

## Chapter-1

### GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, DEMOGRAPHY AND RURAL SETTLEMENT PATTERN OF THE HILL AREAS OF DARJEELING DISTRICT.

The word 'Darjeeling' which is the name of the northernmost district of Jalpaiguri Division of West Bengal has originated from the word 'Dorji - ling', where "ling" means place and 'Dorje' stands for the ecclesiastical sceptre or the double-headed thunder-bolt, which is caught hold of by the Lama in his hands during the service. Moreover, it is to be noted that the word 'Dorje'- ling' was the name of the Buddhist monastery that was once situated on the Observatory Hill overlooking the Mall, the nerve centre of the town.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1.1. Geographical Features:

##### 1.1.1. Area, Location and Boundary:

The geographical area of the district of Darjeeling is 3379.137 sq. km.<sup>2</sup> This district is located between 27°13'05" and 26°27'10" north latitudes and 88°53'00" and 87°59'30" east longitudes.<sup>3</sup>

Among all the frontier districts of India the boundary of Darjeeling district appears to be hemmed in by international frontiers. The Darjeeling district is surrounded by Nepal in the West, by Sikkim, a state of India in the north, Bhutan and the district of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal in the east, and Bangladesh, North Dinajpur district of West Bengal and Purnea district of Bihar

in the south of this district.<sup>3</sup>

The hill areas of Darjeeling district is composed of three sub-divisions - Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong. The total area of the region is about 2417.25 sq. km, that is 74.24 per cent of the total area of the district and 2.72 per cent of the state of West Bengal.<sup>4</sup>

#### 1.1.2. Natural Divisions:

Darjeeling district is composed of a portion of outlying hills of the lower Himalayas and a stretch of territory lying along their base which is known as the Terai. The hills seem to rise abruptly from the plains. The height of the hills increases north-west-ward. The mean height of the Terai is 300 feet (91.44 m.) above the sea level, while the elevation of some of the hills within the district are found to be more than 10,000 feet (300 m.) above the sea level. Within these two main natural divisions there exists a mosaic of micro-topographic units.<sup>5</sup>

The Terai portion of the district, lying between the mountains and the plains of India is crossed by numerous rivers and streams flowing down from the hills and by the upland ridges which mark their courses. This division is an unhealthy swampy tract which was formerly covered by dense malarious jungles. It has now become extensively cleared for tea gardens and settled tillage but it till now contains wide blocks of sal forest interspersed with cultivated land and villages as well as to some extent urban sites.<sup>6</sup>

From geological point of view it is a kind of neutral terrain which is neither composed of the alluvium of the plains nor of the rocks of the hills. Most of the parts of the Terai are found to be alternate beds of sands, gravel and boulders brought from the mountains. Botanically the Terai region is defined as the region of forestry. The Terai soil which is generally light, dry and gravelly varies in breadth from 10 miles along the Sikkim frontier to 30 or more miles on the Nepalese frontier. In between the river channels there lies the region of gravel beds extending 20 miles to the south from the base of the mountains in the Terai region.<sup>7</sup>

In the lower Himalayan region the mountains tower abruptly from the plains, which are here only about 300 feet above sea-level, in lofty spurs reaching to 6,000 and 10,000 feet and culminate in a series of long ridges and valleys. The mountains in 1830 were completely clothed with forest from the top to the very bottom, and formed rather a gloomy feature in the landscape, owing to the sameness of the former and want of break or variety on the surface. The slopes from about 6000 feet downwards are dotted with trim tea-gardens, interspersed with small tracts of land reserved for native cultivators. Above this level the mountains are full of dense forests through which torrents rush down. Their position is often only indicated by the dipping of the forest into their beds. But at the higher levels on the Singalila range there are wide grassy slopes broken here and there clothed with pine forests and masses of rhododendrons.<sup>8</sup>

### 1.1.3. Geological Divisions:

Darjeeling district is divided into four tracts from the geological point of view. These divisions are from north to south the hard rock area, the Bhabar belt, the Terai belt and the alluvial plains. In the hard rock region, the southern portion is covered with sedimentary rocks while the northern part is composed of metamorphic rocks. The Bhabar belt include rock fragments, big boulders and fine grained clastics derived from the hard rock area. This belt is also characterised by rather steep slopes, bouldery surfaces and forests of tall trees. The Terai belt is composed mostly of coarse granular materials alternating with finer clastics. The alluvium is composed of a succession of layers of sand, silt and clay with occasional gravel beds and lenses of peaty organic matter. Although there exists variability in the thickness of alluvium, it is supposed to increase towards south. The geological formations of the area are shown in Table 1.1 in an order of increasing antiquity.<sup>9</sup>

### 1.1.4. Soil Condition:

Heterogenous soil condition exists in different areas of Darjeeling district. The soil in the plains is composed mostly of sandy alluvium. Sandy and gravelly soils are also observed in some tracts of plains.<sup>10</sup> The soil in the plains is dark and more fertile.<sup>11</sup> The greety soils in the hill areas are of three classifications - black, red and white. Of these, black soil is the most rich in terms of its nutrient contents for plants, white is the most poor and the red occupies intermediate position.<sup>12</sup> For a better understanding about the types of soil of cultivable area in

different blocks of Darjeeling district Table 1.1 is given. From Table 1.1 it is revealed that sandy loam is the predominant type of soil in all the blocks of Darjeeling district. Hence, in time it is to be noted that soils in the district are mostly acidic and have high base exchange capacity with lesser depth.<sup>13</sup>

#### 1.1.5. Water Sources and River System:

The water sources, besides the supply of water from rainfall in Darjeeling district are classified into the following heads: (a) River, (b) Springs and spring heads, (c) Lakes, (d) Snow-fields, glaciers etc. and (e) Ground water. Among these the rivers are the major source of water supply in the district.

There exists six main rivers which are generally perennial, shallow and torrential with stony and sandy beds. Each of the rivers is fed by a considerable number of perennial streams or rivulets throughout the year and hundreds of monsoon streams.<sup>14</sup>

An important feature of the rivers in this region is that they are not navigable and are rarely utilised for irrigation purposes within the district itself although many of them have high potentialities of generating hydro-electric power and rearing of fishes. The names and lengths of the main rivers and their tributaries are given in Tables 1.2 and 1.3.

#### 1.1.6. Forest Resources:

In some tracts of Darjeeling district there exist dense and vast forest species which are in fact probably found in few places

in the world. The total area of forests in the district is 1252.66 sq.kms, 39.78 per cent of the total geographical area of the district.<sup>15</sup> This vast forest area is not uniform in nature in all the tracts of the district. There exists wide variation in the types of forests. The variation is mainly due to the variation of altitude and climate.

#### 1.1.7. Mineral Resources:

There are valuable mineral deposits, namely, coal, copper, graphite, iron and lime in Darjeeling district. It is evident from Table 1.4 that Darjeeling district is very rich in terms of its mineral deposits. But none of these has so far been found to be exploited successfully due to the fact that modern large-scale exploitation in most of the cases has been found to be un-economic. But it seems to be encouraging to note that the Mines and Minerals Corporation is at present surveying the zinc deposit in Garubathan block and its findings may lead to the exploitation of the deposits for large-scale operations.<sup>16</sup>

#### 1.1.8. Climate:

There prevails two distinct types of climatic conditions in the plains and in the hill areas of Darjeeling district. The climatic condition of the Terai plains of Siliguri sub-division is similar to that of the adjacent plain districts of West Bengal and Bihar. The temperature becomes highest in the month of May, when the temperature goes upto 42°C. The minimum temperature in

the winter is around  $8^{\circ}\text{C}$  in this area.

In the hills the temperature both at night and day is higher during the monsoon. The coldest month is January when the mean daily maximum and minimum temperatures are  $8.6^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $1.90^{\circ}\text{C}$  respectively. Frost is common in winter and during occasional cold wave temperature is observed to go down to the maximum level of  $1^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $2^{\circ}\text{C}$ .<sup>17</sup>

The variation in climate is strongly correlated with the variation in altitude. As there exists considerable variations in altitude of different segments within this region, the climate also varies sharply from one place to another. Table 1.5 presents the variation in climate. It shows notable variations both in minimum and maximum temperatures of different places within the hill region of the district.

On an average there are about 120 rainy days in a year in Darjeeling district. About 80 per cent of total rainfall is received during the months between May and September from the south-west monsoon and about 20 per cent during the remaining months. Like temperature rainfall varies within the district itself. Generally rainfall is heavier in the southern Terai region and ridges and slopes near the plains. Kurseong sub-division in the southern slopes gets about 160" of rainfall. Darjeeling receives 120" of rainfall while Kalimpong gets about 80" of it. The place to place variation in rainfall within the hill areas is evident from Table 1.6.<sup>18</sup>

## 1.2. History of Darjeeling District:

Before the extension of British rule Darjeeling was a part of the dominions of the Raja of Sikkim, a petty ruler, who was engaged for a long time in an unsuccessful struggle against the growing power of the war-like Gorkhas. After crossing the hills and the valleys of Nepal, they marched eastward into Sikkim in 1770, and during the next thirty years the country suffered repeatedly from their inroads. At the end of this period they overran Sikkim as far eastward as the Tista river and conquered and annexed the Terai, i.e., the belt of country lying along the lower hills between that river and the Mechi, which is now covered by the valuable tea gardens of Darjeeling planters. In the meantime the East India Company was engaged in unavailing remonstrances against the Nepalese aggression throughout the whole length of their northern frontier and finally war broke out in 1814. At the close of this war the tract which was annexed by the Nepalese from the Raja of Sikkim was given to the East India Company. The Raja of Sikkim who was driven out of his dominions was reinstated. And in 1817 a treaty was concluded at Titaliya under which the whole of the country between the Mechi and the Tista, a tract extending over 4,000 square miles (10359.96 sq.kms.) was restored to the Raja of Sikkim. Thus the sovereignty of the Raja had been guaranteed by the Company. The intervention which was made by the British became successful in preventing the Gorkhas from turning the whole of Sikkim and the hills, West and South of the Tista into an out-lying province of Nepal; and Sikkim; including the present district



of Darjeeling, was retained as a buffer state between Nepal and Bhutan.<sup>19</sup>

Under the treaty of Titaliya the East India Company assumed the position of the permanent power in Sikkim. The Raja of Sikkim was bound to seek the arbitration of the British Government in any dispute between his subjects and those of Nepal or of any other neighbouring state. Ten years after the treaty was signed, disputes arose on the Sikkim-Nepal frontier which according to the terms of the treaty were referred to the Governor General of India. Accordingly, in 1828 General (then Captain) Lloyed was deputed to effect a settlement. He started his journey taking Mr. J.W. Grant as a companion towards the Darjeeling hills which were still terra incognita to the British and arrived as far as Rinchingpong. During the journey General Lloyed was attracted by the advantageous position of Darjeeling as a centre which would engross all the trade of the country and as a place of great strategical importance, commanding the entrance into Nepal and Bhutan. On all grounds he strongly urged the importance of securing the possession of the place. At the same time Mr. Grant realised the numerous advantages promised by the establishment of a sanatorium at Darjeeling and strongly felt the need to occupy the place for military purposes as the key of a pass into the Nepal territory. In considering all these facts they reported to the then Governor General Lord William Bentinck.<sup>20</sup>

