussion contributed 12.77 percent share in entire population when Bengal as whole represented only 3.13 percent of tribal population of her total human source. However, we may have demographic picture of North Bengal in 1940 from the following the table:

Table-6.18
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religious Community
For the year 1941

District/State /Province	Hindus			Muslims	Christians (Indian)	Buddhists
	Scheduled Castes	Caste not Returned	Others			
Bengal	7597404	6942743	11261577	33371688	111426	154285
Dinajpur	399410	43630	331582	967246	1448	16
Jalpaiguri	325504	71125	155018	251460	2589	2570
Darjeeling	28922	17718	131856	9125	2599	42575
Malda	75535	179349	210794	699945	466	10
Cooch Behr	206443	2659	185841	242684	187	1
Total of North Bengal	1573625	314481	910049	2170460	7289	45172
District/State /Province	Sikhs	Jains	Parsees	Jews	Others	Tribes
Bengal	16284	11708	2519	2781	6905	1925457
Dinajpur	48	375	43	-	22	182892
Jalpaiguri	182	62	-	-	1246	279296
Darjeeling	54	54	22	42	2	141301
Malda	19	45	-	-	-	66449

Cooch Behr	-	582	-	3	-	2435
Total of North Bengal	303	1118	65	45	1270	672373

Source: Compiled from Census of India, 1941, Volume IV, Bengal, Tables, R.A.Dutch, Manager of publications, Delhi, Government of India Press, Simla, 1942, Table-XIII, Community, pp. 44-47

In 1941 there were 774622 Hindu populations in Dinajpur district comprising 40.20 percent of total population of the district. On the other the Muslims comprised 50.20 percent of entire population of the district having contributed 967246 by number in the district. In both cases this was a decline from the previous decade. But decline in Hindu population was much more of 5.02 percent in compare to that of 1931. On the other the decline in Muslim population was a little bit of 0.31 percent. The small decline of population among the Hindus and the Muslim was also seen in context total Bengal population. But we have seen in the previous chapter that there was a trend of increase in total both in Bengal and North Bengal of our study. In fact, the decline of Hindu population in both cases of Bengal and North Bengal may be explained by the increase of Tribal population in both the cases. In Bengal the tribal people grew from 1.04 percent in 1931 to 3.13 percent in 1941 and in North Bengal they increased from 3.67 percent in 1931 to 12.77 percent in 1941. In the same way there was also rise of tribal population in Dinajpur district from 3.84 percent to 9.49 percent during the period between 1931 and 1941. This is probable that the campaigning of the Hindu Mission and Hindu Sabha which greatly influenced the tribal people to enlist themselves as Hindus withered away at that time and the people belonged to tribal group again enlisted themselves in tribal list to be treated as non-scheduled tribes.

In Dinajpur district Patnitala, Porsha, Phulbari, Dhamoirhat police stations of Balurghat Subdivision remained Muslim major inhabited areas and the Hindus were in majority in other Police stations of the subdivision like Balurghat and Gangarampur. Tapan and Kumarganj police stations were Hindu dominated in 1931 but became Muslim dominated in 1941. It is very noticeable that in Tapan police station the Muslim population (22864) exceeded only a few of the Hindu population (22665). In Thakurgaon Subdivision the police stations of Thakurgaon, Atwari, Baliadangi, Ranisankail, Haripur Khanshama remained Muslim dominated where as Kaharul, Bochaganj and Birganj remained Hindu dominated by number. Pirganj which was Hindu dominated in previous census year became Muslim dominated marginally. In Sadar Subdivision Dinajpur, Parbatipur, Nawabganj, Chiribandar, Ghoraghat remained majorly Muslim resided police stations. Biral, Raiganj, Itahar, and Kaliaganj remained Hindu predominant police stations. In Itahar the Hindus marginally remained preponderant over the Muslims only by 701 souls. Banshihari and Hemtabad police stations had been previously Hindu dominated then became Muslim dominated in 1941 by number.⁴⁷ This was because of growth of more Hindu

population than the Muslims in these police stations. On the other the tribal people were centered in the Balurghat subdivision and Nawabganj, Ghoraghat and Banshihari police stations.

The district of Malda had a Hindu population 898447 in number in 1941 containing 37.86 percent of total population in the district. This was a good decline by 4.31 percent from that of the previous census year. On the other the Muslims in Malda district was in rise from 54.28 percent to 56.79 percent, though a little, of the total population of the district. The decline of Hindu population of 4.31 percent in might have been balanced by the growth of tribal population by 1.99 percent (from 3.4 in 1931 to 5.39 in 1941) of the tribal population in the district. However the process of immigration and emigration also should have some impact on this which has been discussed in the previous chapter. In Malda dsitricgts the Muslim majority populated police stations of the previous decade remained the same and the Hindu preponderant police stations remained Hindu dominated. Only the Bamangola police station which had been Hindu dominated in the previous decade became marginally Muslim preponderant. The tribal people in the district concentrated mainly in the police stations of Gajole, Habibpur, Nachole and Ghoraghat police stations.⁴⁸

In Darjeeling district the Hindu population in 1941 was 178496 containing 47.42 percent of the entire population of the district. This was a great bulk of reduction in the Hindu population as it was 74.12 percent during the last census year. This reduce actually was balanced by the people's entry in large number in the list of tribal. So there was also decline in Buddhist population from 18.44 percent in 1931 to 11.31 percent in 1941. This was a trend then in Bengal by the tribal people to be enlisted in the tribal list non-scheduled. So in Darjeeling district the share of the tribal people grew from 2.63 percent to 37.54 percent, having a number of 141301, a revolutionary growth in the tribal population in Darjeeling district. The Muslims as usual decreased a little by 0.21 percent from 2.63 to 2.42 percent in the total population of the district. The Muslims were divided mainly between the Sadar subdivision (1448) and Siliguri Subdivision (6989). The tribal people were evenly divided into all the police stations throughout the district and in largest number were found in Kalimpong subdivision and smallest number was seen in Gorubathan police station.⁴⁹

In Jalpaiguri district the Hindu population in 1941 was recorded 551647 in number. This was the 50.63 percent share in the entire population of the district. However it was a great decrease in Hindu population for the district from 67.52 percent in 1931 to 50.63 percent a loss of 16.89 percent in total population. The Muslims also witnessed a little decrease of 0.91 percent from 23.99 percent in 1931 to 23.08 percent in 1941. The great bulk of Hindu decline in this district was also balanced by the growth of tribal population in number from 6.17 percent to 25.63 percent of the total population of the district. The Muslims were predominant only in three

police stations of Boda, Pachagar and Tetulia. However, in Boda the Muslim population was very marginally major by number 37844 in compare to the Hindus of 36480. Besides there was large number of Muslims in Jalpaiguri, Rajganj, Maynaguri, Pathgram police stations. In Falakata and Alipurduar there were also a good number of Muslims. The tribal population was agglomerated in all the police stations of Alipurduar Subdivisions and Dhupguri, Nagrakata, Mitiali and Mal police stations.⁵⁰

The Cooch Behar district also witnessed a fall in Hindu population like the other districts. In 1941 census the Hindu population was reported 394943 which was 61.62 percent of the total population. This was a decline of 2.7 percent from the previous decade. However, the Muslim population in the district increased in this decade and in 1941 it was reported 242648 in number comprising 37.87 percent of total population of the district. This was a growth of 2.54 percent from the growth of previous census year. There was no tribal population in significant number in the district. So the trend in the province or in North Bengal of reentering the name of the tribal people happened in insignificant number. Like the previous decade only the Haldibari police station was Muslim predominant area. However, in Dinhatra police station the Muslims were almost nearer to the Hindus in number both the community numbering 63837 and 67711 respectively. In Mathabhanga police station the Muslims were also in large number having 21306 in number⁵¹

Thus in North Bengal, throughout all the districts, we find that there was a steady decline in Hindu population. All the five districts showed steady decline in Hindu population in compare to the last census year. In Darjeeling-Jalpaiguri region the bulk of decline was much. This was because in these two districts tribal people were in more voluminous than the other districts. The changing of the people belonged to tribal community their religious recognition at least in official papers led to this havoc in Hindu religion by number. However, as it has been analyzed earlier that the tribal people , practically extending their practices towards Hinduism embracing the Hindu rites and habits in their lives. Barring the district of Malda and State of Cooch Behar there was also declining trend in number of Muslims in all North Bengal districts. However, in both the districts of Malda and Dinajpur the population was constituted more than half by the Muslim people. In district of Jalpaiguri and the State of Cooch Behar the population was constituted more than half by the Hindus. On the other in the district of Darjeeling no religious community was singly major or above or equal the half of the population. Among the Muslims, Buddhists, Tribal people and the Hindus as a single major community the Hindus might represent. But if the Buddhists and tribal were taken together, according to the Census of 1941, they were in Major bulk of population in the district.

The decade of 1941-51 was very significant concerning religious demography of India and Bengal in general or North Bengal in special. For the communal holocaust of 1946, so called Radcliffe Award and partition of India and Bengal were mainly born or based on major or minor number of people belonged to either Muslim or Hindu religious community. So investigation about the distribution and nature of religious demography of India or Bengal in general and North Bengal in special in post partition period is of a great necessity. In fact, the post-partition periodic cross border migration of the Bengalis both Muslims and Hindus in between East Pakistan and West Bengal might have changed the equation of Hindu-Muslim ratio in West Bengal as well as in the districts of North Bengal. In both the Part-IA and Part-IC of Census of India, 1951, Volume VI on West Bengal and Sikkim recorded the distribution of the religious communities in the districts of West Bengal State. From that record I have compiled the religious demography of the districts of North Bengal. However, there is no description of religious distribution of each of the police stations of the district. But making tally with the thannwary records of previous decade, accounting the thannahs which went to East Pakistan from North Bengal districts under our study and overall growth or decline in each religious community some ideas of the religious distribution of demography in the districts may be formed. The following table will show the strength of each religious community in the districts of North Bengal during 1950s.

Table-6.19
Distribution of population in North Bengal Districts in Reference to Religion
1951

religion	Cooch Behar	Darjeeling	Malda	West Dinajpur	Jalpaiguri	Total NB
Hindu	475824	363836	589896	499327	769278	2698161
Sikh	43	322	56	18	1073	1512
Jains	638	123	50	249	377	1437
Buddhist	19	62150	7	45	6540	68761
Zoroatrians	9	41	-	-	-	50
Muslim	194220	6393	346649	215739	89099	852100
Christian	281	12310	830	3233	25481	42135
Jews	39	17	-	-	-	56
Tribal	119	11	87	1962	21095	23274
Non Tribal	-	-	-	-	-	-
Religion not returned	51	57	5	-	89	202

Source: Union Table D II-Religion, Census of India, 1951, West Benal, Sikkim,& Chandernagore,Volume VI, Part-II Tables, Mitra, A., Manger of Publications, Delhi, Government of India Press, Calcutta,1953, pp.446-447

The total number of Hindus in North Bengal districts was 2325393 in pre-partition period and the total number of Muslims was 2170460 during the period in North Bengal. On the other the tribal people in North Bengal were 717113 in number. Thus the Hindus constituted 44.16 percent, the Muslims 41.22 percent and the tribal people comprised 13.62 percent of the entire population of North Bengal in 1941. After the great heave of the partition of India resulted in the partition of Bengal and North Bengal should have brought a greater change in the religious demography of the region as the partition was basically based on religious majority and minority between Hinduism and Islamism. During the post-partition period the Hindus in North Bengal districts represented 2698161 in number and the Muslims reflected 852100 in number. On the other the tribal people became 91964 persons in number in North Bengal population. Thus the Hindus constituted 73.14 percent, the Muslims 23.10 percent and the tribal people 2.49 percent of the total population of North Bengal in 1951. This growth of percentage in Hindu population and decline in Muslim population was largely due to the amputation of the majorly Muslim populated area from the part of North Bengal to form eastern part of Pakistan with eastern part of Bengal. However, the great decline in the percentage in the population of tribal religion can be noticed during this time. This may happened that during pre-partition period the most of the tribal people returned themselves as the Hindus resulting in increase of percentage in Hindus more during post-partition period. The tribal religious people had numbered 672373 in 1941 census which came down to only 91964 in number. On the other the Christians grew in a magnificent number from 7289 to 42135 in number. The Buddhists also grew from 45172 to 68761 in number in North Bengal. Bothe the increase in Christians and Buddhists might have been returned by the Tribal people in more number in 1951 than the previous decade. The issue of this religious distribution may be more satisfactorily discussed district wise. The following table will show the strength of each religious community among per 10000 of total, rural and urban populations in each of the district of North Bengal.

Table-6.20

Distribution Of the strength of each major religious community per 10000 of total rural and urban population respectively 1951

State and District	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Others
Malda	(T) 6292	(T) 3697	(T) 9	(T) 1	(T) -	(T) -	(T) 1
	(R) 6223	(R) 3768	(R) 9	(R) 1	(R) -	(R) -	(R) 1
	(U) 8048	(U) 1931	(U) 5	(U) 2	(U) -	(U) 9	(U) 5
West Dinajpur	(T) 6930	(T) 2994	(T) 45	(T) -	(T) 1	(T) 3	(T) 27
	(R) 6764	(R) 3160	(R) 47	(R) -	(R) -	(R) -	(R) 29
	(U) 9613	(U) 312	(U) 7	(U) 4	(U) 4	(U) 52	(U) 8
Jalpaiguri	(T) 8418	(T) 974	(T)279	(T) 12	(T) 71	(T) 4	(T) 242
	(R) 8318	(R)1031	(R)298	(R)12	(R)77	(R)3	(R)261

	(U) 9701	(U) 247	(U) 27	(U) 8	(U) 4	(U) 13	(U) -
Darjeeling	(T) 8171	(T) 144	(T) 277	(T) 7	(T) 1398	(T) 3	(T) 2
	(R) 8270	(R) 86	(R) 270	(R) 1	(R) 1369	(R) 2	(R) 2
	(U) 7803	(U) 359	(U) 301	(U) 29	(U) 1496	(U) 6	(U) 6
Cooch Behar	(T) 7090	(T) 2894	(T) 4	(T) 1	(T) -	(T) 9	(T) 2
	(R) 6916	(R) 3074	(R) 4	(R) 1	(R) -	(R) 3	(R) 2
	(U) 9231	(U) 666	(U) 12	(U) 1	(U) 3	(U) 87	(U) -

Source: Census of India, 1951, Volume VI, West Bengal, Sikkim and Chandernagore, Part IC-Report, A. Mitra, Manager of Publication, Delhi, Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1953, Statement VI.I, pp.4-7

The total Hindu population in the Malda district in 1941 was 465678 in number which after partition in 1951 came to be 589896 in total number having an increase of 124218 in total population. But if we account taking only the police stations which constituted the post partition Malda district this increase from 1941 to 1951 would be 228146 in number. However, the partition of the district led directly the areas of 94085 Hindu populations in East Pakistan. But this could not reduce the total Hindu population in the post-partition district. Here lays the significance of immigration of the Hindu people either prior to happening of partition or after partition through cross border migration. On the other as the mostly Muslim inhabited area were excluded to form East Pakistan with erstwhile East Bengal so the total Muslim population of the district was reduced to 346649 in 1951 from total number of 699945 in 1941 with a reduction of 353296 persons of Muslim community. But if we take only the police stations which constituted the post-partition district this decrease would be only 55660 number Muslims who might have been migrated into erstwhile East Bengal during pre-partition period or crossed border after partition of the district.⁵² There was a great decline of the people who returned as belonged to tribal religion in 1941 numbering 66449 among whom only 87 persons returned in 1951 as belonged to tribal religion. This indicated the Hinduization of the tribal population in the district. Thus in 1950s the Hindus in total constituted 62.92 percent of total population and the Muslims 36.97 percent of the total population of the district. The Muslims obviously remained dominated in the police stations of Kalichak, Ratua, Kharba in compare to the total districts. Among the rural population of the district the 62.23 percent population was comprised by the Hindus and 37.66 percent by the Muslims. On the other in urban populations 80.48 percent populations were constituted by Hindus and 19.31 percent by the Muslims. Whereas in 1941 among the rural population 39.58 percent were the Hindus and 56.97 percent were the Muslims and in urban populations 47.47 percent were the Hindus and 52.36 percent were the Muslims.⁵³ The Hindus were greatest in the north, east, and west of the district and the Muslims were greatest in the South of the district.⁵⁴ Thus a compositional and structural change happened in the post-partition demography of Malda district.

The district of Dinajpur in 1941 had the Hindu population of 774622, the Muslim population of 967246 and the tribal population of 18289 constituting 40.20 percent, 50.19 percent and 0.95 percent respectively of the total population of the district. But in post partition period according the census of 1951 the district of West Dinajpur comprised of 499327 persons Hindus, 215739 persons Muslims and only 1962 persons tribal constituting 69.30 percent, 29.94 percent and 0.27 percent of the total population of the district. In compare to the census year of 1941 and the whole of the Dinajpur district of the period the Hindus were reduced 275295 persons by number, the Muslims were reduced 751507 persons by number and tribal population was reduced 177892 persons by number. But if we take only the police stations which constituted the West Dinajpur district in post-partition period for the census year of 1941 then the Hindu population showed a growth of 251619 persons, even the Muslims showed an increase of 5317 persons and the tribal population showed down the reduce to 93341 persons from 1941 to 1951.⁵⁵

However, the partitioning of the district led 526914 person Hindu populated areas, 756824 persons Muslim populated area and 84551 persons tribal populated area in East Pakistan. So as a result of partition of the district the Hindu population only reduced 275295 against which was to be 526914 persons, the Muslims reduced 751507 persons against which was to be 756824 persons but the tribal population reduced 177892 persons against which was to be 84551 persons. This justify conceptual phenomenon of larger immigration of the Hindus of the erstwhile eastern part of Bengal into Western part of Bengal and less emigration of the Muslims of Western part of Bengal to erstwhile eastern part of Bengal. On the other the reduction of the large number of the tribal population may be justified by the fact of Hinduization of the people in large volume during pre-partition period.⁵⁶ However, among the total population of the rural areas 67.64 percent was constituted by the Hindus and 31.66 percent was constituted by the Muslims. On the other in urban areas of the district 96.13 percent population was comprised by the Hindus and only 3.12 percent was comprised by the Muslims.⁵⁷ There were a good number of Jain followers numbering 249 and Christians numbering 3233 persons in West Dinajpur district.

In Jalpaiguri district during the census year of 1941 out of total 1089513 persons the Hindus constituted 84.18 percent having a number of 769278 persons and the Muslim constituted 23.08 percent having a total number of 89099 persons. People returned as belonged to tribal religion numbered 21095 and as Buddhists numbered 6540 persons. This showed a growth in Hindu population of 124218 persons in number even after curtailment of territory with 94085 persons of Hindu population. So the Hindu population which had to be reduced to 417562 persons in number, if we don't take any excess of birth or death, in 1951 as result of partitioning of the district it reached at 769278 persons in number. In case of the Muslims the people were reduced to 89099 persons after a reduction of 162361 persons of Muslim origin in

the district. But as a result of curtailment of land due to the partition of the district reduction in Muslim population had to be 108378 persons became reduced an excess of 53983 persons. But this excess reduction of Muslim population was very small in proportion in compare to the excess growth of 351716 persons of Hindu population in the district.⁵⁸ This again justify the conceptual phenomenon of larger immigration of the Hindus of the erstwhile eastern part of Bengal into Western part of Bengal and less emigration of the Muslims of Western part of Bengal to erstwhile eastern part of Bengal.

Jalpaiguri district had a tribal population of 279296 in 1941 or 25.63 percent or 25.98 percent in 'others' category as a whole. The partitioning of the territory of the district in its new form of post partition land was to have 257523 persons of tribal religious people with a loss of 21773 persons belonging to tribal religion. But the census record of 1951 returned only 21095 persons as belonged to tribal religion. So the missing 236428 people belonged to tribal religion of 1941 might have relation with Hinduization process and with the growth of 351716 persons belonged to Hindu religion in 1951. The population of the rural areas of the district was comprised by the 83.18 percent Hindu population and the Muslims comprised 10.31 percent of rural population. In case of urbanity the Muslims constituted 0.25 percent of urban population in the district and the Hindus composed 97.01 percent of the total urban population of the district.⁵⁹ There was great rise in the Christianity in the district of Jalpaiguri from 2589 persons to 25481 persons returned as belonged to Christianity. There was a good number of Buddhists in the district of Jalpaiguri numbering 6540, the Sikhs numbering 1073 and the Jains numbering 377 persons.⁶⁰

The district of Darjeeling in 1951 witnessed a great rise in the strength of Hindu population. The Hindu population in 1941 in the district was 178498 comprising 47.43 percent of total population of the district. In 1951 the Hindu population increased to 363836 persons having an increase of 185338 persons comprising 81.71 percent of the total population in the district. This was an increase of 103.83 percent over the Hindu population of the last decade. The Muslim population in the district in 1941 was 9125 in number comprising only 2.42 percent of the total population. in 1951 the Muslim population in Darjeeling district decreased to 6393 by reducing 2732 persons in number and then the Muslims constituted 1.44 percent of total population of the district.⁶¹ This decrease might be the result of partition of Bengal on the basis of religion and the emigration of the Muslims in some numbers to the East Pakistan.

A very important aspect in transition of religious demography in Darjeeling district was a large volume of people had returned their religion as tribe numbering 141301 in 1941 and also 44740 number of persons had been recorded in 'other' category. But in 1951 religion as tribe was returned only by 11 persons and 62150 persons as Buddhists. So if we take the Tribal and the others of 1941 together (186041 persons altogether) they became greatly reduced in 1951 taking the tribal religious people and the Buddhists together (62161 persons altogether). The

missing tribal religious (123880 persons) people might have returned themselves as Hindus like other districts of North Bengal. There were 123 persons returned religion as Sikhs, 123 persons as Jains, 41 as Zoroastrians and 17 as Jews in the district. A good number of people returned their religion as Christianity numbering 12310 persons who had been 3599 persons in number during 1941.⁶² Among the rural population of the district the Hindus comprised 81.71 percent and the Muslims comprised 0.86 percent. On the other among the urban population of the district the Hindus constituted 78.03 percent and the Muslims constituted 3.59 percent. The 13.96 percent Buddhists in total population of the district constituted 13.69 percent of rural population and 14.96 percent of urban population of the district.⁶³

In Cooch Behar State in 1941 total Hindu population was 394948 persons consisting 61.63 percent of the total population. In 1951 it reached at 475824 persons by an increase of 80876 persons and comprising 70.90 percent of the total population. On the other the Muslims had been 242684 persons in number having 37.87 percent in the total population of the district during 1941. In 1951 the Muslims in Cooch Behar district (at this time Cooch Behar became a district of the State of West Bengal) became 194220 in number having a percentage 28.94 percent of the total population. A decrease of 48464 persons happened this time. This might have been caused due to post-partition Muslim emigration to East Pakistan.⁶⁴ In the total rural population of the district Cooch Behar in 1951 the Hindus comprised 69.16 percent and the Muslims shared 30.74 percent population of rural area in the district. In case of urban areas the Hindus constituted the major bulk of 92.31 percent of total urban population in the district in 1951 and the Muslims constituted only 6.66 percent of total urban population of the district.⁶⁵

Like other districts of North Bengal the tribal population, though small in number in the district, decreased from 2435 persons in 1941 to only 119 in 1951 reducing 2731 persons in number. There were good number of Jains mostly belonged to the Marwari community numbering 638 in 1951 in the district of Cooch Behar. Besides there were 43 Sikhs, 19 Buddhists, 9 persons belonged to Zoroastrians, 281 persons of Christianity, 39 persons of Jews in Cooch Behar.⁶⁶ However, the major two bulks of religious demography was constituted by the Hindus and the Muslims as like as the earlier period.

Thus a great change was seen, which was to be, during post partition period in North Bengal districts. But if we consider the issue of partition that is the religious community, the territorial division could not divide the religious demography properly as number of Hindu pockets still remained in the East Pakistan and more than that large number Muslim pockets remained in West Bengal which was greatly visible in context of North Bengal districts. The following table will highlight over the religious distribution of the population in North Bengal districts in 1951 in compare to the State of West Bengal.

Table-6.21
Distribution of each major religious community in North Bengal Districts per 10000 of total rural and urban population of West Bengal 1951.

State and District	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Others
West Bengal	(T) 10000 (R)10000 (U)10000	(T) 10000 (R)10000 (U)10000	(T) 10000 (R)10000 (U)10000	(T) 10000 (R)10000 (U)10000	(T) 10000 (R)10000 (U)10000	(T) 10000 (R)10000 (U)10000	(T) 10000 (R)10000 (U)10000
Malda	(T) 303	(T) 704	(T) 48	(T) 19	(T) 1	(T) 26	(T) 8
	(R) 396	(R) 807	(R) 114	(R) 99	(R) 1	(R) 44	(R) 7
	(U) 54	(U) 95	(U) 2	(U) 2	(U) -	(U) 21	(U) 23
West Dinajpur	(T) 257	(T) 438	(T) 185	(T) 6	(T) 5	(T) 72	(T) 168
	(R) 323	(R) 509	(R) 452	(R) 2	(R) 5	(R) 72	(R) 176
	(U) 77	(U) 18	(U) 3	(U) 7	(U) 6	(U) 146	(U) 47
Jalpaiguri	(T) 396	(T) 181	(T)1456	(T) 359	(T) 802	(T) 197	(T) 1896
	(R) 497	(R)208	(R)3566	(R)2031	(R)1179	(R)721	(R)2016
	(U) 122	(U) 23	(U) 17	(U) 20	(U) 11	(U) 56	(U) -
Darjeeling	(T) 187	(T) 13	(T) 703	(T) 108	(T) 7619	(T) 64	(T) 11
	(R) 204	(R) 7	(R) 1333	(R) 103	(R) 8692	(R) 156	(R) 7
	(U) 140	(U) 48	(U) 274	(U) 209	(U) 5367	(U) 40	(U) 76
Cooch Behar	(T) 244	(T) 394	(T) 16	(T) 14	(T) 2	(T) 334	(T) 11
	(R) 302	(R) 453	(R) 31	(R) 73	(R) 1	(R) 501	(R) 12
	(U) 88	(U) 47	(U) 5	(U) 2	(U) 6	(U) 289	(U) 3
North Bengal	(T)1387	(T)1730	(T)2408	(T)506	(T)8429	(T)751	(T)2094
	(R)1722	(R)1984	(R)5496	(R)2308	(R)9878	(R)1494	(R)2218
	(U)481	(U)231	(U)301	(U)140	(U)5390	(U)552	(U)149

Source: Census of India, 1951, Volume VI, West Bengal, Sikkim and Chandernagore, Part IC- Report, A. Mitra, Manager of Publication, Delhi, Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1953, Statement VI.I, p.8

Here I have compared the strength of population of each of the Major religious community of North Bengal with that of the State of West Bengal in its 10000 strength. Among 10000 Hindu people in West Bengal in 1951 North Bengal had 1387 number persons belonged to Hindu community having occupied 13.87 percent Hindu population of the State. In 1941 this was 15.09 percent of the total Hindu population of the State. Among the nine districts under Presidency Division in 1951 Jalpaiguri from North Bengal occupied the fourth position having share of 3.96 percent of the State's Hindu population. Regarding Muslim populations there were 1730 Muslims per 10000 Muslim population of the State of West Bengal having a share of 17.30 percent in the State. But this had been 29.94 percent of the State's Muslim population in

1941 census year. In consideration of the rural urban distribution the Muslims of North Bengal shared only 2.31 percent of the State's total urban population and only 481 people per 10000 of the State's Hindu people or 4.81 percent lived in urban areas. This corroborated the rural character of the North Bengal districts. Among the nine districts of Presidency division and also among all the districts of the State of West Bengal Malda from North Bengal occupied the third position having share of 7.04 percent of total Muslim population of the State. ⁶⁷

As regards of the Christian population North Bengal had a great share in the total Christian population of the State in 1951 with a share of 24.08 percent. This was only 9.78 percent in 1941. So there was a great increase in Christian population in 1951 in North Bengal districts among which the districts of Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling contributed much. Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling with a share of 14.56 percent and 7.03 percent respectively among the total Christian population of the State of West Bengal ranked third and fourth respectively in 1951. The Sikh population in North Bengal was only 5.06 percent in 1951 in which Jalpaiguri contributed 3.59 percent and Darjeeling 1.08 percent if mentionable. A very significant change in religious demography happened during this decade was the growth of people belonged to Sikhism. The Sikhs in North Bengal grew from 303 persons in 1941 to 1512 persons in 1951 having a growth of 399 percent within the decade. The partition of India might have been impacted on this growth of the Sikh people in North Bengal particularly in Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts. Thus Jalpaiguri ranked sixth among all the districts of North Bengal considering the Sikh population in the district in 1950s. Another significant aspect of religious demography of North Bengal district during this time was the existence of largest number of Buddhist population in North Bengal districts. In 1941 all the people belonged to the tribal community either enumerated by the name of the tribes or returned themselves as the Hindus. But 1951 a good number of people returned their religion as Buddhism. These Buddhist people comprised agglomerated in the North Bengal districts, particularly in Darjeeling-Jalpaiguri belt. Thus among the total Buddhist population of the State of West Bengal North Bengal shared 84.29 percent having in Darjeeling-Jalpaiguri belt 84.21 percent. However, the tribal people in the district of Darjeeling or in the Darjeeling-Jalpaiguri belt being divided into Hinduism, tribalism, Buddhism and others could not form a Socio-political-cultural metabolism in this region. Regarding the Jains North Bengal as a whole constituted 7.51 percent of the total Jain population of the State. In this the Cooch Behar district having 3.34 percent of State's Jain population ranked sixth among all the districts of the State. In the category of 'others' population Jalpaiguri had a great share. She ranked second having 18.96 percent of the State's 'others' population preceded by Bankura (47.57 percent) and followed by Midnapur (18.08 percent) districts.⁶⁸ Thus North Bengal had a Zig-jag position in transition of religious demography during the decade 1941-51.

The description of the other religions may be well understood from the following table for the North Bengal districts.

Table-6.22
Distribution of Other Religions in North Bengal
1951

Other Religion	Cooch Behar	Malda	West Dinajpur	darjeeling	Jalpaiguri
Tribal	118	87	1962	11	22001
Oraon	6	1	86	4	NA
Santal	112	48	1649	4	NA
Unclassified	-	38	17	-	89
Mech	-	-	-	3	NA
Non –Tribal	-	-	-	-	-
Munda	-	-	210	-	NA

Source: Census 1951, West Bengal, District Handbooks, Malda, West Dinajpur, Darjeeling, Cooch Behr and for Jalpaiguri, Census of India, 1951, West Bengal, Sikkim, & Chandernagore, Volume VI, Part-I A, A.Mitra, Manager of Publications, Delhi, Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1953, p.69

The other category of population concerned with religion during this time was mainly constituted by the tribal people who totaled 22001 in North Bengal breaking up as 118 in Cooch Behar, 87 in Malda, 1962 in West Dinajpur, 11 in Darjeeling and 22001 in Jalpaiguri. Among these people belonged to 'other' religion 97 persons returned Oraon as their religion, 1813 persons returned Santal as their religion (1649 from only from West Dinajpur), 3 persons as Mech, 210 persons as Munda and 144 persons could not return their religion. All the Mundas returned from West Dinajpur.

Up to 1941 all the enumeration used to be done on the basis of religion. This resulted in availability of data and information of demography village upwards based on religious differentiation. But afterwards since 1951 religious sorting or classification of demographic data was substituted by the economic sorting or economic classification. As a result "The information extracted at the 1951 and 1961 Censuses on Religion" had been restricted "to the ascertainment of numbers only."⁶⁹ However, though there was no record of district wise breakup of the religious demography, a good deal of data we have from the Census Report of 1961 concerning male-female, rural-urban distribution of the population in each district based on religion, comparative data of strength of population of each major religions in the State of West Bengal on the one and its districts on the other. There is also information of the religious distribution of the people based on caste and description of the minor religious group of people in different districts. This will obviously help us to form an idea about the transition of religious

demography during the decade of 1951-61 and more clearly from pre-partition period to post-partition period up to 1961. The following is the table of description of the major religious communities in the districts of North Bengal during 1960s.

Table-6.23
Distribution of Population by Religion in North Bengal districts
For the year 1961

State/ district/ Region	Buddhists	Christians	Hindus	Jains	Muslims	Sikhs	Others	Religion Not stated
West Bengal	112253	204530	27523358	26880	6985287	34184	38610	1117
West Dinajpur	92	8491	792534	904	521758	18	-	-
Jalpaiguri	18258	48570	1160948	780	129771	950	7	2
Darjeeling	42046	20475	501382	840	19214	626	40	17
Malda	5	2040	655415	85	564331	47	-	-
Cooch Behr	107	745	775514	867	242371	202	-	-
Total of North Bengal	60508	80321	3885793	3476	1477445	1843	47	19

Census of India 1961, VolumeXVI, West Bengal and Sikkim, Part-II(i), Social and Cultural table, Datta Gupta, J., 1965, Table C-VII-Religion, pp.400-401

During 1951 North Bengal comprised 14.12 percent of total Hindu population of the State of West Bengal having 3885793 persons belonged to the Hindu religion. This was an increase of 1187632 persons in Hindu population being 44.02 percent on the Hindu population of the previous decade. The growth of the Muslim population was very dynamic during this period. The Muslims had an increase of 625345 persons with 73.39 percent of growth from the Muslim population of the last decade. But there was a decline of 12 percent in Buddhist people as a whole in North Bengal, whereas a great rise of 90.63 percent in Christian people was witnessed by the region. There was also growth in Sikh and Jain population in the geographic territory of North Bengal. Thus the Hindus constituted 70.02 percent of the total population of North Bengal, the Muslims 26.62 percent, the Christians 1.45 percent, the Buddhists 1.09 percent, the Jains 0.03 percent and the others 0.06 percent of total population of North Bengal. With this the Buddhist of North Bengal constituted 53.90 percent of total Buddhist population of the State of West Bengal and the Christians constituted 39.27 percent of the total Christian

population of the State.⁷⁰ This transition can be more clearly understood if we discuss the issue district wise for the period of 1960s.

In the district of Malda the total number of the Hindus in 1961 was 655415 persons who constituted 53.64 percent of the total population of the district during this time. This was an increase of 65519 persons being 11.11 percent growth over the Hindu population of the previous census year. On the other the Muslims increased 217682 persons by number being 62.80 percent over the Muslim population of the last decade. This was a large growth within the decade naturally caused by the phenomenon of the in-migration of the Muslims both from the adjacent districts and adjacent East Pakistan. This was 44.71 percent of the total population of the district.⁷¹ The following table will show the distribution of the Muslim population in border Police Stations of Malda.

Table-6.24
Muslim Population in the Border Police Stations of West Bengal, 1961
Malda District

Police Station	Total Population	Muslims	Percentage of Muslims
Bamangola	47805	8711	18.22
Habibpur	87494	2094	2.39
Malda	52475	14559	27.74
English Bazar	131377	47829	36.41
Kaliachak	283635	177327	62.52

Source: Statement IX-3, Census of India 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal and Sikkim, Part-I-A, General Report, Book (ii), Population and Society, Datta Gupta, J., Manager of Publication, Delhi, Government of India Press, Calcutta 1969, p.221-22

Among the border police stations of the Malda district, Kaliachak showed highest percentage of Muslim population having 62.52 percent of its population. In fact, Kaliachak continued its pre-partition tradition of growing large number of Muslims especially through in-migration process. Thus if we take the Muslim population of 1941 in Kaliachak then it witnessed an increase of 43.00 percent of Muslim population in 1961 over the Muslim population of 1941. Following the same way the police stations of Malda and English Bazar also presented increases of 2837 persons (24.40 percent) and 10596 persons (28.46 percent) in 1961 over the Muslim population of 1941 respectively. But in reverse the police stations of Bamangola and Habibpur showed a decrease of 6543 (42.89 percent) and 4815 persons (69.69 percent) of Muslim population over the 1941 Muslim population respectively. In spite of this the Bamangola police station shared

18.22 percent Muslims in its total population. Malda police station had 27.74 percent of its population Muslims. However, if we take these five border police stations together then they accounted total Muslim population of 250520 persons. Thus the remaining Muslim population of 313811 persons was, naturally, contributed by the police stations of Ratua, Kharba, Mankchak, Harishchndrapur and Gazol. So not only the border police stations of Malda but the other police stations also equally had contribution in growth of Muslim population of the district.⁷² Besides there were 2040 Christians, 85 numbers of Jains, 47 numbers of Sikhs and only 5 number of Buddhists in the district.

The district West Dinajpur had in 1961 792534 number of Hindus who constituted he 59.87 percent of total population of the district and the Muslims numbered in 1961 in the district 521758 persons who constituted 39.41 percent of total population. in this the Hindus increased 293207 persons being 58.72 percent and the Muslims increased 306019 persons which constituted 141.85 percent a voluminous bulk over the respective populations of the last decade. This voluminous growth of the Muslims was partly caused by the inclusion of the Muslim dominated police stations of Islampur, Chopra, Goalpokhar and Karandighi by the 1956 Act and partly by the in-migration of the Muslims from the territory of East Pakistan.⁷³ The increase of Muslim population in the border police stations of the district corroborated this connotation which may be seen as follows.

Table-6.25
Muslim Population in the Border Police Stations of West Bengal, 1961
West Dinajpur District

Police Station	Total Population	Muslims	Percentage of Muslims
Chopra	68868	47954	69.63
Islampur	87942	60421	68.71
Goalpokhar	147025	105034	71.44
Karandighi	75191	25886	34.43
Raiganj	150072	36640	24.41
Hemtabad	46769	19208	41.07
Kaliaganj	93911	16706	17.79
Kushmundi	73448	27529	37.48
Gangarampur	86506	30111	34.81
Kumarganj	68998	25930	37.58
Hili	37245	8637	23.19
Balurghat	120848	10449	8.65
Tapan	89851	20993	33.38

Source: Statement IX-3, Census of India 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal and Sikkim, Part-I-A, General Report, Book (ii), Population and Society, Datta Gupta, J., Manager of Publication, Delhi, Government of India Press, Calcutta 1969, p.221-22

The highest number of Muslims in the district was in the police station of Goalpokhar numbering 105034 constituting 71.44 percent of the total population of the police station. Chopra and Islampur had also great bulk of Muslim population exceeding the half of their total population numbering 47954 and 60421 respectively which constituted 69.63 percent and 68.71 percent of their total populations respectively. Another noticeable fact is that the growth Muslim population in the police stations of Raiganj, Hemtabad, Gangarampur and Mumarganj. In compare to the Muslim populations of 1941 census year in these four police stations the Muslims increased 49.13 percent, 34.15 percent, 62.45 percent and 35.39 percent respectively in 1961. But in Hili-Balurgaht region and tapan there was a decline of Muslim population by 43.53 percent and 8.18 percent respectively from 1941 to 1961. Barring these border police stations the remaining police stations of Itahar and Banshihari together represented the total Muslim population 86260 persons in number in 1961.⁷⁴ Besides, there were 92 Buddhists, 8491 Christians, 904 Jains and 18 Sikhs in the district of West Dinajpur. In this the Christian people increased greatly by 5258 persons having 162.64 percent growth from 1951 census year to 1961 census year.

Jalpaiguri district in 1961 recorded 1160948 numbers of Hindus who constituted 85.41 percent of total population. This was resulted with the increase of 391670 persons belonged to Hindus having a rise of 50.91 percent over the last decade's Hindu population. This great increase of the Hindu population might have been resulted by the permanent settlement of the displaced persons arrived from East Pakistan into the district during post-partition period. On the other hand the Muslims in the district numbered 129771 persons constituting 9.55 percent of the total population of the district. There was an increase of 40672 Muslim persons being 45.65 percent over the Muslim population of the last decade in the district.⁷⁵ This huge percentage growth of the Muslim population indicated the phenomenon of immigration of the Muslim people from East Pakistan and also from the other parts of the State and India. The following table will show the distribution of the Muslim population in the two border police stations of the Jalpaiguri district.

Table-6.26
Muslim Population in the Border Police Stations of West Bengal, 1961
Jalpaiguri District

Police Station	Total Population	Muslims	Percentage of Muslims
Jalpaiguri	171822	24226	14.10
Rajganj	80766	11351	14.05

Source: Statement IX-3, Census of India 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal and Sikkim, Part-I-A, General Report, Book (ii), Population and Society, Datta Gupta, J., Manager of Publication, Delhi, Government of India Press, Calcutta 1969, p.221-22

In border police stations of Jalpaiguri and Rajganj of Jalpaiguri district there were about 14 percent of Muslims in total population of those police stations having number of Muslims 24226 and 11351 respectively in 1961 census year. If we take account of the Muslim population of these populations for the census year of 1941 then the increases will show 35.32 percent and 46.67 percent having increase of 13228 persons and 9932 persons respectively. This was less in case of Jalpaiguri and little above in case of Rajganj than the district's growth of Muslim population during 1951-61 periods.⁷⁶ There was a great increase of the Buddhists in Jalpaiguri district during this period. The people belonged the Buddhism increased 11718 persons constituting 1.34 percent of the total population of the district and having an increase of 179.17 percent over the Buddhist population of the last decade in the district. The people who had been enumerated as tribe in last decade might have been enumerated as Buddhists in 1961 in good number. There was also a heavy rise in Christian people in the district during this period. The people returned Christianity as their religion increased 90.61 percent over its numerical strength of 1951 and constituted 3.57 percent population of the district in 1961 census year. However, a decline was witnessed by the district in this decade in Sikh population of 11.46 percent having reached to 950 Sikh persons in the district. There were 780 persons returned as Jains in the district in this census year.⁷⁷ In Darjeeling there were 80.27 percent population belonged to the Hindu community. In this the increase of 137546 persons Hindus constituting 37.80 growths over the Hindu population of the last decade was witnessed by the district. The Muslims numbered in 1961 in the district 19214 persons constituting 3.08 percent of the total population. This was coupled with the increase of 12821 numbers of Muslim people in the district in 1961 having 200.55 percent growth over the Muslim population of the 1951 census year. The following table will show the description of the Muslim population in the border police station of Fansidewa in the district. The Muslims in Phansidewa constituted 17.52 percent of total Muslim population of the district in 1961 having 10263 numbers Muslim people in the police station. This was an increase from that of the 1941 in a great percentage of 292.47 percent having 7648 number of increased Muslim population here within this twenty years period. The remaining 8951 numbers of Muslims people were distributed among the other police stations in 1961 in the district, most of them having settled in Siliguri-Naxalbari belt.⁷⁸

Table-6.27

**Muslim Population in the Border Police Stations of West Bengal, 1961
Darjeeling District**

Police Station	Total Population	Muslims	Percentage of Muslims
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Phansidewa	58573	10263	17.52
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Source: The Statement IX-3, Census of India 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal and Sikkim, Part-I-A, General Report, Book (ii), Population and Society, Datta Gupta, J., Manager of Publication, Delhi, Government of India Press, Calcutta 1969, p.221-22

There were a large number of the Buddhist population in the district numbering 42046 persons in 1961 who constituted 6.73 percent of the total population of the district. However, this was a decline in the Buddhist population by 20104 persons being 32.35 percent decline over the Buddhist population of the 1951 census year. On the other there was increase of 66.33 percent of Christian population numbering 8165 persons increase over the Christian population of 1951 in the 1961 census year. Thus the Christians numbered in the year 20475 having constituted 3.28 percent of the total population in the district. There were 626 persons of Sikh religion in Darjeeling with 94.40 percent increase over the Sikh people of the last decade. The Jains also grew from 123 in 1951 to 840 in 1961 in a very significant percentage.⁷⁹

In Cooch Behar district in 1961 there was 775514 number of persons belonged to the Hindu religion constituting 76.05 percent of the total population of the district. A great bulk of increase among Hindu population was witnessed by the district of Cooch Behar. This was increased by 299690 persons with 62.98 percent growth over the Hindu population of the 1951 census year. The Muslim population in the district also grew voluminosly and reached at 242371 persons having been increased by 48151 persons with 24.79 percent growth over the Muslim population of 1951 census year. Thus the Muslims in the district constituted 23.77 percent of the total population.⁸⁰ This growth of Muslim population in the district may be well understood by the following table on the distribution of the Muslim population on the border police stations of the district.

Table-6.28
Muslim Population in the Border Police Stations of West Bengal, 1961
Cooch Behar District

Police Station	Total Population	Muslims	Percentage of Muslims
Tufanganj	173637	32516	18.73
Dinhata	211295	67300	31.85
Sitai	36664	8909	24.30
Sitalkuchi	67720	19723	29.12
Mathabhanga	150445	23291	15.48
Mekliganj	60057	13083	21.78
Haldibari	47504	22582	47.54

Source: The Statement IX-3, Census of India 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal and Sikkim, Part-I-A, General Report, Book (ii), Population and Society, Datta Gupta, J., Manager of Publication, Delhi, Government of India Press, Calcutta 1969, p.221-22

Following the pre-partition tradition the police station of Dinhata remained mostly Muslim populated police station in Cooch Behar having 67300 persons by number and 31.85 percent of total population in the district. If we compare the Muslim population in the different police stations of the Cooch Behar district of 1961 with that of the 1941 then it will be found that the police stations like Dinhata, Sitai, Sitalkuchi and Mathabhanga witnessed small but positive growth in Muslim population. But the police stations of Tufanganj, Mekliganj and Haldibari witnessed a decline in Muslim population during the said period. If we take all these border police stations together then the remaining Muslim population of 54967 number were in Cooch Behar police station in 1961. Thus the Sadar police station also showed positive growth in Muslim population during the period.⁸¹ So there was not much difference between pre-partition Muslim population (142684 in 1941) and the post-partition Muslim population (242371 in 1961). The decline in some of the police stations and progress in some were balanced.

The Buddhist population in Cooch Behar district grew in good number. From 19 of Buddhist people in 1951 they grew to 107 persons in 1961. The Christians also witnessed a great volume of growth from 281 in 1951 to 745 in 1961. In both cases the growth was above 400 times and above 150 times respectively. The Sikhs also grew in good number by increasing from 43 in 1951 to 202 in 1961. So the minor religious communities in the district of Cooch Behar were developing progressively in numerical strength during post-partition period.

It has been said in earlier that during pre-independent period religion had been considered as the basis of classification of the people in all the census records and the data of the demography had been provided in the same way. But the post-independent period census gave trace on the economic classification of the population. But data on religion continued to be very important for the demographic analysis of the population. So information was collected on religions of the people in 1971 and was recorded as returned by the respondents.⁸² As a result the data on six important religions of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Jainism, Islamism and Sikhism were recorded. In other cases under the heads of 'other religions' and 'religion not stated' were recorded. During this time we also have the details of that religious information for the different police stations of the districts of the State of West Bengal. So we may form an idea of religious demography of North Bengal very apparently for the period of 1961-71. The following table will present the religious demographic scenario of North Bengal at a glance from which we may also analyze the transitional pattern of the religious demography of North Bengal.

Table-6.29
Distribution of Population in North Bengal Districts by Religions
1971

District/ Subdivision/ Police station	Buddhist s	Christia n	Hindu	Jain	Muslim	Sikh	other	Not stat ed
West Bengal	121504	251737	3461186 4	32203	9064338	34391	19412 6	114 0
Maldah	51	3492	913283	191	695504	136	-	-
West Dinajpur	167	17750	1172930	970	667547	116	407	-
Darjeeling	91358	28037	636741	597	23523	1504	13	4
Jalpaiguri	15628	55707	1519201	1372	156992	1253	5	1
Koch Bihar	49	1076	1111017	1524	300496	21	-	-
North Bengal	107253	106062	5353172	4654	1844062	3030	425	114 5

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 22, West Bengal, Part-II-C (i), Social and Cultural tables, Tables C-VII and C-VIII, Bhaskar Ghose, pp.14-19

The major two bulks of religion like in the State of West Bengal were the Hinduism and Islamism in North Bengal also during this time. In the census year of 1971 the Hindu population became 5353172 constituting 72.16 percent of the entire population of North Bengal. On the other the Muslims constituted 24.86 percent of total North Bengal population having 1844062 persons in number. The Buddhists and the Christians having total more than one lakh population each in numerical strength comprised 1.45 percent and 1.43 percent respectively of the entire population of North Bengal. On the other the Sikhs and Jains having 3030 persons and 4654 persons in North Bengal constituted no significant proportion of North Bengal population. The Hindus increased during the decade 1961-71 by 1467379 with 37.76 percent of growth on the Hindu population of 1961 in contrast of 44.02 percent growth in 1961 on the Hindu population of 1951. However, this growth of Hindu population in North Bengal was much higher than the State's growth of 25.75 percent during the decade of 1961-71. The Muslims increased in North Bengal during 1961-71 by 366617 persons having growth of 24.81 percent over the Muslim population of 1961 census year. This was much less than the growth of Muslim population during the decade 1951-61 in North Bengal and also a moderately less of 4.95 percent from the growth of Muslim population of the State during the decade of 1961-71. The Buddhists of North Bengal constituted only 1.45 p percent of total population of North Bengal having 107253 persons in number. The Christians had 106062 persons by number in North Bengal constituted 1.43 percent of total North Bengal population almost the same of the

Buddhists. However, the Buddhists increased 77.25 percent over the population of 1961 being in large proportion above the State's growth rate of Buddhist population of 8.24 percent. But in case of the Christian population the growth rate in North Bengal was 30.05 percent in compare to the 23.08 percent growth of the State's Christian population during the decade of 1961-71. The Jains grew in 33.89 percent in North Bengal being much higher in compare to the growth of the State by 19.80 percent. The Sikhs also witnessed a large proportionate of increase by 64.41 percent having 1187 persons increased.⁸³ However this proportional increase or growth may be more apparently realized if we discuss the phenomenon district wise.

The district of Malda had 913283 persons of Hindu population constituting 17.06 percent of the total Hindu population of North Bengal in 1971. This was an increase of 257868 persons being 39.35 percent of growth over the Hindu population of 1961. On the other the Muslims in the district reached at 695504 persons in 1971 by an increase of 131173 persons being 23.24 percent over the population of the previous decade. The Buddhists, the Jains, the Christians and the Sikhs were represented 51 persons, 191 persons, 2987 persons and 136 persons respectively during the period.⁸⁴ However the details of the district's religious demography may be seen from the following statistical table.