These representations were accepted by Lord William Bentinck. He promptly deputed Captain Herbet, the then Deputy Surveyor

116654  
23 JUN 1997

~~SECRET~~  
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
~~TOP SECRET~~

General, to examine the country in company with Mr. Grant, observing the extreme earnestness in commending Darjeeling. The reports of Captain Herbert and Mr. Grant conclusively proved the feasibility of establishing a sanatorium at Darjeeling. The court of Directors approved the project on the ground that it might be a valuable depot for the temporary reception of European recruits, and even a permanent cantonment for a European regiment. General Lloyd was accordingly directed to open negotiations with the Raja of Sikkim on the first convenient occasion for the cession of Darjeeling in return for an equivalent in money and land. The opportunity occurred in 1834-35, when General Lloyd was deputed to enquire into the causes of the disturbance created due to an inroad of some Lepcha refugees in Nepal into the Sikkim Terai. The refugees were obliged to return to Nepal and the negotiations ended in the execution by the Raja of Sikkim of a deed of grant on the 1st of February, 1835.<sup>21</sup>

This deed of grant, which is commendably short, runs as follows - "The Governor-General having expressed his desire for the possession of the hill of Darjeeling on account of its cool climate, for the purpose of enabling the servants of his Government, suffering from sickness, to avail themselves of its advantages, I, the Sikkim-puttee Rajah, out of friendship for the said Governor General, hereby present Darjeeling to the East India Company, that is all the land south of the Great Rangit river, east of the Balasun, Kahail and little Rangit rivers, and west of the Rungno and Mahanadi rivers".<sup>22</sup> This was an unconditional cession of what was

then a worthless uninhabited mountain, but in 1841 the Government granted the Raja an allowance of Rs. 3000 per annum as a compensation and raised the grant to Rs. 6,000 per annum in 1846.

After the cession General Lloyd and Dr. Chapman were sent in 1836 to explore the country, to ascertain the nature of the climate and to investigate the capabilities of the place. They spent the winter of 1836 and part of 1837, and on receipt of their reports it was finally decided to adopt Darjeeling as a sanatorium. General Lloyd was appointed the local agent with power to deal with the applications for land which soon began to pour in from the residency of Calcutta and the new settlement progressed rapidly. In 1836, when General Lloyd and Dr. Chapman visited Darjeeling they found some huts recently erected by the Raja of Sikkim. By 1840 a road had been made from Phankhabari; there was a staging bungalow and another at Mahaldiram; a hotel had been started at Kurseong and the second at Darjeeling and at the latter place some thirty private houses had been erected and nearly as many more locations had been taken up at Lebong.<sup>23</sup>

Elsewhere, however, the country was still uncleared, the whole road from Pankhabari running through virgin forests with an almost impenetrable growth of underwood broken only here and there by a Lepcha clearing, a mountain slip or a slope cleared by fire. The country was practically uninhabited and one of the most important problems of administration was to attract native settlers.

In 1839 Dr. Campbell, a member of the Indian Medical Service and a British resident in Nepal was transferred to Darjeeling as Superintendent. He was also in charge of the political relationship with Sikkim and was entrusted with civil, criminal and fiscal administration of the district, besides being post-master, marriage registrar and administrator of the station fund, i.e., the income from the lands in and about the station which had been leased for building purposes. All these duties were discharged by him singlehanded but Dr. Campbell devoted himself with rare energy to the task of developing the station. He gave much encouragement to attract immigrants to cultivate the mountain slopes and to stimulate trade and commerce. His developmental efforts made immigrants attracted to Darjeeling from the neighbouring states of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan where slavery was prevalent. And as a result population rose from not more than 100 souls in 1839 and to about 10,000 in 1849.<sup>24</sup> About his activity an inspecting officer wrote in 1852, "whatever has been done here has been done by Dr. Campbell alone".<sup>25</sup>

But the development of Darjeeling resulted in constant jealousy and annoyance to the Dewan, the Prime Minister of Sikkim, who was himself the monopolist of all trade in Sikkim and it was shared in by the Lamas and other notabilities, who lost their right over slaves settling as British subjects in Darjeeling. In order to restrict the development of Darjeeling the Dewan and his trading partners pursued the policies : (a) to frighten the British subjects in Darjeeling by spreading false reports and sending secret emissaries by declaring that the immigrants who were formerly

slaves, would be delivered up as escaped slaves to their former masters, (b) in every way by discouraging the immigration of the people of Sikkim to Darjeeling, (c) by kidnapping the British subjects of Darjeeling to sell as slaves, (d) by making frequent denials of aid in, capturing and surrendering criminals.<sup>26</sup>

Apart from these as stated by Sir J. Hooker, "every obstacle was thrown in the way of a good understanding between Sikkim and the British Government. British subjects were rigorously excluded from Sikkim; every liberal offer for free trade and intercourse was rejected generally with insolence; merchandise was taxed, and notorious offenders, refugees from the British territories were harboured; despatches were detained; and the Vakil or Raja's representatives were chosen for their insolence and incapacity..." Due to such type of conduct displayed by the Dewan on behalf of the Raja of Sikkim the relation between the British Government and Sikkim had deteriorated. But in this regard the Raja was unable to do anything as he was old and infirm and a mere doll in the hands of his minister, i.e., Dewan Namguay, who was popularly known as the Pagla Dewan or the mad Prime Minister of Sikkim.<sup>27</sup>

The bitterness reached its climax in November 1849, when Sir Joseph Hooker and Dr. Campbell were suddenly seized and made prisoners, while travelling in Sikkim with the permission both of the Raja and the British Government. The objects of the Dewan were to relinquish the claims for the surrender of criminals by forcing Dr. Campbell and making him, while in duress, agree to the dictation of the Dewan regarding the giving up of escaped slaves; and

to detain him until these enforced conditions should be sanctioned by the Government. But Dr. Campbell did not agree to and declared that whatever concessions extorted to Sikkim would be repudiated by the Government and added with this declaration the characteristic threat of the Governor General Lord Dalhousie, that the Raja's head should answer for it, if a hair of the head of either prisoner were hurt. The Sikkimese, as a result, released Dr. Campbell and Sir Joseph Hooker on 24th December, 1849, a little more than six weeks after their seizure.<sup>28</sup>

The British Government replied to the insolency of the Raja of Sikkim as discussed above in 1850. The grant of Rs. 6,000 per annum which the Raja had been receiving since 1846 was withdrawn. The British annexed the Sikkim Terai, the only lucrative and fertile estate of the Raja of Sikkim. This was originally given to him as a free gift by the British Government. At the same time the portion of the Sikkim Hills bounded by the Ramman on the north, the Great Rangit and the Tista on the east, and by the Nepal frontier on the west, a tract of the country containing 5,000 people was also annexed. As a result;

(a) The Raja had been confined to the mountainous hinterland and isolated from all access to the plains except through the British territory. The new territory which was annexed from the Raja of Sikkim was placed under the management of the Superintendent of Darjeeling. The administration by him made Darjeeling a valuable asset in no time. As his efforts raised the population, Darjeeling had expanded the suitability of tea cultivation. The whole country

thus annexed at that time covered an area of 640 sq. miles (1657.59 Sq.Kms.).

(b) The annexation made the British boundary-mark with Nepal on the West and with Bhutan on the East, while it connected Darjeeling on the south with the British districts of Purnea and Jalpaiguri.

(c) The annexation brought about a significant change in the relationship between Sikkim and the British. Previously the district was an enclave in Sikkim territory and to reach it, the British had to pass through a country acknowledging the rule of a foreign, though dependent, potentate. But after the annexation of the country, the need to cross the foreign country had been removed as the territory in Darjeeling became continuous with the British districts Purnea and Rangpur in the plains. Sikkim Raja was cut off from access to the plains except through the British territory.<sup>29</sup>

For some years after this, the relations between Sikkim and the British Government proceeded smoothly. The Dewan though apparently dismissed, soon worked his way into power through his wife and illegitimate daughter of the Raja. The former outrages were deliberately renewed by him. Constant raids were made upon the annexed territory, property was plundered, subjects were carried off and sold as slaves or detained in Sikkim and no redress could be obtained. As a consequence after six months of negotiations, reparation was refused and it was resolved to take possession of the portion of Sikkim lying to the north of Ramman and to the West of Great Rangit and to retain it till the British

subjects were restored, the offenders given up and security obtained against a recurrence of offences. In November 1860, Dr. Campbell crossed the Ramman with a small force and advanced as far as Rinchingpong. But he had only 160 natives and a complement of English and non-commissioned officers, and when attacked he was forced to retreat for lack of ammunition and to fall back on Darjeeling. Subsequently Colonel Gawler at the head of a force of 2600 men including 2 mountain howitzers and detachment of artillery with Sir Ashley Eden as Envoy and Special Commissioner started from Darjeeling on the 1st February, 1861 and reached Tamlong, the capital of Sikkim early in March, 1861. The Dewan fled, the British force dismantled the forts, the old Raja abdicated in favour of his son, and on the 28th March Sir Ashley Eden effected a treaty with the new Raja and according to the conditions of the treaty the new Raja was to provide:

- (a) full compensation to those of the British subjects who had either been kidnapped or pillaged by the Raja's people.
- (b) full indemnification for the losses sustained in Dr. Campbell's retreat.
- (c) the guarantee for opening up of the country to trade and the removal of all restrictions on travellers and merchants.
- (d) the guarantee for fixing the maximum rate of transit duties to be levied on goods between British India and Tibet and for the construction of roads and the security of those who favoured them.
- (e) lastly, the treaty contained provisions for the banishment of Dewan Namguay, and for the future good conduct of the Sikkim



Government. This treaty was of great importance to the interest of Darjeeling as it finally put an end to the long-term political dispute between the British Government and the Sikkim Government. During the period of occupation of Sikkim by the British a good road was constructed from Darjeeling to the Tista, while the remaining portion between the Chola pass and Tibet was completed by the Sikkim authority and thus the first step was taken to open trade with Tibet.<sup>30</sup>