Table-6.30
Distribution of Population By Religion
Malda District
1971

State/District	Buddhist s	Christia n	Hindu	Jain	Muslim	Sikh	other	Not state d
Harishchandra pur	2	18	71427	129	105757	-	-	-
Kharba (Chanchal)	16	464	68927	-	108498	-	-	-
Ratua	-	40	79025	-	116084	2	-	-
Gajole	12	655	117157	-	25591	11	-	-
Bamangola	-	96	60944	-	5733	-	-	-
Habibpur	-	1634	110520	-	1016	-	-	-
Maldah	-	127	53794	-	17154	2	-	-
Englishbajar	16	42	125750	47	57125	16	-	-
Manichak	-	-	82132	-	44583	-	-	-
Kaliachak	5	416	143597	15	213963	105	-	-

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 22, West Bengal, Part-II-C (i), Social and Cultural tables, Tables C-VII and C-VIII, Bhaskar Ghose, pp.18-19

Kaliachak was the police station of Malda where both the Hindus and the Muslims were in largest number in the district having 143597 persons Hindus and 2213963 persons Muslims. This was because of its being the largest populous police station and continuous growth. The Muslims grew in the police station by 20.66 percent below the average of the state and also below the average of the district. But the Hindus grew approximately by only 13.16 percent over the Hindu population of the last decade also much less than the district and State growth. However the Hindus constituted 40.10 percent and the Muslims comprised 59.75 percent of the total population of the police station. In Ratua police station the Hindus constituted 40.49 percent of its population and the Muslims constituted 59.48 percent of its total population in the line of the Kaliachak Police station. The police stations of Kharba and Harishchandrapur were also predominantly Muslim dominated having 66.99 percent and 59.64 percent Muslims respectively. On the other the police stations of Gajole, Bamangola, Habibpur, Maldah, Englishbajar and Manikchak were largely dominated by the Hindu residents. The most of the Christians were found in Habibpur during this census period. The Sikhs numbering 105 highest in the district were found in Kaliachak.⁸⁵ There was decline of the Muslims in number in the Hindu dominated border police stations of Englishbazar, Bamangola and Habibpur. There was also decline in growth of rate of the Muslims in Muslim dominated border police station of Kaliachak and in Hindu dominated border police station of Malda. The large growth of the Hindus during this time is explained by the phenomenon of immigration across the Indo-East Pakistan (afterwards Bangladesh) border and the decennial growth of the Muslims is explained by natural growth whereas the decline is ascribed to out-migration.⁸⁶

In the district of West Dinajpur in 1971 the Hindus having a number of 1172930 persons constituted 63.06 percent of the total population and the Muslims having a number of 667547 comprised 35.89 percent of the total population of the district. The Sikhs in the district increased from 18 in 1961 to 116 in 1971. The Buddhists also increased from 92 in 1961 to 167 in 1971. But the Christians were the great constituent of the population of the district during this time as they comprised 0.95 percent of the population having 17750 persons in number. Thus during the decade of 1961-71 the Buddhists increased by 81.52 persons, the Christians increased by 109.04 percent, the Hindus increased by 48.00 percent, the Muslims increased by 27.94 percent on the population of each of the religion of the preceding decade.⁸⁷ However, the following table will provide more analytical statistics of the religious composition of the population in the district of West Dinajpur in 1971 and the transition in the religious demography.

Tabel-6.31
Distribution of Population By Religion
West Dinajpur District
1971

State/District	Buddhists	Christian	Hindu	Jain	Muslim	Sikh	other	Not stated
West Dinajpur	167	17750	1172930	970	667547	116	407	-
Chopra	5	1265	37116	22	62748	7	407	-
Islampur	-	142	48770	45	84990	2	-	-
Goalpokhar	-	851	25632	-	90170	-	-	-
Chakalia	-	1579	40238	276	55117	-	-	-
Karandighi	5	2198	70752	95	49179	3	-	-
Raiganj	50	1122	159657	86	47343	16	-	-
Hemtabad	-	273	33902	-	27823	2	-	-
Kaliaganj	30	142	102389	96	19720	30	-	-
Kushmundi	-	632	60516	31	33986	-	-	-
Itahar	-	1129	75795	4	65927	-	-	-
Banshihari	-	1597	68950	45	30620	9	-	-
Gangarampur	12	3145	79824	-	32886	-	-	-
Kumarganj	-	277	61033	-	24917	-	-	-
Tapan	14	891	88676	94	31889	-	-	-
Balurghat	51	1724	180928	22	5870	43	-	-
Hilli	-	783	38262	158	4362	-	-	-

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 22, West Bengal, Part-II-C (i), Social and Cultural tables, Tables C-VII and C-VIII, Bhaskar Ghose, pp.16-19

In the district of West Dinajpur four police stations namely Chopra, Islampur, Goalpokhar and chakalia, the transferring tracts from Bihar contained Muslim population in major share. On the other the remaining police stations shared the Hindu population in major portion during the period of 1971 census year. The most Muslim populous police station among them was Goalpokhar having 77.30 percent Muslim population during this time. The police stations of Islampur and Chopra constituted 63.74 percent and 61.78 percent of total population respectively in the district in 1971. The most Hindu populous police station in the district was Balurghat having constituted 95.66 percent population by the Hindus. Kaliaganj and Hilli police stations had Hindu populations above 80 percent. In Raiganj, Kumarganj and Tapan police stations the Hindus constituted above 70 percent population. Gangarampur and Banshihari had 68.89 percent and 68.12 percent Hindu populations respectively. Though Goalpokhar was the most Muslim inhabited police station the Muslim population declined by 14.15 percent on the population of the previous decade. This was basically caused by the curving out of Chakalia

thannah from the Goalpokhar police station. The border police station of Kumarganj also showed decline in Muslim population by 3.91 percent. But the border police station of Karandighi witnessed 89.98 percent increase in Muslim population over its quantity of previous decade. The police stations of Hemtabad, Islampur and Raiganj showed the growth of Muslim population above the states average growth of Muslim population having growth of 44.85 percent, 40.66 percent and 30.85 percent.⁸⁸ The proportion of the Christians was high in the police stations of Chopra (1265), Chakalia (1579), Karandighi (2198), Raiganj (1122), Itahar (1129), Bansihari (1597), Gangarampur (3145) and Balurghat (1724).⁸⁹

Thus as a whole the district of West Dinajpur had a growth of Hindu population by 48.00 percent much above the State's average increase of Hindu population by 25.75 percent during the decade of 1961-71 period. The Muslim population was increased by 27.94 percent little lower than State's average growth of 29.76 percent during this period. The growth in Christian population was very high of 109.04 percent than the State's average growth of 23.08 of the Christian population. The growth of the Jains in the district was lower than the State's growth. On the other the growth of the Sikhs in the district was higher than the State's average growth. Thus the three major religions in the district were Hinduism, Islamism and Christianity.⁹⁰

The religious practices and beliefs in the district of Darjeeling should be seen in the light of the religious demonstrations and worshipping of the diverse people belonged to both the hilly tract and Terai region of the district.⁹¹ The Hindus were majority both in hill and terai regions. The Christians and Buddhist were also found in those both tracts. But the Muslims mostly resided in the plains of the district. In the census year the Hindus in the district constituted singly 81.45 percent of the total population of the district having 636741 number of persons. The Muslims with a number of 23523 persons comprised 3.01 percent of the total population of the district. The Buddhists, the second largest religion in the district having a population of 91358 persons constituted 11.69 percent of the total population of the district. Another important religion of the district the Christianity had 28037 numbers of followers in the district that constituted 3.59 percent of the total population of the district. There were 1504 number of Sikhs and 597 followers of Jainism in the district during this time. The following table will highlight over the details of the religious composition of the demography of the district.

Table-6.32
Distribution of Population By Religion
Darjeeling District
1971

State/District	Buddhists	Christian	Hindu	Jain	Muslim	Sikh	other	Not stated
West Bengal	121504	251737	34611864	32203	9064338	34391	194126	1140
Darjeeling	91358	28037	636741	597	23523	1504	13	4

District								
Sukhiapokri	5602	124	23375	-	43	2	-	-
Pulbazar	6790	116	34081	4	95	1	-	-
Darjeeling	13157	1486	65947	39	1204	99	-	-
Rangli Rangliot	12264	556	38849	114	44	-	-	-
Jore Bunglow	8912	181	31942	31	30	-	-	-
Kalimpong	20613	8060	72465	93	757	248	-	-
Garubathan	5319	1257	25568	-	80	74	-	4
Kurseong	12494	2193	56139	53	686	149	-	-
Mirik	4705	85	23501	166	54	8	-	-
Naxalbari	809	2023	45894	12	1979	74	8	-
Siliguri	667	1362	127092	79	4452	775	-	-
Phansidewa	17	8204	50185	-	13475	4	-	-
Kharibari	49	2330	41712	6	626	-	-	-

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 22, West Bengal, Part-II-C (i), Social and Cultural tables, Tables C-VII and C-VIII, Bhaskar Ghose, pp.10-12

Most Hindu populous police station in the hill tract of the district was Kalimpong having 70.88 percent Hindu population and in terai tract Siliguri having 94.57 percent Hindu population. On the other the most Muslim populous police station in the district was the border police station of Phansidewa having 18.75 percent Muslim population being much higher than the district's percentage of Muslim population. This was an increase of 31.30 percent over the Muslim population of the previous decade being much higher than the increase of Muslim population in the district. Again Kalimpong was the most Buddhist populous police station having 20.16 percent share in the total population of the police station. But the highest percentage of the Buddhist population was found in Rangli Rangliot police station having 23.66 percent share in the total population of the police station. The police stations of Darjeeling (13157), Kurseong (12494) also had large number of Buddhist population. A good number of Christians were found during this time in the police stations of Pansidewa (8204), Kalimpong (8060), Kharibari (2330), Kursiong (2193), Naxalbari(2023), Darjeeling (1486), Siliguri(1362) and in Gorubathan (1257). The Jains were found above 100 in the police stations of Rangli Rangliot and Mirik. The Sikhs in the district were mostly found in Siliguri numbering 775 persons in 1971 and 248 souls in Kalimpong and 149 in Kurseong.⁹²

Thus the district of Darjeeling had four major groups of religious followers namely the Hindus, the Muslims, the Buddhists and the Christians. The growth of the Sikhs during the decade 1961-71 was highest in the district the growth rate being 140.26 percent over the Sikh population of the previous decade in the district following by the Buddhist with the growth rate of 117.28 percent over the Buddhist population of the previous decade. The growth of the Christians was

also high having 36.93 percent growth over the Christian population of the previous decade being much high than the State's average growth of Christian population of 23.08 percent. The growth rate of the Hindu population (27.00 percent) was also little high than the State's growth (25.75 percent). But the growth rate of the Muslims (22.43) in the district was moderately lower than the growth of the State (29.76 percent). Most importantly the negative growth was found in case of the Jains in the district declining by 28.93 percent on the Jain population of the previous decade in the district.

In Jalpaiguri district also Hinduism, Islam and Christianity were the main religious persuasions of the people.⁹³ The Hindus in the district constituted 86.80 percent of the total population of the district in 1971 census year having 1519201 numbers of persons. The Muslims numbered 156992 persons in the district having constituted 8.97 percent of the total population of the district. The most important was the number of the Christians who represented 3.18 percent of the total population of the district having numbered 55707 persons. The Buddhists had some 15628 followers in the district turning it the fourth religion in the district during 1971 census period. The Jains and the Sikhs were of a very small number being 1372 and 1253 in numerical strength in the district during this time.⁹⁴ However, the following statistical table will elaborate the scenarios of the religious demography of the districts.

Tabel-6.33
Distribution of Population By Religion
Jalpaiguri District
1971

State/District	Buddhists	Christian	Hindu	Jain	Muslim	Sikh	other	Not stated
Jalpaiguri	15628	55707	1519201	1372	156992	1253	5	1
Rajganj	515	883	102836	-	24454	56	-	-
Jalpaiguri	181	1218	194229	67	21708	7	-	-
Mal	1730	6989	136916	421	19787	299	-	-
Mitali	312	2769	54679	28	3255	2	-	-
Maynaguri	33	55	143957	33	15682	-	4	-
Nagrakata	738	2199	60920	3	2122	20	-	-
Dhubguri	1274	4258	182735	157	27781	125	-	-
Birpara	1293	2800	52617	56	1118	58	-	-
Falakata	29	937	109883	126	19538	46	-	-
Madarihat	1963	1808	34793	-	4242	1	-	-
Alipurduar	104	11412	250064	294	9838	52	1	1
Kalchini	7372	11241	109826	177	4778	573	-	-
Kumargram	84	9168	85246	10	2689	14	-	-

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 22, West Bengal, Part-II-C (i), Social and Cultural tables, Tables C-VII and C-VIII, Bhaskar Ghose, pp.12-16

The most Hindu populous police station in the district in 1971 was Alipurduar police station having 250064 persons and being 92.01 percent of the population of the police station and 16.46 percent of the total Hindu population of the district. Jalpaiguri and Dhupguri police stations had also huge number of Hindu population having 194229 persons and 182735 persons Hindus constituting respectively 12.78 percent and 12.03 percent of the total Hindu population of the district. This was 89.34 percent 4.47 percent of the total populations of the police stations. The police stations of Rajganj (102836), Mal (136216), Maynaguri (143957), Falakata ((109883) and Kalchini (109826) had more than one lakh Hindu population each. The most Muslim populous police station was the Dhupguri police station having 27781 numbers of Muslims followed by the police station of Rajganj having 24454 numbers of Muslims. Besides, the police stations of Jalpaiguri (21708), Mal (19787), Maynaguri (15682) and Falakata (19538) had a large number of Muslims. The border police station of Jalpaiguri witnessed a decline of 10.39 percent Muslims and the police station of Rajganj witnessed a rise of 115.43 percent Muslims on the Muslim populations of the previous decade. The highest numbers of Buddhists in the district were found in the police station of Kalchini having 7372 number of Buddhists in the police station. The highest number of Christians was found in the police station of Alipurduar police station having 11412 numbers of Christians followed by the police station of Kalchini having 11241 numbers of Christians in the district. The Sikhs were in highest number in the police station of Kalchini having 573 numbers with 45.73 percent share in the Sikh population of the district.⁹⁵

Thus the district of Jalpaiguri was comprised by mainly three religious communities of the Hindus, the Muslims and the Christians having the Buddhist a good number and the Jains and Sikhs very insignificant number. The Hindus increased in good rate during the decade 1961-71 by 358253 persons and having 30.86 percent growth over the population of the previous decade. This was above the growth rate of the Hindu population of the State. On the other the growth in Muslim population was below the growth rate of the State. The Muslim population grew by 27221 numbers of persons having 20.98 percent of increase. However the Buddhists shared a declined during this period by 14.40 percent over the population of the previous decade declining 2630 persons. Going in contrast the Christians showed a growth of 14.69 percent with a rise of 7137 persons on the Christian population of the previous decade. The Sikhs also witnessed growth of 31.89 percent over the Sikh population of the previous decade in the district.⁹⁶ In all these growth the phenomenon of in-migration played an important role beside the natural growth. In the case of the decline of the Buddhists was caused by the tribal Buddhists' conversion into Christianity.

The district of Cooch Behar had two major bulks of religions, Hinduism and Islam during the 1971 census year. The Hindus numbered 1111017 persons in number and comprised 78.56 percent of the total population of the district. The Muslims were numbered by 300496 and

constituted 21.25 percent of the total population of the district. Besides, there were few numbers of Christians and Jains in the district. They numbered 1076 persons and 1524 persons in the district during this period.⁹⁷ The Buddhists and the Sikhs were very in significant in numerical strength. It was written that Yuan Chwang found no trace of Buddhism in the territory of Bhaskaravarman.⁹⁸ From the following table we may have the details of the religious demography of the district of Cooch Behar in 1970s.

Tabel-6.34
Distribution of Population By Religion
Koch Bihar District
1971

State/District	Buddhists	Christian	Hindu	Jain	Muslim	Sikh	other	Not stated
Koch Bihar	49	1076	1111017	1524	300496	21	-	-
Haldibari	-	-	41607	-	14908	-	-	-
Mekliganj	23	99	68044	333	12548	-	-	-
Mathabhanga	12	273	194289	146	32077	-	-	-
Sital Kuchi	-	-	66107	8	29013	-	-	-
Koch Bihar	12	53	301310	535	70557	20	-	-
Tufanganj	2	77	200007	64	41477	1	-	-
Dinhata	-	554	200617	433	99916	-	-	-
Sitai	-	-	39036	-	12719	-	-	-

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 22, West Bengal, Part-II-C (i), Social and Cultural tables, Tables C-VII and C-VIII, Bhaskar Ghose, pp.14-17

Among the eight police stations of the district of Cooch Behar the most Hindu populous police station was Cooch Behar having 301310 numbers of Hindus constituting 27.12 percent Hindu population of the district. The next were the police stations of Dinhata and tufanganj having 200617 persons and 200007 persons Hindus respectively constituting 18.06 percent and 18.00 percent respectively of total Hindu population of the district. All these three police stations constituted 80.89 percent, 69.47 percent and 82.77 percent respectively of their total populations. The Muslims were found in largest number in the police station of Dinhata numbering 99916 persons followed by the Cooch Behar police station having 70557 persons Muslims. The police station of Dinhata constituted 34.60 percent of the total population of the police station and the Cooch Behar police station constituted 18.94 percent both being much high than the district percentage of the Muslim population. The Tufanganj police station had also good number of Muslims having 41477 persons and constituting 17.16 percent of the population. The border police stations of Tufanganj witnessed 27.56 percent growth in Muslim population, Dinhata 48.46 percent, Sitai 42.76 percent, Sitalkuchi 47.10 percent and Mathabhanga 37.72 percent growth on the Muslim population of the previous decade. But the police stations of Mekliganj and Haldibari witnessed decline 4.08 percent and 33.98 percent

respectively on the Muslim population of the previous decade. The Christians were found mostly in Mathabhanga (273) and Dinhata (554) police stations. The Jains were largely found in Cooch Behar police station (535), Dinhata (433) and Mekliganj (333). All the 21 persons of Sikh religion were concentrated in the sadar police station.⁹⁹ Thus the district of Cooch Behar witnessed the increase of 43.26 percent Hindus much higher than the growth rate of the State. The district also witnessed increase of 23.98 percent Muslim population moderately lower than the State's increase on the Muslim population of the previous decade. So the growth of the Hindus is explained by the in-migration of the Hindus from across the Indo-Bangladesh (erstwhile East Pakistan) border. The growth in Muslims is explained by the growth of natural birth.

Considering the Hindu population of the State of West Bengal Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts in 1961 had Hindu population above the state average of 788 per 1000 people and the district of Cooch Behar was nearer to the State average. In this Jalpaiguri with 854 Hindus per 1000 people ranked sixth and Darjeeling with 803 per 1000 people ranked tenth among all the districts of the State of West Bengal. In 1971 also distribution remained same. In all the districts of North Bengal the Hindus numbered more in urban areas than the rural areas. In Darjeeling Hindus in urban and rural areas were more or less equal in number having 800 per 1000 in rural areas and 812 per 1000 in urban areas. The Hindus made greatest growth in the Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri districts in the State.¹⁰⁰ The State had 7.5 percent of the Indian Hindus and about 15 percent of Indian Muslims. In this Muslim population the North Bengal districts greatly contributed. This was greatly caused by the fact that they in large part became bordered with post-partition East Pakistan. It had been reported in the General Report of Census'1961 that among the total Muslims of West Bengal 28.92 percent lived in 50 border police stations among which North Bengal had 28 border police stations with East Pakistan. The Muslims were largely represented in the rural areas than urban areas except of Darjeeling in North Bengal. Regarding the number of Muslims per 1000 people Malda(462) and West Dinajpur(394) ranked second and third after Murshidabad(559) and Cooch Behar(238) ranked fifth after Nadia(244) among the districts of West Bengal. The percentage of the Muslims in 1971 was in Malda 43.13 and in West Dinajpur 35.89 percent. Among the total Christians of the State more than one third resided over in Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts having 33 and 36 Christians per 1000 people in total. West Dinajpur ranked fourth in this respect with 6 Christians per 1000 people after Calcutta (18 per 1000). Among the total Buddhists of the State about nine-tenths were concentrated in the Darjeeling-Jalpaiguri belt. In Sikhs and Jains also the North Bengal districts showed progress. Among the Scheduled Castes population barring a few exceptions who returned themselves as Sikhs most of them returned as Hindus. On the other the 93.84 percent of Scheduled tribes returned themselves as Hindus and the remaining as Christians, Buddhists and others.¹⁰¹ Thus in all major religions of the State North Bengal districts had a good say during 1951-71 period.

III

The transition of demography in size and number also should have cultural say. In this context religion has much to say regarding composition and nature of demography. During the decade 1971-81 transition in line with the previous decade went on in religious demography of the State of West Bengal as well as North Bengal. In the 1981 census, question on religion was included in the individual slip filled in for every person and the Household schedule filled in for a household. According to the question no. 8 in the slip the religion of a person was to be recorded as it was returned by the interviewer. That is the actual religion returned by the respondent was to be depicted by the enumerator. On the other in question no. 2 the religion of the head of household was to be recorded by the enumerator as the religion of the concerned household. In this context following the earlier line 'B' for Buddhist, 'C' for Christians, 'H' for Hinds, 'J' for Jains, 'M' for Muslims and 'S' for Sikhs and for 'Others' the actual religion returned by the respondent were recorded.¹⁰² In this way the religious structure for the Stat of West Bengal was formed from which we are to compile the religious stature of North Bengal for the decade 1971-81.

According the census record the total Hindu population in 1981 in the State of West Bengal was 42007159 persons constituting 76.96 percent of the total population of the state. The percentage of the Hindus grew by 21.37 percent in the State during the time. On the other the total population of the Muslims in the State was 11743259 persons constituting 21.52 percent of the total population of the State. The increase of the Muslims in the State was 29.55 percent over the population of the preceding decade. This was much more than the increase of the Hindus of the State. There was also a great increase in the number of the Buddhists in the State amounting total 156296 persons constituting 0.29 percent of the State population. The Buddhists increased 28.63 percent over the population of the preceding decade. The Jains numbering 22290 persons witnessed an increase of 20.06 percent during the decade of 1971-81. On the other the Sikshs increased in highest percentage increasing 39.82 percent over its population in the State during the preceding decade.¹⁰³ So the pace of growth in the State during the decade 1971-81 continued. In the same way religious transition in demography also continued in North Bengal districts. From the following table the transition of North Bengal districts' demographic scenario may be observed for the decade of 1971-1981 periods.

Table-6.35
Distribution of Six Major Religions in North Bengal Districts
1971-1981

State/ District	Censu s year	Hindus	Muslims	Buddhist s	Jains	Christian s	Sikhs	Other Religi on
West	1981	42,007,15	11,743,20	156,296	38,663	319,670	49,054	263,4

Bengal		9	9					14
	1971	34,611,864	9,064,338	121,504	32,203	251,752	35,084	194,126
Koch Bihar	1981	1,399,844	368,176	273	2,000	1,333	14	3
	1971	1,111,017	300,496	49	1,524	1,076	21	...
Jalpaiguri	1981	1,938,062	193,658	16,368	1,406	63,555	1,628	162
	1971	1,519,201	156,992	15,628	1,372	55,707	1,253	5
West Dinajpur	1981	1,521,416	860,797	279	1,604	19,481	153	1,217
	1971	1,172,930	667,547	167	970	17,750	116	407
Maldah	1981	1,107,192	919,918	108	395	4,020	127	110
	1971	913,283	695,504	51	191	3,492	136	...
Darjeeling	1981	813,625	37,299	120,864	903	47,161	2,447	125
	1971	636,741	23,523	91,358	597	28,037	1,504	13
North Bengal	1981	6780139	2379848	137892	6308	135550	4369	1617
	1971	5353172	1844062	107253	4654	106062	3030	425

Source: **Census of India 1981, Series-23, West Bengal, Paper-I of 1984, Household Population by Religion of Head of Household (Up to Police Station & Town Level), S.N. Ghosh, IAS, Director of Census Operations, West Bengal, Calcutta, 1985, pp. viii-x**

North Bengal as a whole had total Hindu population of 6780139 persons in 1981 constituting 71.77 percent of the total population of the region. In 1971 this was 5353172 persons belonged to Hinduism and constituted 72.16 percent of the total population of North Bengal territory. Thus there was an increase of 1426967 persons being 26.66 percent growth of Hindu population over the Hindu population of the preceding decade in North Bengal districts altogether. On the other the Muslim population in North Bengal territory in 1981 reached at 2379848 persons with an increase of 535786 persons being 29.05 percent growth over the Muslim population of the last decade. With this in 1981 the Muslim population constituted 25.19 percent of the total population of the North Bengal as a whole. It was 24.86 percent of the total population of North Bengal during the previous decade.¹⁰⁴ So concerning the share of the Hindus in total population North Bengal showed low proportion of Hindus and high proportion of the Muslims in compare to the State (the Hindus and the Muslims in the State constituted respectively 76.96 percent and 21.52 percent). North Bengal contributed 16.14 percent to the Hindu population of the State in 1981 in compare to 20.20 percent Muslims. However, concerning the rate of growth the growth of Hindu population in North Bengal districts as a whole was higher than the State but regarding the growth of the Muslims it was at par the State.

The Buddhist population in the district was 137892 in 1981 being increased with 30639 persons by 28.57 percent growth during the decade of 1971-1981 and constituted 1.50 percent of the total population of the North Bengal region. Among the total Buddhist population of State the

North Bengal districts singly constituted 68.62 percent. The other part of the population remained spreading in other districts of the State.¹⁰⁵ The Jains in 1981 in North Bengal numbered total 6308 persons constituting 16.32 percent of the total Jain population of the State. The increase of the Jains in North Bengal was also important. The Jains increased by 35.54 percent over the Jain population of North Bengal in preceding decade. The Christians also contributed a good proportion in North Bengal districts. Numbering total 135550 persons belonged to Christianity in North Bengal in 1981 they constituted 1.43 percent of the total population of North Bengal and constituted 42.40 percent of the total Christian population of the State of West Bengal. The increase of the Christian population in North Bengal from 1971 to 1981 was 27.80 percent. The total number of Sikhs in North Bengal in 1981 was 4369 persons who constituted 8.91 percent of the total Sikh population of the State.¹⁰⁶ Thus in respect of all the six major religions North Bengal as a whole had important contribution to the State. Even in some cases, such as of Buddhism and Christianity, North Bengal had great contribution to the State. However, the composition of religious demography varied in different districts of North Bengal. So we have to make scrutiny over the districts of North Bengal individually.

The district of Malda had 1107192 persons belonged to the Hindu religion constituting 54.49 percent of the total population of the district. In 1971 census year 56.63 percent population of the district was Hindu. There was an increase of Hindu population by 21.23 percent on the Hindu population of the last decade. On the other the total number of the Muslims in the district was 919918 persons constituting 45.27 percent of the total population of the district during the decade of 1971-81. The growth rate of the Muslims in the district was 32.27 percent on the Muslim population of the last decade. The Buddhists in the district was very few in number. The Christians numbered only 4020 persons constituting only 0.20 percent of the total population of the district. The Jains and the Sikhs were too little to mention during this time.¹⁰⁷ However, to form an idea over the religious composition of demography of the district details may be seen in the following table.

Table-6.36
Distribution of Six Major Religions in North Bengal Districts
1981
District of Malda

District/ Subdivision/ Police station	Buddhist s	Christian s	Hindus	Jains	Muslim s	Sikhs	Other Religio ns	Religio n not stated
Maldah District	108	4,020	11,07,19 2	395	9,19,91 8	127	110	...
Sadar	108	4020	11,07,19	395	9,19,91	127	110	...

Division			2		8			
Harishchand ra pur	...	146	85,005	93	1,36,64 6	...	...	...
Kharba (Chanchal)	...	144	74,454	90	1,43,05 8	...	...	...
Ratua	...	43	88,897	46	1,52,21 2	...	...	...
Gajole	14	1,311	1,41,717	...	37,258	15	...	...
Bamangola	...	339	77,713	...	7,607	...	103	...
Habibpur	...	1,678	137,734	...	1,651	...	7	...
Maldah	16	222	74,903	...	23,598	28	...	...
Englishbajar	63	135	1,64,721	159	74,294	84	...	...
Manichak	...	1	93,369	...	56,611	...	...	...
Kaliachak	15	1	169,079	7	286,983	...	...	...

Source: **Census of India 1981, Series-23, West Bengal, Paper-I of 1984, Household Population by Religion of Head of Household (Up to Police Station & Town Level), S.N. Ghosh, IAS, Director of Census Operations, West Bengal, Calcutta, 1985, pp.38-43**

From the above table it is apparent that the police stations of Harishchandrapur, Kharba, Ratua and Kaliachak remained Muslim dominated police stations even since the time of partition which was exhibited in the census of 1951 year. The proportions of the Muslims in those police stations during 1981 census came to be 61.58 percent, 65.70 percent, 63.11 percent and 62.92 percent all were in much high percentages than the district's percentage of the Muslim population. Even they had Muslim populations in 1941 56.71 percent, 59.33 percent, 56.91 percent and 63.81 percent respectively. Barring Kaliachak in all the three police stations the proportion of the Muslims in compare to the total population increased in 1981.¹⁰⁸ Even the four police stations constituted 78.15 percent of the Muslim populations of the district. Gajole, Bamangola, Habibpur, Malda, Englishbazar and Manikchak remained Hindu dominated police stations since the time of pre-partition period. The Hindus increased in Malda police station by 39.24 percent.¹⁰⁹ All the border police stations of Malda during this time the number of Muslim population increased.

The district of West Dinajpur in 1981 had Hindu population of 1521416 persons and constituted 63.26 percent of the total population of the district. It was a small increase in proportion from the last decade (63.07 percent). However, the Hindus increased in great number being increased by 29.71 percent over the population of the last decade. This was much higher than the growth rate of the State (21.37 percent). The Muslim population in the district in 1981 was 860797 persons having been grown by 28.95 percent on the Muslim population of the last decade. The Musalmans of the district constituted 35.79 percent of the total population being a little proportionate loss from that of the last decade (35.89 percent). This was because the

Muslims' growth rate was little less (0.76 percent) from that of the growth of the Hindus of the time. There were only 279 Buddhists, 1604 Jains and 153 Sikhs in the district in 1981. But the Christians were in good proportion in the district numbering 19481 persons constituting 0.81 percent of the total population having a growth rate of 9.75 percent over the Christian population of the last decade.¹¹⁰ This indicates the growing extension of the Christianity among the tribal people of the district. However, the composition of the religious demography in detail may be observed from following tabular distribution of the different religious communities among the different police stations of the district.

Table-6.37
Distribution of Six Major Religions in North Bengal Districts
1981
District of West Dinajpur

District/ Subdivision/ Police station	Buddhist s	Christian s	Hindus	Jains	Muslim s	Sikhs	Other Religio ns	Religio n not stated
West Dinajpur	279	19,481	1,521,416	1,604	860,797	153	1,217	...
Islampur Subdivision	45	6,627	297,044	898	449,974	51	277	...
Chopra	16	1768	48,360	...	78,508	47	...	...
Islampur	7	714	64,770	282	106,003	4	...	...
Goalpokhar	...	949	41,970	30	127,781	...	...	...
Chakalia	...	1,916	49,284	301	63,029	...	...	...
Karandighi	22	1,280	92,660	285	74,647	...	277	...
Raiganj Subdivision	120	5,717	622,011	350	307,857	54	323	...
Raiganj	101	1,440	190,064	141	79,765	21	...	...
Hemtabad	6	188	41,580	...	36,106	1	...	...
Kaliaganj	13	144	128,122	130	25,296	24	40	...
Kushmundi	...	701	76,024	22	45,533	...	...	...
Itahar	...	1,137	94,227	...	86,535	8	70	...
Bansihari	...	2,107	91,994	57	36,602	...	213	...
Sadar Subdivision	114	7,137	602,361	356	102,966	48	617	...
Gangaramp ur	31	2,688	114,931	135	35,576	...	45	...
Kumarganj	...	268	72,813	...	31,434	...	112	...
Tapan	12	855	123,473	73	23,042	...	178	...
Balurghat	71	2,191	246,855	64	7,906	48	282	...

Hilli	...	1,135	44,289	84	5,008
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Source: **Census of India 1981, Series-23, West Bengal, Paper-I of 1984, Household Population by Religion of Head of Household (Up to Police Station & Town Level), S.N. Ghosh, IAS, Director of Census Operations, West Bengal, Calcutta, 1985 pp.26-37**

Following the tradition of the preceding decade in 1981 also the police stations of Chopra, Islampur, Goalpokhar and Chakalia remained Muslim dominated. Likewise the police station of Goalpokhar was the most populous Muslim police in the district having 127781 persons belonged to Muslim community followed by the police station of Islampur with 106003 persons of Muslim population. Thus in both the police stations the Muslims constituted 74.84 percent and 61.71 percent of their total population respectively during this decade. The Muslims in the police station of Chopra constituted 61.00 percent and Chakalia 55.03 percent of their total population.¹¹¹ In all cases there was, though little, proportional decrease of the Muslim population in the police stations. On the other the most populous Hindu police station of the district was Balurghat having 246855 persons belonged to the Hindu community and constituting 95.90 percent of the total population of the police station having a little proportional increase of the Hindu population. The police stations of Hili (87.67 percent), Tapan (83.63 percent), Gangarampur (74.92), Kaliaganj (83.32 percent), Raiganj (70.00 percent) had large number of Hindu e populations in 1981. Kumarganj and Banshihari had also large number of Hindu population in compare to that of the Muslims.¹¹² The police stations of Krandighi with 54.77 percent Hindus and 44.13 percent Muslims and the police station of Hemtabad with 53.39 Hindus and 46.36 Muslims were becoming equal in proportion by both the communities. The Muslims increased greatly during this decade in the police stations of Raiganj (68.48 percent), Krandighi (51.79 percent), Goalpokhar (41.71 percent), Balurghat (34.68 percent), Kushmundi (33.98 percent) and Islampur (31.25 percent). The Hindus increased largely in the police stations of Goalpokhar (63.74 percent), Gangarampur (43.98 percent), Tapan (39.24 percent), Balurghat (36.44 percent), Banshihari (33.42 percent), Islampur (32.81 percent) and Karandighi (30.96 percent). Very astonishingly there was a great loss of the Muslim population in the police station of Tapan by 27.74 percent. The Buddhist population was distributed in number of police stations of the district with little strength. Most of the Jains were in the police stations of Chakalia((301), Islampu (282), Karandighi (285), Raiganj(141), Gangarampur (135) and Kaliaganj (130). The Sikhs of the district were distributed mainly in the police stations of Choprqa (47), Balurghat (48) Kaliaganj (24) and Raiganj (21). The Christian in significant number in the district were in the police stations of Gangarampur (2688), Balurghat (2191), Banshihari (2107), Chakalia (1916), Chopra (1768), Raiganj (1440), Karandighi (1280), Ithar (11137) and Hili (1135).¹¹³

The district of Darjeeling in 1981 had total population 813625 persons belonged to Hindu religion. They constituted 79.44 percent of the total population of the district. There was

increase of 176884 persons among the Hindus with the growth of 27.78 percent on the population of the last decade. This was above both the percentage of total population and percentage of increase in compare to the State. The Muslims in the district during the period numbered 37,299 persons constituting only 3.64 percent of the total population of the district. By number it was a moderate increase of 13776 persons in compare to that of the previous decade but by percentage it was a great increase of 58.56 percent. In consideration of the total population the percentage of the Muslim population was least among the district of the State. However, by percentage of increase it was much above the State increase for the decade. The large existence of the Buddhist population was an important feature in the district's demography. The Buddhists numbering 120684 persons constituted 11.80 percent of the total population of the district and the district alone constituted 77.33 percent Buddhist population of the State of West Bengal during the decade of 1971-81. There was an increase of 32.30 percent of the Buddhist population on its numerical strength of the last decade in the district. The Jains and the Sikhs in the district numbered 903 and 2447 respectively in the decade. The Sikhs were numerically considerable in the district. The Christians also numerically developed in the district from 28037 persons to 47161 persons in the district during the period. It was grew by 68.21 percent and constituted 4.60 percent of the total population of the district.¹¹⁴ The following table may highlight over the description of the religious demography of the district.

Table-6.38
Distribution of Six Major Religions in North Bengal Districts
1981
District of Darjeeling

District/ Subdivision/ Police station	Buddhist s	Christian s	Hindus	Jains	Muslim s	Sikhs	Othe r Religi ons	Religion not stated
Darjeeling District	120,864	47,161	813,625	903	37,299	2,447	125	1,845
Sadar Subdivisio n	60,597	5,092	211,863	267	2,897	439	28	163
Sukhiapokr i	6,029	676	22,171	...	80	19	...	...
Pulbazar	9,230	316	35,022	5	153	19	1	...
Darjeeling	21,009	2,771	77,614	42	2,362	396	27	150
Rangli Rangliot	13,337	815	36,706	176	188	3	...	...
Jore Bunglow	10,992	514	40,350	44	114	2	...	13

Kalimpong Subdivision	31,123	12,532	111,548	111	1,384	436	...	1,682
Kalimpong	23,941	10,950	80,911	109	1,130	351	...	1,156
Garubathan	7,182	1,582	30,547	2	254	85	...	526
Kurseong Subdivision	22,725	2,602	84,331	85	1,255	330	4	...
Kurseong	15,612	2,527	62,190	67	1,152	330	4	...
Mirik	7,113	75	22,141	18	73	...	...	...
Siliguri Subdivision	6,419	26,935	405,973	440	31,793	1,242	93	...
Naxalbari	929	5,516	71,426	306	2,819	179	...	...
Siliguri	4,675	4,200	214,363	129	8,197	1046	...	...
Phansidewa	256	16,033	72,473	5	18,683	14	...	...
Kharibari	559	1,186	47,711	...	2,094	3	93	...

Source: **Census of India 1981, Series-23, West Bengal, Paper-I of 1984, Household Population by Religion of Head of Household (Up to Police Station & Town Level), S.N. Ghosh, IAS, Director of Census Operations, West Bengal, pp.20-31**

The largest number of the Hindu population in 1981 was constituted by the police station of Siliguri Police Station in the Darjeeling district and it comprised 26.35 percent of the total Hindu population of the district. There was an increase of 68.66 percent of the Hindu population of the police station of the last decade. It was also the 20.92 percent of the total population of the district. There were large number of Hindus in the police stations of Sukhiapokri (122171 persons), Klimpong (80911 pesons) and in other police stations. The Muslims in largest number in the district were enumerated in Phansidewa numbering 18683 persons constituting 50.09 percent of the total Muslim population of the district. Next to Phansidewa ranked the Siliguri police station having 8197 persons belonged to Muslim community. Among the other police stations where the Muslims were enumerated in good number important were Darjeeling (2362 persons), Naxalbari (2819 persons) and Kharibari (2094 persons). The Buddhists concentrated mainly in the hill tract of the district the largest number being enumerated in Kalimpong police station having 23941 Buddhist persons followed by the police station of Darjeeling having 21009 persons of Buddhist religion. The other important police stations inhabiting by the Buddhist in the district were Kurseong (15612 persons), Jore Bunglow (10992 persons) and others. There were 6419 Buddhist persons in the Plain subdivision of Siliguri having 4675 persons of Buddhist religion in Siliguri police station. The largest number of the Christians were found in the police station of Phansidewa (16033) constituting 34.00 percent of

the total Christian population of the district. The Christians were also concentrated in the police station of Kalimpong 23.22 percent of the total Christian population of the district. The Jains were found in highest number in the district in Naxalbari police station and the Sikhs in highest number were found in Siiguri police station having about 50 percent.¹¹⁵ There was good number of people in Kalimpong police station who did not state their religion.

The district of Jalpaiguri had 1938062 persons of Hindu religion in 1981 constituting 87.50 percent of the total population of the district. There was an increase of 27.57 percent on the Hindu population of the last decade. It was much higher than the growth rate of the State. On the other the Muslims in the district constituted only 8.75 percent of the total population in the decade of 1971-81. The Muslims grew in the district by 23.36 percent on the Muslim population of the last decade. This was naturally below the growth rate of Muslim population of the State. The Buddhists were in very sound number in the district having 10.47 percent share of the total Buddhist population of the State with a number of 16368 persons of Buddhist religion. However, the Buddhists constituted only 0.74 percent of the total population of the district and had an increase only of 4.74 percent over the Buddhist population in the district in preceding decade. In case of the Christian population the district had a share of 19.88 percent of the total Christian population of the State which was 22.13 percent in the last decade. With this the Christian population constituted 2.87 percent of the total population of the district. There was 14.09 percent increase of Christian population in compare to the preceding decade. There were Jains (1406 persons) and Sikhs (1628) in small number in the district.¹¹⁶ However, the detail description of the religious demography may be observed from the following the table.

Table-6.39
Distribution of Six Major Religions in North Bengal Districts
1981
District of Jalpaigurin

District/ Subdivision/ Police station	Buddhist s	Christian s	Hindus	Jains	Muslim s	Sikhs	Other Religi ons	Religio n not stated
Jalpaiguri	16,368	63,555	1,938,062	1,406	193,658	1,628	162	32
Sadar Subdivisio n	7,768	27,993	1,124,809	639	146,462	1,177	64	25
Rajganj	1,711	3,219	158,860	57	32,931	283	4	25
Jalpaiguri	258	2,329	237,506	88	26,732	3	9	...
Mal	2,370	8,909	166,372	322	27,392	255	24	...
Mitali	971	2,810	65,810	...	5,025	33	...	...

Maynaguri	102	77	180,522	59	18,740	9	...	...
Nagrakata	663	1,581	64,738	3	3,143	20	...	...
Banarhat	1,678	8,746	129,526	36	9,160	574	3	...
Dhupguri	15	322	121,475	74	23,339	...	11	...
Alipurduar Subdivision	8,600	35,562	813,253	767	47,196	451	46	...
Birpara	2,485	2,930	62,967	60	1,515	163	30	7
Falakata	49	1,547	144,127	169	23,051	40	13	...
Madarihat	606	772	48,996	3	24	...	...	...
Alipurduar	1,813	13,610	304,579	244	12,967	52	...	...
Kalchini	3,001	1,192	148,056	152	2,739	178	...	...
Kumargram	646	10,214	104,528	139	791	18	7	...

Source: **Census of India 1981, Series-23, West Bengal, Paper-I of 1984, Household Population by Religion of Head of Household (Up to Police Station & Town Level), S.N. Ghosh, IAS, Director of Census Operations, West Bengal, pp.14-25**

The largest number of the Hindus in the district was enumerated in 1981 in the police station of Alipurduar numbering 304579 persons constituting 15.72 percent of the total population of the district followed by the police station of Jalpaiguri having 237506 persons of Hindu religion and constituting 12.25 percent of the total Hindu population of the district. The largest increase of Hindu population was found in the police station of Rajganj (54.48 percent) followed by the police stations of Madarihat (40.82 percent), Kalchini (34.81 percent) and Falakata (31.16 percent). In other police stations the growth was above 20 percent. However, in Dhupguri there was decrease of both the Hindus and Muslim population due to the jurisdictional changes. The Muslims in largest number were enumerated in the polices station of Rajganj (32931 persons) followed by the police stations of Mal (27392 persons), Jalpaiguri (26732 persons), Dhupguri (23339 persons) and Falakata (23051 persons). The largest increase in Muslim population in the district was found in the police station of Mitiali (54.38 percent) followed by the police stations of Mal (38.43 percent), Rajganj (34.67 percent) and Alipurduar (31.80 percent).The Buddhists were mainly concentrated in the police stations of Rajganj (1711), Mal (2370), Banarhat (1678), Birpara (2485), Alipurduar (1813) and Kalchini (3001). The large number of the Christians were found in the police stations of Alipurduar(13610), Kumargram (10214), Mal(8909) and Banarhat (8746). The police stations of Rajganj, Jalpaiguri, Mitiali, Birpara had good number Christians during the decade. There were also the Jains and Sikhs in different police stations of the district.¹¹⁷

The district of Cooch Behar had 1399844 persons belonged to Hindu religion who constituted 79.01 percent of total population of the district in 1971-81. The Hindus increased by 26.00

percent in the decade on the Hindu population of the last decade. In both points of view the percentages of increase and to the total population the district was in higher position than the State. On the other hand in consideration of the Muslim population in both cases the district was in lower position than the State. The district had Muslim population of 368176 persons constituting 20.78 percent and having increased 22.52 percent over the Muslim population of the last decade. There were only 273 Buddhist people increased by 457.14 percent and 2000 Jain people having been 31.23 percent over previous decade's population of those sects. A very few number of the Sikhs were there in the district during the time. There were only 1333 persons of Christian religion in the district.¹¹⁸ However, to have an elaborate picture of the religious demography of the district the following table may be gone through.

Table-6.40
Distribution of Six Major Religions in North Bengal Districts
1981
District of Koch Bihar

District/ Subdivision/ Police station	Buddhi sts	Christian s	Hindus	Jains	Muslims	Sikhs	Other Religio ns	Religio n not stated
Koch Bihar	273	1,333	1,399,844	2,000	368,176	14	3	...
Mekliganj Subdivisio n	21	141	141,286	365	35,426	1	3	...
Haldibari	9	35	54,149	...	19,778	1	3	...
Mekliganj	12	106	87,137	365	15,648	...	...	...
Mathabha nga Subdivisio n	19	184	337,550	297	78,040	...	...	...
Mathabha nga	10	184	250,543	297	39,346	...	...	...
Sital Kuchi	9	...	87,007	...	38,694	...	...	...
Sadar Subdivisio n	232	459	379,220	381	87,114	13	...	...
Koch Bihar	232	459	379,220	381	87,114	13	...	...
Tufanganj Subdivisio n	...	92	236,413	132	51,733	...	...	...
Tufanganj	...	92	236,413	132	51,733	...	...	...
Dinahata	1	457	305,375	825	115,863	...	...	...

Subdivision								
Dinhata	1	457	251,710	813	100,168	...	...	...
Sitai	...	...	53,665	12	15,695	...	...	...

Source: **Census of India 1981, Series-23, West Bengal, Paper-I of 1984, Household Population by Religion of Head of Household (Up to Police Station & Town Level), S.N. Ghosh, IAS, Director of Census Operations, West Bengal,, pp.9-13**

The largest number of Hindu population in the district during 1971-81 was in the police station of Cooch Behar having 379220 persons of Hindu religion and constituting 81.13 percent of the total population of the district. It was followed by the police stations of Dinhata with 251710

Hindu persons, Mathabhanga 250543 Hindu persons and Tufanganj with 236413 persons of Hindu religion. The highest increase in the Hindu population in the district during this time was found in Sitai with 37.48 percent increase followed by the police stations of Sitalkuchi (31.62 percent), Mathabhanga (28.95 percent), Mekliganj (28.06 percent), Cooch Behar (25.86 percent) and Dinhata (25.47 percent). The highest number of the Muslims in the district was enumerated in the police station of Dinhata having 100168 persons of Muslim religion followed by the police stations of Cooch Behar (87114 persons) and Tufanganj (51733 persons). The highest percentage of the Muslims to the total population was enumerated in the police station of Sitalkuchi (30.78) followed by the police stations of Dinhata (28.36) and Haldibari (26.74). However, the highest increase of Muslim population in the district was found in the police station of Sitalkuchi (33.37) followed by the police stations of Haldibari (32.67), Mekliganj (24.71) and Tufanganj (24.73). The Buddhists and Christians in largest number were enumerated in the police station of Cooch Behar the number being 232 out of total 273 persons and 459 out of total 1333 persons. The Jains were found in greatest number in the district in Dinhata with 813 persons. [ibid. pp.9-13] Thus barring the Sikhs, Other religions and Religion not stated the North Bengal districts had great contribution on the religious composition.

During the decade following 1981 there was a great development in religious demography happened both in Bengal and its part North Bengal with voluminous growth of both the Hindu and Muslim communities. In the State of West Bengal the Hindus totaled to 50866624 in 1991. This was 74.72 percent of the total population of the State. There was an increase of 8859465 persons of Hindu religion with a growth rate of 21.09 percent over the Hindu population of the previous decade. The people belonged to the Muslim community numbered 16075836 persons constituting 23.61 percent of the total population of the district. The increase in the Muslim population in 1991 in compare to that of the 1981 were 4332627 persons with the growth rate of 36.89 percent. It is noticeable that the growth of the Hindus in 1991 was decreased by 0.28

percent whereas the growth of the Muslims increased by 7.34 percent in compare to the growth of previous decade. The growth of the Buddhists was also high by 30.25 percent in the State during the period. The Christians in the State constituted 0.56 percent of the total population whereas the Buddhists constituted 0.30 percent. The Jains and the Sikhs were in small number in the State during the period.¹¹⁹ Noticing over these developments of the State we shall discuss the religious demographic scenario of the districts of North Bengal for the decade of 1981-91. The following tables will help us to have a glance over the phenomenon.

Table-6.41
Distribution of population in districts of North Bengal by religion,
1991

State/District	Total population	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Bhuddhists	Jains	Orp	RNS
WEST BENGAL	68077965	50866624	16075836	383477	55392	203578	34355	452403	6300
Kochbihar	2171145	1659733	506728	1467	215	353	2093	52	504
Jalpai guri	2800543	2375168	281054	107969	1607	31633	862	2100	150
Darjiling	1299919	1013310	59140	65605	1251	155295	802	4028	488
West Dinajpur	3127653	1955019	1149560	20540	156	228	1169	942	39
Maldah	2637032	1377844	1252292	5118	183	64	224	1130	177

Source: West Bengal Religious Table, Table for India, C-9, downloaded from censusindia.gov.in/Digital Library/Archive..., Tables, Social & Cultural Tables – (C-Series), C-9, Religion

Table-6.42
Distribution of population in percentage in districts of North Bengal by religion,
1991

State/District	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Bhuddhists	Jains	Orp	RNS
WEST BENGAL	74.72	23.61	.56	.08	.30	.05	.66	.01
Kochbihar	76.45	23.34	.07	.01	.02	.10	.00	.02
Jalpai guri	84.81	10.04	3.86	.06	1.13	.03	.07	.01
Darjiling	77.95	4.55	5.05	.01	11.95	.06	.31	.04

West Dinajpur	62.51	36.75	.66	.00	.01	.04	.03	.00
Maldah	52.25	47.49	.19	.01	.00	01	.04	.01

Source: West Bengal Religious Table, Table for India, C-9, downloaded from censusindia.gov.in/Digital Library/Archive..., Tables, Social & Cultural Tables – (C-Series), C-9, Religion

During the decade of 1981-91 the district of Malda had 1377844 persons belonged to Hindu religion. Thus the Hindus formed 52.25 percent of the total population of the district. This was very much low (22.47 percent low) proportion than the proportion of the Hindu population in the State. It was also low from the proportion of the Hindu people to the total population in 1981 (54.49 percent) and 1971 (56.63 percent). That is in every decade there was decrease about 2 percent decrease in proportion of the Hindus among the total population. Even in compare to that of 1951 (62.02 percent) this was low around 10 percent. The increase of Hindu population numbered 270652 persons in 1991 being increased by 24.44 percent growth over the Hindu population of the last decade. The growth rate was above the growth of State during the period. The Muslims in the district in 1991 were 1252292 persons being contributed 47.49 percent population to the total population of the district. There was increase of 332374 persons with the rate of growth of 36.89 percent among the Muslims of the district in 1991. The rate of growth of the Muslims was much high than the growth rate of the Muslims in the State as a whole. It was 13.14 percent above the State. The district had 7.67 percent share in the growth of Muslim population of the State. The growth of the Muslims in the district was increased by 4.62 percent than the growth of the previous decade. On the other proportionately the Muslim population in the district grew from 36.97 percent in 1951 to 43.13 percent in 1971, to 45.27 percent in 1981 and to 47.49 percent in 1991. Proportional growth was also high.

There were only 5118 persons of Christian religion in the district of Malda. The Christian population was increased 1098 persons in number with the rate of growth of 27.31 percent also higher than the State's growth rate. The Christian population comprised only 0.19 percent population of the district. There were only 183 Sikhs, 64 Buddhists, and 224 Jains in the district in 1991. In respect of the State the proportion in all these cases was very small in the district. There were 1130 persons from other religions and 177 persons did not return any religion in the district. In both cases of the Buddhists and the Jains the number was decreased from the previous decade by 44 and 171 numbers respectively. On the other the Sikhs grew 73 persons in number.

During the decade of 1981-91 the district of West Dinajpur had 1955019 persons of Hindu religion. They contributed 62.51 percent population in the district. There was increase of 433603 persons among the Hindus in the district with growth rate of 28.50 percent over the population of the last decade being much higher than the growth rate of the State. The

proportion of the Hindu population of the district was decreased from 63.26 percent in 1981 to 62.51 percent in 1991. The rate of the growth of the Hindu population in the district also decreased from 1981 to 1991 by small percentage of 1.21 percent. On the other both in proportion and rate of growth there was increase in Muslim population in the district in 1991 from that of 1981. The Muslims in 1991 in the district of West Dinajpur being 1149560 persons comprised 36.75 percent of the total population by increasing 0.96 percent than that of 1981 census year. The increase of the Muslim population was 33.55 percent with an increase of 288763 persons in 1991 being lower than the average growth rate of the State. The rate of growth increased during this time by 4.60 percent than that of the last census decade.

There was large number of Christians in the district of West Dinajpur in 1991. They numbered 20540 persons in the district contributing 0.66 percent to the total population. However the increase of the Christian people was very small in number (1098 persons) and percent (05.43). There was decrease among the Buddhist population and Jain population of the district. The Buddhists decreased by 51 persons (18.27 percent) and the Jain population decreased by 435 persons (27.12 percent) during this time. There were only 156 persons in the district with an increase of 3 persons during the decade. There were 942 persons beyond the six major religions and 39 persons who did not return any religion in the district in 1991.

The district of Darjeeling was populated by 1013310 persons of Hindu religion during the decade of 1981-91 and the Hindus constituted 77.95 percent of the total population of the district. Thus the Hindus proportionately declined by 1.49 percent during the period from 1981 to 1991. However, the number of the Hindus in the district was increased by 199685 persons with a growth rate of 24.54 percent being declined from the rate of growth of Hindu population of 1981 by 3.24 percent. The Muslim population of the district with the number of 59140 persons comprised 4.55 percent of total population during this period. There was proportional increase among the Muslims of the district from 3.64 percent in 1981 to 4.55 percent in 1991. The increase of the Muslims during this period numbered 21841 persons with a growth of 58.56 percent, a spectacular growth of the Muslim population in the district being same percentage of increase in last decade also.

A very large number of Christians with a large percentage of increase were witnessed by the district of Darjeeling during the decade 1981-1991. There were 65605 persons of Christian religion in the district in 1991 with an increase of 18444 persons having growth rate of 39.11 percent. Thus the Christian population constituted 5.05 percent of the total population. This was the largest proportion Christian population in the districts of North Bengal. Even the Christians of the district of Darjeeling contributed 17.11 percent of the total Christian population of the State of West Bengal. The Buddhists were in more large number in the district of Darjeeling having 155295 persons belonged to the religious community. Thus they comprised

11.95 percent of the total population again being the largest proportion to the total population not only among the North Bengal districts but also among the districts of West Bengal as a whole. With this the district contributed 76.28 percent to the total Buddhist population of the State. The Sikhs were also in good number in the district during this time having 1251 persons of the religion. There were 1169 persons of Jainism in the district. There was large number of people, highest in the North Bengal district, numbering 4028 persons belonged religions other than the six major religions. There 488 persons in the district during this time who did not return their religion.

The district of Jalpaiguri had 2375168 persons belonged to Hindu religion and they constituted 84.81 percent, the highest proportion in the North Bengal districts, of the total population of the district. There was proportional decline in Hindu population in the district by 2.69 percent from that of the previous decade. However, the Hindu population increased in the district 22.55 percent having a number of 437106 persons increased. The percentage of increase was also declined by 5.02 percent from that of the preceding decade. On the other the Muslims increased in the district by 45.13 percent having a number of 87396 persons increased. Thus there was progress of 21.77 percent of the increase of Muslim population from that of the previous decade. Thus there was also proportional rise of the Muslims by 1.29 percent from that of the previous decade and the Muslims in 1991 having a number of 281054 persons constituting 10.04 percent of the total population of the district.

There was large number of Christians in the district of Jalpaiguri in 1991 census year. Having 107969 persons of Christian religion it constituted 3.86 percent of the total population of the district. Most importantly the district of Jalpaiguri contributed 28.16 percent to the total Christian population of the State of West Bengal. The Christians in the district increased greatly by 69.88 percent having 44414 persons increased during the decade. There was also proportional increase of 0.99 percent of the Christian population in the district. The Buddhists were also in a significant number in the district constituting 1.13 percent of the total population. Having 31633 persons of Buddhist religion the district contributed 15.54 percent to the total Buddhist population of the State. The Buddhist population in the district was increased by 93.26 percent having a number of 15265 persons increased. There was good number of Sikhs numbering 1607 persons in the district during the decade. There were 862 persons of Jain religion and 2100 persons of other religion in the district in 1991. 150 persons of the district did not return any religious faith they observed.

The district of Cooch Behar had Hindu population of 1659733 persons in 1991 and constituted 76.45 percent of the total population of the district. It was a decline of 2.56 percent in the proportion of the Hindu population from that of 1981. In accordance with the proportionate decline the rate of increase of the Hindus also declined. Thus having an increase of 259899

persons of Hindu religion it grew up by 18.57 percent which was 7.43 percent less from that of the rate of growth of preceding decade. In contrary the rate of growth of the Muslims in the district progressed from 22.52 percent in 1981 to 37.63 percent in 1991 having increased by 138552 persons in the district. So it was a large increase of 15.11 percent in the rate of increase from that of the 1981. This also led to the growth of the proportion of the Muslims in total population of the district from 20.78 percent in 1981 to 23.34 percent in 1991 with an increase of 2.56 percent. That is proportional decrease of the Hindus was substituted by the proportional increase of the Muslims.

There were 1467 persons belonged to the Christianity in 1991 in the district of Cooch Behar. This was only 0.07 percent of the total population of the district. There was an increase of 134 persons of Christian religion during the decade of 1981-1991. There were 215 persons of the district returned their religion as Sikhism. The Buddhists were also in small number in the district of Cooch Behar numbering only 353 persons. There was good number of Jain population numbering 2029 persons in the district of Cooch Behar in 1991. There were 52 persons returned religions other than the six major religions and 504 persons did not return any faith as their religions in the district during this time.

Thus the decade of 1981-1991 witnessed various experiences in context of different religions in North Bengal. As a whole North Bengal had above 8 million persons of Hindu religion (8381074 persons) and constituted 69.63 percent of the total population of the region. There was increase of 23.61 percent in the Hindu population on the previous decade which was above the average growth of Hindu population in the State (21.09 percent). The Muslims in North Bengal as a whole increased by 36.51 percent on the Muslim population of the preceding decade and constituted 26.99 percent of the total population of the region during the period of 1981-91. In cases of proportion to the total population it was much high than the State's proportion but in case of rate of increase of the Muslim population it was little bit low than the State's increase. There was large number of the Christians in the North Bengal region numbering total 200699 persons and constituted 1.66 percent of the total population of the region. But in case of total Christian population of the State, North Bengal comprised 52.34 percent of the total Christian population of the State. There was an increase of 65149 persons being 48.06 percent increase among the Christian population in North Bengal in 1991. Regarding Buddhist population in North Bengal there was growth of 36.03 percent with 49681 persons increased from 1981 to 1991 census year. The Buddhists constituted 1.56 percent of the total population of the district. But in consider to the State of West Bengal the North Bengal districts alone had the share of 92.14 percent in the total Buddhist population of the State during the decade. However, there were decreases in the growth of the Sikhs by 21.90 percent and in the growth of Jains by 18.35 percent during the decade. Thus development in religious demography varied from district to district and also religion to religion in North Bengal during the decade.

IV

Beverley wrote in 1872 report that "there is certainly no par of India- perhaps there is no country in the world which contains so wide a variety of races and tribes a we find in Bengal."¹²⁰ It is also true in case of present day North Bengal during our period of study which still is continued. Like Bengal proper and border Bengal districts though not in large number, people belonged to the nationalities of Bengalis, Oryas, Assamese and Hindustanis were also found in different partsof North Bengal districts of the period. 'Besides these four distinct nationalities' the districts of Norh Bengal constituted a large number of 'aboriginals', not in the senses of 'indigenous authocthones' but in the sense of non-Aryans.¹²¹ I would like to favour the view of the Census Commissioner, Bengal Census 1872 to treat the fact that 'Within each nationality we find numerous tribes and castes which clearly indicate a difference of origin and race'. As though both the Brahmin of upper caste and Koch, Rajbanshis or Paliyas of North Bengal districts are Bengali speaking they must be treated as the representatives of different stocks the latter being treated as aborigins. In case of absence of racial distinctin 'tribal-sub-divisions with ethnical peculiarities may be taken under consideration. However I have taken the group of tribe, caste or ethnicity as given in the official records.

W.W. Hunter listed the different ethnical and caste groups of Bengal district wise in his series of 'Statistical Accounts' compiling information basically from the Census Report of Bengal in 1872. His 'Imperial Gazetteer'¹²² and 'Annals of Rural Bengal',¹²³ H.H. Risley,¹²⁴ Dalton¹²⁵ also through light over this phenomenon. I also have followed the list given in those and tried to corroborate the description given in later official records.

In Maldah the people at the time knew both the languages Hindustani and Bengali representing the caste belonged to both groups in the district. The Census of Bengal, 1872, though treated Koch, Paliya and Rajbanshis, a single tribe recorded in a great umber in Maldah.¹²⁶ But Mr. Hunter in his table of ethnic and caste groups of Maldha district listed them differently with spate number. This fact has been clarified by Colonel Dalton in this way "There can be no doubt the the Koch is one of the most ancient of the people in India....their linguistic affinities were supposed to be with Mech-Kchhari, but this rests on an uncertainty, and they are distinguished for those tribes by the darkness of their complexion".¹²⁷ Among the Hindus about seventy castes were listed by Hunter in case of the District of Maldah. The Brahmins were the priest class; some of them being land holders or merchants, or Government employees. There were different classes of Brahmins in Maldah like Rahri, Uttarbraendri, Varendry, Vedic, Kanyakubja, Maithili, Gauriya, Bhuinhar, Barua Sarkar and Acharya. Among the others were Gir Gosains, Baidya, Khatri, Kayastha, Rajput, Sadgop, Teli, Karmakar, Kansabanik, Goala, Bairagi, Pundari, Chain, Ganesa, Nagar, Dhanuk, Koch, Palia, Rajbanshi, Tiar, Bin, Hari etc. The Chain and the Bin, as mr. Magrath, C.S. told were originally of Bihar land and only found in Maldah district.¹²⁸

Besides, there were number of Muhammadans and aborigins in the district who constituted the greater portion of the population of the district. However, the Hindu, ceremonies and models of worship were gradually followed by them.¹²⁹ Among the Muhammadans Julaha, Mughul, pathan sayyid, shekh and unspecified were in the district. All the upper caste Hindus were immigrants. **[A Separate chart for details of cast and ethnic division has been attached in the Appendix of this Chapter]**

The population of the district of Dinagepore also ethnically consisted by the Hindu castes, Muhammadan and the aboriginal tribes. **[A Separate chart for details of cast and ethnic division has been attached in the Appendix of this Chapter]** There were about 89 Hindu castes in the district which Mr. C.F. Magrath's District Census compilation for Dinajpur enlisted. Among the upper castes in rank were Brahmins with the family names of Mukhopadhyay, Bhattacharya, Chattopadhyay, Gangopadhyaya, Bandyopadhyaya, Chakraborty, Maitra, Sanyal and Bagchi who immigrated in near past in the district. The Kshatriyas, Rajput, Ghahrwal, Baidya, Kayastha, Agarwala and Marwari, Oswal were also belonged to upper caste. Among the 'Pure Sudra Caste' enlisted by Hunter from the Bengal Census, the important were Napit, Kamar, Kumar, Sadgop, Barui, Teli etc. Among the 'Intermediate Sudra Castes' important were Goala, Kaibartta, Vaishnavs, Gosain, Tanti, Ganesh etc. Among the 'low caste Hindus' important were Pali, Jogi, Suri (wine sellers), Khyen, Jalia, Tiar, etc. Among the 'Semi Aboriginal Castes' of the district important were Buna, Chamar, Mal, Bediya, Hari, Bhuimali etc. Among the 'Aboriginal tribes' important were Santals, Dhangar, Kol etc. Brahmins used to take water or uncooked food from the Pure Sudra Castes. The intermediate Sudra castes were neither esteemed nor despised. The Muhammadans like Maldah district was constituted by the Julah, Mughul, Pathan, Sayyid, Shaikh and mostly the unspecified. In case of this district all the upper castes Hindus were immigrants.¹³⁰

Bengal as contained the metropolis of British India a large number Non-Asiatics were seen in the census than the other provinces. Total number of non-Asiatics in Bengal was 17155 among whom Americans, Africans, Australasians together were 2712 and 14448 were Europeans. Among North Bengal districts European in a major number were seen in Darjeeling 419 in number.¹³¹ Among the Asiatics other than natives of British India were largely constituted by the Nepalese. They prominently were seen in Darjeeling. They numbered in Darjeeling 25,781. Among them the large numbers were Khambu (3913), Gurung (cowherd, 3150), Mangar (2494), Limbu (4663) and Kami (blacksmith, 1886). The other Nepali caste in the region found in less number were Chabiring, Diwan, Damai (tailor), Dilpali, Gain, Ghalia, Gharti, Ghatwal, Gurkhani, Hatwali, Iyaka, Jemedder, Jimal, Khawas, Manjhi, Moktan, Newar, Paharia, parel, Parbatiya, Pradhan, Rai, Sharki (shoe makes), Suchikar, Sunawar, Tamang, Thkur, Thami and Thapa.

The Bengal Census 1872 highlighted over the Darjeeling aboriginal tribes of Dhimal, the Lepchas, Mech and Murmis who numbered respectively 873, 3952, 1004 and 6,603. The report or the description of Hodgson has been taken by the census commissioner to describe the Dhimal and Meches considering them as the Bodo or Kachhari race. Hodgson told of 15000 Dhimals have and 12593 male adult Bodo or Meches turning their population 40000 in the Dooars.¹³² The Lepchas, the natives of Sikkim, were also found in greater number in Darjeeling district. Dr. Hooker gave vivid description of the Lepcha, which was taken by the Census Report.¹³³ The Murmis were mostly found in Darjeeling. To Dalton they were “a nomadic and pastoral branch of the Bhotiyas” whereas they had more affinity with the Nepalese.¹³⁴ Another important tribe was Bhutia in Darjeeling. They were found in Darjeeling in three classes – Tibetan Bhutia, Bhatanese Bhutia and Sikkimese Bhutia. The Sherpa Bhutias emerged from cross between Tibetan Bhutia and Lepcha. If we take the Buddhists as Bhutias then their number in Darjeeling in 1872 was 3834. Among the western aboriginal tribes the region of North Bengal found them as Bhoomij, Kharriah, Kharwar, Kol, Sonthal and Oraon. Among the Hindu castes of Darjeeling there were Brahmins, Babhan, Kshatriya, Rajput, Baidya, Kayastha, Marwari, Ararwala, Kaibarta, Goala, Vaishnav, Koch, Rajbanshi, Dosadh, Mal, Hari, Mithar, Chapwal, Jaliya, Kahar were important to be named. **[A Separate chart for details of cast and ethnic division has been attached in the Appendix of this Chapter]**

During census enumeration of 1872 in Jalpaiguri District, as the district census compilation by Mr. C.F. Magrath, returned there were few Mech or Kachharis in permanently settled area numbering only 40. But in Western Durars they were a numerous section numbering 3841 during the Deputy Commissioner’s Census in 1870 at the time of settlement of the Duars.¹³⁵ The Koch, Rajbanshi and Palias altogether were recorded 137267 in the Regulation or permanently settled portion of the district whereas they constituted 20413 male adults of Western Duars’ Hindu population in 1870.¹³⁶ During the time among the other Hindu castes the significant were the Brahmins, Kshatriya or the warrior castes, Rajputs, Baidyas, Kayasthas, Agarwala, Oswal etc. Among the Subordinate Hindus important were the Napit or Jazzam, Kamar, Kumar, Teli, Sadgop, Kaibarta, Goalas, Vaishnav, Tantis, Behara, Suri, Chandals, Hari, Khyen, etc. **[A Separate chart for details of cast and ethnic division has been attached in the Appendix of this Chapter]**

The Muhamdan constituted 44.2 percent of the population in permanently settled portion of the district whereas they formed only 12.3 percent in the Non-Regulation part.¹³⁷ However, Suders reported that “Next to the Rajbansis come the muhammadans, of whom there are 53,562 in the Duars according to the last census. They originally belonged to the adjoining state of Kuch Behar, as also to Purnea, Rangpur, Dinajpur and the regulation portion of Jalpaiguri district which is to the west of the Tista river, whence they are attracted to the Duars by the richness of the soil, the easy terms on which land may be obtained, ...”¹³⁸ W.W. Hunter wrote that “the population of Kuch Behar is of mixed origin”¹³⁹ According to the District census compilation the Hinduized aboriginals together with the Muhammadans who ethnically

resembled with them formed almost 93.64 percent of the entire population of the present day Cooch Behar during 1870s. Among the other aboriginal tribe in the then State there were Garos, Kachharis, Mechs and the Morangs.¹⁴⁰ Among the Hindu castes significant portion was occupied by the Brahmins, Rajputs, Kahaystha, Napit, Kaibarta, Koeri, Tanti, Vaishnav, Khyen, Jogi or Jugi, Chandal etc. The Muhammadans constituted about 27 percent of the population in the state in 1870s. [A Separate chart for details of cast and ethnic division has been attached in the Appendix of this Chapter] From the following chart we may get an idea of caste and ethnic composition of population in 1872 in North Bengal.¹⁴¹

Table-6.43
Caste and Ethnicity in North Bengal
For the Year 1872

Caste & Ethnicity	Maldah	Dinagepore	Julpigoree	Darjeeling	Cooch Behar
Non-Asiatics	26	21	25	420	5
Mixed Races	11	-	7	-	-
Aboriginal Tribes	11717	4431	533	14088	863
Semi Hinduized Aboriginals	135562	505527	148043	25029	117095
Hindus	211552	181550	4360	19052	9624
Persons of Hindu Origin nor Recognized Caste	6698	17180	-	4062	708
Muhammadans	310890	793215	144980 (Regulation Area)	6248	48086
Asiatic beyond India	-	-	-	25781	13

Source: Compiled from Bengal Census, 1872, Hunter, W.W., Statistical Accounts of Bengal,

So from the 1872 census and other details it is clear that almost all the upper caste Hindus in the North Bengal districts were immigrants of different parts of Bengal and other provinces of India. The aboriginal tribes like Dhangar, Kharwar, Kol, Phariya, Santal, Garo, Murmi, Uraon were not indigenous autochthones rather immigrants. Among the intermediate lower caste Hindus the Napits, Chandals, Goalas, Vaishnav, Suris, Haris, Kaibartta, Tanti, Dhangar, Chamars were of a significant number in all part of North Bengl. Regarding the semi-Hinduized aboriginals the Koch, Palias and Rajbanshis had great share in the Hindu and total population. Even the converted Muhammedans in large number were from this aboriginal section of people

from North Bengal. In Darjeeling Asiatics other than India that is people from Nepal became dominant in number.

The following table will show the numerical strength of the Rajbanshis, Koch and Palias in North Bengal in 1870s¹⁴²

Table-6.44
Rajbanshi, Pali and Koch in North Bengal
For the Year 1872

Caste or Ethnic Group	Maldah	Dinagepore	Julpigoree	Darjeeling	Cooch Behar	Total of North Bengal
Koch	13908	30605	4	-	-	44517
Pali	24320	326971	128	-	-	351419
Rajbanshi	24724	86351	13735	23124	111125	382459
Total	62952	443927	137267	23124	111125	778395

Source: Compiled from Bengal Census, 1872, Hunter, W.W., Statistical Accounts of Bengal

So among the North Bengal districts the district of Dinagepore was the highest holder of the Rajbanshi, Pali and Koch ethnic group of people in North Bengal who together with constituted a great portion not only of the district population but also the population of North Bengal region. If the people of Jalpiguri and Cooch Behar are taken they have the largest share of the North Bengal population. In fact, the Rajbanshi, Pali and Koch ethnic group of people in North Bengal altogether comprised 778395 out of total population of 3224292 souls about 24 percent of the entire population.

Besides, the occupation was taken by the enumerators, as the people returned thus, for designating people of different parts of North Bengal. So in a few cases people from Muhammedan religion were included in Hindu castes like Bediya, Dhunia etc. who were separated and showed in Muslim caste in later enumeration.

H.H. Risley gave detail description of 'Tribes and Case of Bengal' in his stalwart work 'Ethnographic Glossary'¹⁴³ from where we may have a details of the caste and ethnic composition of North Bengal for the period from 1872 to 1881. However, he used the statistics mostly provided in the Bengal Census of 1872 and Bengal Census of 1881. As I already briefed up the different caste and ethnic composition of North Bengal districts based basically the Bengal Census of 1872 and the official Survey Reports, now I shall proceed to the development of that composition in the latter decades up to 1901 based on the census and other official records ad having some details of the castes from Risley.

The census of 1881 listed the Hindu castes of the province of Bengal dividing them into six classes: Class-I for Brahmins, Class-II for Rajputs, Class-III for the Hindu castes, Class-IV for Aboriginal Tribes and Castes, Class-V for the Hindus not recognizing caste and Class-VI for the Caste not stated. If we take the statistics from the census of 1881 the demographic scenario for the Class I, II, V, and VI it would be as follows in North Bengal during the time.¹⁴⁴

Table-6.45

**Caste distribution for Class I, II, V&VI in North Bengal
For the Year 1881**

Districts\ Feudatory State	Class-I	Class-II	Class-V		Class-VI
	Brahmin	Rajputs	Baishnab	Others	Caste not Stated
Maldah	12001	5104	9569	291	6567
Dinagepore	8913	2885	19349	62	7900
Darjeeling	3882	6352	576	949	11552
Julpigoree	3909	1269	3420	28	12435
Cooch Behar	3530	3197	1210	72	1573
Total of North Bengal	32235	18807	34124	1404	40027

Source:Compiled from Bengal Census, 1881 Table no. VIII

So there was small proportion of upper caste Brahmins and Rajput population in North Bengal out of total Hindu population of the region for the time. Even the Hindu people who did not recognize caste and did not state their caste were more in large number than them. But this small group of Brahmanical group had greatest influence in the society which will be discussed in the latter chapter.

Among the other Hindu castes who were more than 10000 in numbers were Baniya, Kaibarta, Hari, Jaliya, Napit in Dinajpur; Bengali and Teor in Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar district; Goalla, Hari, Kaibartta and Teor in Maldah district. No Hindu caste of Darjeeling district were more than 10000 in number found. Above 5000 but below 10000 in number among the other Hindu castes in North Bengal districts were Chandal, Dossadh, Gowalla, Karmakaror Lohar, Kayastha, Kumhar, Sunri, Tanti, Jugi in Dinagepore district; Baniya, Bind, Dhanuk, Karmkar, Napit, Sunri, Tanti and Teli were in Maldah district; Bhaban in Darjeeling district; Hari, Kaibartta, Napit, Tanti were in Jalpaiguri; Chandal in Cooch Behar district. So all these caste groups more or less constituted the major portion of the Hindu people in North Bengal during the census period of 1881 which excluding the hilly tract of Darjeeling district. It should be mentioned that the

Bengalis in Jalpaiguri-Cooch Behar, Baniyas in Dinagepore, Gwalla in Maldah, Kaibarta both in Dinajpur-Maldah, Teor in Jalpiguri-Maldah-Cooch Behar were very much predominant caste.¹⁴⁵

Among the aboriginal tribes and castes during this census period in North Bengal important were Kharwar, Kol, Santal, Bhumij and Koch were significant. Distribution of the aboriginals in North Bengal may be seen from the following Chart for the 1881.¹⁴⁶

Table-6.46
Distribution of Aboriginal Tribes and Caste for Class IV, in North Bengal
For the Year 1881

Aboriginal Tribes&Case	Maldah	Dinagepore	Julpigoree	Darjeeling	Cooch Behar	Total of North Bengal
Bhuinya	259	45	-	15	11	330
Bhumij	-	6829	-	81	-	6910
Gond	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kharwar	4182	213	-	371	-	4766
Koch	60700	407923	208322	30801	299458	1007204
Kol	897	316	8	-	-	1221
Santhal	833	6813	-	19	-	7665
Others	3173	9450	10898	43724	6559	73804
Total of Class IV	7044	431589	219228	74961	306028	1038850

Source: Compiled from Bengal Census, 1881, Table no. VIII

It should be noticed that all the Rajbanshis, Paliyas and Koches , not like the census of 1872, has been enlisted under single head 'Koch'. Risley wrote "At the preset day the name Kochh, without doubt the original designation of the tribe, is so carefully tabooed in the districts where they are most numerous, and where there is every reason to believe them to represent the earliest permanent settlers, that in Kuch Behar itself at the census of 1881 not a single Kochh was to be found. The transformation of the Kochh into the Rajbansi, the name by which they are now known in Rangpur, Jalpaiguri and Kuch or Koch Behar, is a singular illustration of the influence exercised by fiction in the making of caste."¹⁴⁷ However, the census of 1881 listed, as I told, them under the head of 'Koch'.

About the Santhals Risley wrote that "Santal, Sonthal, Saontar, a large Dravidian tribe classed in linguistic grounds as Kolarians, which is found in western Bengal, Northern Orissa, Bhagalpur and Santal Parganas"¹⁴⁸ It is obvious that they came in North Bengal basically during 1872-1881 period large number in Dinajpur from those region. In other group of the aboriginal tribes were

the Dhimals, Mech, Gado, Oraon etc. were important in case of North Bengal. In respect of Darjeeling there was various Nepali caste and hill tribes who largely constituted the 'Others' group numbering 43724 among whom Limbu, Bhotia, Murmi, Gurung, Kamis(3723), Khambas, Sunwars and also Lepchas with others. The aboriginal tribes with their animistic faith were rapidly becoming Hinduized to be termed as Semi-Hinduized aboriginals. The Muhammedans were also increasing in number in North Bengal with their previous caste groups like Julah, Mughul, Pathan, Sayyid and Shaikh and unspecified also.¹⁴⁹ **[A Separate chart for details of other castes under Class III for the year 1881 for North Bengal has been attached in the Appendix of this Chapter]**

The census of Bengal 1891 provided district wise separate statistics for different castes under the headings of Caste, Religious Devotees and persons returned by Sect, Hindus returned by title or common Sub caste, Hindus Returned by Actual Occupation, Hindus Returned by locality, Musalmans returned by title and Musalmans returned by actual occupation. However, there is no separate list for the Hindu caste, Semi-Hinduized and aboriginal tribes in this census Statistics. From the random statistics of the Hindu castes of different districts district wise picture may be observed.

The Hindu caste numbering more than 10000 in the North Bengal districts during 1890s were Baniya, Bhumali and Mithar together, Brahman, Jugi, Kaibarta, Napit in Dinajpur; Baniya and Khatri in Jalpaiguri; Goala, Jugi, Kaibarta, Tiya, Bind, Chain, Haria and Mithar together, Nagarin Malda. There was no Hindu caste both in Darjeeling and Kuch Bihar in 1890s above 10000 number. The important aspect of this period decrease of Baniya class in Dinajpur and more or less equal increase in Jalpaiguri district of that class. There was a great appearance of the Buimalis, the Eastern Bengal Hinduized caste group, in Dinajpur with a number of 34647. The Jugis showed also an important rise in Dinajpur(15188) and Maldah (13398). The Kaibartta continued to be a major caste group in Dinajpur (39765) and with a great increase in Maldah from 23556 in 1881 to 37744 in 1891. **[A Separate chart for details of other castes for the year 1881 for North Bengal has been attached in the Appendix of this Chapter]**

Among the aboriginal Tribes and Castes of North Bengal the Koches showed a steady growth in all the district during the census decade from 1881 to 1891. Here it should be pointed out that there was protest from Rajbanshi people in Jalpaiguri-Cooch Behar district against designating them as 'Koch' in the Census record of 1881. But in spite of the protest again in 1891 the Paliyas, Rajbanshis and Koches were listed under the single head of 'Koch'. So discontent was reflected by the Rajbanshi people of the region The Oraon represented a steady growth in all the North Bengal districts of our discussion and the Santals showed an appearance in Jalpaiguri districts (1409) and a voluminous growth in Maldah (from 833 in 1881 to 20989 in 1891). In the district of Darjeeling Bhutia(8890), Khambu(29950), Kami(7048), Limbu (12812), Manger (4412),

Gurung(9232), Lepcha (9717), Murmi (21636) and Sunwar(5156) were significant. Another important feature is that some Hindus were returned as Hindustani, Bengalis and Morangis in this region. The Musalmans remained under the caste name of Pathan, Sayyid and Shaikh, the lion portion being the Shaikhs. The Musalmans, on the basis of occupation, were also recognized as Dhuniya, Jolaha and Kunjra in North Bengal.¹⁵⁰

In 1901 Census of Bengal the Caste groups were arranged alphabetically and province and district wise list for the each caste was prepared. I have compiled the data from the table for whole Bengal Province and its feudatory states to prepare the caste and ethnic composition of people of present day North Bengal during the last decade of nineteenth century up to 1901. Here we get the religious divisions of, if there was, of all the castes in male female category. However I have in most cases, compiled the castes as a whole and when any castes show noticeable strength in religious division then it has been taken separately. **[A Separate chart for details of other castes for the year 1901 for North Bengal has been attached in the Appendix of this Chapter]**

The Hindu caste groups which was more than 10000 number in 1901 were Baishnabs(13207), Hari(22628), Kaibarta(27311), in Dinajpur; Ahir and Goala(13872), Bind(11208), Chain(43639), Hari(11078), Kaibarta(15003) in Malda; Khami(33133), Khas(11597), Limbu(14305), Murmi(25398) in Darjeeling district. In Jalpaiguri the Bhotia (6804), Brahman (4416), Hari(5208), Khen (khyan,4959), Kumhar were in a significant number. The Bhuimalis, greatly reduced in Dinajpur district. The Jugis or Jogis and Kaibarta also greatly decreased in Dinajpur and Malda district. The Tantis and Tiar in the North Bengal districts remained almost same to the previous decade. The Chandals were listed both in 1891 and 1901 census as Namasudras who became reduced in number in their previous existing parts of North Bengal. During this time the Khens were recorded in Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Kuch Bihar State 3943, 4959 and 3636 respectively in 1901.¹⁵¹ Risley recorded them as “a trading and cultivating caste of Northern Bengal an Assm, who claimed to be descended from a Kayasth who was employed at the court of Raja of Kuch Behar.¹⁵²

Among the Semi-Hinduized caste the Meches were a significant number in Jalpaiguri district (22348). Risley recorded them as “a Mongoloid tribe found in the Goalpara district of Assam and in the Himalayan Terai from Bhutan Duars westward to the Kanki river.”¹⁵³ Sanders recorded thus “the Mech and the Kachhari are considered as the same people, but in Duars they also call themselves Bodo, which mean a great people”(Sanders, Final Report, p. 178). Sanders recorded of the Rajbanshi, Muhammedans Bhutia, Dobasiyas, The Garos and The Totos in Western Duars in his ‘Final Report’ of 1889-1895.

A very significant aspect of the study is that not only the Rajbanshis but under its head Koch and Paliya, Deshi, Kantai were separately recoded in 1901 census. The distribution may be shoed as follows:¹⁵⁴

Table-6.47
Distribution Of the Rajbanshis, Desi, Kantia, Koch ad Paliyas in North Bengal
For the year 1901

Aboriginal Tribes&Case	Maldah	Dinagepore	Julpigoree	Darjeeling	Cooch Behar	Total of North Bengal
Rajbanshi	63735	498272	321170	29460	338299	1250936
Desi	10997	65405	99	-	-	76501
Kantai	55	58	-	-	-	113
Koch	8	231	-	-	-	219
Paliya	7796	252959	48	1434	-	262237
Total	82591	816925	321317	30894	338299	1590026

Source: Census of Bengal,1901, pp.191-266

If we see the gradual evolution of Rajbanshis, Paliya and Koch together during the period from 1872 to 1901 that will be as follows:

Table-6.48
Numerical Evolutions of the Rajbanshis together with Plaiya and Koch North Bengal
From 1872 to 1901

Districts\ Feudatory State	Census Year			
	1872	1881	1891	1901
Maldah	42952	60700	62975	63735
Dinagepore	443957	407923	481591	498272
Darjeeling	23124	30801	33472	29460
Julpigoree	137267	208322	297852	321170
Cooch Behar	111125	299458	352409	338299
Total of North Bengal	758425	1007204	1228299	1250936

Source: Compiled from All the four Census Data of 1872, 1881, 1891, 1901 for Bengal

There was a steady growth of the Rajbansis form 1872 to 1891 in all the districts of North Bengal in 1901. In 1872 the Rajbansis in North Bengal as a whole contained 24 percent of population (758425 out of total population 3224992). In 1881 it was 28 percent of total population. In that year they shared 49.91 percent of total Hindu population of North Bengal. In

1891 the share of the Rajbansis in North Bengal population was 32 percent (having 1228299 out of 3854288) and at the same time comprised 57.14 percent Hindu population. In the year of 1901 they had 31 percent share in total population of North Bengal (1250936 out of 4054581) and consisted 54.73 of Hindu population in North Bengal with a slight decline of 2.4 percent. This was happened due to the large number immigration of the Buddhists and Animists as the latter part of this discussion will prove.

Among the aboriginal tribes during 1901 significant were the Munda., Santal and Oraon. The Munda and Oroans who were absent in the census for 1872 to 1891 in almost all the districts of North Bengal they became mentionable number in 1901. It may be presented in the following chart:

Table-6.49
Distribution Of the Santals, Mundas and Oraons in North Bengal
For the year 1901

Aboriginal Tribes	Districts\ Feudatory State					Total of North Bengal
	Maldah	Dinagepore	Julpigoree	Darjeeling	Cooch Behar	
Munda	2408	5873	11672	3784	43	23780
Oraon	3718	31904	63584	9119	20	108345
Santal	52126	74101	10927	1859	32	139045
total	58252	111878	86183	14762	95	271170

Source: Census of Bengal, 1901, pp.191-266

So the Oraon and Munda both became a very and significant part of North Bengal population. The Oraon shoed a great number specially in Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri district. On the other the strength of Santals in North Bengal grew much within the period between 1872 and 1901. The numerical evolution of the Santals in North Bengal may be presented in the following way as tabular form:

Table-6.50
Numerical Evolution of the Santals in North Bengal
From 1872 to 1901

Districts\ Feudatory State	Census Year			
	1872	1881	1891	1901
Maldah	215	833	20989	52126
Dinagepore	1039	6813	6515	74101
Darjeeling	-	19	-	1859
Julpigoree	-	-	1409	10927
Cooch Behar	-	-	-	32
Total of North Bengal	1254	7698	28913	139045

Source: Compiled from All the four Census Data of 1872, 1881, 1891, 1901 for Bengal

So in compare to previous census in 1901 the number of Santhals in Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Malda district grew in a very greater level. The kind of changes and the decrease and disappearance of some of the castes during 1872 to 1901 period led us to scrutinize the phenomenon of migration consisting of emigration and emigration in the region of our discussion.

Among the Muhamedans in 1901 a very details had been recorded by the census operation. Some castes among the Muhammedans who were found in previous record in Hindu caste became in he Musalman's list like Bediya, Behara, Dhanuk. Besides, the Jaloha, Pathan, Moghul, Shekh and Nasyas like previous record also were taken in record. In all cases the Musalmans grew in number very steadily the predominant caste group being Shekh. As the castes had been recorded based on religion and as we have seen in religious table the growth of the Muhammedans naturally led the growth of grouping as caste in the records. The growth may be felt from the following table of 1901:

Table-6.51
Distribution of the Musalmans according to the Caste Group in North Bengal
For the year 1901

Caste Group	Districts\ Feudatory State					Total of North Bengal
	Maldah	Dinagepore	Julpigoree	Darjeeling	Cooch Behar	
Bediya	146	949	7	-	202	1304
Behara	-	9	2	-	-	11
Dhobi	288	14	10	12	16	340
Dhunias	2773	1	97	13	24	2908
Jaloha	11350	1517	723	407	195	14192
Moghal	189	117	356	84	6	752
Nasya	-	811	63884	62	42607	107364
Pathan	5138	3575	1488	266	704	11171
Sekh	399024	765263	161495	8186	123690	1457658
Saiad	2887	3018	584	121	219	6829
Total	421795	775274	228646	9151	167663	1602529

Source: Census of Bengal, 1901, pp.268-269

It should be mentioned here that the total number of he Musalmans given in the table of religion will not match with the total number of the musalmans of this table. Because there many other name of Muslim caste group in the Census table of 1901of which all, who are in a minor number, I have not taken. So there will be some difference in the number. However, the scenario of the Muslims according to their caste group as returned in the Census may be well understood from the table above. Most of the muhammedans returned themselves as Sekh

(1457658). The total numbers of Nasyas are 107364 among most whom resided in Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar the number of strength being 63884 and 42607 respectively. The reason of increasing of Sekhs had been described by the Census Report of 1901 thus: "Not only do new converts often call themselves sheikh, but it is also the title assumed by well-to-do members of the various functional groups when desirous of hiding their humble origin and entering the Ashraf class."¹⁵⁵ However the difference of number between the Nasyas and Sekhs in Jalpaiguri-Cooch Behar Region and Malda-Dinajpur region may led us to assume more castic difference in Jalpaiguri-Cooch Behar region than Malda-Dinajpur.

In some cases in the list of caste group there may be seen the disappearance or sudden decrease of a particular caste group. It may be because of their inclusion in other caste group or their emigration to other region. For example F.W. Strong reported that "the Tiyars, who often call themselves Rajbangsi in the districts south of Rangpur as far as Nadia and Jessore, and they probably owned the name long before the Mongoloid Koch kings rose to power."¹⁵⁶ So they may include themselves in Rajbangsi caste group. The change in profession also led the change of caste in group. As Risley described Jogi or Jugi as "a weaving caste of Eastern Bengal many of whose members have of recent years been driven by the competition of English piece goods to be take themselves to agriculture, lime-burning, gold-smiths' work and the subordinate grades of Government service"¹⁵⁷. Conversion to Islam might be another factor in disappearance or decrease of some low caste or so called semi Hinduised aboriginals of this region. It was the census of 1901 where I found a good number of Shaha (Sunri) caste of North Bengal amounting 3502 in Dinajpur 1172 in Jalpaiguri, 342 in Darjeeling, 2649 in Masldah and 513 in Kuch Behar. They have been recorded by Risley thus: "Shaha, a sub caste of Sunris in Eastern Bengal who have given up their original and taken to other possession, and thereby raised themselves above their caste brethren who sell wine, so that at present they consider the Sunris to be a caste different from and considerably inferior, to them."¹⁵⁸ Little difference between Rajbanshis and the Muhammedans in Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri was recorded as the evidence of conversion of Rajbansis into Muhammedanism by F.W. Strong in case of Dinajpur¹⁵⁹ and by D.H.E. Sanders in case of Western Duars¹⁶⁰ However, in this development the phenomenon of migration is very much important. Besides the process of immigration and emigration formed the base of composition of population of this period which have come different times in our previous discussion. So we now I shall proceed the important phenomenon of migration of this period between 1872 and 1901.

The beginning of the twentieth century in Bengal as well as in North Bengal Hinduism was regarded as a matter of belief, religious practice and over all this was a social system acknowledging the supremacy of Brahmans. Due to its heterogonous nature utmost tolerance in Hinduism was found which led the belief to have member in different sects like the 'followers of Vedas, of Brahmanism, of Buddhism and of polydaemonistic tribal cults of the aboriginal

populations and of eclectic schools, religious and philosophical, of every kind and every class. O'Malley wrote that Hinduism was "At one end of the scale is the monotheist or cultured pantheist, at the other end is the ignorant peasant, whose religious beliefs and practices are scarcely distinguishable from Animism pure and simple."¹⁶¹ However, even being in Hindu fold of the society there were restrictions in professing and practicing the religion. For example in 1809 the Hindus castes like the Loli or Kasbi, Kalal or Sunri, Machhus, Namasudra or Chandal, Ghuski, Bagdi, Jogi or Burbaf, Kahar-Bauri and Dulia, Rajbansi, Pirali, Chamar, Dom, Pan, Tiyar, Bhuinmali and Hari were not permitted to enter the temple Jagannath at Puri. However, this kind of rigidity did not prevail in North Bengal, though the upper segment of the society coming from different parts of the Province and India maintained this in some extent and if needed for enfolding into the Hindu society 'Prayschitta' and 'Suddhi' were deployed. So during the period of constructive development in Northern part of Bengal and in the newly formed districts of the Nineteenth century in North Bengal under our discussion number of castes and ethnic group of people emerged even within its existing population of heterogeneity.

Basing on some questions on practicing and revering Hinduism number of castes were surveyed in different districts of North Bengal as like as Bengal. In this survey as the continuity of the previous decade the functional castes like Bagdi, Buri, Belder, Bhuimalli, Bhuiya, Bhumij, Bind, Chamar, Chasadhoba, Dhoba, Dom, Dosadh, Ganda, Hari, Ho, Jogi or Jugi, Kaibartta (Jaliya), Kalwar, Kamr, Kapali, Kharwar, Koch, Kumhar, Mal, Mallah, Malo, Muchi, Munda, Namasudra, Nuniya Oraon, Rajbansi, santal, Savar, Shaha, Soar, Subarnabanik, Sunri, Sutradhar, Tanti, Teli, Tiyar were found. Among the listed castes or tribes many were animistic or likewise concerning their manner of worship and method of life. But in social context they arrogated themselves as Hindus. For example where as in Bihar and Orissa there was one Hindu Munda to four Animist Mundas and in case of Oraons one to eight in Bengal both of them represented as Hindus more in number than the Animists.

In the district of Malda during this period the higher caste people like Brahmins were in limited number. Barring them there were Shahas and Baniks who returned them as the Agarwalas, were found in Old Malda region. There were also the Chasatis, the Agriculturists and the Puros, the Silk-worm rearers, the Ganesh, the weavers, the Gangai, the potters and agriculturists in the district. A good number of Chains (43639), the agriculturists-cum-labourers were found Malda during this time in the 'diara' region in the western part of the district. There were large numbers of Santals in the Malda district numbering 52128 at the time. Though the Santals returned them as Hindus in the district in practice they used to worship their own tribal rites in life. However, the most important caste in Malda district was the Koch, Rajbanshis, Polis and the Deshis who numbered together 63735. They were the very prosperous caste of the district solely based on agriculture. At the time a section of the people, particularly the Polis claimed to be Kshatriya by origin. The Muslims in the district were mostly Sunnis besides some of the

Shershabadis. Different faiths like Farazi, Lamazhabis, Wahabis, Hadayat were existed among the Muslijm community of the district.¹⁶²

In Dinajpur district the major bulik of the population was constituted by the Rajbangsi as like as the previous decade. Strong reported that in 1911 the total of Rajbangsi people were 26 percent of the total population having no less than 442990 persons in number. Among these semi-Hinduized Rajbangsi 66415 were Desi Rajbangshis and 158798 paliyas and a few Kantais. Barring them huge number of the Rajbangsi people was converted to Muhammedanism. Some of them also embraced into orthodox Hinduism. Strong regarded the better class Muhammedan families were belonged to Afghan or Mughal soldiers or officials in Malda district. The better class Muhammedan elements, the Aryan elements, aboriginal tribes like Mundas and Oroans , even the low Hindu caste people all were foreign by origin in the district of Dinajur. In the census the persons who returned Animism their religion numbered 102031. The better classes Muhammedans were the descendents from the foreign invaders comprising the Afghans and Mughals. These invaders were the followed by the upper caste Hindus to be employed in military and administrative services. They also came as traders in the district. The superior intelligence of the upper caste Hindus made them wealthier and led them in power later on. So though the district largely populated by the Muslims the most of the Jamindars were Hindus and mostly from the upper caste Hindus.¹⁶³ The Muhammedans in the district were divided mainly into Sheikhs with a number of 813412 and Saiads with a number of 3241 only in 1911. Besides, there were 3675 Pathans and 289 Mughals in the district. Only 33 persons among the Muslims represented them as the Nasyas during 1911.

The Hindu Brahmins during this time the Hindu Brahmins increased in number in Dinajpur district. Many of them leaving their traditional Priesthood took the occupation of trade and commerce and services oriented jobs. A number of them bought Zamindari and became Zamindari families in the district. The Maldwar family of Ramgnj located in the Ranisankoil Polices Station was such a Brahmkn Zamindari family. During this second decade the Kaysthas had a vedry important place in the district. The Maharaj of Dinajpur of the time belonged to that caste. Numbser of Zamindars and government officials also belonged to this caste. The Rajputs 4000 in number at that time were employed basically in security service as policemen and Barkandazes. Another important element of Dinajpur demography during this time was the Kaibarttas mainly in the guise of cultivators numbering about 33000. These Chasi-Kaibarttas later on turned into Mahishy caste as per the Bengal line. Even some of them were Zamindars in this district.¹⁶⁴

Among the low Hindu castes in the district of Dinajpur the Haris were very important. The Mihtars, probably the remnant of some aboriginal tribe, a sub-caste of the Haris numbered 25098 in the district. The Haris were engaged in field as agricultural day-labourer, in small

manufacturing activities like tapping date trees, making bamboo combs, working as players of musical instruments in weddings and festivals, carrying palanquins, serving as syces, and scavenging. (Strong, F.W., quoting Risley, p.51). Among the other castes of Hindus important were the Jugis and Tantis, the weaving castes, and the Napits, a pure Sudra Caste (10,270). There were 17328 Vaishnabs comprised mainly by the Bairagis or religious mendicants and the prostitutes.

During the second decade of the twentieth century there were number of castes who heavily contributed not only in the population of North Benal and Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling districts. In fact, at the time they were all Bengal caste. The important among them were the Barui, Bhumali, Bhuiya, Brahman, Chain, Chamar, Chasadhoba, Dhanuk, Dhoba, Dom, Dosadh, Gandabanik Goala, Hari, Jogi or Jugi, Kahar, Chasi Kaibarta, Jalia Kaibarta, Kamar, Lohar, Lohar, Kayastha, Mal, Napit, Nuniya, Munda, Pundari, Sontal, Katri, Shaha, Sunri, Sutradhar, Tanti and Tatwa, Teli and tili, Tiya etc. But, barring these, concerning North Bengal region there were various caste group of people who at the time were such as North Bengal caste such as the Rajbansis, the Bhotia, the Bind, The Chasati, The Dami, the Gangai (Ganesh), Gurung, the Kami, Khambu, Khas, Khen(Khyn), Lepcha, Limbu, Mangar, Mech, Murmi, Nagar, Newar, Sarki and many other were important. From the following table we may have an idea of the strength of different Hindu caste group of people who were in a good strength in North Bengal region with their increase or decrease from the previous year.