After the end of the disputes with Sikkim trouble arose soon with the adjacent state of Bhutan. The Bhutanese constantly engaged themselves to create the same kind of disturbances in Darjeeling as those were made by Dewan Namguay. Moreover, in the beginning of 1862 a news came to the British that the Bhutanese were making hostile preparations for the purpose of entering into the British territory and an attack on Darjeeling was anticipated. Troops were sent at once hurriedly from Dinapore and confidence on the frontier was restored. This was followed in 1863 by the despatch of a special mission to Bhutan under Sir Ashley Eden, who was charged with the proposals of a conciliatory character but was also instructed to demand the restoration of plundered property. But the proposals for the establishment of peace were insolently rejected by the Government of Bhutan and the British Envoy was openly insulted in the Durbar. Besides, as the only means of ensuring the safe return, the British Envoy was compelled to sign a document by which the Government of India was to renounce Bhutan Duars on the Assam frontier. At last Sir Ashley Eden, who had been treated with gross indignity succeeded with difficulty in

having Punakha during the night, and returned to Darjeeling in April, 1864.<sup>31</sup>

After further fruitless negotiations, the Government of India determined to annex the Bengal-Duars and so much to the hill territory including the forts of Dalimkote, Peshok and Dewangiri to prevent the hostile incursion of the Bhutanese into the Darjeeling district and the plains below. For that purpose a military force of sufficient strength was accordingly despatched into Bhutan in the winter 1864. The force captured the fortresses of the Bhutanese and the whole of the Duars by the middle of January 1865. In November 1865 the treaty extorted from Sir Ashley Eden was given up, and a fresh treaty was executed under which the Bhutan Duars with the passes leading into the hills were added to the British in return for an annual subsidy. Thus the whole of the Bhutia possessions in the plains were occupied by the British and a slip of British hill territory lying on the eastern bank of the Tista was interposed between Bhutan and Sikkim. In 1866 this tract bounded by the Ramman on the north, the Great Rangit and the Tista on the east and by the Nepal frontier on the west, at present known as Kalimpong sub-division was added to Darjeeling district. At the time of annexation the country contained 5000 people. This was the last addition to the district which thus acquired its present dimension.<sup>32</sup>

Peace was thus established within the borders of Darjeeling and thenceforward began to march of progress and civilization. The

year 1866 is for this reason considered as marking an epoch in the history of Darjeeling.<sup>33</sup>

The tract thus acquired by the British Government was named as the Darjeeling district. This district was included in the Rajshahi division until October 1905, when as a result of the partition of Bengal it was transferred to the Bhagalpur division. With the re-arrangement of the provinces it was retransferred to the Rajshahi division in March, 1912 and since then it remained in the jurisdiction of the said division until the year of independence of India, i.e., the 1947.<sup>34</sup>

The district was divided into two sub-divisions in the earlier period of its administrative set up. These were the headquarters sub-division with an area of 960 sq. miles (2486.39 sq. kms.) including all the hills on both sides of Tista and the Terai sub-division with an area of 274 sq. miles (709.66 sq. kms.) including the whole of the country at the foot hills. The headquarters of the Terai sub-division were at Hanskhawa near Phansidewa from 1864 to 1880, when they were transferred to Siliguri, which was formerly in the Jalpaiguri district. Later on with a small surrounding area, Siliguri was transferred to Darjeeling district and made the headquarters of the Terai sub-division. In 1891 Kurseong, a new sub-division including both the Terai and the lower hills west of the Tista was formed. Kurseong had been made the head-quarters of this new sub-division. Later on in 1907, Siliguri was made a sub-division with the re-establishment of the Terai sub-division, which had in 1891 been absorbed

into the Kurseong sub-division. Upto 1907 there had been a Deputy Magistrate at Siliguri working under the sub-divisional officer, Kurseong and managing the Terai Government estates under Deputy Commissioner. From 1865 to 1916 Kalimpong was in the Sadar sub-division with a manager of the Khashmahal working in Kalimpong under the Deputy Commissioner, police work being controlled by an Inspector. In 1916 the Kalimpong sub-division was created as a preliminary to working out development schemes in Kalimpong. Thus with the formation of Kalimpong sub-division, in the year 1916 the district was divided into four sub-divisions, Sadar (Darjeeling), Kurseong, Kalimpong and Siliguri. In this sphere there had not taken place any change till the date.<sup>35</sup>

There was only one urban centre namely Darjeeling in this hilly district upto 1879. In 1879 Kurseong municipality was formed and Kurseong town was treated as an urban area. Later on, since 1931 both Kalimpong and Siliguri were being treated as the other two urban centres of the district. Thus, there were four urban centres namely, Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong and Siliguri in the district since the year 1931.<sup>36</sup>

### 1.3. Demographic change in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling district.

#### 1.3.1. Growth of Population in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District:

At present the hill areas and district as a whole are seen to be composed of the people of various races, religions and languages. There are inhabiting Nepalese, Bhutias, Lepchas, Tibetans, Anglo-Indians, Europeans, Rajasthanis, Punjabies and

Hindusthanis.<sup>37</sup> But once this tract was almost covered with forest. As stated earlier Darjeeling contained only 100 souls when British first acquired this territory in the year 1835. This state of affair was changed soon by Dr. Campbell, the first Superintendent, who made immigration in Darjeeling, attractive to the people of the neighbouring states namely, Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim. Population rose from 100 souls to about 10,000 in the year 1849 chiefly by immigration. In the year 1869, when a rough census was taken of the inhabitants of this tract, the total population was found to be more than 22,000. This was due to the rapid influx of immigrants noted by Sir Josheph Hooker, when he visited Darjeeling about that time.<sup>38</sup>

The census of population of this district has been carried on regularly since the year 1872. In order to understand the nature of growth of population in this region the population and the percentage increase at each census since 1872 upto 1981 are presented in Table 1.7.

Table 1.7 shows that population had increased remarkably during the years 1872-1881, 1881-91, 1891-1901, 1901-1911 and 1911-21, the region recorded a decline in the growth of population, followed by a further increase in the growth rate during the years 1921-1931, 1931-1941, 1941-1951 and 1951-1961 and since 1961 the growth rate had registered a drop to 18.57 per cent during 1961-1971 and a further drop to 8.75 per cent during 1971-1981.

The large increase in population in 1881 had been attributed partially to the incompleteness and inaccuracy of the first census. However, the phenomenal growth during the years 1871-81 and also during 1881-91 was mainly due to the large-scale immigration in the Darjeeling Hill areas at that time.<sup>39</sup> For the assessment of the extent of immigration affecting population of the hill areas of Darjeeling the percentages of immigrants to total population of the district since 1891 to 1961 are presented in Table 1.8. The table shows that the percentage of immigrants to total population exceeds the percentage of natural population in the census years 1881 and 1891. This implies that the rapid growth of population between 1872-1891 is mainly due to immigration.

The development of tea industry and the settlement for exploiting the waste lands of the area seem to be the main reason behind immigration. The importance of the tea industry in this respect can be understood from the data presented in Table 1.9. It is observed from Table 1.9 that between the years 1872 and 1891 the number of estates had increased by more than 140 per cent and the acreage under the tea cultivation had trebled. This rapid development of tea industry developed the scope for employment an enormous quantity of manual labour. But the local supply of labour was not sufficient to meet the rapidly increasing demand for labour in the tea estates, the result was then an unexampled immigration. As a result at the census of 1891 it was found that no less than 88,000 persons, resident in the district were born in Nepal.<sup>40</sup>

The influx of agriculturists and its extent could be apparent from the exceptional growth of the population of the Kalimpong tract to the east of the Tista. This tract was over 401 square miles (1038.59 sq. kms) of which 213 square miles (551.67 sq. kms) were occupied by tea gardens, while the remainder 178 sq. miles (461.02 sq. kms.) had been reserved for native cultivation. The population of this tract had been estimated to be 3,530 souls, when in 1865 it was annexed from Bhutan. The number increased in 1881 to 12,683 and to 26,631 in 1881 or by 110 per cent in the decade. In 1901 the population had grown to 41,511 or by 55.9 per cent. This rapid expansion of population was entirely due to the immigration of agriculturists from Nepal.<sup>41</sup>

This large-scale influx of population from Nepal in order to settle in Darjeeling either as the labourers of tea estates or as the agriculturists was due to social, economic and political conditions prevailing in Nepal at that time.<sup>42</sup>

The Shah kings were the rulers of Nepal. After the annexation of eastern part of Nepal they tried to settle upper caste Hindus in the land held by Kiratis who used to live in the eastern part of Nepal. They encouraged the upper caste Hindus to settle in those parts which were the exclusive preservers of different tribes for centuries. The Hindu settlers of those parts engaged themselves into struggle for land with tribals. The struggle for land between the Hindus and the tribals was not unique in Nepal,

in India too. Hindu settlers entered and acquired large stretches of aboriginal's land.<sup>43</sup>

Further, they (Shah rulers) replaced the old system of land tenure namely, "Kipat", and brought all the tribal lands except those that belonged to the Limbus, under a new system of tenure known as "Raikar". Under this new land tenurial system, i.e., "Raikar", the rights of an individual to utilise and transfer land were recognised by the state so long as taxes were paid. In other words, the ownership of land had been related to the payment of tax. On bringing into practice the "Raikar" system of land tenure, the Shah ruler began gradually to force the "Kipat" holders confer land grants of the olden times called "Sonami" on the immigrants, who were mostly upper caste Hindus and also allowed them to convert the "Sonami" land into "Raikar" land with the introduction of a series of legislation. As a consequence of compelling the Kipat holder to confer land grants of the olden times, "Sonami" on the upper caste Hindu immigrants along with giving right to the said immigrants to convert "Sonami" land into "Raikar" land and the introduction of "Raikar" system of land tenure in place of "Kipat" system, Kipat was abolished, Kiratis became landless and powerless. The Limbus were only allowed to retain at least a portion of their ancestral land under the "Raikar" system of land tenure".<sup>44</sup>

Besides, the above mentioned policies adopted by the Nepal Government, the upper caste Hindus tried to acquire lands of the



"Kipat" holders by giving loans to them, i.e., original tribes. As the economic conditions of the upper caste Hindus were better than that of the original tribes, they were the chief source of credit to the original tribes of Nepal. They had to pledge their lands to these upper caste Hindus in order to obtain loans. Under the system prevailing at that time the creditor in lieu of interest, obtained the right to cultivate the "Kipat" land for as long as the loan remained as outstanding. The Hindus for their part were anxious to have right to cultivate of these "Kipat" lands, since their own "Raikar" lands were short in supply. As a result of the defeat of the tribals in the struggle with the upper caste Hindus, introduction of "Raikar" system of land tenure, a pressure of the upper caste Hindus on the land occupied by tribal communities of the eastern part of Nepal was created. This pressure on land was further accentuated by the natural growth of population within the tribal communities itself. The resultant fact was the abolition of "Kipat", the origination of a class of landless, powerless poor miserable, tribal population.<sup>45</sup>

But, for this class in the eastern part of Nepal there was no industry to be employed in, no opportunity being available in Government services, no scope for taking up any commercial vocation and no secondary means to fall back upon for economic livelihood. On the other hand by this time Darjeeling was flourishing under the British rule. The rapid development of tea industry created vast employment opportunity in the tea estates. In addition, the

British introduced a "progressive" land tenure system under which government was considered as the direct proprietor of the estate and there was no landlord, no Zamindar, no intermediaries between the government and the ryots. The laws regarding the transfer of land from the Nepalis to the other groups were made extremely stringent and it became impossible on behalf of the upper caste Hindus and money lenders (Kayahs) to purchase land from the Nepali cultivators. Thus there arose a situation in which the Nepalis obtained the opportunity to spend their time and energy on their lands without any fear of alienation to rich upper caste money lenders of the plains. These economic situations in Darjeeling attracted the landless, poor, tribals of the eastern part of Nepal to immigrate and settle in the hill areas of Darjeeling. So by 1891 the population of the Darjeeling hills had been more than trebled in comparison to that of 1872.<sup>46</sup>

The observed declining trend in the rate of growth of population by the decades, 1891-1901, 1901-1911 and 1911-1921 is due to the fact that there happened a continuous decrease in the volume of immigration which may be cleared from Table 1.8. This decrease in the volume of immigration started because at the end of 1891 the tea industry followed a period of depression and its expansion was ceased.

Therefore the decline in the rate of growth of population since 1891 to 1921 might be attributed to the depression in the tea industry. Apart from this, the influenza epidemics causing a

great mortality in the hills between 1911-21 was partially responsible for the declining trend of rate of growth of population in the hill areas of Darjeeling district.

The higher rates of growth of population in the census years, 1931, 1941, 1951, 1961 in comparison to those of 1901, 1911 and 1921 were the result of immigration mainly from East Pakistan and Tibet on the one hand and the decline in the death rate since 1921 on the other.

In between 1971 and 1981 the rate of growth of population is noticed to be declining progressively. This is due to the fact that migration in the hill areas in the above mentioned period has become merely a trickle for the stagnancy of the hill economy with the traditional agrarian structure and practically having no industrial base.

#### 1.3.2. Growth of Population in the Three Hill Sub-divisions:

The hill areas of Darjeeling are composed of three hill sub-divisions namely Darjeeling sadar, Kalimpong and Kurseong. Increases in the population in these three hill sub-divisions have not been found to follow the trend of the rate of growth of the population of the entire hill areas. Kalimpong sub-division has grown more than the other two sub-divisions. Table 1.10 exhibits the growth of population and inter-census percentage variation in each of the sub-division of the hill areas of Darjeeling district.

### 1.3.3. Growth of Rural Population in the Hill Areas:

A little more than three-fourth of the total population (77.19 per cent) in the hill areas of the Darjeeling district are found to live in the rural areas, comprised with the villages, which are different from the villages in the proper sense of the word. In fact, in the hill areas of Darjeeling district there exist no villages in the conventional sense but only homestead nestling on the hill sides or in the valleys. Occasionally, five or six houses are observed to be grouped together but generally, each homestead stands in its own land near the passage of cleared cultivation, clustered of houses which can be dignified by the designation of villages are only found in few bazars to which the people go for their weekly purchases.<sup>47</sup>

The population and its decade variation along inter census percentage variation in population of the rural areas in the Darjeeling hills from 1872 are presented in table 1.11. It is observed that increases in population in the entire rural areas follow the trend like that for the hill areas as a whole. But the patterns of growth of population in the rural areas of the three hill sub-divisions are not similar to each other, which is evident from Table 1.12.

### 1.3.4. Growth of Urban Population:

There are three towns or urban centres namely Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong according to the criteria prescribed in the census of 1961;

(i) a population of not less than 5,000 persons, (ii) a density of at least 1,000 persons per sq. mile (2.59 sq. kms.), (iii) occupation of the three-fourth of the working population should be outside of agriculture and (iv) the place should have a few pronounced urban characteristics and amenities like location of educational, medical or public institutions, offices or trading centres in it.<sup>48</sup>

These three hill towns are the most attractive tourist spots and as such population in these towns are subject to considerable seasonal variations. During the tourist season, these towns particularly Darjeeling are full to the capacity. In winter not only are there no visitors in these towns but many normal residents of these towns also go down to the plains and these towns get thinner in their population. These are the peculiar characteristics of the tourist hill resorts.<sup>49</sup>

The growth of urban population in the hill areas of Darjeeling district as a whole and that for each urban centre are shown in Table 1.13 and 1.14 respectively. From Table 1.13 it is observed that the total urban population increases steadily over the decades with varying growth rates from one decade to another. The growth rates of urban population have not been found to follow any general pattern. But from the comparison of the index of growth of urban population, rural population and the total population of the hill areas it is clear that the urban areas are far above the rural areas as well as the hill areas as a whole. This higher rate of growth of

urban population is mainly due to the fact that the hill areas of Darjeeling opened up by the British gave a number of opportunities to the immigrants. With the establishment of tea gardens, new roads were constructed and new commercial centres as well as new settlements were started.

From Table 1.14 it appears that the growth rate of urban population has been negative in the case of Darjeeling and Kurseong towns in all the census years except 1931 for Darjeeling and 1891 for Kurseong. But the growth rate of urban population in the Kalimpong sub-division has been found to be increasing and Kurseong sub-divisions upto 1961. In the census years 1971 the growth rate in case of Kalimpong has been negative and in 1981 that was positive and greater than that of Darjeeling sub-division but less than that of Kurseong sub-division. The increasing trend in the growth rate of urban population in Kalimpong sub-division is the result of the opening of trade route between India and Tibet during 1951-1961 and the growing importance of Kalimpong town as a trading Centre. But with the closure of this trade route in 1961, Kalimpong lost its trading importance which resulted in the decrease of urban population of this sub-division.

Although Kalimpong and Kurseong towns show almost an increasing trend in the growth rate of urban population, the growth rate of urban population in the hill areas as a whole are found to be more or less stagnant during 1931-1961. The rate of growth has declined from 27.4 per cent in 1941 to 4.95 per cent in 1971. But again it has increased to 43.93 per cent in 1981. The increase in

the rate of growth of urban population can be explained by the recent increase in the employment opportunities.

But the decline in the rate of growth of urban population in the hill areas in 1971 and stagnancy from 1931-1961 is the result of the establishment of Siliguri town in the plain areas of the Darjeeling district in 1931. In the census of 1931, the percentage share of Siliguri town in the total urban population was 13.95 per cent, which increased to 57.80 per cent in 1981 due to immigration of the people from the urban areas of the hill areas of the district to Siliguri town of the plains for its vital strategic importance as a focal point in the transport and commerce lines in the North-Eastern India and its growing importance as a focus of communications between North-Indian states and other parts of the country. As because of these facts new job opportunities were created in Siliguri town of the plain areas of the district and for this reason the urban centres of the hill areas, where no developmental activity to create employment opportunities was undertaken, were gradually losing their importance to the towns like Siliguri. And for this fact, the percentage share of the urban centres of the hill areas to the total urban population and to the increases of it over decades were declining since 1931 upto the date. For understanding the fact Tables 1.15 and 1.16 are presented.

#### 1.4. Demographic characteristics in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District.

##### 1.4.1. Density of Population:

The term density of population implies the average number of persons residing per sq. mile or per sq. km. Here density of population is worked out per sq. mile. The number of persons per sq. mile or in a word the density of North Bengal in Jalpaiguri division is generally low in comparison to other districts of the state of West Bengal. Darjeeling district is observed to be the least populous district in the state and experiences a very low pressure on its soil specially in the hill areas of the district. On an average 598, 18203 and 815 persons are found to be living in one sq. mile of the rural, urban and the district as a whole respectively, while the corresponding figures of the state are 1197, 39609 and 1610 as per census of 1981.

The hill areas and the district itself are all along found to be most sparsely populated. In 1872 when the first census of the district was taken, the density of population in the district was found to be 81 persons per sq. mile. In 1901 its density increased a little above 200 and it had been going up from decade to decade. The density of population in the hill areas, plain areas and for the district as a whole are shown in Table 1.17. From this table it is observed that persons per sq. mile in the hill areas of the district are found to be lower than those of the plain areas. One can seek the explanation for the lower density of population in the hill areas of Darjeeling district from its geographical



conditions. The existence of large tracts of land under hills, forests and also under plantation is the main cause of lower density of population in this region.

The density of population is not only uneven between plain and hill areas of the district but there exists notable variation within the hill areas also. This variation may be cleared from Tables 1.18 and 1.19.

Tables 1.18 and 1.19 show that the sub-divisions and blocks of the western part of the river Tista experience higher density than the blocks and sub-divisions on the eastern part of the river. This is because most of the tea gardens of the hill areas are situated in the administrative divisions of the western side of the Tista. About 95 per cent of the total number of the tea gardens in the hill areas is spread over the areas of blocks of sub-divisions on the western side of the Tista, while the rest 5 per cent is found in Garubathan, Kalimpong blocks I and II of the Kalimpong sub-division, situated on the eastern bank of the Tista. As the tea plantation is assumed to be the industry to some extent, it may be said that the distribution of density of population has mainly been determined by the degree of industrialisation.

#### 1.4.2. Sex Ratio:

Alike West Bengal and other states of India Darjeeling shows an excess of male births over female births. The three hill sub-divisions and the hill areas of Darjeeling district as a whole do not possess any exception without this general observance. It

is observed from Table 1.20 that in the case of urban areas of the hill areas of Darjeeling, there has been a substantial rise in the number of females for every 1,000 males during the decade 1961-1971. But it declined during the decade 1971-1981. The number of females per 1,000 male has declined from 933 in 1971 to 924 in 1981. The sex ratios are higher in the rural areas than in the urban areas. But the rural part shows a declining trend in its sex ratio during 1961-1981. The rise in the sex-ratio during the period from 1961 to 1981 in the urban areas clearly indicates the presence of sex-selective migration during the period. Table 1.20 indicates the number of females per 1,000 males in the hill areas of Darjeeling district.

#### 1.4.3. Literacy Rates:

The extent of literacy in Darjeeling district is higher than that in other districts of North Bengal. It is also higher than the state's figure in 1981. This will be understood from Table 1.21. It appears from Table 1.21 that out of the five districts of North Bengal, four districts have witnessed the percentage of literacy, which is lower than the states average. It is only Darjeeling district where the literacy rate is higher than the other districts of North Bengal. It is quite well known that Darjeeling has a tradition of high literacy rate. Again, the extent of literacy in the urban and rural areas shows wide divergence and the literacy rate is higher in the Kurseong sub-division than in the other two sub-divisions in the hill areas. This can better be understood from Table 1.22. The literacy rate in the hill areas of Darjeeling district is going on increasing and the literacy

rate in the urban areas is higher than the corresponding figure in the rural areas of the hill region of Darjeeling district. The increasing rate of literacy may be explained by the higher rate of growth in the service sector and infrastructural development during the period 1961-1981.