Table-6.52
Some Castes and Tribes and their variation in North Bengal
1911

Caste	Locality	1911	1901	Percentage of Variation in 1901-1911
Bhotia	Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri	10044 (including Sikkim)	4400 (including Sikkim)	+148.7
Bind	Malda	11957	10209	+17.1
Chasati	Malda	27088	26768	+1.2
Dami	Darjeeling	6009 (including Sikkim)	5481 (Including Sikkim)	+9.6
Kami	Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri	18422(including Sikkim)	13746(including Sikkim)	+34.0
Khamba	Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri	60911(including Sikkim)	44599(including Sikkim)	+36.6
Khen	Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri	20915 (including Rangpur)	21554 (including Rangpur)	-3.0
Limbu	Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri	25380 (including Sikkim)	23159(including Sikkim)	+9.8

Mech	Jalpaiguri	19893	22350	-11.0
Murmi	Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri	38317(including Sikkim)	32778(including Sikkim)	+16.9
Nagar	Malda	18605	17438	+6.1
Newar	Darjeelig, Jalpaiguri,	12503(including Sikkim)	10476(including Sikkim)	+19.3
Rajbansi (Khatriya)	North Bengal	1808790	1898241	-4.7

Source: Census of India, 1921, Volume V, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Sikkim, Report, part-I, subsidiary Table II, pp. 375

In Darjeeling district there were good numbers of Semi-Hinduized Rajbangsi people numbering 29460 in 1911. However, we have 444 number of Dhimal people in the district in this decade. The number of the Meches in the district during this time 201. Almost all the Meches recorded in Siliguri Subdivision. Among the aboriginal tribes in the district Santals were 2246, Oraons were 7543, Mundas were 3365. Besides there were good number Bengalis, Marwaris and the up country castes in the district. There were 40409 Rais, 6195 Nepali Brhamins, 12451 Mangars, 6927 Newars, 27226 Tamangs, 13804 Limbus, 1119 Yakhas, 4453 Damais, 10939 Kamis, 1992 Sarkis, 3584 Gharti, 10768 Bhutias and Tibetans and 9708 Lepchas in 1911 in the district of Darjeeling.

J.A. Milligan, the Survey Settlement Officer, Jalpaiguri reported that in 1909 that at *Satali* in Duars where the colony was made with the Meches and the Garos, out of a total area of 10550 acres the settled Mech jotedars held 7170 acres, of which 669 acres were given in sublet to the Chukanidars. The adhiars were recruited to cultivate the land. The Rajbansis, Paharias, Oraons, also held the jotes and the adhiars were constituted by all these aborigines and semi Hinduized people. However, within a few years he was reported that an exodus of the Meches happened and there were little number of the Garos. He also reported of the Totos numbering 200 in the Totopara at Bhutan frontier. In Cooch Behar like the previous decade there were there were a number of Goala, Baishnab, Baniya, Barui, Bhunmali, chamar, Dhoba, Dosadh, Hari, Jogi or Jugi, Khen, Namasudra, Napit, Nunya from the lower Hindu caste continued to be existed. A good number of Brahmans and Kayasthas also continued in the district. Brahmanical settlements developed in the Takagachh-Khagrbari region at the north of the town in Cooch Behar. The Muslims, instead of functional division of Jolaha, Dhunia, Bediya, became divided into racial division such as Seikh, Sayaid, Afghan, Pathan, Mughal throughout the North Bengal districts of our study.

During the census of 1911 only the castes in Bengal were taken for statistical report containing 50000 populations in the provinces or 25000 populations in the districts. In other cases local importance and special interests if there was taken under consideration. But in 1921 account

were taken of the castes in Bengal having one person per mile or more to the total population of the districts. Thus the statistics accounted 96 percent of the non-Muhammadan population and 99 percent of the Muhammadan population in describing the castes and races in Bengal. During the decade between 1911 and 1921 there emerge claims and counter claims and even objection to those claims from different section of the people for upgradation, shift and change to be recognized in the Census report. There had been developed number of caste 'shabhas' and societies of caste men to make organize effort for advancement of the position of their caste. Thus the claims from the Rajbansis as Kshatriya, Bratya Kshatriy, Barna Kshatriya were raised. The Kaysthas of Bengal also claimed for recognition as Kshatriy; the Kamars claimed for Karmar Kshatriya and Kshattri Karmakar; the Koch claimed for Koch Kshatriya; the Shahas claimed for Vaisya, Baisya Shaha, Vaisya Banikya, Baisya Barendra Shaha and so on. The claim for 'Vaisya' recognition was also raised by the Bais Bania, Gandhabanik, Teli and Tili, Tnti Goala, Sutradhar, and Barui caste representatives. Claim to be recognized as Kayasthas were raised by the Barui, Kacaru and Mayra. The Barui, the Muchi and the Muchi caste representatives also claimed for recognition as Lata Baidya, Baidya Rishi and Chandra Baidya. Mahishya claim was done by the Chasi Kaibartta, Jalia Kaibartta, Tyar and Patnis. The Goalas and the Chasadhobas claimed to be Sadgop. Some of Jalia Kaibartta and Tyars also claimed for recognition as to be Rajbansi. When the Shahas claimed to be Vaisya, the Sunris claimed to be Shaha which was objected by Shahas.¹⁶⁵ However, the following table, compiled from the Table, Bengal, Census of India, 1921 we may have an idea of the caste and racial description of the population of North Bengal districts under our study.¹⁶⁶

Table-6.53
Distribution of Population according to caste, tribe or race in North Bengal
(Hindus, Animists, Jains, Sikhs, Brahmos, Aryas and Buddhists)
For the Year 1921

caste, tribe or race	Districts\State Where Found					
	Dinajpur	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	Malda	Cooch Behar	North Bengal
Bagdi	534	287	88	1126	35	
Baidya	1322	758	261	627	422	
Baishnab (Bairagi)	16930	1567	179	6888	2900	
Barui	2343	1049	478	881	101	
Bauri	333	169	44	148	10	
Bhuimali	5241	626	25	2220	1861	
Bhutia	7221	4582	704	5912	44	
Bhumij	5	568	52	291	1	
Brahman	10772	8269	8174	9506	5341	
Chamar	2365	1797	438	4543	1130	

Chasadhoba	86	1	21	115	6	
Dhoba	793	643	440	3349	291	
Dom	1364	1134	284	1091	813	
Dosadh	1146	973	361	3357	858	
Gandhabanik	775	132	81	375	352	
Gpa;a	4980	6219	1018	13859	2019	
Hari	16783	3576	701	8900	514	
Jugo and Jogi	4394	2492	672	2158	4573	
Kahar	2194	2252	155	2800	1343	
Chasi Kaibartta (Mahishya)	26232	2508	170	8285	2014	
Jalia Kaibartta (Adi Kaibartta)	7224	3325	149	1593	2617	
Kalu	222	363	37	147	78	
Kamar(Karmaka r)	7377	2457	150	9319	291	
Kaora	99	108	244	1	1	
Kapali	31	1238	71	30	8	
Kayastha	6922	4871	1104	2595	4526	
Koch	42810	1380	141	7630	1261	
Kumhar	8269	4146	1238	3180	1160	
Kurmi	7949	2786	543	6338	1749	
Lohar	842	8887	1228	793	148	
Mal	1926	32	4	1083	134	
Mali (Malakar)	1866	1138	287	1139	110	
Malo	2051	212	105	5810	149	
Mayra	664	530	175	184	65	
Muchi	7096	2907	243	3012	3173	
Munda	7512	34591	5322	424	252	
Namasudra	4001	1289	31	869	4105	
Napit	9720	3386	189	7157	2859	
Nuniya	2985	1561	435	3210	1384	
Oraon	16046	116350	10952	5685	420	
Patni	1053	775	84	430	215	
Pod (Poundra)	6	122	3	1	-	
Rajbansi (Kshattriya)	429525	250545	23191	39529	329268	
Rajput (Chhatri)	2674	7430	15636	3730	984	
Sadgop	3310	451	44	7489	86	
Santal	120211	23988	3547	72139	327	
Shaha	2786	862	146	2153	730	
Sonar	574	613	369	2230	259	

Subarnabanik	298	102	50	155	22	
Sudra	1	18	-	5	5	
Sunri	995	765	118	2192	96	
Sutradhar	490	942	46	2676	175	
Tambbuli	96	28	34	268	-	
Tanti and Tatwa	5211	5317	195	7341	1177	
Teli and tili	3219	2464	717	9386	595	
Tiyar	585	2	-	11615	-	
Others	45892	111712	184872	180408	12733	

Source: Census of India, 1921, Volume V, Bengal, Part-II, Tables, W.H. Thompson, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot., Calcutta, 1923, compiled from Table XIII, Part-A, pp.166-174

There was little number of Bagdis, mainly the Western Bengal caste, in North Bengal districts about 2000 in number against the large number of 895397 in Bengal in 1921. The Baidyas, the traditional medical men of Bengal, commonly called 'bhadralok' of Bengal mostly found in Dinajpur district among the North Bengal districts. The Baisnab castes among the Hindus, being 'the refuge for many in revolt against society and Brahmanical domination' numbered about 28000 in North Bengal districts during this time and greatly found in Dinajpur district. The Barui, the traditional betel-leaf grower; Bhuimali, the scavenger class; Chamar, the leather workers, generally the Bihari immigrants; Dhoba, the washermen caste; Dom, the scavengers and basketmakers; Dosadh, Gandhabanik, the traditional sellers of spices and the like were found in small number throughout the districts of North Bengal in 1921. There were 42062 Brahmans in North Bengal district against the number of 1309539 in Bengal. The milkmen caste of Goalas in North Bengal was in good number having 13859 only in Malda district and 4980 in Dinajpur district. They used to call themselves Sadgop during this time. There were large number of Haris, who had the same position as the Doms, in North Bengal districts specially in Dinajpur (16783) and Malda (8900). The Jugis and Jogis, the Hindu weaver castes of Eastern Bengal were in good number in Dinajpur (4393) and Cooch Behar State (4573). The Kahars, the palki-bearers by tradition and the Bihari immigrants also existed in different parts of North Bengal during this period. The Chasi Kaibarttas and the Jalia Kaibarttas were then split up completely and very importantly the Chasi Kaibarttas then recognized as Mahisyas became the largest Hindu caste in Bengal having 2210684 in number exceeding the Namasudras (more than 200000) and the Rajbansis (More than 500000). Basically the south-western Bengal caste was found in good number in Dinajpur (26232) and Malda (8285).¹⁶⁷ The Jaliya Kaibartta were also anxious to have the caste name of Mahisya. But they were still then stick to their profession of fishing belonged to non-Aryan outcastes. So they remained as the Jaliya Kaibartas or as Adi Kaibartas.¹⁶⁸

There were also number of Kamars, the traditional blacksmiths of the plains of Bengal; Kapalis, the cultivators-cum-weavers; Kayastha, the Bengali Bhadrlok Caste were in good number in the districts of North Bengal the Kayasthas having number 6922 in Dinajpur, 4871 in Jalpaiguri,

1104 in Darjeeling, 2595 in Malda, 4526 in the State of Cooch Behar. The Kumhar, the potter caste was also in good number in all the North Bengal districts as like as the whole province of Bengal. Besides, the Kurmi, the cultivating caste, Lohar, Mal and Malo, employed as boatmen, the Mali, the gardener caste, Napit, the Barber caste of Bengal, Patni, traditionally employed in ferry and boat, the Sadgops, the cultivating caste, Shaha, the trading caste, the Sunris, the spirituous liquor sellers. In 1911 in Eastern Bengal and Assam the Shahas were permitted to return them as Vasiya which was declined in 1921. Thus both the demands of Shahas and Sunri remained unfulfilled. The total number of Shahas and Sunris in North Bengal district were 6677 and 4166 respectively. The two broad divisions among the Shahas were 'Varendra Shaha' and 'Radhi Shaha.'¹⁶⁹ There were good number of Tyars, the fishing caste of South-Western Bengal proper, found in Malda and a few in Dinajpur district.

There were a good number of Namasudras, the second Hindu Caste in Bengal, in Dinajpur (4001) and Cooch Behar (4105) and a few in Jalpaiguri (1289), Darjeeling (31) and the State of Cooch Behar (869). The Koches were treated as per with the Rajbansi caste in 1911, but the statistics returned at the time was exclusively of Maymensingh and Dacca, in Northern Bengal they were not returned separately. However, in 1921 they were treated separately from the Rajbanshis and they represented 42810 in Dinajpur, 1380 in Jalpaiguri, 141 in Darjeeling, 7630 in Malda and 1261 in the State of Cooch Behar. During this the Rajbanshis caste of North Bengal represented total 1072058 in number distributing 429525 in Dinajpur, 250545 in Jalpaiguri, 23191 in Darjeeling, 39529 in Malda and 329268 in Cooch Behar and was the single largest caste among the Hindus. However, it was a small decline in the Rajbanshi people from the previous census record. This was caused by the fact that in 1901 the Koches in North Bengal were returned as Rajbangshis and in 1921 they were shown separately.

There were number of aboriginal tribes in the districts of North Bengal like the Bhumij, Lohars, Mundas, Oraon, and Santals. The Santals numbered 220212 in total distributing 120211 in Dinajpur, 23988 in Jalpaiguri, 3547 in Darjeeling, 72139 in Malda and 327 in Cooch Behar. The Mundas in total were 48101 in number in North Bengal of our study distributing 7512 in Dinajpur, 34591 in Jalpaiguri, 5322 in Darjeeling, 424 in Malda and 252 in Cooch Behar. On the other the Oraon were 149453 in total in North Bengal distributing 16046 in Dinajpur, 116350 in Jalpaiguri, 10952 in Darjeeling, 5685 in Malda and 420 in Cooch Behar State. So in 1921 by caste the Tribal people in North Bengal were very significant in number. The following table will show the bulk of these three large tribes in North Bengal district in compare to the other districts of Bengal.¹⁷⁰

Among all the districts of Bengal including Chittagong Hill Tract, Tripura State and Sikkim the population of these three tribes per mile to the total population is largest in Jalpaiguri 190 per

mile. The second highest district having these three tribes largely per mile to the total population is Bankura with 103 per mile. After that come the three districts of North Bengal of our discussion one after another like Dinajpur (84 per mile), Malda (79 per mile) and Darjeeling (70 per mile). Only Cooh Behar State continuously had a little number of tribal people as in this case only 2 per mile. So among the first five district of North Bengal the four districts stood in rank barring the second one in 1920s. This is a very significant development in the process of transition and composition of North Bengal demography.¹⁷¹ Another important feature of demography of North Bengal during this period was the large number of Himalyan castes and tribes in Darjeeling-Jalpaiguri region and especially in Darjeeling hill and terai egion. However in the census table in the 'Other' gruoup these hill tribes with lical castes have been recorded. In the group of 'Others" in the table of Hindu, animists, Jains, Buddhists, Sikhs, Brahmos and Aryans there were many local castes who were enumerated not in a large area but in a or a few districts. Among them In Darjeeiling the important and in larger number are Bhutia (10710), Damai (5781), Gurung(9575), Kami (11779), Khambu (41236), Khas (620), Limbu (14191), Mangar (14934), Murmi (30450), Newar (8751), Sarki (2036), Sanwar (3691) etc . In this context the castes enumerated in Jalpaiguri district with one or two other districts were Bhutia (4997), Kami (2744), Khambu (1669), Khen (3830), Limbu (1244), Mangar (8054) Newar (2226), Mech (10777) etc. In Malda district this kind of castes found were Bind (10437), Chain (42099), Chasati (17867), Dhanuk (4668), Gangai (13370), Nagar (14714), Pundari (4660) etc. In Dinajpur Gangai or Ganesh (...), Khern (3905) were found who were grouped in the 'Others'. Most of them were hill castes or so called 'pahariya castes'. Among them most such as Bind, Chasati, Gangai or Ganesh, Gurung, Khas, Kami, Managar, Mech, Nagar and Sarki may be called as North Bengal castes.¹⁷²

It is well accepted that the Muhammedans had no caste division as like as the Hindus. But we have seen earlier since 1872 that there were functional and othe (racial) division among the Muhammedans continued. Even events and practices of difference and distinctions among the different section of the Muslims were reported to the Census Commissioner. Generally mirage between Sheikh and Kulus used not to be happened. 'Palki' carrier Beharas were treated as low caste. There were different functional sections among the Muslims like Jolahas, Kulus, Beharas, Sheikhs, Sayaids and racial groups like the Pahtans and Mughals. However, change in profession also happened among them and many of the Jolahas, Kulus left their traditional profession and joined the great mass of the cultivating class. In the following table we may have an idea of numerical strength of different sections of the Muslims during the time in North Bengal districts:

Table-6.54
Distribution of Population according to caste, tribe or race in North Bengal
(Musalmans)
For the Year 1921

caste, tribe or race	Districts\State Where Found					
	Dinajpur	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	Malda	Cooch Behar	North Bengal
Behara	6	-	1	2	5	14
Jolaha	752	1716	209	3267	62	6006
Kolu	607	10	-	7	3	627
Nikari	9	10	2	3	62	86
Pathan	4059	1970	186	5560	999	12774
Saiyad	4176	771	192	2719	426	8284
Sheikh	824602	226167	7843	486432	174657	1719701
Othes	2612	439	83	9092	16820	29046

Source: Census of India, 1921, Volume V, Bengal, Part-II, Tables, W.H. Thompson, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot., Calcutta, 1923, compiled from Table XIII, Part-B, p.175

A very insignificant number of Beharas were found in North Bengal districts. The traditional professional class of weaving section the Jolahas used to work. They numbered 3267 in Malda, 1716 in Jalpaiguri, 752 in Dinajpur, 209 in Darjeeling and 62 in Cooch Behar State. However, the small number of Jolahas was justified that increasing unwilling to use the socio-economic designation of Jolahas. Kulus, the oil-pressers were 607 in Dinajpur. A very few number of Nikaris were recorded in the districts of North Bengal totaling 86 only. As a whole in Bengal the number of Pathan Muslims increased continuously increased from 1901 to 1921 period. They numbered in Dinajpur 4059, in Jalpaiguri 1970, in Darjeeling 186, in Malda 5560 and in Cooch Behar 999 persons. The Saiyads, the aristocratic class among the Muslims in North Bengal numbered 8284 in total among whom 4176 were in Dinajpur and 2719 were in Malda. However, the most of the Muslims were Sheikh numbering 1719701 in total distributing according to the religious demographic distribution in the districts.

During 1920s the Government took a policy for the representation of the lower class of the Hindus in the government especially for their representation in the Legislative Council. The section of this low class or caste Hindu people was termed as the depressed class which was justified by the Census commissioner thus: "the expression the 'Depressed Classes' has, however, attained a political significance..... What are the depressed classes does not seem to have been defined when the Reformed Legislature was constituted and this step was taken."

The term was not meant for the backward classes. As the Muhammedans had separate representation in the Government they were not included in the class. The hill tribes were also excluded from the list. Thus a list of the Depressed Classes was prepared with the lower section of the Hindu caste people and aboriginal tribes of in Bengal and a new chapter of socio-political-cultural history began in India.

In 1930, for official use, caste became more specific to be used in records. The specific division of Hindus like Brahmans , Kayasthas , shahas, telis etc ; the divisions of the Aryans into Brahamans , Jains , Sikhs and others ,the Muslims in racial groups like Sayyad, Sheikh , Moghul , Pathan and in functional groups of Behra, Jolaha, Kulu, the aboriginal tribes by name of their tribe like Santal , Oraon etc. Buddhist, Parsis and other Indians such as Christians etc. were taken for recording of caste in the census Report. Instructions were given not to use mere titles like Das, Pramanik, Mandal as caste, terms which then indicated only the occupation and function of the people. In fact during 1921-31 period the peoples in Bengal ,also in other parts in India were growingly applying their title based on profession and livelihood functions leading to emergence of a great number of caste groups even very subtly differed from each other. The phenomenon of immigration since the last quarter of the nineteenth century or even prior to that led in emerging diverse castes groups. In the districts of North Bengal the emergence of these castes both in Bengal line and also in North Bengal line made the issue more complicated. But the 1931 census tried to recognize specifically the real caste in records. In case of the Muslims the caste like divisions had no strong base as the proverb says thus "Shekh bidam Sal-i-Awwal, Khan Shudam, Sal-i-diggar, Gallah gar arzan shewad imsal Sayyad mishwam." That is 'in the first year I was a shekh, /in the next year I became a Khan / If crops turn out cheap this yer, I shall become a Sayyad.¹⁷³

There were petitions and counter petitions regarding implementations or abolition of Caste differences. The branch of all India Varnashram Swaraj Sangha claimed for maintaining castes distinctions even untouchability. On the contrary the Bengal Hindu Samaj Sammelani in Calcutta took a resolution claiming All Hindus to be called 'Brahmans and invested with sacred thread.' Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj members , in Bengal opposed castism and the Hindu Mission and the Hindu Sabha appealed to its member, as said earlier, use and designate others only in three 'twice born' Hindu 'Varna', not any other caste, even Sudras. The 'Jat Pat Torak Mandol' also professed few of the caste hindrances and caste order. But interestingly that out of 22212069 Hindus only a few about 28659 did not or could not return their caste and in context of North Bengal the members were only 227.¹⁷⁴ There were also claims and counter claims among the Muslims during this time. The 'Jolahas,' the term then used by the commoners to make jokes as the English word 'silly', claimed to be represented as 'Mumin'. The Nagarchis, the drummers, derivate the name from 'naqqara' were claiming to be recognized as the Shekhs. In fact, there was a tendency among the Muslims not belonged to the

Sayyad, Mogul or Pathan to be regarded as Shekhs and it was the Shekhs were greatly increasing by numbers in the North Bengal districts. However, they were also not ready to include them under the head of 'Bengali' authorized for the cultivators other than the four racial groups or the occupational groups of the Muslims. So many of them took the title 'Mumin' as their social designation.

During this time a movement for upward mobility was begun by the different caste and sections of Hindu community. Even they were referring Shastras in favour of their upgradation and change of Varna caste. Because though there was respectable affiliation in the holy 'Shastras' they were struggling for their social status. So with reference to that of the Shastras they began to collect 'Vyavastha Patras' for their social recognition. The Pandits were abound by the Shastras. Regarding claims of Vaidys, Vaishyas and Kayasthas literary, epigraphic, historical and social evidence were investigated without any result. However, in view of adopting high caste Hindu customs practicing in their life, they were allocated in the higher grade. The lowest groups and some tribal people also claimed social up-gradation renouncing forbidden foods and drinks in their daily life. The ambitious for the 'twice born' varna claimed the status in reference to their Varna Hindu 'Sanskaras' practices in life. Records are there in which the Brahmans with 'Vyavasthapatra' and 'Sacred thread' initiated the aboriginal class turning their social status in the civilized society.

In context of North Bengal Thakur Panchanan Barma's efforts to collect 'Vyavastha Patra' for the upgradation of his fallen fellow Rajbansi people is one of the important instances (karya Bibarani , 13th annual conference , kshatriya Samity B.S 1329). However during the period some of the demands by different castes were raised such as Barijibi or Vaishya Barujibi by the Baruis ; Vaishyamali by the Bhuinmalis ; Satnami by the Chamars ; Satchasi by the Chasadhobas; Yadava by the Gops ; Mahishya and Rajbansi by the Jalia Kaibarttas ; Kamis of Vaishya Brahman, Karmakar of Viswakarma Brahman ; Kayastha of Kshatriya , Khen , Kheyen , Kyen of Kayastha ; Morangias of chhatri and Morangia chhetri ; Namasudras of Namabrahma and Namabrahman , the Napit of Nai Brahmin or Sabitri Brahmin ; patnis of Lupta Mahishya or Mahishya ; even the Oraon of Kshatriya . The Shahas of the time demanded for designation of Baisya Shaha , Sadhubanik, Khandabanik and Baisya Khandabanik . The Tiyars demanded for being Rajbangsi .

However regarding shifting or mobility in caste system fusion or conflict did not arise during the period in 1930s. Though the Sutradhars demanded to be recognized as Viswakarma Brahman , none of them returned such. Taking the term 'Yadava' there was no fusion among the milkmen in Bengal. The trend of separation of the Mahishyas from the Jalia Kaibartas, of the Telis from the Tills, of the Rajbangsi from the Koch, of the Paliyas from the Koch and the Rajbangsi became a continuous process changing turn like that of Mahishya's

demand to be named as 'Deva Das' and Shaha's to 'Sadhu Banik' Thus a relaxation in the caste mobility developed.

The phenomenon of depressed class became apparent and clear during this time . For the census operation in Government Notification it was stated that "The Government of India also desire that attention should be paid to the collection of information conducive to a better knowledge of the backward and depressed classes and of the problem involved in their present and future welfare". It was acknowledged by the census commissioner that term was in itself indefinite. In context of India it was to used to 'describe those community who in common social estimation were considered to be inferior , degraded , outcaste or not fit in any way for social and religious intercourse on reasonably equal terms with members of the clean or higher caste.' [Census of India, Bengal , V-5 ,1931, P.X. VIII, Appendix – I]. In fact the depressed class concept was implanted in 1901 census when the Hindus were divided into seven groups. In 1911 numbers of minor castes were listed in deviating with Hindu norms. However till 1916 the expression was unknown in India and during quinquennial report on education the Bengal Government was asked in 1916 to make a list of the depressed classes. The list was made containing 31 groups. The census, 1921 contained the list. Overlooking for any criterion the Indian statutory commission defined the class thus "lowest castes recognized as being within the Hindu religious and social system"¹⁷⁵ However the 1931 Census commissioner retained the term to indicate the untouchable either of milder or of the more severe degree of untouchability. Muslims and Christian were excluded from the group.

During 1930 there were good numbers of Jalia Kaibartta in north Bengal districts. They were named in as 'Adi Kaibartta' in the Census record with Jalia Kaibartta in bracke. They numbered in North Bengal districts 12519 having 6624 in Dinajpur, 2760 in Jalpaguir, 1064 in Malda and 2000 in Cooch Behar State. The upper Indian caste Agrawala were in good number in all the districts of North Bengal being a very small in the territory of the Cooch Behar State. Besides the Bagdi (3144), Baishnab in a large number (24800), a good number of Baidya (3876), Barui ((4602), Belder basically in Dinajpur (1175) were found. A good number of Baraik s were settled in Jalpaiguri .Bbhutia from Sikkim (965), from Tibet (3986) and from Tibet (3986) were separately listed. The Bhumalis were 1224 and basically seen in Dinajpur district, Jalpaiguri, Malda belt and also in Cooch Behar district. The Bhumija were in small number in Jalpaiguri district. The Bind in large number was mainly seen in Malda.

The Brahman numbered 11668 in Dinajpur, 8665 in Jalpaiguri, 8791 in Darjeeling, 10099 in Malda and total 44376 in North Bengal districts were traversed by the upper most Hindu class. The Kaysthas numbered 9347 in Dinajpur, 8280 in Jalpaigur, 1110 in Darjeeling, 3822 in Malda and 5537 in Cooch Behar were found. The Rajputs were also in good number distributing 4689

in Dinajpur, 6103 in Jalpaiguri, 769 in Darjeeling, 3285 in Malda and 3124 in Cooch Behar State. The Shaha and Sunris were presented separately in all the districts of North Bengal totaling 8003 and 2619 respectively. Numbering 375 Dhimals were seen during this period in North Bengal. The Garos were existed in Jalpaiguri and 250 in Cooch Behar State. About 5057 Dosadh then lived in North Bengal. The Goala in good number all through North Bengal and mostly in Malda were found. The Khambus in large number were seen mainly in Darjeeling District. About 27004 numbers of Mahishyas, the Chashi-Kaibaartta were settled in Dinajpur district whereas their number in Malda was 9706. Jhalo, Malo castes were mainly found in Dinajpur and Malda districts with a few numbers in Cooch Behar State. The Jogis or Jugis were found in all the districts mostly in Dinajpur and Cooch Behar State. Kalu or Teli were present at the time mostly in Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Malda. The Koches were also representing in this time in all the districts. The Rajbangsis were in great bulk in Dinajpur (360368), Jalpaiguri (331168), Darjeeling (26909), Malda (42009) and in Cooch Behar (318846). The Paliyas were mainly found in Dinajpur 33509 in number. The Lepchdas and the Limbus mainly existed in Darjeeling and a few in Jalpaiguri districts. The total number of Meches was 9984 in all over North Bengal. The Rabhas in 2076 in Jalpaiguri and 938 in Cooch Behar State were found. The Totos 328 in Jalpaiguri and 4 in Darjeeling were reported. A great Number of Oraons was found totaling 164260 in number mostly in Jalpaiguri (127530) in North Bengal. The Santals also existed in great number in the North Bengal districts totaling 234822 in number mostly in Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri districts. The Kurmis, an aboriginal tribe of the southern part of the Chota Nagpur Plateau and the Orissa States in all the decades 1901, 1911, 1921 and 1931 showed their great present in the North Bengal districts. The Tyars mainly found in Malda district numbering above ten thousand. The Namasudras were in good number in Dinajpur (3752), Jalpaiguri (1673), Darjeeling (42), Malda (1355) and Cooch Behar State (3766). The Muslims under name of Mumin (Jolaha, Shekh Mumin) and Sayyad remained in good number in all the districts of North Bengal and the State of Cooch Behar.

In the census of 1941 the non-Muslims were enlisted into three categories- the Scheduled Castes (excluding those included among Tribes), Non-Scheduled Castes (excluding those included in among Tribes) and the Tribes. However in this case description the then State of Cooch Behar was excluded. In the lists there were thirteen castes listed as the Tribes, forty eight castes were included in the list of non-scheduled caste and fifty four castes were included in the list of the Scheduled Castes. In the following a table is being presented taking some of the selected castes from the list of Scheduled castes in North Bengal districts.

Table-6.55
Scheduled Castes in North Bengal Districts
(Selected)

1941

Nme of the Caste	Dinajpur	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	Malda
Bagdi	679	125	92	374
Chamar	2643	850	177	3158
Dhoba	817	632	510	2298
Dom	309	807	47	504
Bediya	315	741	7	-
Beldar	881	104	-	562
Bhumija	7269	867	2	3068
Bind	324	6	-	7304
Dosadh	1394	557	75	1306
Hari	5395	1792	336	3450
Jalia Kaibarta	6422	1740	64	659
Jhala-Mala or Mala	1497	18	-	2281
Khaira	805	8352	653	338
Koch	2252	516	18	1112
Lohar	1220	11616	1518	271
Mal	1252	159	78	1452
Mallah	992	459	137	736
Methar	1154	435	1161	247
Muchi	5585	1842	573	2781
Musahar	3124	1205	207	1920
Nagesia	-	2192	436	-
Patni	1073	1834	173	215
Rajbansi	334614	281045	21852	24421
Rajwar	260	204	36	1128
Sunri	587	368	87	889
Namasudra	5093	1820	41	1072
Nuniya	4644	907	181	5060
Paliya	4219	68	-	1668
Tiyar	372	-	-	5484

Source: Census of India, 1941, Volume-IV, Appendix, Bengal Caste Table, R.A. Dutch, Manager of Publication, Delhi, Printed by Government of India Press, Simla, 1942, pp.7-12

Among the scheduled castes the Bagdis were enumerated in all the districts of North Bengal, the highest being found in the district of Dinajpur. There were good number of Chamars, Dhobas and Muchis in the districts of North Bengal. The Muchis were highest in number in

Dinajpru having 5585 persons from the community in the district. In Malda they were 2781 numbers. The Dhenuars were in good numbers in the district of Malda. The Doms in moderated number on average of 500 persons were found in all the districts. The Bediyas were mainly found in Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri. The Belders were in good number in Dinajpur and in Malda. The Bhumija were in good strength in the district of Dinajpur numbering 7269 persons and in Malda numbering 3068 persons. Likewise the Dosadhs, the Haris, the Jhala-Mala or Malas, the Koches, the Mals, the Musahars, the Nuniyas, the Paliyas were in large number found in the districts of Dinajpur and Malda and few in other districts. However, regarding the Tiyars, Malda was the highest scorers; the Paliyas were in majority in Dinajpur (4219 persons), the Namasudras in Dinajpur (5093 persons) in majority number; the Lohars in great number (11616 persons) in Jalpaiguri; the Khairas in largest number in Jalpaiguri; the Jalia Kaibarttas in largest number in Dinajpur (6422 persons) were found. However, the most important scheduled caste of North Bengal was the Rajbangsi community who numbered 334614 persons in Dinajpur, 281045 persons in Jalpaiguri, 21852 persons in Darjeeling and 24421 persons in Malda were found. The Rajbangsis were in largest number found in the State of Cooch Behar. The following is the tables of selected non Scheduled Castes in North Bengal.

Table-6.56
Non- Scheduled Caste (Selected)
1941

Name of the caste	Dinajpur	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	Malda
Agarwala	1277	786	1937	511
Baidya	1339	728	253	206
Baishnab	16042	489	108	3654
Barui	2109	500	54	888
Brahman	37928	8703	11438	7237
Desi	23418	-	-	2747
Dhanoar	-	-	-	267
Kahar	692	108	224	956
Kalu or Teli	1276	1485	191	3451
Kalwar	287	284	374	255
Kamar	9161	2497	412	7880
Goala	5372	7021	982	9779
Halia Rao or Halia Dhoba	147	28	-	-
Jogi or Jugi	7725	2407	474	985
Kayastha	13696	11005	1669	1356
Keot	441	58	10	3262
Kheyari	734	7144	207	-
Kairi	385	185	22	757

Kol	547	393	71	369
Kumhar	8877	3042	324	2614
Kurmi	8822	1469	643	2894
Mahishya	30633	1662	267	5786
Malakar	1915	664	50	436
Rai Ghatwal	1644	922	7	1223
Rajput	879	815	78	635
Sadgope	2551	200	183	12036
Modak	95	151	129	107
Nagar	-	3	-	5931
Namasudra	11	-	-	24
Napit	10049	2746	268	5812
Patty	-	-	-	1971
Shaha	3402	1438	82	1824
Subarna Banik	427	462	-	60
Sutradhar	553	587	15	1750
Tanti	8135	4155	186	11367
Tili	2984	422	270	680

Source: Census of India, 1941, Volume-IV, Appendix, Bengal Caste Table, R.A. Dutch, Manager of Publication, Delhi, Printed by Government of India Press, Simla, 1942, pp.7-12

Among the non-scheduled castes who were in important numbers almost in all the districts were the Agarwalas, the Baidyas, the Bashnabs, the Baruis, the Kalus or the telis, the Kalwars, the Kamars, the Goalas, the Jogis or Jugis, the Kumhars the Kurmis, the Rajputs, the Ghatwals, The Sadgopes, the Napits, the Subanabaniks, the Sutradhars, the Tantis and the Tilis. However, numerically the most important were the Mahishyas in Dinajpur (30633 persons) and Malda (5786 persons); the Napits in Dinajpur (10049 persons) and in Malda (5812 persons); the Tantis in Malda (11367 persons), in Dinajpur (8135 persons), in Jalpaiguri (4155 persons); the Kurmis in dinajpur (8822 persons); the Kumhars in Dinajpur (8877perosns), in Jalpaiguri (3042 persons); the Jogis in Dinajpur (7725 persons); the Goalas in dinajpur (5372 person), in Malda (9779 persons) and in Jalpaiguir (7021 persons); the Baishnabs (16042 persons). The Brahmins were in largest number were found in Dinajpur (37928 persons) and in Darjeeling (11438 persons).The Kamars in largest number were in Dinajpur (9161 prsons) and in Malda (7880 persons). The Desis were found in largest numbers in Dinajpur (23418 persons). The Kaysthas were also in good strength in Dinajpur (13696 persons) and in Jalpaiguri (11005 persons). It is very interesting that the Dhobas were included in the list of the scheduled caste but the Halia dhobas in non-scheduled castes like the Chasi-Kaibarttas and the Jalia Kaibarttas. In the following list we may found the distribution of the Scheduled Tribe people in North Bengal districts in 1941 census year.

Table-6.57
Scheduled Tribes in North Bengal Districts
1941

Name of the Caste	Dinajpur	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	Malda
Munda	5400	33964	2655	274
Oran	14188	117235	9792	1878
Santal	87732	16411	2851	38345
Bhuiya	686	1710	201	891
Bhumij	-	495	10	372
Oraon	4	733	27	-
Ghasi	288	2123	393	134
Kora	1695	22	-	1601
Mahli	2331	8257	425	1393
Malpahariya	929	1800	1427	396
Turi	3835	1995	307	1821
Baraik	-	5233	1078	14
Newar	-	1967	11316	-
Tipra	-	-	-	-

Source: Census of India, 1941, Volume-IV, Appendix, Bengal Caste Table, R.A. Dutch, Manager of Publication, Delhi, Printed by Government of India Press, Simla, 1942, p.12

Among the tribes of North Bengal districts the largest numbers were found by the Oraons, the highest being in Jalpaiguri district having 117235 persons Oraons in the district. In Dinajpur district the Oraons were 14188 numbers, in Darjeeling 9792 persons and in Malda 1878 persons. The Santals were the second highest numbers found in North Bengal districts such as 87732 persons in Dinajpur, 38345 persons in Malda, 16411 persons in Jalpaiguri and 2851 persons in Darjeeling. The third largest tribal community in North Bengal districts was the Mundas numbering 33964 persons in Jalpaiguri, 5400 persons in Dinajpur and 2655 persons in Darjeeling. The Bhuiyas, Ghasis, the Mahlis, Malpahariyas, the Bariks were important in the district of Jalpaiguri. The Turis were important in Dinajpur. In Cooch Beshar the number of the scheduled tribe people was insignificant. The Garos, the Oraons, the Mundas in few numbers were found in the State.

So from the above tables and discussions it is apparent that most of the scheduled caste, non-scheduled caste and even the scheduled tribe populations were foreign in origin and their number swelled gradually since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In fact, the last quarter of the nineteenth century was the formation and construction period of North Bengal demography even from this cast and ethnic point of view. That basis of foundation became the

large tree or building of demography in the first half of the twentieth century North Bengal. Though the fresh immigration was in continuous process the second generation of the first generation migrants remained massive in comprising the multiethnic and multicultural demography of North Bengal during the first half of the twentieth century. But this construction of demography was waiting for another deconstruction and reconstruction which was happened with the resultant effect of partition of India in 1947.

V

Following the all India policy on restriction of disclosing ethnic and demographic data the report over the Census of 1951 for the State of West Bengal also refrained from recording the details of the caste-demography and ethnic demography of the State for the period of 1941-51. In spite of this the Commissioner, Census of India, 1951 made effort to have district wise ethnic composition in a brief way.¹⁷⁶ This resulted in having some of the information about the caste and ethnicity of the population of the State of West Bengal by district. With this an account may be formed about the caste-demographic transition or ethnic demographic transition of the North Bengal districts under our study to some extent. From the following table we may have an idea of the composition of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population of the North Bengal districts numerically.

Table-6.58
Distribution of SC & ST Population in North Bengal
For the Year 1951

Caste	Cooch Behar	Malda	West Dinajpur	Darjeeling	Jalpaiguri	Total of North Bengal
SC	269464	136379	123118	26080	235203	790244
ST	2633	80463	124194	44051	180192	431533
Non-Backward	390854	630228	443582	163397	-	
Neither Scheduled nor Non-Backward	8120	90504	29650	210590	-	

Source: Compiled from Census of India,1951, District Census Handbook, Malda, West Dinajpur, Dajeeling and Cooch Behar, Census of India, 1951, Volume VI, West Bengal, Sikkim & Chandernagore, Part II-Tables, Mitra, A, Published by the Manager of Publication, Delhi, Printed by the Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1953, p.455

Among the five North Bengal districts in 1951 largest number of population was constituted by the district of Cooch Behar having 269464 numbers of SC people and 40.15 percent share in the

total population of the district. There was a good deal of growth of SC population in the district by 63021 numbers from that of the 1941 census year. The ST population in the district numbered only 2633 having also grown by 198 numbers. The ST population in the district constituted 0.39 percent of the total population. The ST population of the district was also rose though only by 198, a very small number. However, there were a large number of people being 390854 who were considered as the Non-backward by the Government. On the other 8120 number of persons in the district were neither in Scheduled nor in non-backward caste. Next to the Cooch Behar district there was Jalpaiguri district where there were 235203 number of SC population contributing 25.72 percent share in the total population of the district. However, the SC population in the district declined during the decade by 90301 persons from 1941 to 1951. The ST Population in the district numbered 180192 persons who constituted 19.70 percent population of the district. There was also a decline in this Scheduled Caste population of the district. It decreased by 99104 persons in number in 1951 in compare to that of the 1941 census year.

The district of Darjeeling had a small quantity of Scheduled Caste population. The total number of SC population in the district was 26080 persons who accounted 5.86 percent of the total population in the district. This was the lowest numerical strength of the SC population among the North Bengal districts declining by 2842 persons from 1941 to 1951 census year. On the other the Scheduled Tribe population was greater than the Scheduled Caste population of the district numbering 44051 persons. They comprised 9.89 percent of the total population of the district. The ST population of the district also decline in good number by 97250 persons within 1941-51 decade. In Darjeeling district there were good numbers of Non-Backward people numbering 163397 persons during this time. There were 210590 persons in the district who were neither Non-backward nor Scheduled people in the district.

In West Dinajpur district the Scheduled Caste population much less than Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri district numbering 123118 persons in total who comprised the 17.09 percent of total population of the district in 1951. There was a great decrease in SC population in the district in compare to that of the 1941 census year. From 1941 it decreased by 276292 persons in number. The Scheduled Tribe people in the district numbered 124194 persons. They constituted 17.24 percent of the total population in the district. That is the SC and ST both was in equal strength numerically in the district. There was also decline in the scheduled tribe people in the district by 58618 persons in number in 1951 from that of the 1941 census year. In Malda the SC population comprised 14.55 percent of total population having 136379 persons numerically. Here a voluminous decline happened in SC population having declined by 476967 in numbers from 1941 to 1951 census year. On the other hand there were only 80463 persons belonged to ST in the district who constituted 8.58 percent of the total population in the district. However, there was a rise in this ST population in the district by 14014 persons from

during the decade from 1941 to 1951. Both in Malda and West Dinajpur the numerical strength of the Non-Backward caste was good numbering 630228 persons and 443582 persons respectively. On the other there were 90504 persons and 29650 persons respectively in the districts of Malda and West Dinajpur who were neither belonged to non-Backward castes nor Scheduled castes of the districts.¹⁷⁷

The directive principal (Article 46) to the Indian Constitution referred that the States should take special care for the protection of the interests of the people belonged to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and in this case the President of India in consultation with the Governors of the States or Union Territory could consider any castes, races or tribes to be Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes in accordance to the Constitution.(Articles 341 and Article 342). Thus the Order of the President of India came into being in 1950 and the Government of West Bengal State recorded the strength of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of West Bengal by locality and sex at its own expense.¹⁷⁸ A decision was also taken to make a list of the 'non-backward' castes of the State of West Bengal by the Home Department (C&E), Government of West Bengal (Memo No. 879-A.R. 3C-I/50 dated 1st June, 1950).¹⁷⁹ Thus in 1950 total 58 numbers of Castes were enlisted as Scheduled Castes, Seven Castes were enlisted as Scheduled Tribes and 32 number of Castes as Non-Backward Classes by the State Government of West Bengal. We are to examine here the Strength of these castes and their transition in the districts of North Bengal under our discussion.

There were good numbers of Bagdis in Malda district numbering 2881 in total and in West Dinajpur totaling 1572 persons. They were few in numbers in Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Cooch Behar districts. The Bhumalis were large number in West Dinajpur district numbering 5597 total and in Malda with a number of 1966 persons but a few in other districts of North Bengal. The Belders were found in few numbers in the districts of North Bengal. Like the Bhumalis the Bhuiyas were important during this time in Malda and West Dinajpur having 4940 and 2972 in numbers respectively. They were also in good numbers in Jalpaiguri having 1834 persons having a few in Darjeeling and Cooch Behar districts. The Binds were in a very large number like the previous decades in 1951 having 11647 numbers of persons in Malda and few numbers in other districts of North Bengal. The Chamar, Dhoba, Dosadh, Hari, Kaora, Mahli, Muchi, Mushahar, Nuniya, Pod, Tyar and Turi were in a very responsive numbers in the districts of Malda and West Dinajpur. Among them the Chamar, Hari, Kaora and Much numbered in Malda above 5000 in number during this decade. The Dhoba, Nunya and Turi numbered here above 3000 persons in number. Most importantly the Tiyars in Malda numbered above 20000 persons. Though not such in a high number all these caste people were also in good number in the district of West Dinajpur the Turi, Mahli, Muchi and Nuniya being above 2000 numbers. The Lohar and Mahli in Jaspalguri district were above 10000 in numbers. The Dosadh, Muchi, Malpahariya, Khaira and the Turis were above 2000 in the district. The Muchis in Cooch Behar

numbered above 2000 persons. The Jaliya Kaibartta and the Jhalo Malo decreased both in Malda and Jalpaiguri districts during this decade.¹⁸⁰ Following is the table of a few important castes Scheduled by the Government who were important for the North Bengal districts.

Table-6.59
Some important Castes in North Bengal
1951

Name of Castes	Malda	West Dinajpur	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	Cooch Behar	North Bengal
Koch	318	331	194	-	9	658
Paliya	1779	10046	-	1	-	11826
Rajbanshi	20994	67489	172710	15894	252069	529156
Rabha	-	-	2869	-	620	3489
Sunri	907	28	291	97	121	1444
Namosudras	4497	5743	4716	667	5949	21572

Source: Census 1951, West Bengal, Land and Land Revenue Department, The Tribes and Castes in West Bengal, Mitra, A., West Bengal Government Press, Alipore, West Bengal, 1953,pp.91-92

A number of Castes which had been included in the list of Scheduled Castes of 1931 Report were excluded from that of the 1951 in the Schedule provided by the President of India. Thus the castes like Halalkhor, Kichak, Binjhia, Agaria, Asur, Birhor, Korwa, Berua, Bhatiya, Damai, Kalwar, Kapali, Kapuria, Nagar, Nat, Rauj and Sagirdpesha were not included in the Scheduled Castes' list of the President in 1951. In compare to the Schedule of 1941 the castes like Agaria, Berua, Bhatiya, Binjia, Garo, Hadi, Hanong, Halalkhor, Ho, Kan, Kandh, Kapuria and Nat were excluded from the President's list of 1951. The Chasi Kaibarttas and Suklis who were regarded as the depressed classes in 1921 were also excluded from the 1951 Scheduled Caste list of the President. Among the Scheduled Castes mentioned above the Bahelia, Beldar, Bind, Chamar, Dosadh, gonhri, Lohar, Malla, Malpahriya, Musahar, Nunia, Pasirajwar, khatik were mainly from Bihar. The Kandra, Mahar, pan were mainly from Orissa. The Bhuiya, Bhumij, Ghasi, Kaur, Kadar, Khaira, Mahli, Nagesia and Turi were mainly from Chhotonagpur region. The Doai, Jalia Kairbrta, Patni, Bhuimali were from East Begnal. The Koch, Palia, Rajbanshiand Rabha always were regarded as the North Bengal Castes. The Bagdi, Beidya, Baiti, Bauri, Dhoba, Dom, Hari, Jhalo Malo, Karanga, Kastha, Khaira, Konai, Konwar, Kora, Kotal, Lalbegi, Lodha, Mal Methor, Muchi, Namasudra, Pod, Sunri and the Tiyar were mainly from Central and Western Bengal.¹⁸¹

The Bagdis, the Bauris, the Pods, the Rajbanshis and the Namasudras, as had been earlier, were basically the agricultural class by profession in the State of West Bengal. In North Bengal, with a few exceptions, they followed the same profession. However, some of them were labourer on

land but without any land owned by them. The Kadars, Dosadhs and the Musahars were basically the laborers by occupation. The Baitis, Doais and Doms were basically mat-makers though the Doms were also basket-makers or workers on woods. The Karangas and the Pans were mainly basket-makers and wood workers. The Baitis had their traditional occupation lime-burning and the Nunias had saltpeter making. The Khatiks used to sell vegetables and the Pasis and the Sunris were spirit distillers. The Belders, Koras, Karangas were engaged in Earth working, digging and stone cutting. The Ghasis, Tiyars, Mallahs, Patnis, Jhalos, Malos, Jalias and the Gonhris were employed in fishing and boating. The Malpaharias and Lodhas were mainly cultivators but also engaged in collecting and selling forest goods, charcoal burning and hunting. The methors, Lalbegis and sections of Haris, Doms, Ghasis were Scavengers and sweepers. The Kotals were basically watchmen and some were engaged in cultivation.¹⁸² However the professional caste bonding gradually came to be drifting away during this time.

In 1951 there were seven communities of people who were enlisted as the Scheduled Tribes by the president of India. Those seven Scheduled Tribes were the Bhutias, Lpechas, Mechs, Mrus, Mundas Oraons and the Santals.¹⁸³ All of them more or less was found in North Bengal districts. However, among those seven castes the Bhutias, Lepachas and the Mechs were basically North Bengal castes; the Mundas, the Oraon were mainly from Chhotonagpur region of Bihar and the Mrus were mainly from the Chittagong Hill Tract. From the following table the numerical strength of the Scheduled Tribes in North Bengal may be accounted.

Table-6.60
Distribution of Scheduled Tribe population
North Bengal districts
1951

Name of Tribes	Malda	West Dinajpur	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	Cooch Behar	North Bengal
Bhutia	..	..	616	4018	..	4634
Lepcha	..	..	201	13164	..	13365
Mech	..	..	10507	224	56	10787
Mru	28	236	674	195	..	1133
Muda	132	8374	39490	5752	215	53963
Oraon	7503	20674	115776	17217	660	161830
Santal	72800	94910	21928	3481	1302	194421
Total	80463	124194	189192	44051	2233	440133

Source: Census 1951, West Bengal, Land and Land Revenue Department, The Tribes and Castes in West Bengal, Mitra, A., West Bengal Government Press, Alipore, West Bengal, 1953,p.93

Among the Tribes in the Schedule of the President the Bhutias of North Bengal were 4634 in total. However, only in two districts they were found, 616 in Jalpaiguri and 4018 in Darjeeling. The Lepchas were also found in these two districts having 201 in Jalpaiguri and 13164 in Darjeeling totaling 13365 in North Bengal. The Mech numbering 10507 in Jalpaiguri, 224 in Darjeeling and 56 in Cooch Behar aggregated in North Bengal 10787 in number in 1951. The Mru the tribe mainly of the Chittagong Hill region were 1133 in total in North Bengal. Among the three important Chhotonagpur tribes the least was found Munda 53963 in number in North Bengal during this time they were mainly concentrated in Jalpaiguri district followed by West Dinajpur and Darjeeling. The highest number of tribal population was constituted by the Santals. They numbered 194421 persons in North Bengal distributing 72800 in Malda, 94910 in West Dinajpur, 21928 in Jalpaiguri, 3481 in Darjeeling and 1302 in Cooch Behar. The Oraon were also in large number in North Bengal having 161830 in total number. Among them they were found 7503 in Malda, 20674 in West Dinajpur, 115776 in Jalpaiguri, 17217 in Darjeeling and 660 in Cooch Behar.¹⁸⁴ However, the number Scheduled Tribes in the President's Schedule of 1951 was half than the enlisted numbers of tribes in compare to the Schedule of 1941. The Schedule of the 'Castes and Tribes' prepared by the 'Order, Government of India (Scheduled Castes), 1936' included fourteen number of 'Tribes'. In this schedule the Lepcha, Bhutia, Mech and Mru were not enlisted. However, due to the numerical strength of the Lepchas, Bhutias and the Mrus in the province and the districts where they had been found tabulation of their populations were published.¹⁸⁵

There was numerous numbers of Hindu castes who were enlisted as the 'Non-Backward' by the Government, State of West Bengal in 1951. These were Agarwala, Baidya, Barui, Buinhar, Brahman, Kayastha, Kshatria or Khetri, Mahisya, Rajput, Shaha, Subarnabanik, Tili, Sabitribrhman, Jadav, Satchasi, Karmakar, Malakar, Kumbhakar, Modak, Satgope, Sutradhar, Tanti, Gandha Banik, Kangsha Banik, Tambuli, Karan, Nath, Raju, Swrnakar, Vaisya, Solanki and Ugra Kshatia.¹⁸⁶ There were some other castes in the districts of North Bengal. Thus the Nagars of Malda were Bihari Hindu castes. The Chasatis were the agriculturists and the Puros were the silk-worm rearers in the district. The Ganesh were the weavers and the Gangai were the potters though both of the castes also engaged in agriculture. Another important caste in the district in its western part was the Chains who had affinities with the Biharis. In the district of West Dinajpur among the Hindu castes the important were the Kayasthas, Rajputs, Mahisya, Haris, Jugis, Tantis, Napits, Vasihnavas, Rajbansis, Deshis and Paliyas with a few numbers of Kantais and Koches. Among the Hindu castes of Jalpaiguri district the Rajbanshis, Koches and the upper caste Hindu immigrants from Dacca, Faridpur and Mymensingh were significant in number. The Bengalis, Marwaris, Punjabis, Biharis and different Nepali castes like Rai, Sherpa, Chettri, Sanyasi, Brhman, Bhujel were significant in the district of Darjeeling. On the other the

Rajbansis and the other usual Hindu castes were in significant strength in the district of Cooch Behar.¹⁸⁷

Besides the Hindu castes there was great bulk of Muslims in the districts of North Bengal as we found in the religious tables. Kaliachak, Manikchak and Ratua were important centre for the Muslims in the district of Malda. The majority of the Muslims in the district were Sheikhs barring a few exceptions of the Saiyids, Mughals and the Pathans. The Cultivating class among the Muslims, Shershabadias from Murshidabad, was important. Among the functional groups of the Muslims the Jolahs were the weavers, the Dhuniyas were the carders, the Naluas were reed sellers, the Nikaris were the fishermen, Kunjras were the vegetable sellers and Pir-ko-Dalis were the beldars. In West Dinajpur district there were mostly the Sheikhs, frequently named as the Nasyas engaged in cultivation, a few numbers of Saiyids acted as priests in the Muslim community, the Pathans engaged as police and peon personnel, the Mughals engaged in dealership of woolen cloths. In the districts of Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling the Muslims were mainly the Seikhs and some were Sunnis. The great bulk of the Muslim population in the district of Cooch Behar was constituted by mostly the converts and the agricultural Sheikhs.¹⁸⁸ Thus the ethnic and caste composition of demography constituted in pre-partition India continued in the immediate post-partition period in 1950s with numerical and some other variations and deviations.

During the post- 1951 period number of changes in jurisdiction and government policies came into being influencing the demography of North Bengal. Among these the most important was the Reorganization of the States in 1956 and the Bihar and West Bengal (Transfer of Territories) Act of 1956 which led to the modification of the President's list of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe during this time.¹⁸⁹ It was enacted in the Section 14 of the above said Act, 1956 that "as soon as may be after the commencement of this Act, the President may, by notified order, make such modifications in the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, and the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, as he thinks fit, having regard to the transfer of territories effected by Section 3".¹⁹⁰ It had been seen that due to the difference of the main caste names and their different synonyms or generic names or local names many people who returned their caste by generic or local or synonym but not the main caste were not included in the Scheduled castes. So prior to the Census operation of 1961 a list of the main castes and their synonyms or sub-castes were prepared to avoid the difficulties. The list may be presented in following tabular form:

Table-6.61
Castes and their synonyms or Sub-castes
Listed in 1961

Synonym	For
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Satnami	Chamar, Charmakar, Mochi, Muchi, Rabidas, Ruidas or Rishi
Dhopa, Rajak or Sukladas	Dhoba or Dhobi
Rajbar	Rajwar
Byagra Kshatriya	Bagdi or Duley
Chunari	Baiti
Bid, Bin	Bind
Dai	Doai
Layak	Khaira
Pure	Pod or Poundra
Sub-caste name	Of Caste name
Let, Malia	Bagdi or Duley

Source: Census of India, 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal & Sikkim, Part V-A(i), Tables on Scheduled Castes, J. Datta Gupta, Published by Manager of Publications, Delhi and Printed by Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1966,p.xix

It was also directed that enquiry should be made on some of the castes like Bhakat, Dhibar, Majhi, Deshi, Nagbonshi, Dhangad, Madeshiya, Kshatriya, Sarder, Buna or Buno whether they would have been within the periphery of any scheduled castes or not.¹⁹¹ In spite of these precautionary steps nomenclatures like 'Harijan', 'Achhut', 'Tapsil' were taken in the schedules but written in the tables as 'unclassified' reducing a significant number of the Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe people. The Modification Order of 1956 resulted in enlisting of 63 castes under Scheduled Castes group in the State of West Bengal and 41 castes under Scheduled Tribe group in the State of West Bengal. But surprisingly only 12 among those scheduled castes were treated such throughout the State and only 7 castes under Scheduled Tribe group were treated such throughout the State. Thus the members of Paliya community were treated as Scheduled castes in Raiganj police station in the district of West Dinajpur but the members of same community in her neighboring police station of Karandighi were not treated as the Scheduled castes. Likewise the Bhumij caste was treated in the State of West Bengal as a Scheduled tribe caste barring in the territories transferred from the Purnea district of Bihar into West Bengal.¹⁹² Thus the Jurisdictional change and the Government policies influenced the caste composition of the population.

The state of West Bengal in 1961 occupied second position among the states of India having 6890314 scheduled caste people containing a share 19.73 percent in the total population and comprised 10.69 percent of the total population of the country. On the other North Bengal as a whole had 1429235 persons belonged to Scheduled caste. This Scheduled Caste people constituted 25.75 percent or one fourth share of the entire population of the region and 20.74 percent or the one fifth of the total Scheduled Caste population of the State of West Bengal. However, the following table will show the distribution of the Scheduled Caste population and

their percentage to the total population of the districts and percentage to the total scheduled caste population of the State.

Table-6.62
Distribution of SC population and Proportions
In the Districts of North Bengal
1961

State/District	SC Population	Percentage to Total population	Percentage to the State Scheduled Caste Population
West Bengal	6890314	19.73	10.69 (Percentage to the country)
Darjeeling	82381	13.9	1.20
Jalpaiguri	418655	30.80	6.08
Cooch Behar	478313	46.90	6.94
West Dinajpur	286453	21.64	4.16
Malda	163433	13.38	2.37
Total Of North Bengal	1429235	25.75	20.74

Source: Census of India 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal & Sikkim, Part-II(i), Social and Cultural Tables, J. Datta Gupta, 1965, pp.418 & Census of India, 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal & Sikkim, Part V-A(i), Tables on Scheduled Castes, J. Datta Gupta, Published by Manager of Publications, Delhi and Printed by Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1966,p.xlii

Among the North Bengal districts highest size and percentage of scheduled caste population in 1961 was contained by the district of Cooch Behar. With this the district became first among all the districts of the State of West Bengal by percentage. The second highest percentage holder of Scheduled caste people Jalpaiguri district in North Bengal also ranked second by percentage among the districts of the State. West Dinajpur contained much more Scheduled caste population than the State's percentage of Scheduled caste population. Malda and Darjeeling had almost equal percentage of Scheduled caste of scheduled caste population having 13.38 percent and 13.90 percent respectively. Regarding the share of scheduled caste population to the State Cooch Behar ranked fifth and Jalpaiguri sixth position among the districts of the State during this period.¹⁹³ A very significant aspect in this context is that total eight police stations were recorded in the Census of 1961 which had above fifty percent of scheduled caste populations. Among these the five police stations were from North Bengal districts Mayanaguri from Jalpaiguri district and Sitai, Mathabhanga, Sitalkuchi, Mekliganj were from Cooch Behar district. Even the first three police stations were Sitai with 68.67 percent, Mathabhanga with 65.76 percent and Mekliganj with 63.60 percent scheduled caste population. Maynaguri was in fifth rank with 60.70 percent and Sitalkuchi was in sixth rank with 59.97 percent scheduled caste population. The remaining three police stations were from 24-Parganas districts.¹⁹⁴ Following is

the table of distribution of the important Scheduled castes in the North Bengal districts in percentage to the State.

Table-6.63
Distribution of Numerically important Scheduled Castes in Percentage to the State
North Bengal, 1961

Name of the Castes	Malda	West Dinajpur	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	Cooch Behar
Rajbanshi	3.20	7.77	26.30	2.62	34.86
Bagdi or Duley	0.18	2.07	0.14	0.24	0.64
Pod or Poundra	0.46	0.04	0.01	N	N
Namasudra	1.43	1.63	5.99	0.36	3.21
Bauri	0.05	0.07	0.11	N	0.04
Chamar	1.80	1.63	1.47	0.40	1.54
Dhoba or Dhobi	2.69	0.83	1.95	0.57	1.09
Dom or Dhangad	1.13	0.31	0.17	0.13	0.03
Hari	5.04	6.23	0.83	0.34	0.78
Mal	1.59	1.42	0.51	0.09	0.13
Kaora	0.12	0.08	0.02	0.13	0.08
Jalia Kaibartta	2.24	4.55	4.70	1.03	5.64
Sunri	1.65	0.52	0.31	0.12	0.07
Lohar	2.78	2.63	14.73	1.45	0.10
Paliya	8.12	90.94	0.06	0.26	0
Jhalo Malo or Malo	7.03	4.51	2.24	0.25	4.53

Source: **Census of India, 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal & Sikkim, Part V-A(i), Tables on Scheduled Castes, J. Datta Gupta, Published by Manager of Publications, Delhi and Printed by Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1966,p.xlvii, Statement VI**

The Rajbanshis were agglomerated mainly in the Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar and to some extent In West Dinajpur districts having together 68.93 percent in the three districts and in whole of North Bengal being 74.75 percent or round 75 percent in the State of West Bengal. Next important scheduled caste in North Bengal was the Paliya having 99.38 percent share in the State and being concentrated mainly in West Dinajpur district (90.94 percent). The Jhalo Malo or the Malo also were significant numerically in North Bengal having 18.56 percent share in the State. In this population Malda, Cooch Behar and West Dinajpur ranked fourth, fifth and sixth respectively in the State. Jalpaiguri had eighth position having 2.24 percent. The Haris had a share of 13.22 percent in the state by North Bengal as a whole. Jalia Kaibarttas were also

important in the North Bengal districts with a share of 18.16 percent in the State. The Lohar were in a very good numerical strength in the district of Jalpaiguri. She ranked second in the State with 14.73 percent Lohar population in the State. The Dhobas were also important in the North Bengal districts having total 7.13 percent population in the State. The Chamars were in 5.84 percent in North Bengal to the State. The Namasudras were also in a good number in North Bengal having 12.62 percent of the State Namasudra population.

It should be mentioned here that the castes like Damai (Nepali), Keot or keyot and Sarki (Nepali) had not been treated as Scheduled Castes in 1951 but in 1961 they were treated such. Again the Bhogta, Chaupal, Dabgar, Halalkhor, Kanjar, Kurariar and Nat who were not treated scheduled castes in 1951 were treated such in the territories transferred from the Purnea district of Bihar. On the other Kashta who were treated as scheduled caste in 1951 were excluded from the list of 1961. The Kora, Malpahariya and Lodha, scheduled castes in 1951 list, were treated as Scheduled Tribe in 1961 throughout the State. The Nagesia and the Rabha were treated as Scheduled tribe in 1961 throughout the State except in the Purulia district and the territories transferred from the Purnea district of Bihar. The Mahli were treated as Scheduled Tribe in 1961 in the Purulia district and the territories transferred from the Purnea district of Bihar.¹⁹⁵ In all the districts of North Bengal barring Darjeeling (80.68 percent) above 90 percent scheduled caste population used to live in rural areas. Following is the table of a few important castes Scheduled by the Government who were important for the North Bengal districts.

Table-6.64
Some important Castes in North Bengal
1961

Name of Castes	Malda	West Dinajpur	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	Cooch Behar	North Bengal
Hari	6346	7847	1041	426	977	16637
Jalia-Kaibarta	2633	5338	5503	1213	6619	21306
Koch	1319	916	317	44	124	2720
Paliya	6008	67292	10	196	-	73506
Rajbanshi	38443	93371	316020	31472	418893	898199
Sunri	1766	553	331	116	78	2844
Namasudras	10448	11877	2982	2557	23429	51293

Source: **Census of India, 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal & Sikkim, Part V-A(i), Tables on Scheduled Castes, J. Datta Gupta, Published by Manager of Publications, Delhi and Printed by Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1966, pp.26-76**

The state of West Bengal in 1961 occupied eighth position among the states of India having 2054081 scheduled caste people containing a share 5.88 percent in the total population and

comprised 6.82 percent of the total scheduled tribe population of the country. On the other North Bengal as a whole had 729665 persons belonged to Scheduled tribe. This Scheduled Tribe people constituted 13.15 percent share of the entire population of the region and 35.52 percent or the one third of the total Scheduled Caste population of the State of West Bengal. However, the following table will show the distribution of the Scheduled Tribe population and their percentage to the total population of the districts and percentage to the total scheduled Tribe population of the State.

Table-6.65
Distribution of ST population and Proportions
In the Districts of North Bengal

1961

State/District	ST Population	Percentage to Total population	Percentage to the State Scheduled Tribe Population
West Bengal	2054081	5.88	6.82 (Percentage to the country)
Darjeeling	96444	15.44	4.70
Jalpaiguri	354741	26.10	17.27
Cooch Behar	8809	0.86	0.43
West Dinajpur	170149	12.85	8.28
Malda	99522	8.14	4.84
Total Of North Bengal	729665	13.15	35.52

Source: Census of India 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal & Sikkim, Part-II(i), Social and Cultural Tables, J. Datta Gupta, 1965, pp.418 & Census of India, 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal & Sikkim, Part V-A(ii), Tables on Scheduled Tribes, J. Datta Gupta, Published by Manager of Publications, Delhi and Printed by Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1967,p.xviii

Concerning the percentage of Scheduled Tribe population in the districts of the State of West Bengal to their total population the highest rank was occupied by the district of Jalpaiguri having 26.10 percent Scheduled Tribe population in the district. The third and the fourth position of were also occupied by the North Bengal districts of Darjeeling (15.44 percent) and West Dinajpur (12.85 percent) respectively the second being taken by Purulia with 19.33 percent scheduled tribe population. Malda having been resided by 8.14 percent of Scheduled Tribe population in the district ranked sixth in the State. In consideration of the State's Scheduled tribe population the highest contribution was made by the district of Jalpaiguri contributing 17.27 percent to the total Scheduled Tribe population of the State. The district of West Dinajpur contributed 8.28 percent, Malda contributed 4.84 percent and Darjeeling contributed 4.70 percent to the total Scheduled Tribe population of the State. In contrast to the Scheduled caste population Cooch Behar district contributed lest both in her total population (0.86 percent) and in total Scheduled Tribe population of the State (0.43 percent).¹⁹⁶

In the Statement IV of the Census Tables on Scheduled Castes of 1961 there were nine police stations were recorded where above 40 percent people belonged to the Scheduled Tribe population. Among these nine police stations the seven police stations belonged to the districts of North Bengal. The highest percentage of scheduled tribe population was contained by the police station of Nagrakata of Jalpaiguri district. Among the other six police stations the Mal, Mitali, Madarihat, Kalchini, Kumargram were under Jalpaiguri district and the Habibpur police station was in Malda district. In Mal there were 41.11 percent Scheduled tribe population, in Mitali 47.95 percent, in Madarihat 40.47 percent, in Kalchini 42.91 percent, in Kumargram 44.88 percent and in Habibpur 40.42 percent Scheduled tribe population among the entire populations of those police stations.¹⁹⁷ Following is the table of distribution of the important Scheduled Tribes in the North Bengal districts in percentage to the State.

Table-6.66

**Distribution of Numerically important Scheduled tribes in Percentage to the State
North Bengal, 1961**

Name of the Tribes	Malda	West Dinajpur	Jalpaiguri	Darjeeling	Cooch Behar
Santal	7.02	10.19	3.21	0.61	0.10
Oraon	1.61	7.49	61.11	9.55	0.78
Munda	0.96	9.31	33.62	5.34	0.39
Bhumij	N	0.01	0.57	0.02	0.50
Kora	3.99	4.55	8.97	0.46	0.14
Lodha	0.06	0.50	58.70	3.52	0.94
Mahali	4.70	7.45	46.39	3.50	0.13
Bhutia	0	0.97	4.96	93.60	0.02
Mal Pahariya	7.53	11.29	1.129	10.42	1.24
Lepcha	0	1.42	0.90	97.39	0.01

Source: Census of India, 1961, Volume XVI, West Bengal & Sikkim, Part V-A(ii), Tables on Scheduled Tribes, J. Datta Gupta, Published by Manager of Publications, Delhi and Printed by Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1967,p.xxv

The district of Jalpaiguri was great centre for the tribal people of different communities. Thus the 61.11 percent Oraon population was contributed by the district to the State. 33.62 percent of the Mumdass of the State of West Bengal resided in Jalpaiguri district during this census period. Besides 58.70 percent of Lodha population, 46.39 percent of Mahali population and 11.29 percent of Mal Pahariya population were contributed by the district to the State. The Bhutia including Sherpa, Toto, Dukpa, Kagatay, tibetand and Yolmo were mainly agglomerated in Darjeeling district having 93.60 percent the said population in the district out of total Bhutia population of the State. 4.96 percent of Bhutia population of West Bengal was contributed by the Jalpaiguri district. The district of West Dinajpur contributed 10.19 percent of Santal population, 7.49 percent of Oraon population, 9.31 percent of Munda population, 7.45 percent

of Mahali population and 11.29 percent of Mal Pahariya population to the State. So, all these three districts of Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and West Dinajpur had great significance in context of Scheduled tribe population. However, the district of Malda and the district of Cooch Behar did not have much tribal Scheduled tribe population in contrast to that of the Scheduled caste population during this time.¹⁹⁸

There were 557 number of Bhumij in Jalpaiguri district in 1951 which decreased to 519 in 1961. On the other Cooch Behar district, though did not have any Bhumij in 1951, witnessed 457 persons of the tribe in 1961. Lepchas were greatly settled in Darjeeling district. Both in 1951 and 1961 they were abundant numbering 13164 in 1951 and 14910 in 1961. The Mal Pahariyas were in good number both in Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts in both the Census years of 1951 and 1961. In Darjeeling they numbered 1367 and 1636 respectively and in Jalpaiguri they numbered 10507 and 13178 respectively. In Malda the Mal Pahariyas increased greatly from 133 in 1951 to 1182 in 1961 census year. The Meches were greatly concentrated in the Jalpaiguri district in both the census year. They increase from 10507 in 1951 to 13178 in 1961 in the district. The Mech were also existed in Darjeeling numbering 224 in 1951 and 237 in 1961 and in Cooch Behar numbering 56 in 1951 and 153 in 1961. The Mundas, as we found earlier, were greatly concentrated in the districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri. The Nagesias who had been treated as Scheduled Caste in 1951 but were treated as Scheduled Tribe in 1961, were mainly agglomerated in Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and to some extent in Cooch Behar districts. In the district of Darjeeling they numbered 428 in 1951 and 1384 in 1961. In Jalpaiguri they numbered 1828 in 1951 and 2876 in 1961. In Cooch Behar they numbered 109 in 1951 and 308 in 1961. In case of North Bengal districts the Oraon were greatly concentrated in the Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts. In Jalpaiguri they had a great bulk numbering 115776 in 1951 and 181749 in 1961 having a great increase in the population. The Rabhas were mostly concentrated in Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar districts. There were 2869 persons of Rabha Community in 1951 in Jalpaiguri who increased to 4132 in 1961. In case Cooch Behar they numbered 624 in 1951 and rose to 1608 in 1961. The Santals were great bulk in both the districts of Malda and Jalpaiguri having 84207 persons and 38560 persons in 1961 respectively. Thus all the Scheduled Tribe populations rose in numerical strength in the North Bengal districts during the decade 1951-61.¹⁹⁹ Like the Scheduled Caste populations the Scheduled Tribe populations also mostly lived in rural areas of North Bengal. Except Darjeeling district where 88.37 percent Scheduled tribe population lived in rural areas in other North Bengal districts above 98 percent Scheduled Caste population stayed in rural lands.

From the above discussion it is apparent that the Scheduled Caste population as well as the Scheduled Tribe population in the North Bengal districts grew largely. The tribal demography in the districts basically was built and enriched by the immigrant tribes, their permanent settlement and residing of them generation after generation besides the strong flow of the

immigrants from Bihar, Nepal, Bhutan region. On the other the Scheduled caste population largely existed in the districts of North Bengal and also enriched by the immigrants. The post partition period witnessed massive immigration of the Scheduled caste people in the North Bengal districts leading their growth. Thus scheduled caste demography and the scheduled tribe demography became criterion phenomenon in different socio-cultural-political developments. Both the Scheduled castes people and the Scheduled Tribe people agglomerated in one or another region. This resulted in growing number of Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe villages. Thus we get voluminous numbers of Scheduled caste and scheduled villages where at least the fifty percent of the population belonged to the Scheduled castes or Scheduled tribes. However, it will be very lengthy and elaborative to depict all the Scheduled caste villages and Scheduled tribe villages here. So, I shall mention the names of the Scheduled Caste villages having about hundred or hundred percent Scheduled caste population and the Scheduled Tribe villages having above ninety percent Scheduled tribe population. Percentages of the Scheduled caste or Scheduled tribe population will be mentioned in the brackets.

In Phansidewa police station of Jalpaiguri district we get a list of 29 villages having Scheduled caste population more than 50 percent for which they were regarded as the Scheduled Caste villages. Here the scheduled caste people like the Rajbansi, Lohar and the Bagdis or Duley were major communities in the villages. Among those villages Meherulla had 100.00 percent Scheduled caste population. The village of Dwara Baksa had 98.66 percent of Scheduled caste population. In Siliguri police station of the Darjeeling district we get the Rajbanshi dominated scheduled caste villages numbering 14 in 1961. Among them in Champashari Chhat and in Thiknikata villages there were 100 percent scheduled caste population mainly the Rajbanshis. In Bataliguri, Tengtichhara, and Pelku villages there were scheduled caste population above 90 percent. In Kharibari police station of Darjeeling district there were 25 numbers of villages where scheduled caste population was above 50 percent. The Rajbanshis and the Bagdis were the major scheduled castes in these villages. Among them in Guabari, Dohaguri, Balahijhora, jamatulla there were scheduled class population above 80 percent. In Naxalbari police station of the Darjeeling district there were 10 villages with Scheduled case population above 50 percent where the major scheduled castes were Rajbanshi, Namasudra and the Kami(Nepali). Among them in Bharat Sing village the scheduled caste people constituted 99.40 percent population and in Dhema 86.11 percent population was constituted by the Scheduled caste population.²⁰⁰

In Jalpaiguri police station of Jalpaiguri district there were 19 villages which were populated by the Scheduled caste population, mainly by the Rajbanshis, containing above 50 percent. Among them in the Chhitlans of Singimari there was 100 percent population belonged to the scheduled caste. In Araji Amarkhana they constituted 97.78 percent population, in Rarmmadeb they constituted 96.99 percent population and in Kachua they contained 83.61 percent population.

In Rajganj police station of Jalpaiguri district there were 11 villages with Scheduled caste population above 50 percent, predominantly comprised by the Rajbanshi community. Among them in Panikauri there were 94.44 percent Scheduled caste population. In Araji Bhelakoba III they were 81.40 percent, in Chhat Sikarpur they were 87.40 percent and in Araji Binnaguri 82.12 percent. In Maynaguri police station of Jalpaiguri district there were 63 villages having above 50 scheduled caste population predominantly resided by the Rajbanshis. Among them in the villages of Dakshin Marichbari, Nirendrapur and Uttar Putimari there were 100 percent scheduled caste population. In the villages of Uttar Sisubari, Uttar Khagrabari, Madhabdanga, Purba Sisubari, Paharpur, Purba Baragharia, Bhangarhat, Dhaolaguri, Charerbari, Chapgar, Purba Baragila, Kajaldighi the scheduled caste people constituted above 90 percent population. In Nagrakata police station there were two villages namely Uttar Nunkhawa danga and dhondasimla having scheduled caste population above 50 percent predominantly resided by the Rajbanshi, Lohar Kami (Nepali) and the Namasudras.

In Dhupguri police station of Jalpaiguri district there were 50 villages where scheduled caste population constituted above 50 percent of the village populations mainly comprised by the Rajbanshi community. Among them one village namely Dambari had 100 percent scheduled caste population. On the other the villages like Niranjanpat, Grakhuta, Madhya Daukimari, Uttar Kathulia, Tuklimari, Dakshin Jhar Altagram, Char Charabari, Kursamari, Paschim Mallikpara and Jurapani had scheduled caste population above 90 percent. In Mal police station there were sixteen villages having scheduled caste population above 50 percent mainly resided by the Rajbanshis and Namasudras. Among them, the village Paschim Mauamari had 96.14 percent, the village Betbari Tea Garden had 91.77 percent and the village Paschim Sngapara had 91.44 percent Scheduled caste population. The villages of Dakshin Saripakuri and Jhar Matiali had scheduled caste population above 80 percent. In Madarihat police station of Jalpaiguri district there was one village namely Paschim Khairbari had 52.58 percent scheduled caste population being resided by the Rajbanshis, Kamis(Nepali), Sarkis(Nepali), Ghasis and the Lohars.

In Falakata police station of Jalpaiguri district there were 25 police stations having above 50 percent Scheduled caste population mostly resided by the Rajbanshis and the Namasudras. Among them Baradoba had 90.76 percent scheduled caste population. The villages like Alinagar, Purba Jharbaltali, Harinathpur, Balasundar, Jay Chandpur had scheduled caste population above 80 percent. In the Alipur Duar police station there were 50 numbers of villages with scheduled caste population above 50 percent inhabited predominantly by the Rajbanshis. Among them the villages like Sirubari, Dakshin Kamsingram, Chaprarpar, Bhatibari had scheduled caste population more than 80 percent. The villages namely Khatpara and Boragari had above 90 percent scheduled caste population. In Kumargram police station there were 18 villages having above 50 percent population belonged to Scheduled castes. Among

them the village Bhalka had 98.48 percent, village Paschim Chak Chaka had 76.28 percent and the village Chengmari had 71.60 percent scheduled caste population.²⁰¹

In Cooch Behar police station of the Cooch Behar district there were 132 villages with scheduled caste population above 50 percent and dominantly inhabited by the Rajbanshis. Among them the villages like Putimari, Chhat Chhaderjhar, Kasiamari, Patpisu, Jhal Jhali, Silhuri, Part II, Monaguri, Aulibari, Karisal, Ghargharia had cent percent of Scheduled Caste population. In the villages like haribbhanga, Jagarjhuli (98.00), Amar Bhairthana (95.30), Bairrati, Maghpala, Falimari, salbari Brahmata, Tangtangi, balagram (98.66), Giriar Kuthi, Morongabari, Khalisaguri (98.16), Ghagerkuthi, Simulguri, Hirarkuthi, Konamalli, Pestarjhar, Araji Kakribari, Sibpur, Daldali (92.13), Topsikhata (92.57), Sonari Nikatiarkuti, Ambari, Goyergari, Aratguri, Dewtibari, Khoiratibari, Kharatibari Chhoto (94.44), Rangrash Bra, Salmar had above 80 percent of Scheduled caste population. In Tufanganj police station of Cooch Behar district there were 59 villages having more than 50 percent scheduled caste population dominantly inhabited by the Rajbanshis. In few of them there was 100 percent scheduled caste population. In Dinhat police station there 93 villages recognizing as the Scheduled Caste villages by the census of 1961. There was also cent percent scheduled Caste population in some of the villages the major schedule caste being the Rajbanshis. Thus in Sitai police station there was 42 scheduled caste villages, in Mathabhanga there was 144 villages with more than half population being inhabited by the scheduled caste people, in Sitalkuchi police station having 39 villages with more than half of the population being scheduled castes, in Mekliganj police station there was 105 villages with more than fifty percent scheduled caste population and in Haldibari police station there was 24 villages having above fifty percent scheduled caste people. In many of the villages there was cent percent and above 90 percent or 80 percent scheduled caste population.²⁰²

In the Hili police station of West Dinajpur district there was three villages namely Kmarghat, Jantipur and Sidai having more than fifty percent scheduled caste population dominantly inhabiting by the Rajbanshis, namasudras, Jhalo Malo or Malos and Bbhuimalis. In Balurghat police station of the district there was 38 villages which had population belonged to scheduled castes more than fifty percent. Those villages were resided dominantly by the Rajbanshis, Namasudras and the Bhuimalis. In number of villages there was 100 percent scheduled caste population in the police station. In Kumarganj police station of the district there was 25 villages recorded as the Scheduled caste villages in which the major castes were the Rajbanshis, Binds and the Namasudras. In Gangarampur police station of the West Dinajpur district there was thirty one villages having more than fifty percent scheduled caste population numerically with greater residents of the Rajbanshis, Paliyas and the Namasudras. The Police station of Tapan in the district had 60 villages with majority of scheduled caste population being resided over dominantly by the Rajbasis, Paliyas, Namasudra and Bhuimali. Raiganj policse station had 83

villages with more than fifty percent scheduled caste population and dominantly inhabited by the Paliya, Rajbanshis, and the Bagdis or Duleys. In Kaliaganj police station there was 106 villages with inhabitation of the scheduled caste population more than fifty percent. The predominant scheduled castes in this police station were the rajbanshis, Doais, Bagdis or duleys and Gornhis. There 38 villages in the Hemtabad police station recognized as the scheduled caste villages having inhabited majorly by the Paliya, Bagdi or Duley, Rajbanshis and Lohars. In Ithar police stations 74 villages were there as scheduled caste villages resided prominently by the Paliyas, the Haris and the Rajbanshis. The police station of Kushmundi had 92 villages mostly populated by the scheduled caste people of the Rajbanshis and the Bagdis or Duleys. Banshihari police stations had 48 villages as the scheduled caste villages majorly resided by the Paliyas, the Rajbanshis and the Namasudras. Islampur police station had two villages as the Scheduled Caste villages namely the Aluwabari and Aliganj having 55.13 percent and 69.96 percent scheduled caste population mainly comprised by the Chamars, the ghazis and Mushars. The Karndighi police Station had four villages of scheduled castes inhabited largely by the Ghasis, the Chamars, the Musahars, the Dosadhs or Dushadhs. Thus the Chopra police station had six such villages resided dominantly by the Dosadhs, Chamars, mushhars and Rajwars. The Goalpokhar police Station had such nine villages habited by the Musahars, the Turis, the Chamars and the Dosadhs.²⁰³

In English Bazar police Station there nine villages having more than fifty percent population of Scheduled castes and largely inhabited by the Tiyar, Pod or Poundra, Keot or Keyot, Bind Jhalo Malo or Malos, Chamar, Muchi, Rabidas, Ruidas or Rishi and the Dhobis. In Kaliachak polices stations there was four villages of Scheduled castes inhabited largely by the rajbanshis, Binds, Keot, Chamars and the Tiyars. There was 29 villages in Malda police station with above fifty percent scheduled caste population resided by the Rajbanshis, Namasudras, Pods, Binds, Jhalo Malo or Malos and the Mals. The Habibpur Police station had 43 villages being inhabited by more than fifty percent scheduled caste people like the Rajbanshis, the Paliyas, the Binds, the Jhalo Malo or Malos, the Namasudras, the Nuniyas and the Pods. The Ratua police station had six such villages with inhabitants of Tiyars, Binds, Chamars, Mushahars, Lohars, Dhobas, Gonrhis and Mallahs. Manikchak police station had four such villages populated by mainly the Bind, Tiyar and the Chamars. The Kharba police station had eight such villages populated by majorly the Haris, Rajbanshis, Bhuiya, Nuniyas, the Jalia Kaibarttas, and the Turis. The Hrishchandrapur police station had nine such villages largely populated by the Haris, tiyars, rajbanshis, Mushhar, Dosadhs, Gonrihs, Jalia Kaibarttas and Chamars. The Gajol police station had 53 such villages with major inhabitants like the Rajbanshis, the Namasudras and the Paliyas. The Bamongola police station had thirty nine such villages dominantly inhabited by the Rajbanshis, Namasudras and the Paliyas.²⁰⁴

The list of the scheduled tribe villages in North Bengal district was not small. In the hilly police Station the number of such villages was a few. But in the Terai-Duars and the plain region the number of the scheduled tribe villages was large. In Rangli Rangliot police station of the Darjeeling district there was one village namely Tukdah Forest had 63.66 percent scheduled tribe population. The major scheduled tribe communities in the village were the Bhutias including Sherpa, Toto, Dukpa, Kagatay, Tibetan and Yolmo and the Lepchas. In Kalimpong police station there was three villages namely Lava forest (86.29), Pemling Khasmahal (57.11), and the Churanthi Forest (52.63) having scheduled tribe population above fifty percent. The villages were majorly inhabited by the Lepcha and the Bhutias. In Garubathan police station the only village Ruka Forest had 100 percent Scheduled tribe population largely inhabited by the Bhutias, the Lepchas, the Lodhas and the Oraons. The Kurseong police station had two villages namely sapti guri Khela Ghar Tea Estate(64.08) and Pairi Kumari (60.25) inhabited majorly by the Lepcha, Bhutias, Oraons and the Nagesias.

In phansidewa police station of Darjeeling district there were 36 villages having scheduled caste people more than fifty percent. In few of them there was hundred percent scheduled caste people such as in Paariullar Chhat, Bhariadangir Chhat, Dhaknagachh and in Paik Para-Arazi. The major scheduled tribes in these villages were Oraon, Santal and Munda. In Siliguri police station there was twenty five villages inhabited by the scheduled tribe population above fifty percent. Some of the villages were constituted by the 100 percent Scheduled Tribe population like the Khoklong, Duramarir Chhat, Shalbari Chhat and Pataner Chhat. The villages were majorly resided by the Oraon and Mundas and some unclassified tribes. In Kharibari police station there was fifteen villages majorly inhabited by the Santals, Oraons and the Mundas. In Naxalbari police station there were 23 villages where the population was more than fifty percent from the Scheduled tribes. There was hundred percent Scheduled tribe populations in the village like Mir Janglar Chhat. The majority of the people resided here were Oraons and Mundas.²⁰⁵

In Jalpaiguri police station of Jalpaiguri district there were six villages populated by more than fifty percent scheduled tribe population. The major scheduled tribes in the villages were the Oraons and the Mundas. In Rajganj police station only one village was Scheduled tribe village namely Saraswatipur T.E. having 63.01 percent Scheduled Tribe population. In Maynaguri police station there were 26 villages having scheduled tribe population more than fifty percent. The inhabitants major in number in the villages were the Oroan and the Mundas. In Dhupguri police station of Jalpaiguri district there were fifteen villages with above fifty percent scheduled tribe population and the villages majorly resided by the Oraon and Mundas. In Mal police station there were 39 villages having above fifty percent Scheduled Tribe population and majorly resided by the Oraon and the Munda. There was 100 percent scheduled tribe population in the villages of Uttar Phulbari and Chel Tea Gardesn. In Mitial police station there were 22 villages with majority of scheduled tribe population resided over dominantly by the Oroan and Mundas. In Madarihat police station there were 21 scheduled caste villages where the major group of

the scheduled tribe people was comprised by the Oraon, Munda and the Lodha, Kheria or Kharia. In Dangapara village there was 100 percent scheduled tribe population.

In Falakata police station there were 16 villages having more than half of the population belonged to the scheduled tribes resided majorly by the Santal and the Oraons. In Kalchini police station there were 22 villages with majorly resided scheduled tribe population. The major scheduled tribes in the villages were the Oraon, the Lodha, Kheria or Kharia and the Munda. There was 100 percent scheduled tribe population in the villages of Parmalangi and Adma in Kalchini police station. In Alipur duars police station there were 32 villages having above fifty percent scheduled tribe population. The scheduled tribes were mainly constituted by the Oraon, Santals, Mech and the Munda. There was 100 percent scheduled tribe population in the villages of Garokhuta, Sambalpur and in Pukhuria. There were 23 villages having more than half of the population belonged to the scheduled tribe population and majorly resided over by the Oraon, Mech, Munda and the unspecified.²⁰⁶

As there was least tribal population in the district of Cooch Behar so there a few scheduled tribe villages in the district. Thus the Cooch Behar police station in the district had two villages namely Angarkata and Karibharal having 72.55 percent and 84.35 percent Scheduled Tribe population respectively. The tribal population in the villages was constituted by the Garos, the Oraons, the Santals and the Bhumijis. In Mekliganj police station of the district had only one scheduled tribe village namely Buraburi Debathtar having 87.10 percent scheduled tribe population constituted by the Santals and the Mundas.²⁰⁷

In Hili police station of the district West Dinajpur there were ten villages belonged the Scheduled Tribe dominated villages. Among them in Makhatair there was 100 percent scheduled tribe population. The tribe people were mainly consisted by the sandals and the Mundas. In Balurghat police station there were 72 villages majorly populated by the Scheduled Tribe population. Among them the villages like Paschim Krishnapur, Darail, Nabipur, Chak Ramanath, Harirampur, Chak Basanta, Kutubpur, Bamanahar, Chak Khetab had hundred percent scheduled tribe population. The villages were inhabited by mainly the Mundas and the unclassified tribes. In Kumarganj police station there were 32 villages having scheduled tribe population above fifty percent. Among the villages charkhanda, Purbba Gobindapur, Prasadpur, Chak Bhabani, Islampur and Serpur had hundred percent scheduled tribe populations. All the tribal population was constituted by the Santals. In Gangarampur police station there were 27 scheduled tribe villages majorly inhabited by the Santals and the Oraons. Among them the villages like Nalafarka, Bishnupur, Brahmanpara and Ausa were constituted with cent percent scheduled tribe population.

In Tapan police station there were 67 villages with above fifty percent Scheduled Tribe population mainly constituted by the Santals and the Oraons. Among the villages OPabail,

Umanandapur, Faradpur, Mahishnota, Goranda Kesurkuri, Dakshin Kesrail, Sondapukur, Sulapanipur, Jnanbai were comprised by cent percent scheduled tribe population. The Raiganj police station had 11 villages with more than half of the scheduled tribe population mainly constituted by the Santals. There was 100 percent scheduled tribe population in the village of Mahespur in the police station. In Kaliaganj there were nine villages having more than half of the population being scheduled tribe mainly constituted by the Santals. The village Ghatisal in this police station had hundred percent scheduled tribe populations. In Itahar police station there were 20 villages belonged to Scheduled Tribe dominating villages mainly constituted by the Santals. Among them the villages Simuldanga, Bishnupur, Kasibati, Suliapara, Sisai and Maghiapara had hundred percent scheduled tribe populations. The Kushmundi police station had 24 villages having more than half of the population belonged to scheduled tribes. Among them the villages of Jaherpur and Nambhail had cent percent scheduled tribe population. In Banshihari police station there were 52 villages being populated largely by the scheduled tribe population. The Santals were the main element of the population. There were hundred percent scheduled tribe population in the villages like Ukhli, uttar Mulahat, Mudafat Makirmpur, Mahespur, hanpur, Sobhanpur, Rankhanpara, Gerul, Amarpur, subarna Sarai, Makrampur and Ojantor. In Karandighi policse station there were 31 Scheduled tribe villages and surprisingly among them the seventeen villages were constituted by the people hundred percent belonged to scheduled tribes mainly comprised by the Santals. In Chopra police station seven villages were scheduled tribe villages and five of them were fully populated by the Scheduled Tribe people mainly belonged to the Santals and the Oraons. The Goalpokhar police station had sixteen villages dominated by the scheduled tribe population and in Aulai, bangaon, Peazgaon, tutikata, Lohajang, Dangipara had cent percent scheduled tribe population.²⁰⁸

In Malda police station of the Malda district there were 36 villages having above fifty percent Scheduled tribe population mainly constituted by the Santals. Among them Badanpur, Harirampur, Paschim Banjhapara, Hatrakndar, Rachhulpur, Satbaria were totally populated by the scheduled tribe people. Habibpur police station had 130 villages being treated as scheduled tribe villages by the census of 1961. Among them the villages like Kathra Naopara, Jamir Pukur, Pathar Mndala, Pirgachhi, Argachhi, Suchal Mhammadpur, Knisipahara, Gopalnagaa, Gurila, Chakdahari, Pathar Oltara, Haito, Khatiakana, Kasiadanga, Lota Bhangra, Karanjabari, Bakna, chengai Chandi, Upar Kendua, Parthar Banpur, Jot Kndarpapur, uttar chandpur, Nasratpur, NiHosenpur, Nabaghar, Parulia Hosenpur, Khas Haripur, Pathar Nachhharatpur had hundred percent Scheduled tribe population. In Khrba there were four and in Harishchadrapur there were five scheduled tribe villages. In Gazol there were 104 villages majorly constituted by the Santal people more than the half. Among them the villages such as Chalandar, Chhuti Kandar, Dharail, Raghunathpur, Atgan, Jalangapara, Baje Jhar Sabail, Jot Ghasi, Dogachhi, Baniakandar, dogharia had cent percent of scheduled tribe population mainly constituted by the Santals. In

Bamangola police station of the district there were thirty villages having more than half of the population belonged to the scheduled tribe population. Among them the villages such as Baje Manikpur, Ramnagar, Beltalbari, Bhadreswar had cent percent scheduled tribe population.²⁰⁹

Thus the districts of North Bengal witnessed the change in clustering and agglomerating of the demography from pre-partition period to the post-partition period. And in 1960s this changes began to hover in the peoples' settlement of habitation. The nomenclature of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe villages by the Muslim names or upper caste Hindu names may lead us to infer that the villages were turned into either in scheduled caste or in the scheduled tribe villages. This obviously also led to the changes in cultural practices prevalent in those villages. However, this agglomeration of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes paved the way of the development of the villages in new form. But this was in the process of 'continuity ad changes' of which result it was to see whether any other changes would happen in these changes or not in the later period. If it would happen then what would be the course of change.

Concerning caste and ethnicity of the population data in 1971 there was no improvement in the Census activities and the enumerators had to work with earlier limitations. Howsoever, the information returned by them has to use for the caste and ethnic description of demography of North Bengal for the 1961-71 decade also. But the quantitative and qualitative changes happened in the caste demography of North Bengal showing transition which will emerge from the following study. During this time the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people of the State of West Bengal constituted 25.62 percent having every fourth person in the State to be a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe.²¹⁰ Within the State an inter-district comparison will also bring out some interesting features of the composition of the Demography of North Bengal. The following table is the general description of the caste composition of the demography of North Bengal for the period of 1971 census year.

Table-6.67
Distribution of SC & ST population In North Bengal
For the Year 1971

Name of District/State	Scheduled Castes	Percentage to total Population	Scheduled Tribe	Percentage to total Populatiion	Percentage of SCs & STs to Total Population
West Bengal	8816028	19.90	2532969	5.72	25.62
Darjiling	98277	12.57	108586	13.89	26.46
Jalpaiguri	595424	34.02	428595	24.49	58.51
Cooch Behar	665020	47.03	10611	0.75	47.48
West Dinajpur	429578	23.10	221317	11.90	35.00

Malda	265697	16.48	130715	8.11	24.59
North Bengal	2053996	27.69	899824	12.13	39.82

Source: Census of India, 1971, Series-22, West Bengal, Part II-C(i), Social and Cultural Tables (Tables C-VII and C-VIII), Bhaskar Ghose, p66

As a whole in North Bengal there was 2053996 persons belonged to the Scheduled Castes and 899824 persons belonged to the Scheduled Tribes in 1971 census year. With this North Bengal had 27.69 percent of its population belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes comprised 12.13 percent population of the North Bengal region. Thus in total about 40 percent of the population of North Bengal belonged to the SC and ST communities and one person belonged to any of the SC or ST communities of each 2.5 persons in North Bengal. This is also important that the SC population increased 624761 persons having growth of 43.71 percent over the SC population of the previous decade. This was much above the growth of general population (33.68) in North Bengal in the same decade. The ST population in North Bengal increased 170159 persons being 23.32 percent growth over the ST population of previous decade. Thus North Bengal contributed 23.30 percent share in the total SC population of the State and 35.52 percent in the total ST population of the State²¹¹. This demographic transition in context of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population in North Bengal may be well understood from the transition of districts of North Bengal.

Among the districts of North Bengal Darjeeling had 781777 numbers of SC populations having 12.57 percent share in the total population of the district. On the other the district had 108586 number of ST populations having 13.89 percent share in the total population. Thus the SCs and STs together formed 26.46 percent population in the district being little higher than the State's percentage. However, the district witnessed a growth of 19.30 percent over the Scheduled Caste population of 1961 against the State's growth of 27.95 percent and constituted only 1.12 percent of the State's Scheduled Caste population.²¹² The important scheduled castes (numbering above 1000) and their numerical strength in the district of Darjeeling in 1971 may be seen in the following table.

Table-6.68
SC in Rural and Urban areas of North Bengal
Darjeeling District
1971

Name of SC	Rural	Urban	Total
All Castes	83459	14818	98277
Chamar, Charmakar, Mochi, Muchi, Rabidas, Ruidas or Rishi	1371	1386	2757
Damai (Nepali)	6110	2434	8544
Dhoba or Dhobi	608	609	1217

Kami (Nepali)	18009	4006	22015
Lohar	1067	179	1246
Mehtor	1516	1006	2522
Namasudra	2965	1745	4710
Rajbanshi	31341	164	31505
Sarki(Nepali)	3489	357	8846

Source: Compiled from SC-III Part-A and Part-B, Census of India, 1971, Part V-A, Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, B. Ghosh, West Bengal, Calcutta, pp.684-686 and 749-51

The highest number of Scheduled Caste population in the district were found in Phansidewa police station numbering 16568 followed by Siliguri, Kharibari and Naxalbari police stations having 13484 persons, 12878 persons and 11278 persons belonged to Scheduled Caste community respectively during this period. The highest percentage of the SC population in the district was in Kharibari police station having 28.80 percent of the total population followed by Phansidewa (23.04 percent) and Naxalbari (22.20 percent). Siliguri police station had 10.03 percent SC population. In the hill police stations of Kurseong had 12.26 percent of SC population, in Darjeeling 10.72 percent and in Kalimpong 8.84 percent.²¹³

The ST population in Darjeeling district constituted 4.29 percent of the ST population of the State in 1971 against its 4.70 percent share of the State's ST population in 1961 census year. The decadal growth of the ST population in the district was 12.59 percent on the ST population of the previous decade. It was much low than the State's growth of ST population by 23.31 percent during the decade.²¹⁴ The highest number of ST population was found in Phansidewa police station in the district during this time numbering 21228 followed by Kalimpong by 19088 persons, Kharibari by 13579 persons, Naxalbari by 13286 persons and Siliguri by 11838 persons belonged to the ST community. However, the highest percentage of ST population was found in Kharibar police station having 30.36 percent ST population followed by Phansidewa having 29.53 percent and Naxalbari having 26.15 percent all these being much higher than the district's share. In hill tract of the district Kalimpong had 18.67 percent ST population, Darjeeling had 9.54 percent and Kurseong had 5.57 percent ST population. Siliguri police station contained 8.81 percent ST population during this time.²¹⁵ The important scheduled Tribes (numbering above 500) and their numerical strength in the district of Darjeeling in 1971 may be seen in the following table.

Table-6.69
ST in Rural and Urba Areas of North Bengal
Darjeeling District
1971

Name Of ST	Total Rural	Total Urban	Total Number
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All Tribes	97169	11417	108586
Bhutia including Sherpa, Toto, Dukpa, Kagatay, Tibetan and Yolmo	20734	9708	30442
Chik Baraik	1544	-	1544
Kisan	713	-	713
Lepcha	12439	1097	13536
Lodha, Kheria or Kharia	1744	-	1744
Mahali	646	1	647
Mal Pahariya	2443	-	2443
Munda	6894	-	6894
Nagesia	855	-	855
Oraon	26656	26	26682
Santal	10270	65	10335

Source: Compiled from Table, ST-V, Part-A, Census of India, 1971, Part V-A, Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, B. Ghosh, West Bengal, Calcutta, pp.906-908

Thus the district of Darjeeling mainly comprised by the SC population of the Chamars or Muchis, the Damais, the Dhobas, the Lohars, the Kamis, the Mehtors, the Sarkis, the Namasudras and the Rajbansis and with ST population comprised by the Bhutias including the Sherpas, the Totos, the Dukpas, the Tietans and Yolmos, the Chik Baraikis, the Kisans, the Lepchas, the Lodhas, the Mahalis, the Malpahariyas, the Mudhas, the Nagesias, the Oraons and the Santals. The highest number of the Scheduled Caste population was comprised by the Rajbansis having 31505 persons with a share of 32.06 percent in the Scheduled Caste population of the district followed by the Kamis (22015) having 22.40 percent share. Among the Scheduled Tribe population the highest number in the district was comprised by the Oraons numbering 26682 and sharing 24.57 percent followed by the Lepchas numbering 13536 persons sharing 12.47 percent in the district's Scheduled Tribe population. There was good strength of unclassified Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population in the district. With these the different cultural segments emerged in the district.