### 1.5. Rural Settlement and its character in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District\*

#### 1.5.1. Different Categories of Villages Comprising the Rural Settlement of the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District:

Approximately 99 per cent of the area of the hill region of Darjeeling District is rural in nature. Urbanization is of very lower degree in the hill areas due to the existence of hills and mountains over the larger part of narrow field for cultivation, poor returns from agriculture and lower level of economic and industrial development. The settlement pattern is as a result primarily rural in nature with only three urban centres namely, Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong.

As the settlement pattern of any region is intimately connected with the natural landscape, the rural areas of the Darjeeling hills are different in comparison to that of plains. The

---

\* The data used in developing this part of the chapter are collected from the Census Hand Book of Darjeeling District, 1961, because the Census Hand Book of the District of this year presents data in disaggregated form as are required for this part.

settlements have no sound cultural and ethnic base. The mountainous terrain and the drainage pattern have influenced greatly the development and distribution of rural settlements. Alike plains there are no villages in the proper sense of the word, only homesteads are found to be nestling near by Jhoras and natural springs on the hill sides or in the valleys. As most of the rivers are rainfed, scarcity of water is a major problem in this region. Occasionally five or six houses each of which stands in its own land near the patches of cleared cultivation are found to be grouped together. Villages in the conventional sense having a corporate life and cluster of houses as found in the plains are observed to some extent in the coolie lines in various tea plantations and at a few market places where people go for their weekly purchases. As a general rule the settlement occurs in a scattered fashion isolated from one another. One or two houses which are not independent units from sociological and ethnological view points stand in an allotted manner to form the hamlets.<sup>50</sup>

The villages which are comprised with these hamlets are the organs of the settlement in the rural areas of Darjeeling hills. Therefore, here it will be worthwhile to examine the distinctive features of the villages in view of having a distinct idea about the nature of rural settlement in this region. It is also important on the ground that it helps to identify the major economic activities on which the development of rural areas of Darjeeling hills is dependent.

As the villages throughout the rural areas are observed to be heterogeneous, the settlement in the rural areas contains a remarkable heterogeneity in itself. This heterogeneity of the villages arises basically from the varying livelihood pattern of the inhabitants. According to the occupational pattern the villages in the rural areas of Darjeeling hills are classified in different categories. The number of the villages, the total population in absolute and percentage terms under each category of villages are set out in Table 1.23.

From Table 1.23 it is observed that there are four categories of villages namely villages based on agriculture, villages based on plantation, villages around bazar and villages which are different from the above three categories. Among four categories of these villages, the villages based on plantation occupy the highest rank in terms of its share in the total number of villages and total population while the villages based on agriculture possess next position. The other two classes of villages though are not observed to occupy significant position in the categorical division of villages in terms of their shares in the total number of villages and in the total population, they can not be avoided from the analysis. It is because of their peculiar feature in respect of the occupational pattern of the inhabitants of those two types of villages.

## 1.5.2. Nature of the Villages under Each Category:

### 1.5.2.1. Nature of Plantation Villages:

The plantation villages as are visualised from Table 1.23 can be said to be the most significant among all the categories of villages. This category is composed of the following sub-categories of the villages, the nature of which is analysed one after another.

#### 1.5.2.1. (a) Tea Villages:

These villages are formed around the tea gardens. The residents of these villages are mostly the workers of the tea gardens. In this respect it can be stated here that the coolie lines in the various tea plantations were the only villages when the hill part of Darjeeling contained nothing corresponding to a village in the ordinary sense of the term.<sup>51</sup> The tea villages are observed to be predominant in Darjeeling and Kurseong sub-divisions while the concentration of these villages in Kalimpong sub-division is the lowest. The lower degree of concentration of tea villages in Kalimpong sub-division is the result of the British policy to keep the area for local cultivation and reserved forest. This was again due to the fact that when Kalimpong was annexed, the British government did not allow to use any portion of it for tea cultivation except very special reason.<sup>52</sup> However the tea villages occupy 56.12 per cent of the plantation villages and 61.20 per cent of the total population inhabiting in the plantation villages which is observed from Table 1.24.

The economy of the tea villages is primarily dependent upon the tea gardens. The major per cent of the working population of these villages are observed to render their labour force in the production process within the purview of the tea gardens. One may have an idea about the economic feature of tea villages from Table 1.25 where percentage of working population under different occupations are presented in respect of different categories of plantation villages.

Besides, some other distinguishing features of the tea villages can be mentioned. These villages do not show the character of a close-knit society like an ordinary village community of the plains as most of the inhabitants of these villages have come from different parts of India. Different ethnic groups such as Gurungs, Rais, Limbus and Pradhans live together in the same village and work in the same garden. The resultant fact is the birth of a mixed culture which has no link with that of the region itself. Above all, it can be said that the tea villages are colonial by nature. This means that there remains complete absence of proper social commune, for which culturally it possesses little or no contribution in building up of an integrated social order in the region.

In the colonies formed around the tea gardens, there exist four categories of employees namely, management, staff, sub-staff, workers and coolies. Among them, the workers and coolies are the most important. They are directly involved in the process of

production. But they do not usually get the same facilities like the managerial classes. They are observed to live in a very sordid condition with the poor quality of health and life and inadequate sanitary facilities.<sup>53</sup>

The physical appearance of the tea villages is semi-urban in nature rather than rural. There exists own township management. They have their own water supply, power house with their own generators, telephones, medical unit and well surfaced roads. Moreover, the pattern of rows of bazars for the labourers, the single and double family quarters for the office and factory employees, the managers' bungalows are the indicators of the semi-urban objective condition. Such an objective condition has increased the degree of accessibility into these villages to a great extent.<sup>54</sup>

The society, which was developed by the British with the introduction of tea cultivation possessed a sound economic health due to the increasing demand for the product.

#### 1.5.2.1. (b) Forest Villages:

The second most important rank among the plantation villages is occupied by the villages which have been grown within the confines of reserved forests. These type of villages are known as forest villages. The number of these villages is 54 and the percentage share of this category of villages in the total number of plantation villages is 38.85. The percentage share of these



villages in the total population in the plantation villages is 24.23 villages have been brought forth due to the administrative needs for maintaining and exploiting the forest resources economically.<sup>55</sup>

Though the forest villages are different from the tea villages in respect of physiographic condition, they are to some extent similar to those villages in respect of occupational pattern. This is observed from Table 1.25. The table shows that 35.65 per cent of the total working population are engaged in occupation III, (i.e. mining, quarrying, livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting, orchard and allied activities).

Accordingly forest villages are termed as the plantation villages. But the share of the occupation I (i.e., cultivators) and IX (i.e., in other services) in the total working population cannot be treated as negligible. Although there does not exist the absolute dominance of the occupation III (i.e. mining, quarrying, livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting, orchards and allied activities) these are referred to as plantation villages. This is mainly because of the fact that these villages were basically formed by the people who were the workers in the forestry, i.e., who engaged themselves in the activities like conservation, planting new forest and replanting the denuded forest areas.<sup>56</sup> Therefore in this sense plantation in forest is the principal activity of the forest villagers. But in succession when the families of these villages became more and more crowded and the income earned from the plantation activities which was carried on for two to three months in a

year became insufficient to maintain themselves. So they began to cultivate land allotted to them by the forest department during the rest of the year and engaged themselves in other occupations, especially in the category IX. Thus the activities linked with agricultural and other occupations came to complement the principal occupation i.e., plantation activities.<sup>57</sup>

Notwithstanding the existence of three major avenues namely agriculture, plantation and other services, the economic condition of inhabitants of the forest villages is very much poor. The total amount of wage bill for rendering service in the forestry combined with the earnings from land and other economic activities is so meagre that it can not maintain the subsistence level of living of the forest villagers throughout the year. As a matter of fact, most of the forest villagers are engaged in illegal business of lumbering and handling of wood and forest products to the plains for sale. Thus it is seen that the forest villages which are located in remote areas are poorly accessible and also added with extreme transportation difficulty and wounded with the severe attacks of poverty.<sup>58</sup>

#### 1.5.2.1.(c) Villages around Cinchona Plantation:

There are three cinchona plantations which are situated in Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong sub-divisions respectively. These plantations alike the tea plantations are the backgrounds of the growth of some kind of villages which are known as the villages based on cinchona plantations. These villages are more or less similar to the tea villages in respect of infrastructures and

compositions. But from the point of view of occupations these are observed to be different from tea villages but similar to forest villages. In these villages, also occupation III (i.e., mining, quarrying, livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting, orchards and allied activities) is not predominant which is clear from Table 1.25. From Table 1.25 it is seen that more than 50 per cent of the total working population of these villages had their livelihood from occupation I and II respectively while the percentage of the total working population under occupation III is slightly above 40. Thus it is observed that these villages stand in an intermediate position of tea and forest villages.

#### 1.5.2.1. (d) Other Types of Plantation Villages:

These villages are not clearly defined in the census hand book of the district but in consideration of the occupational pattern these villages are approximate to the tea villages because from Table 1.25, it is observed that near 70 per cent of the total working population are engaged in occupation III whatever be its character regard to infrastructure and physiographic composition.

#### 1.5.2.2. Nature of the Agricultural Villages:

Agricultural villages are classified into two heads namely, Khasmahal villages and others. Therefore in order to stress out the nature of the agricultural villages it will be reasonable to discuss the features of the Khasmahal villages and the villages other than Khasmahal separately.

### 1.5.2.2(a) Khashmahal Villages:

The estates escheated by Government are called Khashmahals. Villages set up in these estates are called Khashmahal villages. The percentage of the Khashmahal villages is 87.34 in the total number of agricultural villages in the rural areas of Darjeeling hills. These <sup>villages</sup> are mostly concentrated in the Kalimpong sub-division.

From Table 1.26 it is observed that 82.08 per cent and 6.48 per cent of the total working population of the villages are cultivators and agricultural labourers respectively. This implies that activities relating to agriculture are the most pre-dominant in these villages.

Although agriculture presents itself as the principal platform of the livelihood in these villages, it is mostly dependent on nature. That is why agriculture in these villages like most of the regions of India is nothing but a seasonal business which can not feed the entire hungers of the people of the Khashmahal villages. In a word the economic condition of the Khashmahal villages is poverty ridden.

### 1.5.2.2. (b) Agricultural Villages Other Than Khashmahal:

Besides the Khashmahal villages there are other types of villages in the rural areas of Darjeeling hills. The economy of these villages is mostly dependent on agriculture. The percentage share of these villages in the total number of agricultural villages is 12.66. These villages are mostly similar to the Khashmahal villages. But in these two types of agricultural villages the

degree of dependence on agriculture measured in terms of percentage of cultivators and percentage of agricultural labourers in the total working population varies remarkably. From Table 1.26 it is seen that in these villages 73.42 per cent and 2.96 per cent of the working population are cultivators and agricultural labourers, while in the Khashmahal villages the percentages of cultivators and that of agricultural labourers in the total working population are 82.08 and 6.48 respectively.