The district of Jalpaiguri had 595424 number of Scheduled Caste population and 428595 number of Scheduled Tribe population, the largest scheduled tribe population in the North Bengal districts in 1971. Thus the SC population constituted 34.02 percent of the total population of the district and ST population constituted 24.49 percent of the total population of the district comprising together 58.51 percent that is more than the half of the total population of the district. The percentages were much higher than the State in both cases. The most important thing is that the district of Jalpaiguri witnessed a growth of Scheduled Caste people by 42.22 percent during the decade of 1961-71 being much more than the growth of total population of the district by 28.76 percent. This was also much higher growth (14.27 percent)

than the growth of the Scheduled Caste population of the State. The Scheduled Tribe population also increased with great percentage during the decade having growth rate of 20.82 percent being little low (2.49 percent) from the growth of State for the same period.²¹⁶ This was obviously low from the growth of total district population. From following table we may have an idea of the important Scheduled Castes in the district numbering more than 1000 persons.

Table-6.70
SC in Rural and Urban areas of North Bengal
Jalpaiguri District
1971

Name of SC	Rural	Urban	Total
All Castes	569881	25543	595424
Bagdi or Duley	3324	2	3326
Bhaimali	6199	173	6372
Bhuiya	3448	5	3453
Chamar, Charmakar, Mochi, Muchi, Rabidas, Ruidas or Rishi	11753	1452	13205
Damai (Nepali)	2619	5	2624
Dhoba or Dhobi	8922	375	9297
Dome or Dhangad	2784	211	2995
Dosadh or Dusadh including Dhari or Dharhi	3674	407	4081
Ghasi	2719	10	2729
Hari	6301	229	6530
Jalia Kaibartta	18492	689	19181
Jhalo Malo or Malo	5922	28	5950
Kadar	3848	19	3867
Kami (Nepali)	8219	151	8370
Kaur	1471	40	1511
Koch	9558	14	9572
Lohar	13631	270	13901
Mal	2100	500	2600
Mallah	4105	254	4359
Mehtor	2710	1004	3714
Namasudra	54133	4860	58993
Nuniya	2439	128	2567
Paliya	9496	1	9497
Pan or Sawasi	1086	5	1091
Pasi	5095	57	5152
Patni	1989	155	2144

Rajbanshi	319997	9194	329191
Sarki(Nepali)	1003	-	1003
Sunri excluding Saha	2634	31	2665
Tiyar	3424	3	3427
Turi	2599	110	2709

Source: Compiled from SC-III Part-A and Part-B, Census of India, 1971, Part V-A, Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, B. Ghosh, West Bengal, Calcutta, pp.686-690 and 751-53

The highest number of SC population in the district in 1971 was found in Maynaguri police station numbering 103000 persons followed by the police stations of Jalpaiguri (98393 prsons), Alipurduar (93343) and Dhupguri (91698). In consideration of the percentage of Scheduled Caste population (64.47 percent) in the district the highest rank was occupied by the police station of Maynaguri where there was lowest percentage of Scheduled Tribe population (3.05 percent) in the district. The other highly Scheduled Caste dominated police stations were Falakata (47.11 percent), Jalpaiguri (45.26 percent), Rajganj (43.25 percent), Dhupguri (42.39 percent) and Alipurduar (34.35 percent). The Maynaguri police station was in highest rank by both number and also by percentage. The highest percentage of the Scheduled Tribe population was found in 1971 in the police station of Mitali having 53.51 percent Scheduled Tribe population. The other Scheduled Tribe population dominated police stations were Nagrakata (51.14 percent), Kalchini (46.15 percent), Mal (41.87 percent), Birpara (42.39 percent), Kumargram (38.25 percent) and Madarihat (3810 pecent).²¹⁷ The following will present the numerical strength (above 500)of the important Schdeuled Tribe populations in the district.

Table-6.71
ST in Rural and Urba Areas of North Bengal
Jalpaiguri District
1971

Name Of ST	Total Rural	Total Urban	Total Number
All Tribes	427173	1422	428595
Bhumij	6162	19	6181
Bhutia including Sherpa,Toto,Dukpa,Kagatay,Tibetan and Yolmo	3190	54	3244
Kora	6364	55	6419
Lepcha	899	2	901
Lodha , Kheria or Kharia	14112	8	14120
Mahali	24269	51	24320
Mal Pahariya	10465	40	10505

Mech	10345	42	10387
Munda	71535	150	71685
Nagesia	1529	1	1530
Oraon	159224	395	159619
Santal	71332	207	71539

Source: Compiled from Table,ST-V, Part-A, Census of India, 1971, Part V-A, Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, B. Ghosh, West Bengal, Calcutta, pp.908-910

So the district of Jalpaiguri had numerically important Scheduled Caste populations such as the Bagdis, the Bhuimalis, the Bhuiyas, the Chamars or the Muchis, the Damais, the Dhobas, the Domes, The Dosadhs, the Gonrihs, the Haris, The Jalia Kaibarttas, the Jhalo Malo or Malos, the Kadars, the Kamis, the Kours, the Kochs the Lohars, the MIs, the Mallahs, the Mehtors, the namasudras, the Nyniyas, the Paliyas, the Pan or Sawasis, the Pasis, the Patnis, the Rajbanshis,, the Sarkis, the Sunris and the Turis. The highest was the Rajbanshis being more than the half of the total Scheduled Caste population in the district having 55.29 percent share. They were followed by the Namasudras having 58993 persons by number 9.91 percent share. On the other the major Scheduled Tribe population in the district was the Bhumijas, the Bhutias, the Lechas, the Lodhas, the Mahalis, the Mal Pahariyas, the Meches, the Mundas, the Nagesias, the Oraons and the Santals. The highest number of the Scheduled Tribe population was contained by the Oraons numbering 159619 persons and having 37.24 percent share among the Scheduled Caste population of the district. The Mudnas and the Santals had also good strength having 16.73 percent and 16.69 percent share in the Scheduled Tribe population of the district. There was good strength of unclassified Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population in the district.

The district of Cooch Behar had the largest number of Scheduled Caste population in North Bengal numbering 665020 persons belonged to the Scheduled Caste and 10611 persons belonged to the Scheduled Tribes in 1971 census year. The scheduled caste population constituted very significantly 47.03 percent of the total population of the district much more than the double of the State's share in its total population. On the other in contrast the district constituted only 0.75 percent of total population of the district a very small proportion in compare to the other North Bengal districts. Thus the both together formed 47.78 percent of the total population of the district.²¹⁸ The scheduled caste population increased by 39.03 percent during the decade of 1961-71 a little more than the District's general growth of population by 38.67 percent. The rate of growth was much high than the rate of the growth of scheduled caste population of the State of West Bengal. The Scheduled Tribe population in the district grew by 20.46 percent a little lower than the State's growth of Scheduled Tribe population and much low than the general growth of the population of the district during 1961-71. The following is the list of numerically important (having above 1000 members) Scheduled Castes in the district.

Table-6.72
SC in Rural and Urban areas of North Bengal
Cooch Behar District
1971

Name of SC	Rural	Urban	Total
All Castes	656394	8626	665020
Bagdi or Duley	4683	6	4689
Bhuimali	2127	14	2141
Chamar, Charmakar, Mochi, Muchi, Rabidas, Ruidas or Rishi	6494	318	6812
Dhoba or Dhobi	2593	294	2887
Hari	1047	41	1088
Jalia Kaibartta	9685	85	9770
Jhalo Malo or Malo	2722	197	2919
Mehtor	686	850	1536
Namasudra	65773	1452	67225
Paliya	1791	-	1791
Rajbanshi	478264	3040	481304
Sunri excluding Saha	1079	-	1079

Source: Compiled from SC-III Part-A and Part-B, Census of India, 1971, Part V-A, Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, B. Ghosh, West Bengal, Calcutta, pp.690-692 and 753-55

The most scheduled caste populated police station in the district of Cooch Behar was Mthabhangra police station having 137933 persons belonged to the scheduled caste community with 60.82 percent share in the total population of the police station followed by the Cooch Behar police station having 136133 persons belonged to the community with 36.55 percent share in the total population. The other majorly sc populated police stations of the district were Dinahata (116885 persons), Tufanganj (98231 persons), Mekliganj (56911 persons) and Sitalkuchi (52787 persons) police stations. The highest percentage of scheduled caste population was contained by the Mekliganj police station of the district having share of 70.20 percent in the total population. After Mekliganj the significant percentage of eh SC population was found in Sitalkuchi (69.08 percent), Mathabhangra (60.82 percent), Haldibari (53.77 percent), Tufanganj (40.65 percent), Dinahata (40.47 percent) and lastly Cooch Behar (36.35 percent)²¹⁹. The highest number of Scheduled Tribe population was found in 1971 in the Cooch Behar police station in the district having 3271 persons of the community followed by Tufanganj (2927 persons), Mathabhangra (2299 persons) and Dinahata (1268 persons). The highest percentage of ST population was found in Tufanganj police station having 1.21 percent Schedule Tribe population in the police station followed by Mathabhangra (1.01 percent) and

Cooch Behar (0.88 percent).²²⁰ The following is the table of the Scheduled Tribes in the district numerically strong having members above 500.

Table-6.73
ST in Rural and Urba Areas of North Bengal
Cooch Behar District
1971

Name Of ST	Total Rural	Total Urban	Total Number
All Tribes	10454	157	10611
Garo	898	-	898
Munda	943	-	943
Oraon	2483	31	2514
Rabha	1891	-	1891
Santal	2838	42	2880

Source: Compiled from Table,ST-V, Part-A, Census of India, 1971, Part V-A, Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, B. Ghosh, West Bengal, Caluctta, pp.910-11

Thus the district of Cooch Behar Scheduled Caste population was importantly comprised by the bagdis, the Bhuimalis, the Chamars or the Muchis, the Domes the Haris, the Jalia Kaibarttas, the Jhalo Malaos or the Malos, the Koches, the Mals, the Mehtors, the Namasudras, the Paliyas, the Rajbanshis, the Rajwars, the Sunris. Among them the largest Scheduled Caste community was the Rajbanshis who totaled 481304 numbers in the district comprised 72.37 percent of the total scheduled caste people of the district and 34.03 percent of the total population of the district. The second largest sc community in the district was the Namasudras having 67225 persons with 10.11 percent share in the scheduled caste population of the district followed by the Jalia Kaibrttas (9770), the Chamars (6812) and the Bagdis (4689). The numerically the largest Scheduled Tribes in the district was the Santals numbering 2880 persons having share of 27.14 percent followed by the Oraons numbering 2483 and having 23.40 percent and the Rabahas numbering 1891 persons having 17.81 percent share in the Scheduled Tribe population of the district during the period.

The district of West Dinajpur had large number of scheduled caste population numbering 429578 persons having a share of 23.10 percent in the total population of the district. On the other the district had the second largest number of scheduled tribe population among the North Bengal districts numbering 221317 persons with a share of 11.90 percent among the total population of the district.²²¹ There was almost fifty percent (49.96 percent) growth in the scheduled caste population during the decade 1961-71 in the district. It was the largest percentage of growth in the scheduled cast population among the North Bengal districts being much higher than the general growth of population in the district as well as the growth of scheduled caste population in the State of West Bengal. The scheduled tribe population also

grew largely having growth of 30.07 percent over the scheduled tribe population of the district of 1961. Though the growth was below the district's growth of general population it was much high than the State's growth of scheduled tribe population. Following is the table to furnish the numerically important Scheduled Castes in the district of West Dinajpur during 1970s.

Table-6.74
SC in Rural and Urban areas of North Bengal
West Dinajpur District
1971

Name of SC	Rural	Urban	Total
All Castes	417508	12070	429578
Bagdi or Duley	33294	307	33601
Bauri	2149	10	2159
Bediya	1058	58	1116
Bhaimali	7586	173	7759
Bhuiya	1563	65	1628
Chamar, Charmakar, Mochi, Muchi, Rabidas, Ruidas or Rishi	16798	387	17185
Dhoba or Dhobi	1853	414	2267
Dome or Dhangad	1364	102	1466
Dosadh or Dusadh including Dhari or Dharhi	6635	124	6759
Ghasi	4018	57	4075
Gonrih	5003	25	5028
Hari	12843	64	12907
Jalia Kaibartta	11085	665	11750
Jhalo Malo or Malo	3027	591	3618
Kadar	1447	-	1447
Koch	1587	-	1587
Lohar	3088	128	3216
Mallah	2319	109	2428
Musahar	4733	373	5106
Namasudra	30645	955	31600
Nuniya	2934	435	3369
Paliya	78655	777	79432
Pasi	1022	204	1226
Rajbanshi	134312	664	134976
Tiyar	3292	3	3295
Turi	3451	542	3993

Source: Compiled from SC-III Part-A and Part-B, Census of India, 1971, Part V-A, Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, B. Ghosh, West Bengal, Calcutta, pp.692-695 and 756-58

The highest number of the scheduled caste population in the district was found in the police station of Raiganj numbering 67255 persons followed by the police stations of Kaliaganj numbering 63034 persons and Kusmundi numbering 43150 persons. The other largely scheduled caste populated police stations were Itahar, Tapan and Balurghat having sc populations of 38053 persons, 34106 persons and 33834 persons respectively. The highest percentage of sc population was there in the police station of Kaliaganj having 51.50 percent sc population in the police station followed by the police stations of Kushmulndi (45.34 percent), Hemtabad,(38.5 percent), Raiganj (32.29 percent), Tapan (28.06 percent), Itahar (26.64 percent), Gangarampur (24.62 percent), Kumarganj (24.41percent) and Bansihari (22.60 percent) all being higher than the State's percentage of sc population.²²² The highest number of the scheduled tribe population was found in the police station having 35758 persons belonged to the community followed by the police stations of Tapan (31308 persons), Bansihari (22874 persons), Gangarampur (20158 persons) and Kumarganj (18203 persons). The highest amount of scheduled tribe population was found in the police station of Tapan having 25.75 percent sc population in the police station followed by the police stations of Bansihari (22.60 percent), Kumarganj (21.11 percent), Hili (20.10 percent), Balurghat (18.91 percent) and Gangarampur (17.39 percent).²²³ The following is the table of the numerically important scheduled tribes with numerical strength in the district of West Dinajpur during 1970s.

Table-6.75
ST in Rural and Urban Areas of North Bengal
West Dinajpur District
1971

Name Of ST	Total Rural	Total Urban	Total Number
All Tribes	218872	2445	221317
Asur	611	-	611
Bhumij	703	3	706
Kora	4249	6	4255
Korwa	2778	-	2778
Lohara or Lohra	1250	7	1257
Mahali	4844	26	4870
Mal Pahariya	6343	92	6434
Munda	19584	280	19864
Oraon	33684	71	33755
Santal	129075	1398	130473

Savar	501	-	501
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Source: Compiled from Table,ST-V, Part-A, Census of India, 1971, Part V-A, Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, B. Ghosh, West Bengal, Caluctta, pp.911-913

The numerically important scheduled castes in the district of West Dinajpur were the Bagdis, the Bauris, the Bediyas, the Bhuimalis, the Bhuiyas, the Chamars or the Muchis, the Dhobas, the Domes, the Dosadhs, the Ghasis, the Gonrihs, the Haris, the Jalia Kaibarttas, the Jhalo Malos or the Malos, the Kadars, the Koches, the Lohars, the mullahs, the Musahars, the Namasudras, the Nuniyas, the Paliyas, the Pasis, the Pods, the Rajbanshis, the Tiyars and the Turis. Among these scheduled castes the Rajbsnshis was the largest scheduled caste in the district in 1971 numbering 134976 persons and having singly 31.42 percent of the total scheduled caste population of the district. The second largest sc community in the district was the Paliyas numbering 79432 persons and having share of 18.49 percent of the scheduled caste population of the district. The third and the fourth sc communities of the district were the Bagdis (33601 persons) and the Namasudras (31600) having 7.82 percent and 7.36 percent share respectively in the sc population of the district. The numerically important scheduled tribes in the district of West Dinajpur in 1971 were the Asurs, the Bhumijas, the Koras, the Korwas, the Lohars, the Mahalis, the Mal Pahariyas, the Mundas, the Oraons, the Santals and the Savars. Among the tribes of the district numerically highest was the Santals numbering 130473 persons having 58.95 percent share in the sc population of the district. The Santals were followed by the Oraons and the Mundahs having 15.25 percent and 8.98 percent share in the scheduled caste population of the district during this time. The scheduled castes and the Scheduled tribe people being basically agriculturists and tied to the soil mostly lived in the rural areas of the district.²²⁴

The district of Malda ranked fourth amounting scheduled caste population and third amounting scheduled tribe population among the North Bengal districts. The district in 1971 had 265697 persons of scheduled castes and 130715 persons of scheduled tribes. Thus the SC people in the district during the period constituted 16.48 percent of the total population and the ST people constituted 8.11 percent of the total population of the district. Thus they together formed 24.59 percent of the total population of the district.²²⁵ The most important is the decadal growth of the scheduled caste population in the district which constituted 62.57 percent over the SC population of the previous decade being the highest growth not only above the State average but also of all districts of the State and 9.46 percent above the general population growth of the district during 1970s. The ST population of the district grew 31.34 percent over the ST population of 1961 census year. This was even above the State's growth rate and as per the growth of the general population (31.98 percent) of the district.²²⁶ The following is the table of the important Scheduled Castes numerically in the district of Malda.

Table-6.76
SC in Rural and Urban areas of North Bengal
Malda District
1971

Name of SC	Rural	Urban	Total
All Castes	261938	3759	265697
Bagdi or Duley	1503	6	1509
Bind	14452	-	14452
Chamar, Charmakar, Mochi, Muchi, Rabidas, Ruidas or Rishi	16061	386	16447
Dhoba or Dhobi	7040	655	7695
Dome or Dhangad	2118	366	2484
Dosadh or Dusadh including Dhari or Dharhi	6175	106	6281
Gonrih	2608	9	2617
Hari	6044	48	6092
Jalia Kaibartta	11402	258	11660
Jhalo Malo or Malo	6613	265	6878
Koet or Keyot	3915	-	3915
Khaira	1696	-	1696
Koch	3561	-	3561
Lohar	8821	50	8871
Mahar	3523	-	3523
Mal	2189	2	2191
Mallah	4098	97	4195
Musahar	4911	-	4911
Namasudra	24001	59	24060
Nuniya	6625	113	6738
Paliya	9232	9	9241
Patni	1305	49	1354
Pod or Poundra	9627	7	9634
Rajbanshi	50558	135	50693
Rajwar	1717	-	1717
Sunri excluding Saha	2306	53	2359
Tiyar	20210	11	20221
Turi	4809	35	4844

Source: Compiled from SC-III Part-A and Part-B, Census of India, 1971, Part V-A, Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, B. Ghosh, West Bengal, Calcutta, pp.696-698 and 758-61

The highest number of the Scheduled Castes were found in the district in the police station of Habibpur numbering 46057 persons followed by the police stations of Gajole (40006 persons) and Bamangola (32166 persons). In all other police stations the SC people numbered ranging from 20000 to 22000 persons except the police station of Manikchak having 16111 persons of SC population. The highest percentage of SC population was in Bamangola police station having 48.17 percent population belonged to the SC population followed by the police stations of Habibpur (40.70 percent), Gajole (29.93 percent) and Maldah (29.19 percent).²²⁷ The Scheduled Tribe population was highest in number in the police station of Habibpur having 42460 persons of the community followed by the police station of Gajole having 40987 persons of the community. The police stations of Bamangola and Maldah had 18109 persons and 12886 persons belonging from ST populations. The highest percentage of ST populations were found in the police station of Habibpur with 31.52 percent share in the total population followed by the police stations of Bamangola with 27.12 percent share, the police station of Gajole with 28.58 percent share and the police station of Maldah with 18.13 percent share of ST population in the total populations of the police stations.²²⁸ The following table may provide the numerical strength of the important Scheduled Tribes in the district of Malda during the time of 1970s.

Table-6.77
ST in Rural and Urban Areas of North Bengal
Malda District
1971

Name Of ST	Total Rural	Total Urban	Total Number
All Tribes	130658	57	130715
Chakma	2828	-	2828
Kora	8378	-	8378
Lodha, Kheria or Kharia	1567	-	1567
Mahali	2757	-	2757
Mal Pahariya	4654	-	4684
Munda	5262	2	5264
Oraon	10325	-	10325
Santal	90233	46	90279

Source: Compiled from Table, ST-V, Part-A, Census of India, 1971, Part V-A, Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, B. Ghosh, West Bengal, Calcutta, pp.914-915

During the census period of 1971 in Malda district the numerically important Scheduled Castes were the Bagdis, the Bhumalis, the Bhuiyas, the Bindis, the Chamars or the Muchis, the Dhobas, the Dosadhs, the Gonrihs, the Haris, the Jalia Kaibarttas, the Jhalo Malos or Malos, the Koets, the Kharias, the Koches, the Lohars, the Mhars, the Mals, the Mallahs, the Musahars, the Namasudras, the Nuniyas, the Paliyas, the Patnis, the Pods, the Rajbansis, the Sunris, the Tiyars and the Turis. The largest Scheduled Caste in the district recorded was the Rajbanshis

numbering 50693 persons having share 19.08 percent in the SC population of the district. The second largest scheduled caste in the district was the Namasudras numbering 24060 with 9.06 percent share and the third largest was the Tiyars with 20221 persons having 7.61 percent in the SC population of the district. The Binds and the Chamars numbering 14452 persons and 16447 persons respectively were also in good strength in the district of Malda at the time. The largest numerical Scheduled Tribe in the district was the Santals having 90279 persons with 69.07 percent share in the scheduled caste population of the district, the second largest being the Oraons with 10325 persons and 7.90 percent share and the third largest being the Koras having 8378 persons and 6.41 percent share in the scheduled tribe population of the district. The Malpahariys (4684 persons) and the Mundas (5264 persons) were also in good strength among the Scheduled Tribe population of the district.

Thus in composition of caste demography North Bengal witnessed a unique scenario during the 1971 census period. The percentage of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the total population among the West Bengal districts was highest in Jalpaguri district sharing 58.51 percent followed by another North Bengal district Cooch Behar which had alone 47.78 percent Scheduled Caste population whereas the district had only 0.75 percent Scheduled Tribe population. Except Malda all the North Bengal districts had higher percentage of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes taking together than the average of the State. Besides, all the districts of North Bengal except Cooch Behar constituted higher percentage of Scheduled Tribe population than the State's average. Another important aspect is that the two districts of North Bengal Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri ranked first and second in position to the Scheduled Caste population in the total population. Thus the five districts of North Bengal had a high concentration of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, three of them such as Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar and West Dinajpur having highest proportion of the Scheduled Castes in the total population, constituted one third of the total population. Concerning the Scheduled Tribes the entire Northern region of the State of West Bengal accounted more than 35 percent of the total Scheduled Tribes population of the State against the share of 16.74 percent of total population of the State. Thus the significance of North Bengal in the study of SC and ST population may be realized.

VI

Demographic transition continued to be experienced by the North Bengal districts in caste composition of the population during post-Bangladesh liberation movement decade of 1971-81 and so on. In 1981 North Bengal as a whole had scheduled caste population of 2825707 persons in total number and they constituted 29.91 percent of the total population of the region. There was increase of 929308 persons of scheduled castes in North Bengal with the growth of 32.89 percent sc population on the sc population of the previous decade.²²⁹ On the other the ST

population in North Bengal constituted 11.29 percent of the total population having 1066429 persons belonged to scheduled tribe population. They increased by 18.20 percent over the ST population of the last decade having been increased by 194037 persons in number.²³⁰ Thus the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population in North Bengal together with contained 41.20 percent of the total population during the decade of 1981-91. However, the change may be well understood from the district wise discussion of the composition. The following table is an abstract of the composition of the SC and ST population in the North Bengal districts.

Table-6.78
Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes in North Bengal Districts
1981

District/State/ Division	Scheduled Castes			Scheduled Tribes			Total SC&ST
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	
West Bengal	12000768	10511836	1488932	3070672	2955220	115452	15071440
Koch Behar	383084	867502	15582	10105	9666	439	393189
Jalpaiguri	766498	706719	59779	491791	486239	5552	1258289
Darjeeling	145942	119950	25992	151073	135943	15130	297015
West Dinajpur	687094	653324	33770	260160	254640	5520	947254
Malda	343089	334015	9074	153300	153077	223	496389
North Bengal	2325707	2581510	144197	1066429	1039565	26864	3392136

Source: Census of India, 1981, West Bengal, Series-23, Part-II-B, pp.304-339 & 538-571

The district of Malda had 343089 persons belonged to Scheduled Caste population sharing 16.89 percent of the total population of the district. There was an increase of 77392 persons in 1981 with the rate of growth of 29.13 percent on the scheduled caste population of 1971. Among those scheduled caste people 97.36 percent lived in rural areas and remaining 2.64 percent only lived in urban areas of the district.²³¹ There were 153300 persons from Scheduled Tribe population in the district in 1981 and contained the share of 7.54 percent of the total population of the district. They increased by 11.76 percent over the scheduled tribe population of the last decade having been increased with 18026 persons of ST population. 99.85 percent of the ST population lived in rural area of the district and remaining 0.85 percent lived in urban area of the district. Regarding the proportion of SC people the district was below the State and in case of ST population the district's proportion was higher than that of the State.²³²

Habibpur was the most populous police station of Malda district containing 58176 persons and 48660 persons respectively the highest number of scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe

population of the district in 1981. The police stations of Kharba, Gajole, Bamangola, Maldah, Englishbazar also had large number of both the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe populations during this time. The police stations of Manikchak and Kaliachak had large number of scheduled caste populations but a few number of scheduled tribe people. The largest proportion of scheduled caste population to the total population was enumerated in the police station of Bamangola (47.03 percent) followed by the police stations of Habibpur (41.24 percent) and Gazole (31.70 percent). The scheduled tribe population in largest share to the total population was found in the police station of Habibpur (34.49 percent) followed by the police stations of Bamangola (24.68 percent) and Gajole (24.44 percent). On the other the largest increase of SC population was found in Harishchandrapur (57.74 percent) followed by the police stations of Englishbazar (47.70 percent), Gajole (33.15 percent) and Malda (31.27 percent) and largest increase of ST population was found in the police station of Ratua (218.51 percent) followed by the police station of Kharba (33.53 percent).²³³

The prominent communities of the scheduled caste people in the district during the time (1971-81) were the Rajbanshis (83463 persons), the Namasudras (57228 persons), the Tiyars (20482 persons), Paliyas (18060 persons), the Haris (13251 persons), the Jhalo Malos (12943 persons) and the Chamars (12942 persons) all above ten thousand number and numerically strong in the district. The other prominent scheduled caste people in the district were the Jalia Kaibarttas (9991 persons), the Dhobas (7693 persons), the Dosadhs (5853 persons) , the Keots (7677 persons), the Lohars (6907 persons), the Musahars (6370 persons), the Nuniyas (5805 persons), the Pods (7125 persons), the Mallahas (5074 persons), the Sunris (4515 persons), the Turis (4030 persons), the Gonrihs (4304 persons), the Bhuiyas (3039 persons), the Doms (3128 persons), the Koches (3267 persons) and the Mals (3429 persons). Besides the Bhogtas, the Binds, the Khairas, the Mahars, the Rajwars and the Ghasis were also in a significant number in the district during the 1971-81 decade.²³⁴ An important feature of the Scheduled caste composition of the district is that the castes such as the Binds, Dosadhs, the Gonrihs, the Keots, the Pods and the Tiyars were mainly found in Malda among North Bengal districts. Among them the Binds, the Dosadhs and the Tiyars may be called the Malda castes.

The scheduled tribe community who had the largest share among the ST population of the district in 1981 was the Santals numbering 122364 persons and sharing 79.82 percent of the total scheduled tribe population of the district. The Santals were followed by the Oraons amounting 8965 numbers sharing 5.85 percent of the total ST population of the district and the Kharwars and the Koras (having 6407 persons and 5224 persons respectively in the district). The Lohars, the Mahalis, the Mal Pahariyas, the Mundas and the Sauria Paharias were also in significant numbers in the district. Thus the district was constituted by the SC and ST peoples together 24.43 percent or a quarter portion of the total population. From religious table it has been seen that 45.47 percent of the total population of the district were Muslims.²³⁵ So nearly

25 percent of the total population of the district might have belonged to the upper caste Hindus. They in different period with different motivations had come into the districts of North Bengal and settled there permanently.

The district of West Dinajpur had 687094 persons of Scheduled Caste population in 1981 with a share of 28.57 percent in the total population of the district. There was an increase of 257516 persons of scheduled caste communities having been increased by 59.95 percent over the scheduled caste population of the district. This was the highest increase of the scheduled caste population among the North Bengal districts during the decade of 1971-81. Among those scheduled caste people of the district 95.09 percent constituted the rural population and remaining 4.91 percent contributed to the urban population of the district.²³⁶ There were 2602620 persons belonged to the scheduled tribe community in the district during this time. They comprised 17.55 percent of the total population of the district. The district of West Dinajpur experienced an increase of 38843 persons of Scheduled Tribe people with the rate of growth of 10.82 percent on the ST population of the last decade.²³⁷ Thus both the community contained 38.37 percent of the total population of the district. In religious table it has been seen that 35.79 percent of the total population was constituted by the Muslims. So, about a quarter percent of the total population of the district was comprised by the upper caste Hindus.

The largest number of the SC population in the district was enumerated in the police station of Raiganj amounting 95807 persons of scheduled caste community during 1981-91 decade. It was followed by the police stations of Kaliaganj (83998 persons), Karandighi (58920 persons), Kushmundi (54409 persons), Itahar (47525 persons) and Balurghat (45755 persons). From the proportional point of view the largest proportionate SC population to the total population was found in the police station of Kaliaganj having 54.63 percent scheduled caste people there during this time. The second highest proportion of scheduled caste population was found in the police station of Kushmundi having 45.23 percent sc population in the police station. Among the other police stations having significant number of sc population in the district important are Hemtabad (38.03 percent), Raiganj (35.28 percent), Karandighi (34.83 percent) and Tapan (30.99 percent) all having above 30 percent people belonged to the Scheduled caste . The highest increase in the scheduled caste population in the district was found in Karandighi with the growth of 406.53 percent people of scheduled castes on its scheduled caste population of 1971. It was also the highest increase in the district numbering 47288 persons. The police stations of Chopra, Islampur, Goalpokhar, and Chakalia had the growth of scheduled caste population by above much more 100 percent. That is the northern part of the district had experienced the increase of the scheduled caste population in a very good strength in compare to that of the Southern part of the district except Gangarampur police station which had above 70 percent growth of SC population.²³⁸

The largest number of the Scheduled Tribe population in the district during the decade 1971-81 was enumerated in the police station of Balurghat having scheduled tribe population of 43226 persons followed by the police stations of Tapan (35030 persons), Banshihari (28025 persons), Kumarganj (22397 persons) and Gangarampur (22120 persons) all having scheduled Tribe people above twenty thousand. The largest proportion of the Scheduled Tribe population to the total population in the district was found in Tapan (23.73 percent to the total population) followed by the police stations of Kumarganj (21.41 percent), Banshihari (21.40 percent) and Hili (20.17 percent) all having above 20 percent population belonged to the Scheduled Tribe population to the total population. The highest increase in the scheduled tribe population was found in the police station of Chopra (41.88 percent) followed by the police stations of Goalpokhar (26.90 percent), Kumarganj (23.04 percent), Kaliaganj (22.99 percent), Banshihari (22.52 percent), Balurghat (20.88 percent) and Tapan (20.45 percent) all of them having more than 20 percent growth of scheduled tribe population over the ST population of the earlier decade.²³⁹

The scheduled caste largest in number in the district of West Dinajpur as usual was the Rajbangshis accounting 369015 persons in 1981 and constituted more than half (53.71 percent) of the total scheduled caste population of the district. They also constituted 15.34 percent of the total population of the district. The second highest scheduled caste was the Paliyas having 98033 persons in the district during this time and shared 14.27 percent of the total scheduled caste population of the district. The next scheduled caste in numerical order in the district during the time was the Namasudras having 68176 persons belonged to the caste in the district population and shared 9.92 percent of the total scheduled caste population of the district. Thus these three castes formed together the largest bulk of the scheduled caste population being above three fourth (77.90 percent) of the total scheduled caste of the district. The other numerically important scheduled castes in the district were the Jalia Kaibartas (20805 persons), Haris (19203 persons), the Chamars (15421 persons) and the Bhuimalis (12631 persons) all of them being above ten thousand in numbers. Besides the Jhalo Malos (8557 persons), Turis ((5922 persons), the Sunris (4747 persons), the Lohars (4979 persons), the Dosadhs (4367 persons), the Bhuiyas (3734 persons), the Koches (3267 persons) and the Mallahs (3950 persons) were also significant in number.²⁴⁰ The composition of the scheduled caste people with the Bhuimalis, Bhuias, Chamars, Chaupals, Dhobas, Dosadhs, Haris, Khairas, Koches, Lohars, Mals, Mallahas, Musahars, Paliyas, Patnis, Rajwars, Sunris, Tiyars and Turis there was good similarity with that of the district of Maldah. However, the castes like the Belders, Bhuimalis, Bhuias were mainly found in West Dinajpur.

Among the Scheduled Tribes of the district of West Dinajpur the Santals were the largest Scheduled Tribe peoples containing 186282 persons in the district and contributed singly above seventy percent (71.60 percent) of the total Scheduled Tribe population of the district. The

Oraons were the second largest numbers amounting 36888 persons. They constituted 14.18 percent of the total ST population of the district. The third largest Scheduled Tribe community in the district was the Mundas numbering 18475 persons and comprised 7.10 percent of the total Scheduled Tribe population of the district. Thus the above three scheduled tribe castes constituted above ninety percent (92.88 percent) among the total Scheduled Tribe population of the district. Among the other ST population of the district the Bediyas (1935 persons), the Koras (5638 persons), the Lohara (1389 persons), the Mahalis (2724 persons), the Mal Pahariyas (1771 persons) were important. The Meches, the Rabhas, the Maghs, the Lodhas, the Lepchas were few in numbers in the district.²⁴¹

The district of Darjeeling had scheduled caste population of 145942 persons constituting 14.25 percent of the total population of the district during the decade of 1971-81 census period. The Scheduled Caste population of the district was increased by 47665 persons in number with the growth rate of 48.50 percent on the scheduled caste population of the previous decade. Among the Scheduled caste people of the district 82.19 percent lived in rural areas and remaining 17.81 percent constituted the urban population of the district. This was the highest proportion of urban scheduled caste population in a district among the districts of North Bengal and third highest among the districts of the State after the district of Calcutta (100 percent) and Haora (23.85 percent).²⁴² There were 151073 persons of Scheduled Tribe peoples in the district of Darjeeling during the decade and they constituted 14.75 percent of the total population of the district. This district ranked third among the districts of the State of West Bengal in proportion of the Scheduled Tribe population in the district in 1981 after the districts of Jalpaiguri (22.20 percent) and Puruliya (18.79) percent. There was an increase of 42487 persons of scheduled tribe community in the district having been increased by 39.13 percent during the period of 1971-81.²⁴³

The largest number of scheduled caste population in the district was enumerated in the police station of Phansidewa in the plains region of the Siliguri subdivision of the district numbering 30044 persons of Scheduled Caste community in 1981. It was followed by the police stations of Siliguri (25427 persons), Kharibari (24516 persons) and Naxalbari (19182 persons). The police stations of Kalimpong, Darjeeling and Kurseong also had significant number of scheduled caste population. The highest proportion of the scheduled caste population was contained by the police station of Kharibari having 47.47 percent SC population. It was followed by the police stations of Phansidewa (27.96 percent) and Naxalbari (23.63 percent). There was large volume increase of Scheduled Caste population was experienced by the police stations Terai and plains of the district the highest increase being in Kharibari (90.37 percent) followed by the police stations of Phansidewa (81.34 percent), Naxalbari (70.08 percent) and Siliguri (88.57 percent).²⁴⁴ This signifies large number of immigration of the SC population in these police stations from Bangladesh in post –Bangladesh liberation war.

The highest number of Scheduled Tribe population in the district was enumerated in the police station of Phansidewa having 38587 persons of Scheduled Tribe followed by the police stations of Kalimpong (22332 persons), Naxalbari (21626 persons), Siliguri (18397 persons) and Kharibari (11878 persons) during the decade of 1971-81. The police stations of Darjeeling and Kursiong also had significant number of Scheduled Tribe population. Proportionately the largest Scheduled Tribe population was found in the police station of Phansidewa (35.91 percent of total population) followed by the police stations of Naxalbari (26.64 percent), Kharibari (23.00 percent) and Kalimpong (18.84 percent). The highest increase of the ST population in the district was seen in the police station of Phansidewa with 17359 persons increased in ST population with a growth rate of 81.77 percent. It was followed by the police stations Naxalbari (62.77 percent) and Siliguri (55.41 percent).²⁴⁵

Among the SC population in the district of Darjeeling numerically the most important was the Rajbanshis having 62770 numbers of people and constituted 43.01 percent of the total SC population of the district. The next important Scheduled caste among the people was the Kamis numbering 28227 persons and constituting 19.34 percent of the total SC population of the district. It was followed by the Namasudras having 16811 persons (11.52 percent of total SC population) and the Damai amounting 12859 persons (8.81 percent) of the SC populations. Thus these four castes together formed 82.68 percent of the total SC population of the district. The Sarkis, The Haris, the Dhobas, the Doms, the Dosadhs, the Lohars being above thousand and the Ghasis, the Jalia Kaibartas, the Nuniyas and the Sunris being above 500 were important scheduled castes in the district of Darjeeling in 1981 census period.²⁴⁶ Here the Kamis, the Sarkis, the Damais were mainly found in the Darjeeling district.

Among the Scheduled Tribe population of the district of Darjeeling in 1971-81 decade the numerically most strong was the Oraons having 47907 persons of the caste in the district having 31.71 percent of the total ST population of the district. Next to the Oraons there were the Bhutias numbering 34092 persons and constituting 22.57 percent, the Lepchas numbering 22749 persons and constituting 15.06 percent, the Mundas numbering 13088 persons and constituting 8.66 percent and the Santals numbering 11214 persons and constituting 7.42 percent strongly contributed to the population of the district all of them together being 85.42 percent of the total ST population of the district. Besides, the Chik Baraiks, the Kharwars, the Lodhas, the Lohars the Mahalis, the Mal Pahriyas, the Nagesias were also important being above two or one thousand in numbers.²⁴⁷

The district of Jalpaiguri had SC population of 766498 persons in 1981 having 34.61 percent share in the total population of the district. Thus the district ranked second both in North Bengal and the State sharing the SC population to the total population of the district after Cooch Behr. Among them 92.20 percent were rural inhabitants and the 7.80 percent were urban

inhabitants. There was increase of 171074 persons in the scheduled caste community of the district with the growth of 28.73 percent on the scheduled caste population of the last decade.²⁴⁸ On the other the Scheduled Tribe population of the district was increased by 14.74 percent having increased with 63196 persons. With this they contributed 22.20 percent share in the total population of the district. . Thus the district ranked top with largest share ST population among the districts of both North Bengal and the State of West Bengal. 98.87 percent of them were rural inhabitants and 1.13 percent were of urban areas. Thus the district together with the SC and ST population comprised the 56.81 percent of the total population. If we minus the Muslim population of the district then the upper caste Hindus would have constituted about 35 percent of the total population in the district.

The largest number of the scheduled caste population was found in the police station of Maynaguri having 135713 persons of SC community followed by the police stations of Jalpaiguri (127423 persons), Alipurduar (119694 persons), Dhupguri (87363 persons), Rajganj (79317 persons) and Falakata (64282 persons). However, in proportion to the total population of the district the highest proportion of SC population was found again in the police station of Maynaguri with 68.02 percent SC population to the total population followed by the police stations of Dhupguri (60.15 percent), Jalpaiguri (47.73 percent), Rajganj (40.24 percent), Falakata (38.03 percent) and Alipurduar (35.92 percent). On the highest growth of the SC population in the district was found in the police station of Kumargram with the rate of growth of 42.45 percent on the SC population of the previous decade. It was followed by the police stations of Rajganj (42.43 percent), Falakata (31.79 percent), Maynaguri (31.76 percent) and Mal (30.17 percent).²⁴⁹ In case of Scheduled Tribe population of the district the largest numbers were enumerated in the police station of Kalchini having 73721 persons of scheduled tribe community. It was followed by the police stations of Mal (72977 persons), Banarhat (61858 persons), Alipurduar (57771 persons), Nagrakata (39058 persons), Mitali (38691 persons), Kumargram (38862 persons) and Falakata (32145 persons). The largest share in the total population was found in the police station of Nagrakata with 55.68 percent ST population in the total population. It was followed by the police stations of Mitali (51.83 percent), Kalchini (45.90 percent), Banarhat (41.31 percent) and Birpara (40.04 percent). The highest increase of the ST population in the district was found in the police station of Jalpaiguri having increased by 32.07 percent over the ST population of the previous decade.²⁵⁰ However, there was no spectacular growth in ST population of the district. The internal jurisdictional changes influenced the distribution of both SC and ST population in the district.

Among the Scheduled Caste communities of the district the largest number was enumerated by, as usual as, the Rajbanshis numbering 514178 persons. They constituted 67.08 percent to the total SC population of the district and 23.21 percent of the total population of the district. The second largest scheduled caste community of the district was the Namasudras amounting

157094 persons constituting 20.50 percent of the total SC population of the district. Thus both the community formed above ninety percent (90.29 percent) of the total SC population of the district. Besides, the Kamis (12142), the Chamars (9037), Jalia Kaibarttas (8557), the Lohars (9525), the Dhobas (6913) were important SC communities in the district all of them being above five thousand in number. The SC communities such as the Turis (3107), the Sarkis(4902), the Jhalao Malos (4509), the Haris (4648), the Ghasis (2532), the Bhuiyas (2213), the Bhuimalis (2407) were also in significant number in the district.²⁵¹

The Oraons were the largest number of Scheduled Tribe population in the district of Jalpaiguri in 1971-81 decade having 259280 numbers of peoples. They constituted above fifty percent (52.72) of the total ST population of the district and 11.71 percent of the total population of the district. The second largest ST community of the district was Mudnadas being 69469 persons in the district. The third largest ST community in the district was the Santals having 28906 persons during the time in the district. The Mundas and the Santals had share of 14.13 percent and 5.88 percent in the total ST population of the district. Thus the Oraons, Munda and the Santals together constituted above seventy percent (72.72 percent) of the total ST population of the district. Among the other ST communities of the district the Lodhas (29267 persons) and the Meches (24368 persons) were numerically, both above twenty thousand, very strong in the district. The Mahalis with 18696 persons and the Lohars with 14501 persons had good strength in the district. Besides the Bhutias (5434 persons), Chik Bariks (9023 persons), and the Rabahas (8632 persons) were also significant in number, all above five thousands, in the district during this time. The Asurs (2648 persons), the Kharwars (2083 persons), the Mahalis (2543 persons), the Malpahariyas (2664 persons), the Nagesias (3516 persons) were also important in the district during this time.²⁵²

The district of Cooch Behar had Scheduled Caste population of 883084 persons, most importantly constituting almost fifty percent of the total population (49.85 percent) of the district during 1971-81 decade. Among them 98.24 percent, the highest percentage among the districts of the State of West Bengal, were the rural inhabitants and 1.76 percent, the lowest in the State, were urban inhabitants. There was an increase of 218064 persons with the rate of growth of 32.79 percent over the SC population of the previous decade.²⁵³ The district had Scheduled Tribe population of 10105 persons only, being the least among the being the least among the North Bengal districts. It constituted only 0.58 percent of the total population of the district and the accordingly the third last district of the State after Calcutta and Haora. However, of them 95.66 percent lived in rural areas and 4.34 percent lived in urban areas. There was a decrease of the ST population in the district of 506 persons with the rate of decrease of 4.77 percent.²⁵⁴ During the Survey in an tribal area of the district of Cooch Behar I have been come to know that many of the tribal people who crossed into the district from

Rangpur of Erstwhile East Bengal again migrated to other parts of India, mainly in North East India due to some stray community clashes not with them but with others.²⁵⁵

The largest number of Scheduled Caste population in the district during the decade of 1971-81 was enumerated in the police station of Cooch Behar having 187170 persons belonged to the SC community and constituted 21.20 percent of the total SC population of the district. It was followed by the police stations of Mathabhanga with 1886670 persons of SC people, Dinhat with 147286 persons and Tufanganj with 124766 persons. In consideration of the share in total population of the police stations the highest proportion was contained by the police station of Mekliganj having 71.41 percent SC population. It was followed by the police stations of Sitai (68.80 percent), Mathabhanga (64.28 percent), Haldibari (58.59 percent) and Sitalkuchi (57.57 percent) all having above fifty percent SC population. The highest increase in SC population in the district was found in the police station of Haldibari having 12956 persons and 42.64 percent increase in the SC population. It was followed by the police stations of Cooch Behar (38.23 percent), Sitalkuchi (37.11 percent), Mathabhanga (35.33 percent) and Sitai (33.50 percent).²⁵⁶ The highest number of the Scheduled Tribe population in the district contained by the police station of Cooch Behar having 2901 persons of Scheduled Tribe community. It was followed by the police stations of Tufanganj (2833 persons) and Mathabhanga (1972 persons). In Haldibari there was increase of some 240 persons of Scheduled Tribe community. In Cooch Behar, Mekliganj and Mathabhanga there was decrease in the Scheduled Tribe population during this period.²⁵⁷

The largest Scheduled Caste community in the district of Cooch Behar was comprised by the Rajbangshis who numbered 714221 persons in the district during the 1971-81 decade. This very significant that they constituted 80.88 percent of the total SC population of the district and comprised singly 40.31 percent of the total population of the district during this decade. The second largest SC community in the district was Namasudras accounting 104747 persons who constituted 11.86 percent of the total SC population of the district. Numerically the third important SC community in the district was the Jalia Kaibarttas numbering 22397 persons in the district during this time. Among the SC populations of the district the Jhalo Malos (8550 persons), the Chamars (7604 persons), the Dhobas (6342 persons), the Bhumalis (3694 persons) and the Rajwars (2264 persons) were important in number. Besides the Koches, the Nuniyas, the Mals, the Mallahs, the Doms and the Binds were also significant in number.²⁵⁸ The highest number of the Scheduled Tribe population of the district was contained by the Oraons numbering 4049 persons and constituting 40.07 percent of the total Scheduled Tribe population of the district. They were followed by the Rabhas (1852 persons), the Santals (1103 persons) and the Mundas (922 persons). The Asurs, the Garos and the Nagesisas were also important during this time.²⁵⁹

Thus the most prominent Scheduled Caste in North Bengal was the Rajbanshis in 1981 totaling 1743647 persons in number and constituted 61.71 percent of the total Scheduled Caste population of North Bengal and contributed 18.46 percent to the total population of the region. The second largest scheduled caste community was the Namasudras numbering 404056 persons and constituted 14.30 percent of the total SC population of North Bengal. Both the communities formed above three fourth (76.01 percent) of the total SC population of North Bengal in 1971-81 decade. On the other the Oraons were the largest Scheduled Tribe community in North Bengal numbering 357089 persons and constituting 33.48 percent of the total Scheduled Tribe population of the region. The second largest ST community in North Bengal was the Santals numbering 349869 persons and constituting 32.81 percent of the total ST population of North Bengal. The third Scheduled Tribe community in North Bengal was the Mundas having 104957 persons in the community in North Bengal and constituted 9.84 percent of the total ST population of the region. Thus these three ST communities formed above three fourth (76.13 percent) of the total ST population of the North Bengal tract.

The decade following 1981 continued to be developed and transited the demographic structure of North Bengal influencing the statistical variation of the caste and ethnic structure of the demography during the period. In some cases it continued to be remained statistically same as the earlier decade and in some cases changes emerged resulting in cultural mobility among the people of the region. This may be well realized from the caste and ethnic composition of the demography of North Bengal during the decade of 1981-1991 period. So the statistical analysis of the caste composition of demography of North Bengal for the period may be observed.

Table-6.79
Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes in North Bengal Districts
1991

District/State/ Division	Scheduled Castes		Scheduled Tribes		Total SC&ST Percentage to Total Population
	Total	Percentage to Total Population	Total	Percentage to Total Population	
West Bengal	16080611	23.62	3808760	5.59	29.21
Koch Behar	1123719	51.76	13275	0.61	52.37
Jalpaiguri	1035971	36.99	589225	21.4	58.39
Darjeeling	209876	16.15	179153	13.78	29.93
West Dinajpur	907553	29.02	307487	9.83	38.85
Malda	477896	18.12	171326	6.50	24.62
North Bengal	3755015	31.20	1260466	10.47	41.67

Source: Census of India, 1991, Series-26, West Bengal, Part XII-B, District Census Handbook, Primary Census Abstract, for North Bengal Districts and from the Tables, Main Workers Classified by Industrial Category, Age and Sex for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, SC

Series, West Bengal Table, 1991 downloaded from censusindia.gov.in/Digital Library/Archive..., Special Tables for SC and Special Tables for ST, SC2 and ST2

During the decade of 1981-1991 North Bengal as a whole had 3755015 numbers of persons belonged to the Scheduled Caste community. This was 31.20 percent to the total population of North Bengal region. Thus North Bengal contained Scheduled Caste population proportionately much more than the State of West Bengal having 23.62 percent scheduled caste population to the total population. There was an increase of 929308 persons of scheduled castes in North Bengal in 1991 on the SC population of 1981 being 32.89 percent growth. It was about 5 percent above the growth of general population in North Bengal. On the other North Bengal had 1260466 persons of Scheduled Tribe population sharing 10.47 percent of the total population of the North Bengal region. This again was much above than that of the State's share of Scheduled Tribe population (5.59 percent). There was increase of 194037 persons of Scheduled Tribe community in North Bengal having been increased by 18.20 percent.²⁶⁰ So, numerically good response was shown by the SC and ST population in North Bengal. This may be clearly discussed in district wise description as below.

The district of Malda had 477896 persons of Scheduled Caste community who constituted 18.12 persons of the total population of the district. There was increase of 134857 persons from that of the previous decade having been increased by 39.31 percent. This was much more increase in percentage (10.18 percent) than the increase of the previous decade. The district had 171326 persons belonged to the Scheduled Tribe community constituting 6.50 percent of the total population of the district. There was increase of 19026 persons in the ST population of the district with the rate of growth of 12.41 percent over the ST population of the previous decade. It was much higher than the rate of growth in the State and a little more than the growth rate of previous decade in the district.²⁶¹

The largest number of scheduled caste peoples was enumerated in 1991 in the police station of Habibpur in the district of Malda having 78608 persons of scheduled cast. It was followed by the police stations of Gajole (with 78507 persons SC), Bamangola (54493 persons), Englishbazar (with 47129 persons SC) and Maldah (with 42858 persons SC). The highest proportion SC population in the district was found in the police station of Bamangola having 50.65 percent SC population followed by the police stations of Habibpur (46.68 percent) and Gajole (33.67 percent). But the highest increase in the SC population was found in the police station of Maldah with 57.38 percent increase followed by the police stations of Englishbazar (53.82 percent) and Harishchandrapur (44.04 percent). Thus in the urban oriented areas of Malda the rate of growth was high during this time, though the proportional growth were happened in rural areas.²⁶²

Concerning the Schedule Tribe population of the district largest number of ST population was enumerated in 1991 in the police station of Habibpur having 52789 persons of the ST community. It was followed by the police stations of Gajole with 50153 persons of the ST community and Bamangola having 22637 persons belonged to the ST community. However proportionately the highest number of Scheduled Tribe peoples was found in the police station of Habibpur having 31.35 percent ST population among the total population. It was followed by the police stations of Gajole (with 21.51 percent ST population) and Bamangola (with 21.04 percent ST population). But the increase in number was highest in the police station of Gajole with 6088 persons belonged to the ST community increased and the rate of growth was highest in the police station of in Englishbazar with 51.71 percent increase.²⁶³

Like the previous decade the Major two scheduled castes in the district were the Rajbanshis (114697 persons) and the Namasudras (83483 persons). The Rajbanshis increased by 37.42 percent in 1991 on the Rajbanshi population of 1981 and constituted 24.00 percent of the total scheduled caste population in the district. On the other the Namasudras were increased by 45.88 percent and constituted 17.47 percent of the total SC population of the district. The Binds (26606 persons), the Paliyas (23093 persons) and the Tiyars had numerical strength above twenty thousand people in the district. The castes numbering above 15000 people in the district in 1991 were the Chamars (18567 persons), the Haris (17268 persons), the Jhalo Malos (17139 persons) and the Jalia Kaibarttas (17239 persons). The castes with persons above 5000 in the district were the Dhobas, the Dosadhs, the Keots, the Koches, the Lohars, the Mals, the Mallahas, the Musahars, the Nuniyas, the Pods, the Sunris (excluding Sahas) and the Turis. Like the previous decade the Santals were the largest Scheduled Tribe community in Malda district and the Oraons, the Koras and the Kharwars were of significant number.²⁶⁴

The district of West Dinajpur had scheduled caste populations of 907553 persons in 1991 constituting 29.02 percent of the total population in the district. The increase in the SC population of the district was of 220459 persons on the SC population of 1981 during this time with a rate of growth of 32.09 percent. The rate of growth decreased largely from that of the 1981 (59.95 percent). The ST populations of the district were 307487 persons in number. This was 9.83 percent of the total population of the district. There was increase of 47387 persons of Scheduled Tribe in 1991 having been increased by 18.19 percent over the ST population of the previous decade. The district's SC and ST populations were proportionately higher than that of the State.²⁶⁵

The largest number of Scheduled Caste populations in 1991 in the district was found in the police station of Raiganj having 134982 persons belonging to the scheduled castes followed by the police stations of Kaliaganj (101913 persons), Kushmundi (66448 persons), Balurghat (64606 persons), Gangarampur (63476 persons), Tapan (62268 persons) and Itahar (62193 persons).

However, proportionately the largest scheduled caste bearer police station in the district was Kaliagnj with 54.23 percent SC population to the total population. It was followed by the police stations of Kusmundi (45.99 percent), Hemtabad (36.50 percent), Tapan (33.31 percent) and Karandighi (32.95 percent). The highest number of increase was found in the police station of Raiganj having increased of 48175 persons belonged to the SC population. But the highest percentage of growth in the SC population was found in the police station of Raiganj with the rate of growth of 50.28 percent followed by the police station of Gangarampur having increased by 48.87 percent.²⁶⁶ The largest number of scheduled Tribe population in the district was found in the police station of Balurghat with 51970 persons followed by the police stations of Tapan (43008 persons), Kumarganj (24048 persons), Gangarampur (27761 persons) and Raiganj (20023 persons). The increase of scheduled tribe population in number was highest in the police station of Blurghat having increase of 7844 persons. The highest increase in the ST population was seen in the police station of Islampur (31.79 percent) followed by the police station of Chopra (27.32 percent)²⁶⁷

The three major bulks of the Scheduled Caste communities in the district of West Dinajpur in 1991 were the Rajbanshis, the Paliyas and the Namasudras. The Rajbanshis were in highest numbers in the district amounting 489642 persons in the district. They constituted singly much above fifty percent (53.95 percent) of the total scheduled caste population of the district. There was an increase of 120627 persons having increased by 32.69 percent. The Namasudras had good strength in the district and numbered 105014 persons and they constituted 11.57 percent of the total scheduled caste population in the district. The Paliyas having 106448 persons constituting 11.73 percent of the total scheduled caste population in the district. The Jaliya Kaibarttas and the Hari or Mehtar were in significant number having 23373 persons and 31282 persons respectively. The Jhalo and Maloes (13225 persons), the Bhuimalis (17279 persons), the Chamars (18157 persons), the Nuniyas (10295 persons) were very much significant in number in 1991 in the district of West Dinajapur. The Turis, the Sunris (excluding Sahas), the Musahas, the Mallahas, the Mals, the Lohars, The Koches, the Dosadhs, were aslo significant castes in the district.²⁶⁸ There were thirty five scheduled tribes in the district in 1991 among whom the major bulks were formed by the Santals, Oraons and Mundas having 218815 persons, 44349 persons and 23189 persons respectively. The Santals constituted 71.16 percent of the total Scheduled Tribe population of the district and the Oraons 14.42 percent and the Mundas 7.54 percent of the district. The three tribes together formed above ninety percent (93.12 percent) ST population of the district in 1991. Among the other ST communities in the district the important were the Bedias, the Koras, the Mahalis and the Loharas.²⁶⁹

The district of Darjeeling had Scheduled Caste populations of 209876 persons in the 1981-91 decade. They constituted 16.15 percent of the total population of the district. There was increase of 63934 persons belonged to the SC communities in the district during this time with

the rate of growth being 43.81 percent over the SC population of the district. Proportionately this was much less than that of the State. The district had 179153 persons belonged to the Scheduled Tribe populations having constituted 13.78 percent of the total ST population of the district. This was much higher than that of the State. The ST population increased with 28080 persons by 18.59 percent growth over the ST population of the district. In both the cases of SC and ST population of the district the rate of growth was lower than that of the 1981.²⁷⁰

The most populous with scheduled caste population in the district of Darjeeling in 1991 was the police station of Phansidewa having 43466 persons of Scheduled Caste during the time. It was followed by the police stations of Kharibari (with 34140 persons SC), Matigara IC (29996 persons) and Siliguri (22944 persons). However, proportionately the highest share of the scheduled caste population was found in the police station of Kharibari having 53.33 percent SC population to the total population. It was followed by the police stations of Matigara (35.39 percent) and Phansidewa (31.04 percent). The highest increase of the SC population during the decade of 1981-1991 was found in the police station of Phansidewa by 44.67 percent followed by the police station of Kharibari with 39.26 percent.²⁷¹ The district had largest number of Scheduled Tribe population in the police station of Phansidewa having 49851 persons belonged to the ST community followed by the police station of Kalimpong (with 27232 persons of ST) and Naxalbari (with 23610 persons of ST). The highest proportion of ST population to the total population was found in the police station of Phansidewa (with 35.60 percent ST population to the total population) followed by the police stations of Naxalbari (23.03 percent) and Kharibari (21.62 percent). The largest increase in number was found in the police station of Phansidewa with 11264 persons. By the rate of growth the highest percentage was found in the police station of Phansidewa (29.19 percent) followed by Kalimpong (with 21.94 percent).²⁷² Thus mostly the police stations of Plains of the district witnessed growth of both the SC and ST population. It might be due to the saturation of the hill regions in employing the plains people and the selective nature for habitation of the immigrants.

The bulk of the scheduled caste population of the district of Darjeeling in the decade of 1981-1991 was constituted mainly by the Rajbasis, the Namasudras and the Kamis. The Rajbasis numbered during this time by 96745 persons in number and constituted 46.10 percent of the total Scheduled caste population of the district. They increased in the district during the decade from 1981 to 1991 by 33975 persons being increased by 54.13 percent growth over the SC population of the previous decade. The Namasudras in the district having 29479 persons constituted 14.05 percent of the total SC population of the district during 1981-1991 period. They increased by 12668 persons in number being increased by 75.36 percent growth over the SC population of the previous decade. The Kamis, the Nepali caste had also good share in the SC population of the district being 30719 persons and having constituted 14.64 percent of the total SC population of the district during the decade. Thus the three major castes together formed

about three fourth (74.79 percent) of the total SC population of the district. The Chamars (4359 persons), the Damais (8482 persons), the Nuniyas (4145 persons) and the Sarkis (6611 persons) were of significant number in the district.²⁷³

The largest group among the ST populations of the district was constituted by the Oraons having 57808 persons in the district forming 32.27 percent of the total ST population of the district. The Oraons increased in the district by 9901 persons being increased by 20.67 percent over the Oraon population of the previous decade in the district. The second largest group of the Scheduled Tribes in the district had been formed by the Bhutias with 40165 persons in the district during the decade. They constituted 22.42 percent of the total ST population of the district. The Lepchas also became large number having 26920 persons in the district and constituted 15.03 percent of the total ST population of the district. The Mundas with 13682 persons and the Santals with 15315 persons formed together 16.19 percent of the total ST population of the district. Among the other ST population the Chik Baraiks, the Kharwars, the Kisans, the Loharas, the Mahalis, the Mal phariyas, the Meches, the Sauria Paharias and the Savars were of good strength.²⁷⁴

The district of Jalpaiguri had 1035971 persons of Scheduled Caste community constituting 36.99 percent of the total population of the district in 1991. The district experienced increased of 269473 persons growing by 35.16 percent on the SC population of the previous decade. From both points of view of proportion and rate of growth the share of the district was much high than that of the State. It was also the second highest growth of the scheduled caste of people in the district among the north Bengal districts after Malda. There was 589225 persons belonged to the Scheduled Tribe community in the district in 1991 having share of 21.04 percent in the total population of the district. The district experienced growth of 97434 persons of Scheduled Tribes with rate of growth of 19.81 percent. It was second highest growth among the North Bengal districts after Cooch Behar.²⁷⁵

The highest number of scheduled caste population in the district was found in the police station of in the police station of Maynaguri with 169566 persons of scheduled castes followed by the police stations of Alipurduar (with 160235 persons SC), Dhupguri (116187 persons of SC), Falakata (82477 persons of SC community), Mal (62275 persons) and Kumargram (53790 persons of SC peoples). On the other the highest proportion of SC people to the total population was found in the police station of in the same way in Maynaguri having 71.20 percent SC population to the total population of 1991 and followed by the police stations of Dhupguri (62.44 percent), Jalpaiguri (49.70 percent) and Rajganj (48.71 percent). In context of increase of SC population in the district in 1991 highest number was enumerated in the police station of Alipurduar having increased of 40541 persons of SC people followed by the police stations of Jalpaiguri with 36650 persons increased , Maynaguri Police station with 33853

persons of SC community increased and Rajganj with 30430 persons belonged to SC increased. The rate of growth was highest in the police station of Madarihat with the growth of 64.47 percent and followed by Mitiali with 54.21 percent growth of SC people over the SC population of the previous decade.²⁷⁶

The largest number of ST population in the district in 1991 was enumerated in the police station of Mal having 88013 persons of scheduled tribes followed by the police stations of Banarhat (74117 persons of ST peoples), Alipurduar (with 66039 persons scheduled tribes), Kalchini (54549 persons of ST), Kumargram (49332 persons of ST), Mitiali (46651 persons of ST peoples) and Nagrakata (44989 persons of ST population). In context of proportion to the total population the highest was found in the police station of Kalchini with 448.12 percent ST population to the total population followed by the police stations of Nagrakata (55.29 percent), Mitiali (50.03 percent), Banarhat (41.25 percent) and Birpara (38.56 percent). The highest increase in number in the ST population in the district in 1991 was enumerated in the police station of Mal with increase of 15036 persons of ST people followed by the police station of Banarhat (12259 persons), Kumargram (10470 persons) and Alipurduar (8628 persons). The highest growth rate for the increase of the ST population in the district was found in the police station of Dhupguri having increased by 70.34 percent followed by the police stations of Kumargram (26.94 percent), Jalpaiguri (23.80 percent), Mal (20.60 percent) and Mitiali (20.57 percent). For the creation of new police stations of Bhaktinagar and Jaygaon there were decreases of both the SC and ST populations in the police stations respectively of Rajganj and Kalchini.²⁷⁷

Among the Scheduled Castes in Jalpaiguri district in 1991 Rajbansis as usual constituted the single largest caste in the district numbering 656073 persons and contributing 63.33 percent to the total scheduled caste population of the district. They increased by 167851 persons in the district with the growth rate of 34.88 percent little below the growth rate of Scheduled Caste population (by 0.28 percent) of the district as a whole. The second largest Scheduled Caste community of the district was the Namasudras numbering 234739 persons in the district and constituted 22.66 percent of the total Scheduled caste population of the district in 1991. They increased by 96402 persons in number having increased by the rate of growth of 69.69 percent over the Namasuddra people of the district. This indicated the greatest contribution of the Namasudras during the decade of 1981-1991 for the growth of the Scheduled Caste population in the district. There were also great increases in the scheduled caste population of the Damis (from 4466 persons in 1981 to 10612 persons in 1991), the Jhalo Malos (from 4261 in 1981 to 7677 in 1991), the Jalia Kaibarttas (from 7032 persons in 1981 to 13854 persons in 1991), the Kamis (from 11340 persons in 1981 to 18730 persons in 1991) and the Lohars (from 9171 persons in 1981 to 14694 persons in 1991). Besides the Bhogtas, the Bhuimalis (5499 persons), the Bhuiyas, the Chamars (6893 persons), the Dhobas (8581 persons), the Doms, the Dosadhs,

the Ghasis (6723 persons), the Haris, the Sunris (excluding the Sahas) were also important castes in the district during this time.²⁷⁸

Among the Scheduled Tribe population of the district in 1991 the Oraons constituted the largest bulk of ST population in the district numbering 318658 persons in the district and containing 54.08 percent share in the total scheduled tribe population of the district during the decade. There was 22.90 percent increase in the Oraon population of the district from 1981 to 1991 decade. The second largest scheduled tribe was the Mundas in the district numbering 79458 persons and containing 13.49 percent of the total ST population of the district in 1991. The Santals were also in significant number having 30200 persons having 5.13 percent share in the district during the time. Thus these three Tribal communities together in the district constituted 72.7 percent of the total ST population in the district in 1991. There were great bulk of the Chik Bariks (11363 persons), the Lodhas (29572 persons), the Loharas (14628 persons), Mahalis (22612 persons), the Meches (26987 persons) and the Rabhas (11072 persons) in the district during this time. The Asurs, the Bhutias, (together with the Sherpas, Totos, Dukpas Kagatay, Tibetans numbered 7190 persons), the Garos, the Kharwars, the Maghs, the Mahlis (7719 persons), the Mal Pahariyas, the Nagesias and the Savars were also significant in the district of Jalpaiguri during the decade of 1981-1991.²⁷⁹

The district of Cooch Behar had 1123719 persons of Scheduled Caste peoples in 1991 census year. They constituted 51.76 percent of the total population of the district crossing bar of fifty percent of the total population as it was little bit less in the previous decade. There was increase of 240635 persons among the Scheduled Caste populations of the district being enriched 27.25 percent growth which was about five percent above than the rate of growth of the general population of the district during the decade 1981-1991 periods. The Scheduled Tribe population in the district in 1991 numbered 13275 persons not so significant number in compare to the other North Bengal districts. However, they constituted 0.61 percent of the total population of the district. There was increase of 3170 persons among the scheduled tribe populations of Cooch Behar with the growth of 31.37 percent on the ST populations of the preceding decade.²⁸⁰ However, this was progressive growth in the ST population of the district in compare to the regressive growth of the ST population of the previous decade.

The largest number of Scheduled caste people in the district was enumerated in the police station of Cooch Behar having 242409 persons of Scheduled Castes followed by the police stations of Dinhata (with 191051 SC peoples), Tufanganj (with 173712 SC peoples), and Mathabhanga (139761 SC peoples) all having more than one lakh people of SC communities. In proportion to the total population the largest share of scheduled caste populations were found in the police station of Mekliganj sharing 71.41 percent of the total population by SC population and followed by the police stations of Sitai (68.80 percent), Mathabhanga (64.28 percent),

Haldibari (58.59 percent) and Sitalkuchi (57.57 percent). It is noticeable that proportionately the higher percentage of scheduled caste populations emerged in the areas other than the Sadar of Subdivisional police stations, that is in border areas of the district where as the numbers of the SC populations were large in the Sadar and Sub divisional police stations. In the same way the largest increase in the SC population in 1991 was found in the police station of Cooch Behar followed by the police stations of Mathabhanga, Dinhata, and Tufanganj. But highest percentage increase was found in the police station of Haldibari (42.64 percent) followed by the police stations of Cooch Behar (38.23 percent), Sitalkuchi (37.11 percent), Mathabhanga (35.33 percent) and Sitai (33.50 percent).²⁸¹ The highest number of ST populations were enumerated in the police station of Cooch Behar numbering 3901 persons followed by the police stations of Tufanganj (3621 persons) and Ghokshadanga (2353 persons). Naturally the proportion of the ST population in the district to the total population was very small. Though in small number but the percentage of growth was high in the police stations of Mekliganj (68.71 percent) and Cooch Behar (34.47 percent).²⁸²

The largest bulk of Scheduled Caste population was comprised in the district in 1991 by the Rajbanshis numbering 865622 persons. Thus the Rajbanshis constituted 77.03 percent of the total scheduled caste population of the district during the period. There was increase of 151401 persons among the Rajbanshis having increased by 21.20 percent over the Scheduled Caste population of the previous decade. The second largest scheduled caste in the district was the Namasudras numbering 146279 persons during the decade of 1981-1991. They constituted 13.02 percent of the total Scheduled Caste population of the district. There was increase of 41532 persons among the Namasudras in the district with the rate of growth of 39.65 percent over the Namasudra population of the previous decade in the district. The Jalia Kaibarttas were the third largest Scheduled Caste of the district. They numbered 46184 persons and shared 4.10 percent of the total SC population of the district during this time. The Chamars (10145 persons), the Dhobas (9052 persons), the Jhalo Malos and Malos (13109 persons) were of great significant in number in the district. Besides the Bhuimalis (4869 persons), the Haris (2173 persons), the Koches (2497 persons), the Mals (3221 persons), the Nuniyas (2255 persons), the Paliyas (1536 persons), the Patnis (1360 persons) and the Rajwars (2902 persons) were also of a significant in number.²⁸³ There were 31 Scheduled Tribes in the district of Cooch Behar in 1991 enumeration. Among them the Oraons (4940 persons), the Rabhas (2732 persons), the Mundas (1417 persons), the Santals (940 persons) and the Garos (623 persons) were significant in number. The remaining were numerically insignificant scheduled tribes having members below the range of 500 in the district during the time.²⁸⁴

Thus the region of North Bengal had large bulk of Scheduled Caste population during the decade of 1981-1991 following the previous tradition. However, proportionately the districts containing North Bengal population varied with their geo-historical-cultural tradition and

transition. In the district of Malda in 1991 47.49 percent population was Muslims and the district contained 24.62 percent and SC and ST population together. Thus about 28 percent population of the district was constituted by the Upper Caste Hindus who were again comprised by the large volume non-Bengali Hindus during the period within 1991. In West Dinajpur there had been 36.75 percent Muslim population and the districts contained 38.85 percent SC and ST population. Thus the upper caste Hindus constituted about 25 percent population of the district among whom good number non-Bengali Hindus were there. In the district of Darjeeling there had been only 4.55 percent Muslim population and the SC and ST constituted 29.93 percent of the total population. So there might be large volume of upper caste Hindus. But the district, especially its hill tract had been greatly inhabited by the Nepalese population. And there are large volume of Non-Bengali Hindus both in Hill tract and plain areas of the district. In spite of this the upper caste Hindus might be in sound position in the district. In the district of Jalpaiguri there had been 10.04 percent Muslim population and the SC and ST peoples constituted 58.03 percent of the total population. So the remaining about 32 percent population was constituted by the upper caste Hindus among whom there might be the Non-Bengali Hindus in good number. In the district of Cooch Behar 23.34 percent populations were constituted by the Muslims and 52.37 percent populations were comprised by the SC and ST peoples. So here also about 25 percent population of the district was contained by the upper caste Hindus among whom the non-Bengali Hindus also were there. So , in all districts of North Bengal the upper caste Hindus contained about 30 to 25 percent share in which the non-Bengali Hindus had also a prominent portion. This obviously led to emerge various cultural segments among the different caste populations.

VII

Language is the expression of mind and also is the greatest medium of reflecting culture. So in discussion of cultural changes distribution of languages in different caste or religious communities of a given region is also important. However, I am not going to chronological details of development of distribution and of the languages in North Bengal districts, but shall present some aspects of this development so that the aspect of cultural changes may be clearly understood. In fact, with the formation of demography of North Bengal since the last quarter of the nineteenth century the linguistic structure for that demography also developed. Thus the people belonged to different regions also carried on their own regional languages with them. Thus we find number of people in North Bengal districts speaking different Indian languages even some foreign languages. Thus from census data of languages of 1901 besides Bengali we get large number of Hindi speaking people in North Bengal districts numbering 49121 persons in Dinajpur district, 48491 persons in Jalpaiguri district, 22241 persons in Darjeeling district,

188673 persons in Malda district and 17380 persons in the State of Cooch Behar. There were large number of Oriya people (1924 persons) in Jalpaiguri district and few in other districts and the State. The people speaking Khas (Bailpali) language were largely found in the districts of Darjeeling (45320 persons) and Jalpaiguri (11403 persons). In Cooch Behar there were 19 persons of this language during 1901 census year. The Marwari, Punjabi and Gujrati speaking people mainly were found in Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling districts and few Cooch Behar State. It is interesting the Census reported 9 persons belonging to Sindhi language but only in the State of Cooch Behar none in other districts. There were Asure speaking people only in Jalpaiguri district (553 persons). There were large number people of Kharia speaking (3779 persons) in Jalpaiguri district. The Mundaris were in large number in Jalpaiguri (10290 persons), Darjeeling (3783 persons) and Dinajpur (3528 persons). There were Turias in Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling. There were large number of Santalis and Oraons in the four districts of North Bengal except a few in the State of Cooch Behar. The Malhlis were largely enumerated in Jalpaiguri.²⁸⁵

The Tibetan speaking people were mainly enumerated in Darjeeling (1686 persons) in 1901. All categories of Bhotias (Sikkimese, Botanese and Sherpa) were in great number in Darjeeling but the Bhotanese Bhotias were largest in Jalpaiguri (4768 persons). 170 persons of Toto language speaking were enumerated in Jalpaiguri and 607 persons speaking Dhimal language were enumerated in Darjeeling. The Limbus, the Lepchas , theMurmis, the Gurungs, the Mangars, the Gurungs, the Khambus, the Newars , the Thamis, the Yakhas , the Sunuwars were found speaking their languages both in Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling but the huge number being in Darjeeling district. The Garo linguistic people were mainly found in Jalpaiguri district and few in Dinajpur and Cooch Behar. There were Persian, Pashto and Arabic speaking language speaking people in North Bengal districts in a few number during the time. Importantly enough that Chinese speaking people numbering 158 persons and 250 persons respectively in the districts of Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling were enumerated during the 1901 census period.²⁸⁶

In the census year 1921 decrease was found in different languages of North Bengal districts. Thus the numbers of speakers in Bhotia language, in Limbu, in Lepcha, Dhimal, Gurung (great decline occurred), Yakha, Toto declined in smaller or larger numbers. On the other speaking in language of Rai, Newar, Garo increased in larger or smaller numbers. In 1901 there was 5 persons speaking Marathi language was found in Jalpaiguri, but in 1921 there were 543 persons and 424 persons enumerated respectively in the districts of Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling. It is probable that the suppression of the revolt of 1857 and disbanding of the Maratha soldiers led them to take shelter in Bengal and North Bengal region. This time the Sindhis were enumerated (only four in numbers) in Darjeeling district but not in elsewhere in North Bengal. the Punjabi speaking people, Rajasthani Speaking people, even Tamil and Telegu speaking people (31 both in numbers) , Pshtos were found in North Bengal districts. The Chinese speaking people increased to 226 persons and 321 persons in Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling districts respectively.

There were few Burmese speaking people during this census year in the districts of Darjeeling (5), Jalpaiguri(11) and Cooch Behar (8).²⁸⁷

Duringt the census enumeration of 1931 there were good and increased number of Hindi speaking people and also large numbers of Hindustani language speaking people were found in North Bengal districts. Thus the Hindi speakers were 61545 persons in Dinajpur, 114762 persons in Jalpaiguri district, 10473 persons in Cooch Behar State, 22595 persons in Darjeeling district and 199729 a large numbers in Malda distric were enumerated. On the other the Hindustanis were 67265 persons in Dinajpur, 120699 persons in Jalpaiguri, 12164 in Cooch Behar, 25093 in Darjeeling and 201735 persons in Malda were found. There was increase among Limbu speakes and decline in the Murmi speakers. The number of Bhutias from Jalpaiguir also declined in great numbers. During this decade the Naipali speakers grew largely being 28878 pesons in Jalpaiguri and 92970 persons in Darjeeling district. The Urdu speakers also in sound numbers were found in all the North Bengal districts and the State. The people of Assamese speakers were enumerated 47 persons in Dinajpru, 187 persons in Jalpaiguri, 852 in CoochBehar and 39 persons in Darjeeling. The Garos also increased in Jalpaiguri (1955 persons) and Cooch Behar (1125 persons) . Burmese speaking persons of 24 were found in Darjeeling district during the time. Gujrati speakers were accounted in Dinajpur (37 persons), Cooch Behar 24 persons and 31persons in Darjeeling. The Pshto, Rajasthani and Marwari speaking people were found in good numbers in all the districts of North Bengal. The Tamil and Telegu speakers were increased in 553 persons and 42 persons and 260 persons and 67 persons respectively in Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling districts. The Chinese speakers also grew in large number 437 persons in Jalpaiguri and 399 persons in Darjeeling district.²⁸⁸

In 1951Hindi speaking people, Santali speaking people and Urdu speaking people were important in number. The numbers of the Rais grew much. However he Nepali speaking people in Darjeeling district decreased to 88958 persons. But it is more interesting to note that the speakers of Nepali language increased to a great number of 42461 persons in Jalpaiguri district. Durning this time the Gurumukhi langage was recorded for the speakers of 1282 Persons in Jalpaiguri, 491 persons in Darjeeling and few in West Dinajpur and Cooch Behar. The Lepcha, Gurung, Mangar, Bhutia, Newari, Rajasthani remain more or less in same way. The Assamese speaking people grew to 1805 in Jalpaiguri and 648 in Cooch Behar. The Marathi speakers also increased and spread in all districts being 519 persons in Jalpaiguri, 301 persons in Darjeeling 163 persons in Cooch Behar. The Punjabi, Tibetan, Mech, Rabha, Toto, Dhimal all were recorded in the Census of 1931. During this period two persons returned their language as Rajbansi language. The Chines during this time returned 70 persons in Jalpaiguir and 509 persons in Darjeeling district. There were 53 persons speaking Burmese language were accounted in Darjeeling district.²⁸⁹

The table of the Bilingual language of the Census of 1951 gives in details the peoples' preferable subsidiary language other than their mother language. This trend obviously indicates the trend of cultural changes. According to the census record among 38354 tribal people 7064 persons used to speak the subsidiary language other than their mother language. Among them 6975 persons preferred Bengali as their subsidiary language. Thus the Hindi speakers, the Santali Speakers, the Urdu speakers, even the Nepali speakers preferred to use Bengali as their subsidiary language. In West Dinajpur also among 62527 tribal peoples 39206 spoke in subsidiary languages and among them 38948 persons used Bengali as their subsidiary language. There also the Hindi speakers, Urdu speakers, the Santali speakers, the Oriya speakers all preferred to speak in Bengali as their subsidiary language. But in Jalpaiguri district among the 172570 persons of tribal origin 52617 persons took subsidiary language among whom 37175 persons preferred to speak in Hindi and 15396 persons in Bengali. Among 127570 Hindi speakers 21647 persons spoke subsidiary language. Among them 18651 persons spoke in Bengali and 1433 persons spoke in Nepali. Thus the Sanalis, the Hindi speakers, the Nepali speakers, the Gurumukhi speakers, the Oraons all of them preferred much on Hindi and Nepali as subsidiary language. From the following table it will be clear that as the secondary language non-Bengali people preferred much on Hindi and the Nepali castes on Nepali language.

Table 6.80
Bilingualism
1951
Jalpaiguri District

Language	Total Speakers	Total persons returned as speaking a language subsidiary to that shown in 1	Subsidiary languages
Tribal	172570	52617	Hindi(37175) , Bengali(15396) , Nepali(22) ,Oraon(19) , Oriya(5)
All Languages	741959	76231	Hindi(44230) , Bengali(24713) , Nepali(4792) , Urdu(1463) , Sadana(493) , Oriya(470) , Oraon(26) , Assamese(20), Rajasthani(6) , Santali(4) , Pashto(3) , Mundari(1), Punjabi(1)
Bengali	528804	27046	Hindi(23280) , Nepali(3355) , Urdu(243) , Oriya(183), Sadana(38) , Oraon(26) , Assamese(9) , Pashto(3)
Hindi	127570	21647	Bengali(18657) , Nepali(1433) , Urdu(1180) , Oriya (339) , Sadana(14) , Assamese(11) , Rajasthani(6),Mundari(1)

Santali	11227	2848	Hindi(1901),Bengali(947)
Urdu	2511	1101	Hindi(769), Bengali(339), Nepali(2)
Nepali	45761	18560	Hindi(11422), Bengali(1677), Sadana(436) , Oriya(4), Punjabi(1),
Oriya	9225	3006	Bengali(1110), Hindi(1874) ,Urdu(13), Sadana(5), Santali(4)
Gurumukhi	1282	547	Hindi(376), Bengali(171)
Oraon	11761	2964	Hindi(2273),Bengali(674), Urdu(17)
Lepcha	23	11	Hindi(10), Bengali(2)
Mangar	1	1	Oriya(1)
Bhotia	318	54	Hindi(52), Bengali(2)
Gujrati	29	18	Hindi(10), Bengali(8)
Tamil	1418	565	Bengali(389), Hindi(176)
Assamese	1805	614	Bengali(330), Hindi(281), Urdu(3)
Rajasthani	68	31	Hindi(16),Bengali(15)
Marathi	519	144	Hindi(140), Bengali(4)
Mundari	355	177	Bengali(109), Hindi(68)
Punjabi	89	29	Hindi(27) , Bengali(2)
Marwari	126	59	Hindi(52), Bengali(7)
Sadana	1298	839	Hindi(798), Bengali(41)
Kharia	1203	340	Hindi(340)
Mech	1058	305	Hindi(165), Bengali(140)
Garo	176	25	Bengali(25)
Toto	314	-	-
Rabha	211	2	Bengali(2)
Nagpuri	18	8	Hindi(8)
Bara	21	-	-
Dogra	1	-	-
Baite	1	-	-
Rajbanshi	2	2	Bengali(2)
Chinese	160	71	Hindi(56), Bengali(13), Nepali(2)

Source: Census of India, 1951 table on Bilinguallism,

So in the district of Jalpaiguri only the Oriya speaking people, the Tamils, the Assamese, the Mundair, the Garos, the Rabhas and two Rajbanshis who returned their mother language as Rajbansi preferred to use Bengali as the Bengali as subsidiary language. Most of the other language speakers preferred Hindi as their second language. It may be reason that the Non-Bengali and the tribal people's practice of Hindi language raised their demand of Hindi medium of School and College in Terai-Duars region of Jalpaiguri district.

The table of Bilingualism for the district of Darjeeling also indicates the development and changes in demography leading their preference to the Hindi, Nepali or Bengali language. In fact, in Darjeeling preference to the Hindi and Nepali language for speaking in subsidiary language was largely influenced by the phenomenon of demographic structure of the region. This may be clear from the following table;

Table 6.81
Bilingualism
1951
Darjeeling District

Language	Total Speakers	Total persons returned as speaking a language subsidiary to that shown in 1	Subsidiary languages
Tribal	1251	336	Bengali(254), Hindi(82)
All Languages	669907	7306	Bengali(4530), Hindi(2049), Urdu(462), Nepali(124), Assamese(92), Santali(60), Garo(24), Marwari(21), Oriya(4)
Bengali	64446	9280	Hindi(5493), Nepali(2431), Urdu(1014), Oriya(351)
Hindi	30240	5269	Nepali(3372), Bengali(1711), Urdu(119), Oriya(67)
Santali	3928	680	Hindi(334), Bengali(328), Nepali(18)
Urdu	2980	1718	Hindi(851), Nepali(634), Bengali(230), Oriya(3)
Nepali	88958	9328	Hindi(8468), Bengali(813), Urdu(47)
Oriya	1410	554	Hindi(301), Bengali(187), Nepali(6)
Rai	64730	58875	Nepali(58875)
Tamang	49780	44929	Nepali(44929)
Limbu	2002	17833	Nepali(17833)
Gurumukhi	414	42	Hindi(42)
Oraon	16061	4407	Hindi(2745), Bengali(1183), Nepali(470)
Lepcha	23	11	Hindi(10), Bengali(1)
Gurung	17841	15595	Nepali(15595)
Mangar	19375	17423	Nepali(17423)
Bhotia	7068	6335	Nepali(6335)
Newari	14813	13412	Nepali(13412)
Gujrati	47	6	Hindi(6)
Tamil	143	34	Hindi(19), Telugu(12), Kanarese(3)
Sharpa	8089	8126	Nepali(8126)
Assamese	201	51	Hindi(29), Bengali(20), Nepali(2)
Rajasthani	714	100	Hindi(75), Urdu(15), Bengali(10)

Marathi	301	29	Hindi(27) , Nepali(2)
Mundari	4831	1765	Hindi(764), Bengali(596), Nepali(405)
Punjabi	210	40	Hindi(35), Nepali(5)
Sunwar	4782	4339	Nepali(4339)
Marwari	267	85	Hindi(71) , Nepali(11), Bengali(3)
Tibetan	1436	1275	Nepali(1275)
Sadana	300	35	Bengali(30), Hindi(5)
Kharia	177	19	Hindi(11),Bengali(8)
Dukpa	1121	986	Nepali(986)
Mech	167	55	Bengali(51),Hindi(4)
Thami	457	420	Nepali(420)
Garo	31	9	Bengali(7), Hindi(2)
Kagatay	350	314	Nepali(314)
Malpahariya	374	16	Bengali(12), Hindi(4)
Kol	126	16	Bengali(16)
Khond	21	4	Hindi(4)
Sadri	225	40	Bengali(40)
Savara	131	20	Bengali(20)
Dhimal	124	22	Bengali(20),hindi(2)
Nagpuri	74	16	Bengali(13),Hindi(3)
Koda	81	11	Bengali(11)
Brijia	61	17	Bengali(15) , Hindi(2)
Ghasi	58	14	Bengali(12) , Hindi(2)
Turi	57	12	Hindi(7) , Bengali(5)
Garhwali	48	18	Hindi(12) , Nepali(6)
Asuri	6	2	Bengali(2)
Chinese	509	42	Hindi(28), Bengali(14)
Burmese	53	4	Hindi(4)
Persian	5	1	Urdu(1)
Arabic	2	1	Hindi(1)
Kachin	102	14	Hindi(10), Bengali(4)

Source: Census of India, 1951 table on Bilingualism

It is clear from the above table that the Hindi speakers in the district of Darjeeling preferred to use Nepali as their subsidiary language and the Nepali speakers preferred to use Hindi language as subsidiary language. Most of the tribal people in the district such as Asuri, Garhwali, Turi, Kagatay, Kharia, Mundari, Sanali, Oraon, Lepcha preferred for Hindi. This was caused by of their Non-Bengali nature. On the other the hill people such as Rai, Tamang, Limbu, Nayar, Bhutia, Sherpa, Dukpa and Tham all preferred to use Nepali as their subsidiary language. Thus the Nepali and non-Nepali castes of the hill tract of Darjeeling district outnumbered by the Nepali people gradually were consolidating them with Nepali orientation of a culture. In fact, this was dependency of the minority on the majority community which provoked them to speak the

language of majority people. So the plains people like the Mech, Garo, Dhimal, Ghasi, Asuri, Savar, Sadri, Sadanal, Kol etc. preferred Bengali as their subsidiary language. On the other the up country people by non-Bengali nature preferred Hindi. A few number of Chinese preferred Hindi and few preferred Bengali as their subsidiary language in the district. In Cooch Behar the Santalis, the Mundaris, the Oraons, the Garos, the Mech preferred Bengali as subsidiary language. Even the Nepalis preferred Bengali as their subsidiary language in Cooch Behar. The Non-Bengalis naturally preferred Hindi as subsidiary language. Interestingly the Marwaris preferred Bengali in Cooch Behar as subsidiary language. So this is the demographic nature and composition of a region which decisively influence any community to select their second or subsidiary language.

However, the construction, de-construction and reconstruction of demographic structure of North Bengal might have impact on the main or prominent language of this regions this may be seen from following table of variation of proportion of population speaking the Bengali language from 1911 to 1961 period.

Table-6.82

Variation in the Proportion of the Population (1911-1961) Speaking Numerically Predominant Language (Including Dialects) as of 1961

State/District	Language Bengali					
		1961	1951	1931	1921	1911
West Bengal	A	29435928	21662429	15481551	14281426	14806199
	B	+35.89	+39.92	+8.40	-3.54	--
	C	84.48	82.37	82.05	81.75	82.25
Darjeeling	A	16462	65579	38275	38685	51386
	B	+77.59	+71.34	-1.06	-24.72	--
	C	18.64	14.27	11.53	13.15	18.36
Jalpaiguri	A	763064	525042	481829	450057	448824
	B	+45.33	+8.97	+7.06	+0.27	--
	C	56.14	57.27	65.02	64.67	67.67
Cooch Behar	A	980413	650811	572773	567819	566898
	B	+50.64	+13.62	+0.87	+0.16	--
	C	96.14	97.29	97.24	96.14	95.93
West Dinajpur	A	956673	574963	471913	434315	550326
	B	+66.39	+21.84	+8.66	-21.08	--
	C	72.27	58.86	63.20	62.33	69.42
Malda	A	1021446	827809	527132	492461	500811
	B	+23.39	+57.04	+7.04	-1.67	--
	C	83.59	88.29	73.36	69.89	71.69

Source: Census of India 1961, Voloum XVI, West Bengal and Sikkim, Part II(i), Social and Cultural Tables, J Datta Gupta, Government of India press 1965 pg 334. (A is total population speaking the language, B is percentage of increase or decrease and C is proportion of Bengali speaking people to the total population)

The district of Malda developed from 71.69 percent of Bengali speaking population in 1911 to 83.59 percent of Bengali speaking population in 1961. However, the growth up to 1931 was not so developing and slow in motion. But with partition of 1947 and the resultant inflow huge Bengali speaking people both Hindu and Muslims help in growth of this percentage. In 1961 there were 48 mother tongues in Malda district. Among them numerically predominant were the Bengali (83.59 percent) followed by the Sanali (7.19 percent), the Khotha or Khotta (4.08 percent), the Hindi (2.53 percent) and the Urdu (1.72 percent).²⁹⁰ In the district of Dinajpur in 1911 the percentage of Bengali speaking people was only 69.42 percent in 1911 which more decreased during decades followed as 62.33 percent in 1921, 63.20 percent in 1931 and 58.86 percent. After partition for the loss of territory and population the percentage of Bengali speaking population more dropped during in 1951. However, the post-partition immigration of the displaced persons in large volume increased the proportion of Bengali speaking population in the West Dinajpur district to 72.27 percent in 1961. In the district of West Dinajpur there were 69 mother tongues in 1961. The most prominent among them was Bengali having 72.20 of Bengali speaking people in the district to its total population. It was followed by the Urdua having 10.14 percent, Santali having 9.29 percent population, Hindi with 5.38 percent population and Kurukh or Oraon 1.44 percent population to the total population.²⁹¹

Considering language and mother tongue the district of Darjeeling is very complexion one due to existence of diverse population in the district. Thus in 1961 the district contained about 119 mother tongues. Among the prominent was naturally Bengali language which individually formed an important portion of the population. However, since 1911 this was not equal proportion in all census decade. In 1911 the proportion of the Bengali speaking population was 18.36 percent of the total population of the district. It fell down in 1921 to 13.15 percent and in 1931 to 11.53 percent. However during post partition period there was positive growth and it became 14.27 percent and in 1961 it reached to 18.64 percent. During this period among 119 mother tongue languages Nepali became the most prominent and dominant having 59.09 percent population of the district speaking the language. Hindi was numerically third language in the district having 7.66 percent population speaking the language. The next was he Kurukh or Oraon language having 2.82 percent speaking the language. Next was the Sadan or Sadri which have 1.53 percent population speaking the language. Then gradually would come Oriya with 1.36 percent population speaking the language, Lepcha with 1.31 percent, Santali with 1.28 percent and the Tibetan having 1.23 percent population.²⁹²

The district of Jalpaiguri was more voluminous with more number of caste and ethnic groups in the district in 1961. Among the 151 mother tongues in the district of Jalpaiguri Bengali was the

dominant and prominent language. However, the proportion of the people speaking the language was not equal throughout the period. In 1911 the proportion of Bengali speaking population was 67.67 percent. Like Darjeeling it fell down to 64.67 percent in 1921. Again it developed with small growth to 65.02 percent in 1931. In 1951 it again declined to 57.27 percent. This was due to the partition of territory with partitioning the demography and decreasing the linguistic demographic balance. However, in 1961 it declined more to 56.14 percent. The second position of the language in the district was the Kurukh or Oraon having 11.87 percent population in the district. Next was Nepali having 8.04 percent population in the district. Hindi had also good number of speakers in the district containing 6.99 percent of total population. Next was the Sadan or Sadri which had 5.64 percent population in the district. The Munda had 3/22 percent population in the district in 1961. Then gradually came the Santali (2.15 percent), the Rajbansi (1.37 percent) 1.37 percent and the Khairia 18325 persons or 1.35 percent of the total population.²⁹³

The district of Cooch Behar contained the highest number and percentage of Bengali speaking population. In 1911 it had 95.93 percent population speaking the Bengali language. Unlike the other districts it showed a little growth in its strength in 1921 to 96.14 percent and continued in same pace in 1931 having 97.24 percent population of the district. During the next two decades in 1951 it grew a little bit and reached to 97.29 percent. However, in following decade of 1961 the proportion again declined a little and it became 96.14 percent of the total population. During this time the district of Cooch Behar had 48 Mother tongues among which it is apparent the Bengali was the major in proportion. The second was the language of Hindi which had 3.13 percent speakers among the total population of the district.²⁹⁴ Thus the variation of percentages in Bengali speaking population indicates variation in the nature and composition of the demography.

The numerical strength of the Hindi speaking population in North Bengal districts also grew during the 1951-61 decade. The Hindi speakers of the districts were mainly the immigrants which corroborated by the fact that the females are much less among them.²⁹⁵ Among the 10000 Hindi speaking population the districts of North Bengal contributed Darjeeling 2.53 percent, Jalpaiguri 5.02 percent, Cooch Behar 1.68 percent, West Dinajpur 3.76 percent and Malda 1.64 percent. Thus among the districts of the State of West Bengal the sixth, Seventh and eighth positions were occupied by the districts of Jalpaiguri, West Dinajpur, and Darjeeling respectively. The other two districts of Cooch Behar and Malda occupied twelfth and thirteenth position in having the State's Hindi speaking population among all the districts of the State.²⁹⁶

In 1971 numerical development happened in all languages of North Bengal. The Bhutia speaking people were important in both the district of Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling. The Bodo speaking people were significant in Jalpaiguri district. The Kharia speakers were important in Jalpaiguri and the Lepchas were in Darjeeling district. The Munda speakers and the Tibetan speakers were in significant number in Darjeeling district though not by percentage. In case of

Munda the district of Jalpaiguri contained 2.31 percent of the total population of the district. They were also in good number in the district of West Dinajpur. The Santalis were in significant number in the district of Darjeeling and Cooch Behar. The Santalis consisted 6.55 percent of the total population of Malda. In West Dinajpur there were 8.79 speakers of Santali language. In Jalpaiguri they comprised 1.99 percent. The Rabhas were in important number in the districts of Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar. The Oroans were largely found in Jalpaiguri the total speakers in the district being 8.27 percent, in Darjeeling 2.88 percent and in West Dinajpur 1.10 percent.

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In the decade 1961-71 there was increase of proportion of the Bengali speaking people in all the districts of North Bengal. This was happened due to the large volume of influx into North Bengal districts from the erstwhile East Bengal and later on Bangladesh. The great number of Bengali speaking people both the Hindus and the Muslims immigrants led to the growth of this advancement. Thus in Malda the Bengali speaking increased from 83.59 percent in 1961 to 85.68 in 1971. They increased in West Dinajpur district from 72.27 percent in 1961 to 78.22 percent in 1971 census year. It was about 6 percent increase. In Darjeeling the Bengali speaking people increased 18.64 percent to 20.76 percent in 1971. In Jalpaiguri district the Bengali speakers rose from 56.14 percent to 60.24 percent. Cooch Behar witnessed a small bit of increase and reached at 97.30 percent in 1971. However the Nepali speaking people decline in a smaller proportion from 59.09 percent in 1961 to 57.13 percent in 1971 in the district of Darjeeling and from 8.04 percent in 1961 to 7.35 percent in 1971.²⁹⁸ This was due to the large volume of Bengali linguistic peoples' in migration in Jalpaiguri and plains of Darjeeling. However, among the plains of Darjeeling the Nepali speaking people contributed a good share of 17.72 percent. Number of police stations of the Jalpaiguri district became populated by the Nepali speaking people during this time. Thus in Birpara police station the Nepali speakers contributed 33.25 percent, in Kalchini 24.24 percent, in Madarihat 20.90 percent, in Mitiali 15.67 percent, in Nagrakata 15.82 percent and Mal and Jalpaiguri in both above seven percent.²⁹⁹ Thus the Nepali inhabitation was expanding towards Duars.

The decade followed 1971 witnessed mixed development in the linguistic population in the districts of North Bengal. There was 85.75 percent Bengali speaking population in the State of West Bengal which was 75.02 percent of the total population in 1981. This established the fact that the average growth of Bengali speaking peoples in North Bengal was lower than that of the State. Among the districts of North Bengal the districts of Malda and Cooch Behar returned a little decline in the proportionate growth of Bengali speakers. On the other the district of West Dinajpur showed greater loss than the two districts. However, Darjeeling experienced a growth of 5.26 percent proportionately. The largest number of Hindi speaking population was found in the district of Jalpaiguri amounting 15.23 percent. It was followed by the district of Darjeeling with 12.23 percent Hindi speakers. In the districts of Malda and West Dinajpur the Hindi

speaking population contributed 6.89 percent and 6.42 percent population respectively. The amount of Hindi speakers in the district of Cooch Behar was very small of 2.33 percent. There was good proportion of Urdu speaking population in the district of West Dinajpur amounting 6.91 percent which was 1.52 percent in the district of Malda. There were Gujarati, Oriya, Panjabi, Telegu speaking people all over North Bengal districts. There were few Sindhis in Jalpaiguri (16 persons) and Darjeeling (70 persons) districts.³⁰⁰

There were good number of Bhotia speaking population in Jalpaiguri (259) and Darjeeling (2825); Bodo or Boros in Jalpaiguri (21924) and Darjeeling (531); Garo speaking population in Cooch Behar (250) and Jalpaiguri (198); Kharia speakers in Jalpaiguri (6948) and Darjeeling (335); Kurukh speaking in Jalpaiguri (89008), Darjeeling (33845), West Dinajpur (26750) and in Malda (4941); Lepacha speakers in Darjeeling (3600); small number of Limbu speakers in Darjeeling (87); Munda speakers in Jalpaiguri (27652), Darjeeling (5069) and West Dinajpur (5747); Rabha speakers in Cooch Behar (1017) and Jalpaiguri (4196); Santali speakers in Cooch Behar (1053), Jalpaiguri (37718), Darjeeling (11457), West Dinajpur (177175) and Malda (114292); Tibetan in Jalpaiguri (221) and Darjeeling (2269). The Nepali speakers were increased in Jalpaiguri by 5.51 percent and in Darjeeling 20.95 percent and reached to 135860 persons (6.13 percent) and 540444 (52.76 percent) persons respectively. Though the proportional increase was not much in Duars and plains of the Darjeeling like the previous decade the number of the Nepali speaking persons in those areas was very sound and healthy the highest proportion being in of 32.10 percent in Birpara of Jalpaiguri Durars and 24.82 percent in Naxalbari of Darjeeling plains.³⁰¹

The decade followed 1981 to 1991 also went through in same manner. In West Bengal in 1991 the Bengali speakers were 5841519 persons in number, the Hindi speakers were 4479170 persons, the Santali 1858010 persons, the Urdu speakers 1455649 persons, the Nepali speakers 860403 persons, the Kurukh speakers 192833 persons, the Oriya speakers 170001 persons and Munda 46328 persons. This time the Rajbansi language was reported speaking by 31263 persons.³⁰² From the account the proportion of the districts may assumed. In Malda the Bengali speakers were 89.42 percent, in Cooch Behar 89.42 percent, in Jalpaiguri 70.00 percent, in Darjeeling 29.00 percent and West Dinajpur 77.00 percent. On the other the Hindi speaking population was in 1991 in Malda 4.14 percent, in Cooch Behar 2.00 percent, in Jalpaiguri 16.00 percent, in Darjeeling 12.00 percent and in West Dinajpur 7 percent.³⁰³ So the great wave of Bengali immigration or infiltration in the districts of North Bengal led to the increase of the Bengali speaking population in North Bengal region.