#### 1.5.2.3. Bazar Villages:

These types of villages are entirely found in the Kalimpong sub-division. These are grown up centring around some bazars, i.e., market places. The number of these villages and the share of these villages in the total rural population are very much low. Although this claims a little as these villages possess different types of occupational pattern in comparison to those prevailing in the plantation villages and agricultural villages. From Table 1.27 it is evident that occupation IX is the most important followed by occupation VII and IV.

#### 1.5.2.4. Villages Other Than Plantation, Agriculture and Bazar:

In the rural areas of Darjeeling hills there exist some other villages which are not included in the above three categories. The number of these villages is sixteen and these are scattered throughout whole of the rural areas of Darjeeling hills. The inhabitants of these villages are mostly dependent on occupation IX which is evident from Table 1.28. Besides, occupations III and I are also to some extent important. The percentage of total work-

ing population engaged in these two occupations are 13.75 and 11.29 respectively.

The analysis so far done shows that the rural settlement in the Darjeeling hills is not dependent absolutely only on one economic activity. The economy of the rural areas of Darjeeling hills is neither agricultural nor industrial. There has become an ad-mixture of the characteristics of an agrarian economy and an industrial economy resulting from the simultaneous existence of villages based on occupations relating to agriculture, plantation and other services.

Yet in terms of the percentage share of different categories of the villages in the total number, it is seen that this rural settlement is basically a subordinate of the agriculture and plantation because among the total number of villages, 58.01 and 32.97 per cent of the villages are based on these two activities respectively. Again among plantation villages 56.12 and 38.85 per cent of villages are based on tea plantation and forestry. So it may be stated that agriculture, tea plantation and forestry are the lives of the economy of the settlement grown up in the rural areas of Darjeeling hills. Therefore, the discussion relating to problems of development of rural areas of Darjeeling hills is nothing but an analysis of problems of development of agriculture, tea plantation and forestry on which the subset of Indian population inhabiting in this region is basically dependent. But the subsidiary occupations like animal husbandry, small-scale and cottage industry as well as sericulture have enormous importance in this region

like other rural regions of India. So the problems of development of this region is also to some extent related to these activities: animal husbandry, small-scale and cottage industry as well as sericulture. Besides, as development is not purely an economic phenomenon, it encompasses more than the material and financial side of people's lives and often refers to the development of some non-economic factors like, communication, transportation, power supply, educational and health services, so this study of the problems of development of rural areas in the hill areas of Darjeeling district is added with the discussion relating to the problems of development of communication, transport, power supply, educational and health services in the rural areas of the hill areas of Darjeeling district.

Table 1.1  
Classification of Type of Soil in Each Block  
of Darjeeling District

Name of the Blocks	Cultivable Area (in Hectare)	Types of Soil (in percentage term)				
		Sandy Loam	Sandy Loam	Loam	Clayee Loam	Clayee Boul- dry etc
1. Darjeeling- Pulbazar	9783.00	-	95	5		
2. Jorebunglow- Sukhiapokhri	2037.00	-	95	5		
3. Rangli- Rangliot	2958.00	-	95	5		
4. Kurseong	2023.00	-	60	-	-	40
5. Mirik	1130.00	-	60	-	-	40
6. Kalimpong I	7206.00	28	60	-	-	12
7. Kalimpong II	7120.00	28	60	-		12
8. Garubathan	4844.00	28	60			12
9. Siliguri- Naxalbari	11316.00		60	30	10	
10. Khoribari- Phansidewa	18,454.00		60	30	10	

Source : Annual Action Plan 1984-85 : Under Integrated Rural Development Programmes (District Rural Development Agency, Darjeeling).



Table 1.2  
Names and Lengths of Main Rivers in  
Darjeeling District

Names of the Rivers	Length (km)
1. Teesta	37.00
2. Balason	48.40
3. Great Rangit	18.57
4. Jaldhaka	19.47
5. Mahanadi (Mahananda)	91.70
6. Mechi	63.20

Source : Government of West Bengal, Plan For Darjeeling Hill Areas 1980-85 : Mid-Term.

Review and Annual Plans 1983-84 & 1984-85

Volume I (Darjeeling : Development and Planning Department : Hill Affairs Branch Secretariat).

Table 1.3

Names and Lengths of the Tributaries of the  
Main Rivers of Darjeeling District

Names of the Tributaries	Length (km)
1. Chel Nala of Jaldhaka	10.46
2. Gish Nala of Jaldhaka	30.20
3. Lish Nala of Jaldhaka	12.10
4. Murti Nala of Jaldhaka	13.82
5. Neora Nala of Jaldhaka	27.46
6. Ni Chu of Jaldhaka	14.90
7. Ramman of Great Rangit	39.78
8. Rangnu Khola of Great Rangit	16.27
9. Chhota Rangit of Great Rangit	23.77
10. Rangpo Chu of Tista	9.66
11. Riyang Nala of Tista	18.70
12. Relli Nala of Tista	30.64
13. Rishi Chu, Rangpchu, Rishi Khola, Rishi Nala	17.36
14. Cheng Nala	62.58

Source: Government of West Bengal, Plan For Darjeeling Hill Areas 1980-85 : Mid-Term Review and Annual Plans 1983-84 & 1984-85 : Volume I (Darjeeling : Development and Planning Department : Hill Affairs Branch Secretariat).

Table - 1.4  
Mineral Resources in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District

Name of Minerals	Name of Areas/Regions
Coal	<p>(a) Throughout the area extending from Pankhabari to the vicinity of Dalingkote,            (b) Along the area from near Balason river in the West to Neora Nala in the east passing through Tindharia (26°5' : 88°20'), Lish Nala, Ramthi Nala &amp; Lethi Nala as also further east in the Jaldhaka Road Section.</p>
Copper	<p>(a) In the Dalings, (b) At Kalimpong (27°5' N: 88°29' E) (c) At Pashok (27°05'N: 88°25'E) (d) At Chel river bed near Garubathan (26°57'N: 88°42'E) (e) At a place to the east of Mirik (26°58'N : 88°25E) (f) At least North east of Mahanadi (26°53'N : 88°25'E) (g) At Ranihat on the western side of Mahanadi near the mouth of Baffupani (h) At a place on the east of bank of Tista (i) At due east of Mangpu (j) In the neighbourhood of Samther.</p>
Graphite	<p>(a) From the north of Gayabari (26°52'N: 88°19'E) on the Darjeeling Hill Cart Road to the West of Pashok (27°05'N: 88°25'E) passing through Mangpu (26°58'N:88°22'E) as also in the Schists of the Rakti Valley.</p>

Contd..

Table - 1.4 (Contd..)

Name of Minerals	Name of Areas/Regions
Iron	(a) At Lohagarh in the south-west part of the district ( $26^{\circ}47'N$ : $88^{\circ}12'E$ ) (b) At Samalbary about a mile east-south east of Sikbaro to the east of the Tista (c) In the Kalimpong sub-division and in the northern part of the districts.
Lime	(a) Above Pankhabari (b) Within the Sinchal range on the Great Rungeet river, above the exit of the Rummai (f) In the great central Himalayan range.

Source : West Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling, Government of West Bengal, 1980).

Table - 1.5

Average Temperature in the Hill Areas  
of Darjeeling District

Name of the Town	Temperature (Average) (in centigrade)	
	Maximum	Minimum
1. Darjeeling	23.5	0.9
2. Kalimpong	28.7	4.5
3. Kurseong	33.0	5.0

Source: Annual Action Plan 1984-85: Under Integrated Rural Development - Programme (District Rural Development Agency : Darjeeling).

Table - 1.6

The Blockwise Average Annual Rainfall in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District (in mm)

Name of the Block	Average Annual Rainfall
1. Darjeeling - Phulbazar	2286.00
2. Jore Bunglow-Sukhiapokhri	3352.80
3. Rangli-Rangliot	3606.80
4. Kurseong	2794.00
5. Mirik	2794.00
6. Kalimpong I	2387.60
7. Kalimpong II	2514.60
8. Garubathan	2641.60

Source: Annual Action Plan 1984-85 : Under Integrated Rural Development - Programme (District Rural Development Agency : Darjeeling).

Table - 1.7

Growth of Population in the Hill Areas of  
Darjeeling District during 1872 to 1981

Years	Total Population	Decadal Variation	Decadal Variation (In per cent)
1872	46,727	-	-
1881	92,141	+45,414	+97.19
1891	150,321	+58,180	+63.14
1901	178,651	+28,330	+18.85
1911	193,304	+14,653	+ 8.20
1921	206,961	+13,657	+ 7.07
1931	239,377	+32,416	+15.66
1941	286,355	+46,978	+19.63
1951	328,785	+42,430	+14.82
1961	404,792	+76,007	+23.12
1971	479,978	+75,186	+18.57
1981	521,954	+41,976	+ 8.75

Sources: (i) O'Malley, L.S.S., Gazetteer of Darjeeling District

(Alipore : Bengal Government House, 1907).

(ii) Dash, A.J., Bengal District Gazetteers : Darjeeling

(Alipore : Bengal Government House, 1947).

(iii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal District Census Handbook : Darjeeling.

(iv) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal District Census Handbook: Darjeeling.

(v) Census of India 1981, West Bengal, Final Population Totals

Table - 1.8

Immigration in Darjeeling District from  
1891-1961 in Absolute and Relative Terms

Years	Total Number of Immigrants	Percentage to Total Population of the District
1891	119670	53.59
1901	113588	42.74
1911	111269	39.75
1921	101807	34.60
1931	100700	30.33
1941	95750	24.49
1951	100311	21.82
1961	169250	27.10

Source : Government of West Bengal, West Bengal District Gazetteers : Darjeeling, 1980).



Table - 1.9

Number and Acreage Under Tea Estates in the  
Hill Areas of Darjeeling District from 1872 to 1891

Years	Number of Tea Estates	Acreage Under Tea Estates
1872	74	14,000
1881	153	30,000
1891	177	45,000

Source : O'Malley, L.S.S., Gazetter of Darjeeling District  
(Alipore : Bengal Government House, 1907).

Table - 1.10  
Sub-division-wise Growth of Population in the Hill Areas of  
Darjeeling District

Years	Darjeeling Sadar Sub-division			Kalimpong Sub-division			Kurseong Sub-division		
	Total population	Decadal variation	Decadal Variation (In per cent)	Total Population	Decadal Variation	Decadal Variation (In per cent)	Total population	Decadal Variation	Decadal Variation (In per cent)
1872	46727								
1881	79458	+32731	+70.05	12683					
1891	79041	- 417	- 0.52	26631	+13948	+109.97	44649		
1901	91953	+12912	+16.34	41511	+14880	+ 55.87	45187	+538	+ 1.20
1911	102577	+10624	+11.55	49520	+ 8009	+19.29	41207	-3980	- 8.81
1921	106511	+ 3934	+ 3.84	60093	+10573	+21.35	40357	-850	- 2.06
1931	119178	+12667	+11.89	68203	+ 8110	+13.50	51996	+11639	+28.84
1941	147327	+28149	+23.62	79042	+10839	+15.89	59986	+7990	+15.37
1951	169631	+22304	+15.14	93441	+14399	+18.22	65713	+5727	+ 9.54

Contd..