Thus during the period of our study there were existence of four of five broad linguistic families, classified by Grierson, (Linguistic Survey of India, W.Griersons] such as the Austric family, Tibeto Chinese family, Dravidian family and Indo-European family. In the Austro Asiatic family North

Bengal had the languages of Munda, Mundari, Koda or Kora, Bhumia and Kharia etc. The Tibeto-Chinese family consisted of Tibetan-Burman family and Tibetan-Himalaya group. In the Tibetan-Chinese group the Tibetans or Bhutias of various races were important in North Bengal. In the Tibetan-Himalayan group the languages of Dhimal, Gurung, Kami, Khambu, Lepcha, Limbu, Tamang, Mangari, Rai, Sunwar and Newar were of much significance. On the other hand among the Assam-Burma Branch of Tibeto-Chinese family the Bara or Bodo such as Mech, Rabha, Garo, Koch languages in North Bengal were found in different places. Among the Dravidian group in the Tamil, Telegu from the Southern Dravidian group, Gondi, Khond, Koya from the Central Dravidian group and the Kurukh-Oraon and Malto language existed in the districts of North Bengal. Finally both the Dardik and Indo-Aryan constituted Indo-European linguistic groups also existed in North Bengal. The Kashmiri from Dardik was found in North Bengal. Among the Indo-Aryans Sindhi linguistic people from North-Western, the Maratha and the Kankani from southern and the Assamese, Bengali, Bihari, Oriya linguistic group of people also contributed to the population of North Bengal. Thus North Bengal, with this diverse linguistic demography together, turned into a polyglot which has been described by an eminent North Bengal historian and scholar as the 'Bharatirtha Uttaranga' (North Bengal: the Indian Heaven).³⁰⁴ In fact, North Bengal contained people having more than 150 mother tongues, much more than any part of the State. So such linguistically constructed demography together with the religious and caste and ethnic developments as discussed above in this chapter must witness the voluminous cultural changes.

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Appendix:6.1

Table-6.83
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion
1881
Malda (Cont.)

Subdivisional Thannah	Hindus	Mohamedans	Christians	Brahmos
Maldah	34689	14982	-	-
Kharda	61321	41730	-	-
Ratua	60307	19708	9	-
Gajal	40189	13617	-	-
English Bazar	52903	32121	11	3
Kaliachak	57980	57712	-	-
Shibganj	26938	76218	6	-
Gomashtapur	21006	31804	-	-
Nawabganj	24820	41633	-	-
District Total	379153	329525	26	3

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 726 – 727

Appendix:6.2

Table-6.84
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion
1881
Malda (Concl.)

Subdivisional Thannah	Jews	Southals	kals
Maldah	-	1223	-
Kharda	-	-	-
Ratua	-	-	-
Gajal	-	511	-
English Bazar	7	-	-
Kaliachak	-	-	-
Shibganj	-	-	-
Gomashtapur	-	-	-
Nawabganj	-	-	-
District Total	7	1734	-

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 726 - 727

Appendix:6.3

Table-6.85
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion
1881
Cooch Behar (Cont.)

Subdivisional Thannah	Hindus	Mahomedans	Christians	Buddhists
Coochbehar	105482	33570	37	-
Tufanganj	49482	16114	10	-
Mekliganj	34899	17256	-	-
Haldibari	17213	18197	-	-
Dinhatta	103302	52327	-	-
Mathabhanga	117100	3717	-	-
Total	427478	174539	48	-

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 735 - 736

Appendix:6.4

Table-6.86
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion
1881
Cooch Behar (Concl.)

Subdivisional Thannah	Brahoms	Jains	Jews
Coochbehar	-	81	-
Tufanganj	-	3	-
Mekliganj	-	11	-
Haldibari	-	36	-
Dinhatta	-	13	-
Mathabhanga	-	-	-
Total	-	144	-

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 735 - 736

Appendix:6.5

Table-6.87
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion
1881
DINAGEPORE (Cont.)

Subdivisional	Hindus	Mahomedans	Christians
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Thannah			
Dinagepore	6136	6747	94
Rajarampur	89526	109880	3
Birganj	75803	64088	-
Thakurgaun	99548	120848	1
Ranisankail	34506	40596	-
Pirganj	53636	40199	45
Hemtabad	49390	35897	-
Kaliganj	66024	28857	1
Bansihori	43594	38246	15
Patrotulla	28658	40568	9
Mohadebpur	26262	40976	27
Porsha	15119	33308	-
Patiram	36608	33813	240
Gangarampur	41328	33153	10
Chintaman	17641	33449	-
Parbatipur	19701	46917	12
Nawabganj	13157	48282	-
District Total	716630	795824	457

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 706 - 707

Appendix:6.6

Table-6.88

Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion

1881

DINAGEPORE (Cont.)

Subdivisional Thannah	Buddists	Jains	Jews
Dinagepore	-	-	-
Rajarampur	-	-	-
Birganj	-	-	-
Thakurgaun	-	-	-
Ranisankail	-	-	-
Pirganj	-	-	-
Hemtabad	-	-	-
Kaliganj	-	-	-
Bansihori	-	-	-
Patrotulla	-	-	-
Mohadebpur	-	-	-
Porsha	-	-	-

Patiram	-	-	-
Gangarampur	-	-	-
Chintaman	-	-	-
Parbatipur	-	-	-
Nawabganj	-	-	-
District Total	-	-	-

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 706 - 707

Appendix:6.7

Table-6.89

Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion

1881

DINAGEPORE (Concl.)

Subdivisional Thannah	Southals	Easten	Others
Dinagepore	-	-	-
Rajarampur	-	-	-
Birganj	-	-	-
Thakurgaun	-	-	-
Ranisankail	-	-	-
Pirganj	-	-	-
Hemtabad	-	-	-
Kaliganj	-	-	-
Bansihori	22	-	-
Patrotulla	10	-	-
Mohadebpur	-	-	-
Porsha	159	-	-
Patiram	-	-	-
Gangarampur	-	-	-
Chintaman	986	-	-
Parbatipur	78	-	-
Nawabganj	197	-	-
District Total	1434	-	-

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 706 - 707

Appendix:6.8

Table-6.90

Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion

1881

DARJEELING (Cont.)

Subdivisional	Hindus	Sikhs	Mahomedans	Christians
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Thannah				
Sadder Darjeeling	41697	-	952	585
Kalinpong kalinpong	6475	-	9	44
Kurseong Kurseong	23427	-	584	190
Terai Phanritewa	55118	3	6659	23
District Total	126717	3	8204	842

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 710 - 711

Appendix:6.9

Table-6.91
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion
1881
DARJEELING (Cont.)

Subdivisional Thannah	Buddists	Brahmos	Jains	Southals
Sadder Darjeeling	9072	12	-	-
Kalinpong kalinpong	6153	2	-	-
Kurseong Kurseong	2736	-	-	-
Terai Phanritewa	814	-	-	-
District Total	18775	14	-	-

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 710 - 711

Appendix:6.10

Table-6.92
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion
1881
DARJEELING (Concl.)

Subdivisional Thannah	Kuls	Otta Western Abonigines	Eastern	others
Sadder Darjeeling	-	-	-	-

Kalinpong kalinpong	-	-	-	-
Kurseeong Kurseeong	-	-	-	-
Terai Phanritewa	12	612	-	-
District Total	12	612	-	-

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 710 - 711

Appendix:6.11

Table-6.93

Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion

1881

JULPIGOREE DISTRICT (Cont.)

	Subdivisional Thannah	Hindus	sikhs	Mahomedans	Christians
S U D D E R	Julpigoree	45138	-	30224	56
	Silligoree	40958	-	39193	27
	Boda	100067	-	78574	2
	Patgram	39335	-	25301	-
	Mynaguri	50409	-	16031	-
	Kalranti	24840	-	6869	38
	Subdivisional Total	300747	-	196192	123
Ali pur	Alipur	25284	-	2532	15
	Salbari	41860	-	9789	21
	Subdivisional Total	67144	-	12321	36
	District Total	367891	-	208513	159

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 710 - 711

Appendix:6.12

Table-6.94

Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion

1881

JULPIGOREE DISTRICT (Cont.)

S U	Subdivisional Thannah	Buddists	Brahmos	Jains	Southols
	Julpigoree	-	-	-	-

D D E R	Silligoree	-	-	-	-
	Boda	-	-	-	-
	Patgram	-	-	-	-
	Mynaguri	-	-	6	-
	Kalranti	-	-	-	-
Subdivisional Total		-	-	6	-
Ali pur	Alipur	-	-	-	-
	Salbari	-	-	-	-
Subdivisional Total		-	-	-	-
District Total		-	-	6	-

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 710 - 711

Appendix:6.13

Table-6.95

Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion

1881

JULPIGOREE DISTRICT (Concl.)

S U D D E R	Subdivisional Thannah	Kuls	Otta Western Abonigines	Eastern	others
	Julpigoree	-	-	-	-
	Silligoree	-	-	-	-
	Boda	-	-	-	-
	Patgram	-	-	-	-
	Mynaguri	-	-	-	-
	Kalranti	-	-	272	-
Subdivisional Total		-	-	272	-
Ali pur	Alipur	-	-	2914	1295
	Salbari	-	-	26	-
Subdivisional Total		-	-	2940	1295
District Total		-	-	3212	1295

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, P. 710 - 711

Appendix:6.14

Table-6.96

Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion

1891

DINAJPUR

Subdivision	1891			
	HINDU	MUSALMAN	CHRISTIAN	ANINIST
Dinajpur	713663	756188	-	10619

Satan subdivision	447254	262684	-	10491
Dinajpur	94395	113944	-	-
Kaliganj	69154	30550	-	923
Raiganj	50670	33848	-	-
Bunghganj	44161	38850	-	187
Patnitura	35268	43257	-	402
Parsa	16766	287	-	287
Patiram	34385	32997	-	6674
Gangarampur	43770	34782	-	1027
Chintamar	20706	32611	-	28
Parbatipur	20766	48373	-	-
Nawabganj	126270	48625	-	963
Thakurgram Subdivison	266409	264804	-	128
Thakurgram	100589	124031	-	-
Ranisanka	34561	39480	-	-
Pirganj	54212	40338	-	148
Birganj	77047	60955	-	-

O'Donnell, J.J. Census of India, 1891, Volume.V, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, C.J. Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcuta, 1893

Appendix:6.15

Table-6.97

Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion

1901

Dinajpur

Subdivision	1901			
	HINDU	MUSALMAN	CHRISTIAN	ANINIST
Dinajpur	726429	776737	-	62913
Sadar subdivision	456423	506044	-	60576
Dinajpur	93398	114473	-	574
Kaliganj	69983	35845	-	2500
Raiganj	51152	33384	-	1313
Bunghganj	43398	39348	-	3693
Patnitura	44263	47632	-	1999
Parsa	17222	32968	-	4697
Patiram	38290	34277	-	20094
Gangarampur	41963	43770	-	7790
Chintamar	19232	34599	-	7157
Parbatipur	22185	52250	-	519
Nawabganj	14727	50500	-	10232

Thakurgram Subdivison	270006	271193	-	2337
Thakurgram	99873	127478	-	68
Ranisanka	34772	47940	-	-
Pirganj	54995	23036	-	950
Birganj	80361	33240	-	1319

O'Donnell, J.J. Census of India, 1891, Volume.V, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, C.J. Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcuta, 1893

Appendix:6.16

Table-6.98

Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion

1891

Jalpaigure

Subdivision &	1891				
	Hndu	Musalman	Aninist	Buddhist	Christian
Jalpaigure Dt.	549161	222236	6295	2509	-
SadarSubdi vision	392754	211368	8139	1146	-
Jalpaigure	48900	33709	171	17	-
Raiganj	38773	36213	5	-	-
T	-	0	-	-	-
Boda	92062	74304	-	-	-
Pathgram	36073	23919	-	-	-
Maynaguri	77692	20526	364	437	-
Dhupguri	31067	9253	462	90	-
Damsin	67507	13442	2140	602	-
Alipu subdivision	57007	10870	3156	1363	-
Alipur	33533	4406	1697	1363	-
Falakata	23474	6464	1459	-	-

Source: O'Donnell, J.J. Census of India, 1891, Volume.V, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, C.J. Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcuta, 1893

Appendix:6.17

Table-6.99

Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion

1901

Japaiguri

Subdivision	1901
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& Thanas	Hindu	Musalman	ANINIST	Buddhist	Christian
Jalpaigure Dt.	549161	228487	15236	6211	2346
Sadar Subdivision	392754	215152	6425	3247	1165
Jalpaigure	48900	33252	23	7	246
Raiganj	38773	25592	71	-	-
T	-	11467	-	-	3
Boda	92062	73075	-	-	-
Pathgram	36073	23008	-	-	6
Maynaguri	77692	21660	1723	1542	252
Dhupguri	31067	11136	1487	663	235
Damsin	67507	16482	2521	1035	431
Alipu subdivision	57007	13335	10011	3044	1313
Alipur	33533	5052	3414	2005	1243
Falakata	23474	8283	5092	1039	70

Source: Census of India, 1901, Volume VIB, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, E.A. Gait, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1902

Appendix:6.18

Table-6.100

Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion

1891

Darjeeling

Subdivision &	1891				
	Hindi	Buddhist	Musalman	Chritians	ANINIST
Darjeeling Dt.	1018171	40520	10011	1502	-
Sadar Subdivision	74346	28430	1631	1166	-
Darjeeling	74346	28430	1631	1166	-
Kalinpong	-	-	-	-	-
J	-	-	-	-	-
Kurseung Subdivision	96825	12090	8380	336	-
Kurseung	32941	9048	517	202	-
Siliguri	63954	1042	7783	134	-

Source: Census of India, 1901, Volume VIB, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, E.A. Gait, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1902

Appendix:6.19

Table-6.101
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion
1901
Darjeeling

Subdivision	1901				
	Hindi	Buddhist	Musalmans	Chritians	ANINIST
Darjeeling Dt.	187869	44044	9227	4467	3431
Sadar Subdivision	546036	33110	1406	3290	433
Darjeeling	50232	16074	1189	1581	240
Kalinpong	27551	12357	129	1474	-
J	15253	4729	88	235	193
Kurseung Subdivision	92833	10884	7821	1177	2998
Kurseung	33035	10253	431	973	564
Siliguri	59798	631	7390	204	2434

Source: Census of India, 1901, Volume VIB, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, E.A. Gait, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1902

Appendix:6.20

Table-6.102
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion
1891
MALDA

Subdivision &	1891		
	Hindu	Musalman	Aninist
Malda Dt.	409036	384651	21034
Gumesthapur	21234	35244	86
English Bazar	56793	39654	4
Nawadganj	26103	48517	-
Kaliachak	62305	67325	17
Sibganj	26471	88519	5
Kharba	33182	30703	237
Ratua	47767	15923	90
Tulsi	31422	16544	-
Old Malda	31899	16756	10182
Gajal	39060	14303	10413
Manikchak	32920	11163	-

Source: Census of India, 1901, Volume VIB, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, E.A. Gait, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1902

Appendix:6.21

Table-6.103
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion
1901
Malda

Subdivision &	1901		
	Hindu	Musalman	Aninist
Malda Dt.	440390	424969	18476
Gumesthapur	22781	36542	987
English Bazar	50767	39569	100
Nawadganj	26633	46745	5
Kaliachak	65454	82745	-
Sibganj	25876	102021	-
Kharba	35504	35306	-
Ratua	47902	20840	-
Tulsi	29785	18349	10007
Old Malda	45913	16298	7378
Gajal	57156	15228	-
Manikchak	32627	11326	-

Source: Census of India, 1901, Volume VIB, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, E.A. Gait, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1902

Appendix:6.22

Table-6.104
Distribution of Population in Reference to Religion
1891 & 1901
Cooch Behar

	1891		1901	
	Hindu	Musalman	Hindu	Musalman
Kuch Bihar	406528	170746	397946	178236
Kotwali	96459	31832	91511	29820
Dinhata	96776	49581	95348	48441
Mekhliganj	33021	18045	32380	27804
Haldiganj	16901	17801	18146	19474
Mathabhanga	109635	34009	106741	33381
Fulbari	53730	19448	53818	19316

Source: Census of India, 1901, Volume VIB, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, E.A. Gait, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1902

Appendix:6.23

Table-6.105
Castes in North Bengal
1881

Caste	Dinagepure	Darjeeling	Jalpaiguree	Maldah	Coochbehar
1.Babhar	48	6857	-	-	-
2.Bagdi	1536	46	24527	2609	14136
3.Baniya	21149	914	2672	6963	853
4.Barhi	935	545	831	2772	132
5.Barui	1375	319	377	1541	196
6.Bouri	1099	1	30	509	2
7.Bind	29	-	-	7578	6
8.Chamou	4043	778	2163	7718	1284
9.Chandal	7180	308	1895	1157	5208
10.Chassa	-	-	37	4961	-
11.Dhanuk	111	2002	2138	5057	11
12.Dhobi	30	330	162	3893	310
13.Dom	-	980	935	1228	289
14.Dossadh	6000	107	6	2223	91
15.Gareou	14	223	2	310	24
16.Ghatwal	233	3	6	199	17
17.Goualla	5123	1449	2152	16875	1710
18.Hari	31934	1237	6625	11788	1794
19.Jaliya	13560	13	3870	1388	2640
20.Jugi	5844	209	2136	779	4431
21.Kahar	3614	552	1577	3030	187
22.kaibartha	37785	219	5838	23556	2678
23.Kalu	1458	111	535	2369	71
24.Kalwar	27	104	-	233	19
25.Karmakar lohar	5725	954	1619	6202	622
26.Kartara	-	-	-	-	-
27.Kandu	400	430	130	1355	307
28.Kapali	248	89	690	-	12
29.Karon	-	-	-	-	-
30.Kayasth	6024	406	3782	4656	2522
31.Kewat	-	-	-	-	2
32.Khandait	-	-	-	-	-
33.Koiri	233	474	181	496	41
34.Kumhar	5352	687	1892	3983	1101
35.Kurni	2245	689	318	3865	3586

36.Madak	1693	180	1280	896	618
37.Mali	3133	230	1160	2352	2156
38.Mallah	1298	556	3	4309	39
39.Mal	1033	-	-	862	4
40.Musshar	45	384	-	139	14
41.Napit	12735	966	5009	8046	3052
Caste	Dinagepure	Darjeeling	Jalpaiguree	Maldah	Coochbehar
42.Nuniya	1336	362	281	447	702
43.Pan	-	-	-	-	-
44.Pasi	-	4	63	582	3
45.Pod	68	-	-	366	-
46.Rajwar	-	20	145	15	-
47.Sadgop	3858	-	500	1548	133
48.Sonar	-	-	92	2322	16
49.Sudra	5	-	-	-	-
50.Sunri	5096	5	1525	5943	694
51.Tamali	648	7	242	422	-
52.Tanti	9045	428	5453	6492	846
53.Tatwa	48	1	-	-	-
54.Teli	4586	792	1918	9005	433
55.Tew	3001	-	35896	15736	51152
56.Others	30835	6264	8179	87262	4754
Total of classIII	245927	28445	127602	275577	111868

Source: Bourdillan ,J.A. Report on the Census of Bengal , 1881, , Inspector General of Registration, Bengal, Volume-II, Calcutta, The Bengal Secretariat Press, Pp.239-281

Appendix:6.24

Table-6.106
Castes in North Bengal
1891

CASTE GROUP	DINAJPUR	JALPAIGURI	DARJEELING	MALDAH	KUCHBIHAR
Baniya	10145	10775	-	6848	-
Kheetri	8609	10150	-	-	-
Barui	2005	-	-	1940	-
Baidya	1907	-	-	-	-
Baldeb	1232	-	-	2247	-
Bhumali and Mihtav	34647	7173	1757	-	-
Brahman	11370	3410	4924	8318	6129

Chaman and	5130	1617	-	5982	1295
Dhopa	1741	-	-	4097	-
Goala	8533	2694	-	15291	1666
Jugi	15188	2946	-	13398	4972
Kahar	3366	1172	-	3367	-
Kaibartta	39765	3655	1419	37744	3204
Kamar and Lohar	4359	2565	-	5293	-
Kundu	1196	-	-	1773	-
Kayastha	7424	1619	-	2702	2605
Kooll	481591	297852	33472	62975	352409
Kumhar	9463	7635	-	4158	1100
Kusmi	1918	-	-	2199	-
Malakar	1756	-	-	-	-
Malo	1900	-	-	5662	-
Namasudra & Chandal	6981	3844	-	4669	4486
Napit	11158	5837	-	950	2999
Nuniya	3203	-	-	-	1187
Oraon	1386	20051	5323	-	-
Rajput	2865	4027	9123	2871	-
Sadgor	1379	-	-	1024	-
Sankal	6515	1409	-	20989	-
Sunni and Kalwar	3628	-	-	-	-
Tanti and Tatwa	6898	6259	-	5445	1657
Teli and Kalu	3534	1670	-	8195	-
Tiyar	1814	-	-	14301	-
Bhutia	-	4001	8890	-	-
Kar	-	1048	7048	-	-
Kayali	-	1575	-	-	-
Khumbha	-	3540	29950	-	-
Kharwar	-	1579	-	6413	-
Limbu	-	1218	12812	-	-

CASTE GROUP	DINAJPUR	JALPAIGURI	DARJEELING	MALDAH	KUCHBIHAR
Mungar	-	2669	11412	-	-
Mech	-	21608	-	-	3778

Munda	-	2732	1283	-	-
Sutradhar	-	1294	-	-	-
Dami	-	-	3460	-	-
Gharti	-	-	3138	-	-
Gurung	-	-	9232	-	-
Lepcha	-	-	9717	-	-
Meeruni	-	-	21636	-	-
Newar	-	-	4953	-	-
Sanki	-	-	1547	-	-
Sunwar	-	-	5156	-	-
Makha	-	-	1250	-	-
Barhai	-	-	-	3046	-
Bind	-	-	-	10395	-
Chain	-	-	-	41213	-
Dhanuk	-	-	-	7302	-
Dom	-	-	-	1924	-
Dusath	-	-	-	3967	-
Gangastha	-	-	-	3125	-
Gan	-	-	-	3871	-
Numi and Mihtas	-	-	-	15067	3172
Kulwar and Sunri	-	-	-	4125	-
Kewat	-	-	-	3121	-
Kal	-	-	-	3227	-
Mahili	-	-	-	1165	-
Mu	-	-	-	2220	-
Nagas	-	-	-	18878	-
Po	-	-	-	9574	-
Sanar	-	-	-	2056	-
Surahiya	-	-	-	2257	-
Turi	-	-	-	1256	-
Gare	-	-	-	1261	-

CASTE GROUP	DINAJPUR	JALPAIGURI	DARJEELING	MALDAH	KUCHBIHAR
Religious devolpos	18106	-	-	6508	-

and persons returned by sect.					
Baishnab					
.... Returned by title or common subcaste	8904	1287	1390	4732	-
Bune					
Hindus returned by	-	-	-	1716	-
Duliya					
Ghatwal	1177	-	-	-	-
Jaliya	4305	1694	-	-	1159
Mala	1380	-	-	-	-
Patari	-	-	-	1126	-
Musalms returned by title	3451	2126	-	5259	-
Pathan					
Sayyid	2679	-	-	2600	-
Shaikh	792217	218256	7918	360903	168403
Musalms returned by	-	-	-	2658	-
Occupation					
Dhuniya					
Jolaha	-	-	-	7457	-
Kinira	-	-	-	1904	-
Hindus returned by locality	-	1034	-	-	-
Hindusthanis					
Beujalis	-	-	-	1961	-
Mara..	-	-	-	-	2480

Source: O'Donnell, J.J. Census of India, 1891, Volume.V, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, C.J. Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcuta, 1893

Appendix:6.25

Table-6.107
Castes in North Bengal
1901

Caste Group	DINAJPUR	JALPAIGURI	DARJEELING	MALDAH	KUCHBIHAR
Adanki(Adbania)	-	-	-	-	-
Hindu					
Agaria	-	8	46	-	-
Hindu					
Aninist	-	-	-	-	-
Agarwala	136	627	427	1832	2
Hindu					
Jain	28	63	4	-	1
Aghori	14	1	-	-	-
Hindu					
Agrahori	-	-	-	-	-
Hindu					
Aguri	-	-	-	-	-
Hindu					
Ahird Goala	3500	3723	1173	13872	1740
Hindu					
Ahir Gaura	-	-	-	-	-
Hindu					
Ajnabi	-	-	-	-	-
Hindu					
Amat	-	-	-	-	-
Hindu					
Aoghar	-	-	-	-	-
Hindu					
Bais Baniya (H)	727	-	24	5149	1

Caste Group	DINAJPUR	JALPAIGURI	DARJEELING	MALDAH	KUCHBIHAR
Baisnab(Bairagi)(H)	13207	1778	128	4790	3555
Baniya (H)	925	322	30	718	275
Barhi(H)	487	112	375	112	37
Barew(H)	1732	570	226	1690	212
Bhotia	-	2461	100	-	-
Hindu	-	-	-	-	-
Buddhist	-	4343	7520	-	5
Bheuimali(H)	3579	575	14	2567	1016
Bhew(H)	3948	1403	473	1821	67

Bind(H)	56	46	15	10208	69
Brahman(H)	6167	4416	6470	7910	4036
Brahman(Agrahar)(H)	21	-	-	20	5
Brahman(Barua)(H)	48	-	-	-	1
Brahman(Daibina)(H)	34	1	1	69	-
Brahman(Nepali)(H)	-	281	4969	-	-
Chan	324	94	1	43639	5
Chu	652	1309	193	4537	743
Dhimal	-	-	632	-	-
Dhoba	907	336	426	3489	261
Dosath	339	480	450	2644	577
Gautha Banik	476	224	13	667	165
Gangai(Gonesh)	6027	38	477	13129	124
Garo Aninst	-	1247	-	-	217
Garo hindu	199	1966	-	-	456
Genrhi	476	345	7	-	9
Gorait	-	2206	122	4444	2
Geerung	-	1176	8738	-	-
Mani	22628	5208	1279	11078	1098
Jogi	7458	2262	588	537	4590
Kahar	534	939	690	3124	327
Kabarta	27311	5213	228	15003	2989
Kalita	-	180	65	-	14
Kamar & Lohar	4790	3519	1594	7241	474
Kanni	-	1062	9826	-	-
Kapali	10	1470	45	-	11
Kuntu	608	489	608	1345	255
Kayastha	5617	1945	634	2419	2590
Khauni	-	1818	33133	-	-
Kharwar	1327	1038	987	5741	511
Khas	-	459	11597	-	-
Khatri	16	430	23	-	230
Khawas	-	96	566	-	-
Khen	3943	4959	2	-	3656

Caste Group	DINAJPUR	JALPAIGURI	DARJEELING	MALDAH	KUCHBIHAR
Kermhar	4910	3925	1012	3428	1572
Lepcha	-	80	9972	-	-
Lamou	-	2938	14305	-	-

Mas	2064	6	42	2553	5
Malukan	1713	928	238	585	62
Mallah	1024	488	110	280	171
Malpahania	530	1320	707	50	19
Malo	5993	317	14	4729	165
Mar	51	2	-	-	66
Mech	-	22348	292	-	575
M	-	-	-	-	2358
Muchu	4962	2040	547	2126	213
Munda	5873	11672	3784	2408	43
Mu	-	2027	25398	9	-
Namasutra (Chandal)	5048	2568	156	3198	5035
Napit	9032	3361	-	6821	2416
Nepali	-	-	210	-	5
Newar	-	-	2780	2	-
Nuniya	2764	987	291	2055	2168
Oraon(H)	10353	62844	7672	3559	20
Oraon(A)	3587	731	947	159	-
Oswal	117	113	57	104	24
Rajbanshi	498272	321170	29460	63735	338299
Deshi	65405	99	-	10997	-
Kan	58	-	-	55	-
Koch	231	-	-	8	-
Pabiya	252959	48	1434	7796	-
Rajput	3030	3634	43	10018	648
Satgop	2400	269	66	1096	77
Sautal(H)	20478	5127	1186	33825	17
Sautal(A)	53623	5730	673	18301	9
Shunri Shaha	3502	1172	342	2649	513
Sunwar	-	36	4428	-	-
Tanti	5489	6092	131	7528	1185
Telu	2662	1815	843	5939	419
Tiyar	717	1	2	12948	14
Turi	2620	559	273	2759	-

Source: Census of India, 1901, Volume VIB, Lower Provinces of Bengal and their Feudatories, E.A. Gait, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1902 191-266

Appendix:6.26

Table-6.108

**Police Station wise population distribution in North Bengal
In Reference to religion
Dinajpur
For the Year 1931**

District/Subdivision/ Revenue Thana/ Police Station/ Census Town	Muslim	Hindu	Tribal	Buddhist	Christian	Others
Dinajpur district	906723	793832	67404	20	6981	481
Balurghat subdivision	229748	196206	44296	1	3510	86
Patnitala	62023	46798	7652	1	658	12
Patnitala	37346	20902	4934	1	169	2
Dhamoirhat	24677	26346	2718	-	489	10
Porsha	42272	19027	6851	-	107	-
Balurghat	45474	103943	10601	-	1594	24
Balurghat	28485	41051	8840	-	1483	16
Kumarganj	16989	22892	1761	-	111	8
Phulbari	39334	22220	11374	-	238	16
Gnagarampur	40645	43698	12812	-	913	34
Gnagarampur	19831	21666	6239	-	523	34
Tapan	20814	22032	6578	-	390	-
Thakurgaon subdivision	277686	2627498	2781	-	949	32
Thakurgaon	128376	91910	111	-	366	28
Thakurgaon	65250	60146	111	-	75	28
Baliadangi	36386	17956	-	-	77	-
Atwari	26740	13808	-	-	214	-
Ranisankail	38194	32140	557	-	122	-
Ranisankail	24018	20695	504	-	101	-
Haripur	14176	11445	53	-	21	-
Pirganj	47500	58477	755	-	300	4
Pirgan	32997	34996	738	-	140	-
Bochaganj	14503	23381	17	-	160	4
Birganj	63616	85071	1358	-	160	-
Birganj	25559	38452	1249	-	122	-
Khansama	26946	19959	-	-	-	-
Kaharul	11111	26666	109	-	38	-
Sadar subdivision	379289	330148	20333	7	2523	363
Parbatipur	70464	28238	1766	9	310	169
Nawabganj	67948	22963	5940	-	1083	7

Nawabganj	51895	17548	3580	-	1212	-
Ghoraghat	16053	5425	2360	-	371	7
Dinajpur	126816	103213	803	1	529	178
Dinajpur	44936	38221	362	1	368	142
Dinajpur	5646	12509	14	1	345	141
Chirirbandar	53172	31858	35	-	100	30
Biral	29708	32134	406	-	51	6
Raiganj	32865	51241	2256	-	119	3
Raiganj	19861	37791	1281	-	98	3
Hemtabad	13004	13450	965	-	21	-
Kaliaganj	40855	76714	1507	-	148	1
Kaliagan	14917	45660	351	-	135	1
Itahar	25938	31154	1156	-	58	-
Banshihari	40341	49780	8071	-	350	6
Banshihari	18601	20124	7670	-	279	5
Kusmundi	21740	29655	401	-	125	-

Porter A.E., Census of India, 1931, Volume V, Part-II, Bengal Tables, Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1933, Imperial Table I, pp 220 - 223

Appendix:6.27

Table-6.109

**Police Station wise population distribution in North Bengal
In Reference to religion
Malda
For the Year 1931**

District/Subdivision/ Revenue Thana/ Police Station/ Census Town	Muslim	Hindu	Tribal	Buddhist	Christian	Others
Malda district	571943	444478	36158	5	1192	62
Sadar Subdivision	571943	444478	36158	5	1192	62
Kharba	48093	33544	1956	-	1	-
Harischandrapur	45066	36322	1151	-	18	39
Ratua	70509	79546	3	3	-	-
Ratua	45896	39897	-	-	-	-
Manikchak	15613	39649	3	3	-	-
Gajole	29375	46899	20890	-	370	-
Gajole	17880	28505	20315	-	323	-
Bamangola	11495	18394	575	-	48	-
Malda	16472	58177	4339	-	264	1
Malda	10016	16887	3624	-	56	1
Old Malda	867	1911	-	-	-	-

Habibpur	4656	41290	715	-	508	-
English Bazar	47347	45018	105	2	19	2
English Bazar(Malda)	31064	38464	102	-	19	2
English Bazar	7342	9544	-	-	19	2
Bholahat	16283	6554	3	2	-	-
Kaliachak	100245	64329	-	-	-	-
Nawabganj	94276	37316	5468	-	19	13
Nawabganj	86802	19974	703	-	14	13
Nawabganj	10384	5435	-	-	-	7
Naohole	7474	17342	4765	-	5	-
Sibganj	99505	24336	71	-	3	7
Gomastapur	30055	18919	2175	-	198	-

Porter A.E., Census of India, 1931, Volume V, Part-II, Bengal Tables, Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1933, Imperial Table I, pp 220 - 223

Appendix:6.28

Table-6.110

**Police Station –wise population distribution in North Bengal
In Reference to religion
Jalpaiguri
For the Year 1931**

District/Subdivision/ Revenue Thana/ Police Station/ Census Town	Muslim	Hindu	Tribal	Buddhist	Christian	Others
Jalpaiguri District	235951	664015	60675	7503	14767	446
Sadar Subdivision	209543	468390	25886	2136	4110	249
Jalpaiguri	31086	53810	70	61	438	55
Jalpaiguri	4910	13799	14	60	131	48
Jalpaiguri	36265	37770	838	109	51	64
Rajganj	20578	28109	580	21	51	64
Tetulia	15687	9661	258	44	-	-
Boda	119587	90912	311	-	3	27
Boda	37158	35671	41	-	-	17
Pachagar	18688	15312	-	-	-	6
Debiganj	14630	39929	260	-	3	4
Maynaguri	32313	161860	8827	668	2164	71
Maynaguri	17792	60331	102	19	19	4
Nagrakata	1528	34986	1415	282	1195	57
Dhupguri	12994	116549	7310	367	945	10

Damdin	14495	92113	15850	1326	1453	26
Mal	13281	58395	10792	789	876	15
Mitali	1414	33718	5058	537	577	11
Pathgram	24908	31915	-	2	4	5
Alipur Subdivision	27408	195635	34809	5387	10657	197
Alipur Duars	14466	132036	20411	3086	9073	151
Alipur Duars	12165	53015	11723	115	3820	46
Kumargram	1218	23685	13144	312	2700	36
Kalchini	1083	105346	547	2659	2553	69
Falakata	11942	63599	14378	2301	1584	46
Falakata	9943	26874	9760	16	311	20
Madarihat	1939	36725	4618	2285	1273	26

Porter A.E., Census of India, 1931, Volume V, Part-II, Bengal Tables, Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1933, Imperial Table I, pp 220 - 223

Appendix:6.29

Table-6.111
Police Station –wise population distribution in North Bengal
In Reference to religion
Darjeeling
For the Year 1931

District/Subdivision/ Revenue Thana/ Police Station/ Census Town	Muslim	Hindu	Tribal	Buddhist	Christian	Others
Darjeeling District	8391	238913	6963	58943	8280	145
Sadar Subdivision	1088	88000	-	28240	982	68
Darjeeling	1292	118880	-	40703	5344	72
Darjeeling	974	31833	-	9973	1269	47
Darjeeling	818	13784	-	5242	1013	47
Jalapahar	13	549	-	133	23	-
Lebong	83	265	-	140	76	-
Pulbazar	16	14285	-	3640	68	1
Rangli Rangliot	19	14795	-	6781	201	7
Sukhiapokri	58	11176	-	2817	118	11
Jore Bungalow	22	15911	-	5029	126	2
Kalimpong Subdivision	226	46791	-	7442	9697	6
Kalimpong	208	36121	-	15180	3326	6
Kalimpong	153	5374	-	1767	1477	6
Gorubathan	18	10670	-	2312	362	-
Kurseog Subdivision	306	37810	-	12431	1402	47

Kurseong	306	37810	-	12431	1402	47
Kurseong	294	27050	-	9124	1365	36
Kurseong	211	5193	-	1649	362	36
Mirik	12	10940	-	3307	37	11
Siliguri Subdivision	6771	66312	6963	780	1408	24
Siliguri	6771	64312	6963	780	1408	24
Siliguri	2953	27756	4180	697	374	18
Siliguri	1439	4462	-	26	147	3
Phansidewa	2326	17289	492	25	707	6
Khoribari	1192	19267	2301	58	327	-

Porter A.E., Census of India, 1931, Volume V, Part-II, Bengal Tables, Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1933, Imperial Table I, pp 220 - 223

Appendix:6.30

Table-6.112

**Police Station –wise population distribution in North Bengal
In Reference to religion
Cooch Behar
For the Year 1931**

District/Subdivision/ Revenue Thana/ Police Station/ Census Town	Muslim	Hindu	Tribal	Buddhist	Christian	Others
Cooch Behar State	312476	641662	1382	14532	2768	516
Cooch Behar	208754	380073	1382	1	172	502
Cooch Behar	41119	90308	997	1	56	141
Dinhata	2141	9546	-	1	22	127
Dinhata	55282	66811	42	-	12	223
Sitai	354	1963	1	-	12	186
Mathabhanga	7493	18964	-	-	-	3
Mathabhanga	20071	75269	122	-	20	47
Sitalkuchi	230	2137	1	-	20	43
Mekliganj	16808	27263	-	-	-	-
Haldibari	17137	30212	2	-	11	44
Haldibari	20494	16663	150	-	3	1
Tufanganj	343	791	3	-	3	1

Porter A.E., Census of India, 1931, Volume V, Part-II, Bengal Tables, Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1933, Imperial Table I, pp 220 – 223

Appendix:6.31

Table-6.113

Police Station Wise Distribution of Population in Reference to Religions

Dinajpur District

For the Year 1941

District/ Police Stations	Hindus			Jains
	Scheduled Cases	Caste not Returned	Other Hindus	
Dinajpur district	399410	43630	331582	375
Sadar subdivision	138776	29419	153294	96
Dinajpur	17555	11894	16988	36
Biral	13922	244	18658	-
Bansihari	5226	128	11542	-
Kushmundi	9096	735	17415	-
Raiganj	18084	1914	14946	-
Kaliaganj	23469	862	17414	-
Hemtabad	7315	1995	3870	-
Itahar	8083	6509	19128	-
Parbatipur	10408	4018	15528	48
Chiribandar	20722	415	8664	-
Nawabganj	3502	672	6829	8
Ghoraghat	1394	32	2313	4
Thakurgaon Subdivision	195862	6312	79195	178
Thakurgaon	47727	1095	13919	160
Atwari	10380	52	4379	-
Baliadangi	11643	787	7405	-
Ranisankali	12729	148	7065	-
Haripur	7447	351	4827	-
Khanshama	16850	597	3606	7
Kaharul	21762	403	3985	3
Bochaganj	17619	767	9883	-
Pirganj	25716	336	9171	8
Birganj	23989	1776	14955	-
Balurghat Subdivision	64772	7900	99092	101
Balurghat	9531	1189	22326	37
Phulbari	7510	707	11740	37
Kumarganj	5557	317	7191	-
Gangarampur	9703	789	11889	-
Patnitala	8636	1715	13735	-
Tapan	10204	1059	11402	22
Porsha	6389	2026	6901	-

Dhamoirhat	7242	98	13908	5

Compiled from census of india 1941 vol. IV, Bengal Tables, R.A. Dutch, Manager of publications, Govt. of india press, simla, 1942. PP 88- 91.

Appendix:6.32

Table-6.114
Police Station Wise Distribution of Population in Reference to Religions
Dinajpur District
For the Year 1941

District/ Police Stations	Sikhs	Muslims	Indian Christians	Tribes	Others
Dinajpur district	48	967246	1448	182892	202
Sadar subdivision	8	426275	261	63886	166
Dinajpur	-	51692	58	3643	52
Biral	-	31642	39	3107	-
Banshihari	-	20335	99	12692	-
Kushmundi	-	22184	4	3756	-
Raiganj	-	24569	13	6027	-
Kaliaganj	-	15961	2	3717	-
Hemtabad	-	14318	15	1234	-
Itahar	-	33019	-	6492	-
Parbatipur	8	77367	13	4100	106
Chirirbandar	-	58022	-	1844	-
Nawabganj	-	59442	-	12081	8
Ghoraghat	-	17724	18	5193	-
Thakurgaon Subdivision	7	289107	982	13570	15
Thakurgaon	-	69750	242	782	3
Atwari	-	27941	461	5	-
Baliadangi	-	35694	123	-	-
Ranisankali	-	26325	6	1731	-
Haripur	-	14183	-	1000	-
Khanshama	-	27966	-	228	-
Kaharul	-	11459	-	1535	-
Bochaganj	-	14861	68	2161	-
Pirganj	7	37602	82	2105	12
Birganj	-	23326	-	4023	-
Balurghat Subdivision	33	251864	205	105436	21
Balurghat	30	33802	22	25073	6

Phulbari	-	46102	18	10536	-
Kumarganj	-	19152	6	13810	-
Gangarampur	-	18536	15	11950	10
Patnitala	3	36568	11	7818	-
Tapan	-	22864	-	14824	-
Porsha	-	45599	-	10374	-
Dhamoirhat	-	29241	133	11051	5

Compiled from census of india 1941 vol. IV, Bengal Tables, R.A. Dutch, Manager of publications, Govt. of of india press, simla, 1942. PP 88- 91.

Appendix:6.33

Table-6.115

Police Station Wise Distribution of Population in Reference to Religions

Jalpaiguri District

For the Year 1941

District/ Police Stations	Hindus			Jains
	Scheduled Cases	Caste not Returned	Other Hindus	
Jalpaiguri District	325504	71125	155018	62
Sadar Subdivision	257951	47289	101509	33
Jalpaiguri	27180	15585	16004	-
Raiganj	13744	1950	10770	-
Tetulia	4924	2870	2249	-
Pachagar	11547	180	3995	-
Boda	29188	275	7137	-
Debiganj	34866	204	5927	-
Pathgram	21662	2017	7044	19
Maynaguri	53935	1894	11706	5
Dhubguri	36098	5357	10887	7
Nagrakata	3195	3918	6067	2
Mitali	2780	3419	8855	-
Mal	18832	9620	10868	-
Alipur Subdivision	67553	3739	53509	29
Alipur Duars	25229	11795	15333	-
Falakata	18273	1096	5429	15
Madarihath	3156	3804	13768	-
Kalchini	8141	6761	13611	14
Kumargram	12754	380	5368	-

Compiled from census of india 1941 vol. IV, Bengal Tables, R.A. Dutch, Manager of publications, Govt. of of india press, simla, 1942. PP 90- 91.

Appendix:6.34

Table-6.116

Police Station Wise Distribution of Population in Reference to Religions

Jalpaiguri District

For the Year 1941

District/ Police Stations	Sikhs	Muslims	Indian Christians	Tribes	Others
Jalpaiguri District	182	251460	2589	279296	4282
Sadar Subdivision	68	221604	1204	137580	1457
Jalpaiguri	16	37454	3	4122	5
Raiganj	-	21283	27	3353	-
Tetulia	-	17282	9	138	-
Pachagar	-	17807	-	85	-
Boda	-	37844	12	137	3
Debiganj	-	14927	69	518	-
Pathgram	3	20568	45	247	-
Maynaguri	4	23993	19	2482	23
Dhubguri	5	14642	171	34038	383
Nagrakata	1	1309	613	24716	153
Mitali	10	1627	100	25394	452
Mal	29	12868	136	42350	425
Alipur Subdivision	114	29856	1385	141716	2820
Alipur Duars	-	13895	548	28982	13
Falakata	2	10407	24	17054	94
Madarihat	36	2171	66	29386	1030
Kalchini	66	1643	628	45646	1343
Kumargram	10	1790	119	20948	340

Compiled from census of india 1941 vol. IV, Bengal Tables, R.A. Dutch, Manager of publications, Govt. of india press, simla, 1942. PP 90- 91.

Appendix:6.35

Table-6.117

Police Station Wise Distribution of Population in Reference to Religions

Darjeeling District

For the Year 1941

District/ Police Stations	Hindus			Jains
	Scheduled Cases	Caste not Returned	Other Hindus	
Darjeeling	28922	17718	131858	54
Sadar Subdivision	1110	2008	59799	36
Darjeeling	757	984	20329	5
Jore Bungalow	206	572	14275	28
Sukhiapokri	48	211	7151	---
Pulbazar	48	205	8105	3
Rangli Rangliot	51	36	9939	-
Kurseong Subdivision	493	3032	21759	10
Kurseong	471	3005	15099	2
Mirik	22	27	6660	8
Siliguri subdivision	26817	9973	17577	2
Siliguri	8830	6773	10119	2
Khoribari	10342	1750	4817	-
Phansidewa	7645	1450	2641	-
Kalimpong Subdivision	502	2705	32721	6
Kalimpong	303	1680	25868	2
Gorubathan	199	1025	6853	4

Compiled from census of india 1941 vol. IV, Bengal Tables, R.A. Dutch, Manager of publications, Govt. of of india press, simla, 1942. PP 90- 91.

Appendix:6.36

Table-6.118

Police Station Wise Distribution of Population in Reference to Religions

Darjeeling District

For the Year 1941

District/ Police Stations	Sikhs	Muslims	Indian Christians	Tribes	Others
Darjeeling District	54	9125	3599	141301	44740
Sadar Subdivision	14	1448	449	59957	22506
Darjeeling	7	1008	242	18469	6932
Jore Bungalow	7	377	109	12458	4010
Sukhiapokri	-	48	46	8251	2462
Pulbazar	-	13	45	9807	3094
Rangli Rangliot	-	2	7	10972	6008

Kurseong Subdivision	2	364	949	21737	11610
Kurseong	2	341	974	15027	7999
Mirik	-	33	5	6710	3611
Siliguri Subdivision	34	6989	457	27933	232
Siliguri	34	3382	208	12846	169
Khoribari	-	992	134	6166	15
Phansidewa	-	2615	115	8921	48
Kalimpong Subdivision	4	324	714	31674	10392
Kalimpong	3	308	544	26930	8263
Gorubathan	1	16	170	4744	2123

Compiled from census of india 1941 vol. IV, Bengal Tables, R.A. Dutch, Manager of publications, Govt. of india press, simla, 1942. PP 90- 91.

Appendix:6.37

Table-6.119

Police Station Wise Distribution of Population in Reference to Religions
Malda District
For the Year 1941

District/ Police Stations	Hindus			Jains
	Scheduled Cases	Caste not Returned	Other Hindus	
Malda District	75535	179349	210794	45
Sibganj	9201	6429	10412	10
Nawabganj	6125	7175	8791	34
Gomastapur	4652	5297	5953	-
Harischandrapur	5545	19367	17086	-
Kharba	8206	22569	9968	-
Ratua	3035	30238	11087	-
English Bazar	3277	17736	24696	-
Bholahat	749	3597	1845	-
Kaliachak	8600	5158	56560	-
Manikchak	2588	26719	13833	-
Malda	3095	10649	2847	-
Habibpur	5365	12559	12671	-
Bamangola	2757	608	11588	-
Nachole	2530	8066	6515	1
Gazole	9810	3182	16942	-

Compiled from census of india 1941 vol. IV, Bengal Tables, R.A. Dutch, Manager of publications, Govt. of india press, simla, 1942. PP 94- 95.

Appendix:6.38

Table-6.120

Police Station Wise Distribution of Population in Reference to Religions
Malda District
For the Year 1941

District/ Police Stations	Sikhs	Muslims	Indian Christians	Tribes	Others
Malda District	19	699945	286	66449	16
Sibganj	--	122520	-	556	1
Nawabganj	-	103924	4	862	1
Gomastapur	--	35785	-	7337	1
Harischandrapur	-	56696	11	1269	-
Kharba	13	61148	-	1158	-
Ratua	-	58610	-	15	-
English Bazar	6	37233	9	581	1
Bholahat	-	16535	-	140	-
Kaliachak	-	124006	-	-	-
Manikchak	-	21646	-	-	-
Malda	-	11722	20	5645	-
Habibpur	-	6909	66	14736	1
Bamangola	-	15254	64	5692	10
Nachole	-	7150	11	6092	-
Gazole	-	20807	179	22366	1

Compiled from census of india 1941 vol. IV, Bengal Tables, R.A. Dutch, Manager of publications, Govt. of india press, simla, 1942. PP 94- 95.

Appendix:6.39

Table-6.121

Police Station Wise Distribution of Population in Reference to Religions
Cooch Behar District
For the Year 1941

District/ Police Stations	Hindus			Jains
	Scheduled Cases	Caste not Returned	Other Hindus	
Cooch Behar State	206448	2659	185841	582
Cooch Behar	64526	31	33286	228
Dinhata	45230	676	21805	226
Sitai	17563	17	2578	2
Mathabhanga	6161	9	72158	101
Sitalkuchi	14147	113	13826	-
Mekliganj	17909	981	10457	-
Haldibari	7270	472	11814	2
Tufanganj	33692	360	19917	23

Compiled from census of india 1941 vol. IV, Bengal Tables, R.A. Dutch, Manager of publications, Govt. of india press, simla, 1942. PP 104- 105.

Appendix:6.40

Table-6.122

Police Station Wise Distribution of Population in Reference to Religions
Cooch Behar District
For the Year 1941

District/ Police Stations	Sikhs	Muslims	Indian Christians	Tribes	Others
Cooch Behar State	-	242684	137	2435	6
Cooch Behar	-	50338	119	1441	5
Dinhata	-	63837	20	79	1
Sitai	-	7977	-	3	-
MathaBhanga	-	21306	16	345	-
Sitalkuchi	-	18747	-	4	-
Mekliganj	-	16129	12	45	-
Haldibari	-	23807	3	248	-
Tufanganj	-	40343	17	270	-

Compiled from census of india 1941 vol. IV,Bengal Tables, R.A. Dutch, Manager of publications, Govt. of of india press, simla, 1942. PP 104- 105.