Table - 1.10 (Contd..)

Years	Darjeeling Sadar Sub-division			Kalimpong Sub-division			Kurseong Sub-division		
	Total population	Decadal Variation	Decadal Variation (In per cent)	Total Population	Decadal Variation	Decadal Variation (In per cent)	Total population	Decadal Variation	Decadal Variation (In per cent)
1961	203523	+33892	+19.98	120526	+27085	+28.99	80743	+15030	+22.87
1971	245207	+41684	+20.48	134538	+14012	+11.63	100233	+19490	+24.14
1981	281346	+36139	+14.74	158726	+24188	+17.98	111302	+11069	+11.04

Sources: (i) Dash, A. J., Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling (Alipore : Bengal Government House, 1947)

(ii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal District Hand book: Darjeeling

(iii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal District Census Handbook: Darjeeling, Series 22.

(iv) Census of India 1981, West Bengal, Final Population Totals.

Table - 1.11  
Growth of Rural Population in the Hill Areas  
of Darjeeling District during 1872-1981

Years	Total Population	Decadal Variation	Decadal Variation (In Per cent)
1872	43,570	-	-
1881	81,090	+37,520	+86.11
1891	1,32,654	+51,564	+63.59
1901	1,57,258	+24,604	+16.55
1911	1,68,725	+11,467	+ 7.29
1921	1,78,258	+ 9,533	+5.65
1931	2,01,965	+23,707	+13.30
1941	2,38,678	+36,713	+18.18
1951	2,66,784	+28,108	+11.78
1961	3,25,626	+58,842	+22.06
1971	3,97,250	+71,624	+22.00
1981	4,02,887	+ 5,637	+ 1.42

Sources: (i) Dash, A.J., Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling  
(Alipore: Bengal Government House, 1947).

(ii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal  
District Hand book : Darjeeling

(iii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal  
District Census Hand book: Darjeeling, Series 22.

(iv) Census of India 1981, West Bengal, Final  
Population Totals.

Table - 1.12

Growth of Rural Population in the three Hill Sub-Divisions of  
Darjeeling District

Years	Darjeeling Sub-division			Kalimpong Sub-division			Kurseong Sub-division		
	Total Rural population	Decadal Variation	Percentage Decade Variation	Total Rural Population	Decadal Variation	Percentage Decade Variation	Total Rural Population	Decadal Variation	Percentage Decade Variation
1872	43,570								
1881	72,440	+28,870	+66.26	12,683					
1891	64,896	- 7,544	-10.41	26,663	+13,948	+109.97	41,127		
1901	75,029	+10,133	+15.61	41,511	+14,880	+ 55.87	40,720	- 407	- 0.99
1911	83,572	+ 8,543	+11.39	49,520	+ 8,009	+ 19.29	35,633	-5,087	-12.49
1921	84,253	+ 681	+ 0.81	60,093	+10,573	+21.35	33,912	-1,721	- 4.83
1931	97,993	+13,740	+16.31	59,427	- 666	- 1.11	44,545	+10,633	+31.35
1941	1,20,103	+22,110	+22.56	67,084	+ 7,657	+12.88	51,491	+6,946	+15.59
1951	1,36,026	+15,923	+13.26	76,764	+ 9,680	+14.43	53,994	+2,503	+ 4.86
1961	1,62,872	+26,846	+19.74	95,421	+18,657	+24.30	67,333	+13,339	+24.70

Contd..

Table - 1.12 (Contd..)

Years	Darjeeling Sub-division			Kalimpong Sub-division			Kurseong Sub-division		
	Total Rural Population	Decadal Variation	Percentage Decade Variation	Total Rural Population	Decadal Variation	Percentage Decade Variation	Total Rural Population	Decadal Variation	Percentage Decade Variation
1971	2,02,334	+39,462	+24.23	1,11,108	+15,687	+16.44	83,808	+16,475	+24.47
1981	2,23,743	+21,409	+10.58	1,26,308	+15,200	+13.68	82,256	-1,552	- 1.85

- Sources: (i) Dash, A. J., Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling (Alipore: Bengal Government House, 1947
- (ii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal District Census Handbook: Darjeeling.
- (iii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal District Census Handbook: Darjeeling, Series 22.
- (iv) Census of India 1981, West Bengal Final population Totals.

Table - 1.13

## Growth of Population in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District

Years	Total Urban Population	Decadal Variation	Percentage Decadal Variation	Index of Growth of Urban Population	Index of Growth of Rural Population	Index of Growth of Total Population
1872	3157	-	-	100	100	100
1881	11051	+7894	+250.00	350	186	197
1891	17667	+6616	+ 59.87	559	304	322
1901	21393	+3726	+ 21.09	577	360	382
1911	24579	+3187	+ 14.89	778	387	414
1921	28703	+4124	+ 16.78	909	409	443
1931	37412	+8709	+ 30.34	1185	463	512
1941	47677	+10265	+ 27.44	1510	547	613
1951	62001	+14324	+ 30.04	1963	612	704
1961	79166	+17165	+ 27.69	2507	747	866
1971	82728	+3562	+ 4.95	2620	911	1027
1981	119067	+36339	+ 43.93	3771	924	1117

- Sources: (i) O'Malley, L.S.S., Gazetteer of Darjeeling District (Alipore: Bengal Government House, 1907).
- (ii) Dash, A.J., Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling (Alipore: Bengal Government House, 1947).
- (iii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal District Census Hand book: Darjeeling
- (iv) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal District Census Hand book: Darjeeling, Series 22.
- (v) Census of India 1981, West Bengal, Final Population Totals

Table - 1.14

## Sub-division-Wise Growth of Urban Population in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District

Years	Darjeeling Sub-division			Kalimpong Sub-division			Kurseong Sub-division		
	Total Urban Population	Decadal Variation	Percentage Decadal Variation	Total Urban Population	Decadal Variation	Percentage Decadal Variation	Total Urban Population	Decadal Variation	Decadal variation (in per cent)
1872	3,157	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1881	7,018	+3,861	+122.30	-	-	-	4,033	-	-
1891	14,145	+7,127	+101.55	-	-	-	3,522	-511	-12.67
1901	16,924	+2,779	+ 19.65	-	-	-	4,469	+947	+26.89
1911	19,005	+2,081	+ 12.30	-	-	-	5,574	+1,105	+24.73
1921	22,258	+3,253	+ 17.12	-	-	-	6,445	+ 871	+15.63
1931	21,185	-1,073	- 4.82	8,778	-	-	7,451	+1,006	+15.61
1941	27,224	+6,039	+ 28.51	11,958	+3,182	+36.26	8,495	+1,044	+14.01
1951	33,605	+6,381	+23.44	16,677	+4,719	+39.46	11,719	+3,224	+37.95

Contd..



Table - 1.14 (Contd..)

Years	<u>Darjeeling Sub-division</u>			<u>Kalimpong Sub-division</u>			<u>Kurseong Sub-division</u>		
	Total Urban Population	Decadal Varia- tion	Percentage Decadal Variation	Total Urban Population	Decadal Varia- tion	Percen- tage Decadal Varia- tion	Total Urban Population	Decadal Varia- tion	Decadal Variation (in per cent)
1961	40,651	+7,046	+20.97	25,105	+8,428	+50.54	13,410	+1,691	+14.43
1971	42,873	+2,222	+ 5.47	23,430	-1,675	- 6.67	16,425	+3,015	+22.48
1981	57,603	+14,730	+34.36	32,418	+8,988	+38.36	29,046	+12,621	+76.84

Sources: (i) Dash, A. J., Bengal District Gazetteers : Darjeeling (Alipore: Bengal Government House, 1947)

(ii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal

(iii) Census of India 1981, West Bengal Final Population Totals.

Table - 1.15  
Relative Shares of the Hill Areas and Plain Areas in the Urban  
Population of Darjeeling District During 1931 to 1981

Years	Total Urban Population in the District	Total Urban Population in the Hill Areas	Total Urban Population in the Plain Areas	Percentage share of the Hill Areas in the Total Urban Population in the District	Percentage Share of the Plain Areas in the Total Urban Popu- lation in the District
1931	43,479	37,412	6,067	86.05	13.95
1941	58,164	47,677	10,487	81.97	18.03
1951	94,481	62,001	32,480	65.62	34.38
1961	144,637	79,166	65,471	54.73	45.27
1971	180,212	82,728	97,484	45.91	54.09
1981	282,153	119,067	163,086	42.20	57.80

- Sources: (i) Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal District Census Handbook: Darjeeling.
- (ii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal District Census Handbook: Darjeeling, Series 22.
- (iii) Census of India 1981 : West Bengal, Final Population Totals.

Table - 1.16

Relative Shares of the Hill Areas and Plain Areas in the Decadal Variation Since 1931 of the Total Urban Population in Darjeeling District

Years	Decadal Variation of the Total Urban Population in the District	Decadal Variation of the Total Urban Population in the Hill Areas	Decadal Variation of the Total Urban Population in the Plain Areas	Percentage Share of the Hill Areas in the Variations of the Urban Population of the District Over Decades	Percentage Share of the Plain Areas in the Variations of the Urban Population of the District Over Decades
1941	14,685	10,265	4,420	69.90	30.10
1951	36,317	14,324	21,993	39.44	60.56
1961	50,156	17,165	32,991	34.22	65.78
1971	35,575	35,62	32,013	10.01	89.99
1981	101,941	36,339	65,602	35.65	64.35

Sources: (i) Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal District Census Handbook: Darjeeling

(ii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal District Census Handbook: Darjeeling, Series 22.

(iii) Census of India 1981: West Bengal, Final Population Totals.

Table - 1.17

Density of Population per Sq. Mile in the Hill Areas, Plain Areas  
and of Darjeeling District as a Whole

Name of the Areas	Years									
	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981	
(A) Hill Areas of Darjeeling District	T	191	207	222	256	307	352	434	514	559
	R	170	183	193	219	258	289	352	430	436
	U	2252	2587	3021	3938	5019	6526	8333	8708	12533
(B) Plain Areas of Darjee- ling District	T	269	268	270	287	323	405	680	933	1463
	R	269	268	270	273	296	310	487	644	976
	U	-	-	-	1011	1748	5413	10912	16247	27181
(C) Darjeeling District as a Whole	T	212	223	234	264	311	366	497	622	815
	R	1241	197	214	233	268	294	387	485	598
	U	155	1380	1852	2805	3753	6096	9331	11627	18203

T= Density for the whole areas

R= Density for the rural areas

U= Density for the urban areas

- Sources: (i) Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal District Census Handbook: Darjeeling.
- (ii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal District Census Handbook: Darjeeling, Series 22.
- (iii) Census of India 1981 : West Bengal, Final Population Totals.

Table - 1.18

Sub-division-wise Density of Population per Sq. Mile in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District

Name of the Sub-division	Years	Years								
		1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981
Darjeeling	T	255	284	295	330	408	470	563	679	779
	R	210	234	236	274	336	381	456	567	627
	U	4128	4635	5429	5167	6640	8196	9915	10457	14050
Kalimpong	T	102	121	147	167	194	229	295	330	389
	R	102	121	147	147	166	190	236	275	312
	U	-	-	-	2581	3517	4905	7384	6891	9535
Kurseong	T	275	251	246	317	265	400	492	610	678
	R	251	220	209	275	317	333	415	517	507
	U	2235	2787	3223	3726	4248	5860	6705	8213	14523

T = Density for the sub-division as a whole

R = Density for the rural areas

U = Density for the urban areas

Sources: (i) Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal District Census Hand book: Darjeeling.

(ii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal District Census Hand book, Darjeeling, Series 22.

(iii) Census of India, 1981, West Bengal, Final Population Totals.

Table - 1.19  
Block-wise Density of Population per Sq. Mile in the Hill Areas of  
Darjeeling District

Name of the Block		Years								
		1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981
1. Darjeeling-Pulbazar	T	513	572	594	665	750	965	1145	1319	1597
	R	347	385	372	458	480	633	743	899	1025
	U	4128	4635	5429	5167	6640	8196	9915	10457	14050
2. Sukhiapokhri- Jorebunglow	T	169	189	196	237	337	324	390	471	544
	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	U	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Rangli- Rangliot	T	159	177	184	184	227	264	324	436	431
	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	U	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Kurseong	T	259	234	231	298	339	392	467	566	647
	R	227	195	183	243	276	304	367	444	424
	U	2235	2787	3223	3726	4248	5860	6705	8213	14523
5. Mirik	T	331	302	295	381	454	429	576	758	782
	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	U	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Contd..

Table - 1.19 (Contd..)

Name of the Block		Years								
		1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981
6. Kalimpong I- & II	T	145	174	211	233	271	325	408	434	504
	R	-	-	-	199	224	258	306	332	371
	U	-	-	-	2581	3517	4905	7384	6891	9535
7. Garubathan	T	42	50	61	77	88	98	142	187	233
	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	U	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

T = Density for the block as a whole

R = Density for the rural areas of the block

U = Density for the urban areas of the block

Sources: (i) Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal District Census Hand-book, Darjeeling.

(ii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal District Census Hand-book, Darjeeling, Series 22.

(iii) Census of India, 1981, West Bengal Final Population Totals.

Table - 1.20

Population by Sex-Ratio in the Hill Areas of  
Darjeeling District during 1961-1981

(Females per 1,000 Males)

Name of the Sub-division		1961	1971	1981
1. Darjeeling	T	939	955	945
	R	981	975	969
	U	788	865	862
2. Kurseong	T	932	951	876
	R	947	964	864
	U	862	887	910
3. Kalimpong	T	863	881	919
	R	881	888	925
	U	800	848	894
Total Hill Areas of Darjeeling District	T	914	933	924
	R	943	947	935
	U	804	864	882

T = Sex-ratio. as a whole

R = Sex-ratio for the rural areas

U = Sex-ratio for the urban areas

- Sources: (i) A Techno-Economic Survey of the Hill Areas in Darjeeling District (Economic Planning Stream, Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organisation and Siliguri Planning Organisation, Development and Planning (Town and Country Planning ) Department, Government of West Bengal, 1975).
- (ii) Government of West Bengal, Census of India 1981: Series 23, West Bengal.



Table - 1.21  
Literacy Level of the Districts of North Bengal  
(In Percentage)

Name of the District	Literacy Level	
	1971	1981
1. Darjeeling	33.07	42.52
2. Coochbehar	21.92	29.99
3. Jalpaiguri	24.01	29.88
4. West Dinajpur	22.12	26.92
5. Malda	17.61	23.06
West Bengal as a Whole	33.20	40.88

Sources : (i) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971.  
(ii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1981.

Table - 1.22  
Distribution of Literacy in the Hill Areas of  
Darjeeling District

Name of the Sub-division		Percentage of Literacy in the years		
		1961	1971	1981
(1) Darjeeling	T	30.0	34.4	44.7
	R	24.0	29.6	39.7
	U	54.1	57.3	64.2
(2) Kalimpong	T	26.8	34.6	43.8
	R	22.6	30.8	38.2
	U	43.0	56.5	64.7
(3) Kurseong	T	31.7	35.3	45.5
	R	27.3	30.8	36.9
	U	53.3	58.5	69.5

T = Percentage of Literacy for the Whole areas.  
R = Percentage of Literacy for the Rural areas.  
U = Percentage of Literacy for the Urban areas.

- Sources: (i) Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal District Census Hand-book: Darjeeling.
- (ii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1971, West Bengal District Census Handbook, Darjeeling.
- (iii) Government of West Bengal, Census 1981, West Bengal District Census Hand-book, Darjeeling.

Table - 1.23

The Number of Villages and Total Population in Absolute and Percentage Terms Under Different Categories of Villages in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District

Categories of Villages Under Each Settlement	Number of Villages	Total Population
1. Villages Based on Agriculture	79 (32.97)	62,621 (20.48)
2. Villages Based on Plantation	139 (58.01)	223,542 (73.10)
3. Villages Formed Around Market Centres	5 (2.09)	3,233 (1.06)
4. Villages Others than Above Categories	16 (6.95)	16,409 (5.36)
Total	239 (100.00)	305,805 (100.00)

Note : The figures in parentheses are the respective percentages

Source: Government of West Bengal, Census 1961 : West Bengal, District Census Hand Book : Darjeeling.

Table - 1.24

The Number and Population in Absolute and Percentage Terms Under Different Sub-Categories of Plantation Villages in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District

Different Sub-Categories of Plantation Villages	Number of Villages Under Each Sub-Category	Population
1. Tea Villages	78 (56.12)	136805 (61.20)
2. Forest Villages	54 (38.85)	54163 (24.23)
3. Villages Based on Chinchona Plantation	3 (2.16)	22040 (9.86)
4. Others Type of Plantation Villages	4 (2.87)	10534 (4.71)
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b> <b>(100.00)</b>	<b>223542</b> <b>(100.00)</b>

Note : The figures in the parentheses are the respective percentages.

Source: Government of West Bengal, Census 1961 ; West Bengal, District Census Hand Book : Darjeeling.

Table - 1.25

Occupational Pattern of Different Types of Villages Under Plantation Settlement in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District

Villages Under Plantation Settlement	Nature of Occupation									Total Working Population
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	
1. Tea Villages	5568 (9.69)	336 (0.58)	47606 (82.80)	408 (0.71)	35 (0.06)	79 (0.14)	612 (1.06)	601 (1.05)	2245 (3.91)	57490 (100.00)
2. Forest Villages	5123 (47.58)	174 (1.62)	3838 (35.65)	77 (0.72)	10 (0.09)	205 (1.90)	161 (1.50)	80 (0.74)	1099 (10.20)	10767 (100.00)
3. Villages Based on Cinchona Plantation	4405 (49.64)	159 (1.79)	3589 (40.44)	65 (0.73)	4 (0.05)	23 (0.26)	100 (1.13)	7 (0.08)	522 (5.88)	8874 (100.00)
4. Other Types of Villages	1013 (21.77)	15 (0.32)	3251 (69.83)	27 (0.58)	9 (0.19)	50 (1.07)	98 (2.10)	2 (0.04)	191 (4.10)	4656 (100.00)

Note : The figures in parentheses are the respective percentages

I = As Cultivators, II = As Agricultural Labourers, III = In Mining, Quarrying, Allied Activities, IV = At Household Industry, V = In Manufacturing other than Household Industry, VI = In Construction, VII = In Trade and Commerce, VIII = In Transport, Storage and Communications, IX = In Other Services.

Source: Government of West Bengal, Census 1961 : West Bengal District Census Hand-book, Darjeeling.

Table - 1.26  
Nature of Occupation of Agricultural Villages in the Hill Areas of  
Darjeeling District

Types of Agricultural Villages	Nature of Occupation									Total Working Population
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	
1. Khasmahal Villages	24169 (82.08)	1908 (6.48)	14 (0.05)	303 (1.03)	30 (0.10)	1070 (3.63)	183 (0.62)	30 (0.10)	1739 (5.91)	29446 (100.00)
2. Others Type of Agricultural Villages	3174 (73.42)	128 (2.95)	291 (6.92)	82 (1.90)	17 (0.39)	8 (0.19)	187 (4.33)	63 (1.46)	373 (8.63)	4323 (100.00)
Total	27343 (80.97)	2036 (6.03)	305 (0.90)	385 (1.14)	47 (0.14)	1078 (3.19)	370 (1.10)	93 (0.28)	2112 (6.25)	33769 (100.00)

Note : The figures in parentheses are the respective percentages.

I = As Cultivators, II = As Agricultural Labourers, III = In Mining, Quarrying, Allied Activities, IV = At Household Industry, V = In Manufacturing other than Household Industry, VI = In Construction, VII = In Trade and Commerce, VIII = In Transport, Storage and Communications, IX = In other Services.

Source : Government of West Bengal, Census 1961 : West Bengal District Census Hand-book  
Darjeeling.

Table - 1.27

## Occupational Pattern of Bazar Villages in the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District

Name of the Different Occupations	Number of Working Population in Each Occupation	
	Absolute Number	Percentage
I. As Cultivator	45	3.38
II. As Agricultural Labourer	7	0.53
III. In Mining, Quarrying, Livestock, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Plantations, Orchards and Allied Activities	19	1.43
IV. At Household Industry	105	7.89
V. In Manufacturing Other than Household Industry	20	1.50
VI. In Construction	59	4.43
VII. In Trade and Commerce	402	30.20
VIII. In Transport, Storage and Communications	60	4.51
IX. In Other Services	614	46.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>1331</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source : Government of West Bengal, Census 1961 : West Bengal District Census Hand-book, Darjeeling.

Table - 1.28

Occupational pattern of the Villages Except Plantation,  
Agriculture and Bazar Villages in the Hill Areas of  
Darjeeling District

Name of the Different Occupations	Number of Working Population in Each Occupation	
	Absolute Number	Percentage
I. As Cultivator	551	11.29
II. As Agricultural Labourer	18	0.37
III. In Mining, Quarrying, Livestock, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Plantations, Orchards and Allied Activities	671	13.75
IV. At Household Industry	171	3.50
V. In Manufacturing Other than Household Industry	8	0.16
VI. In Construction	88	1.80
VII. In Trade and Commerce	418	8.57
VIII. In Transport, Storage and Communications	189	3.87
IX. In Other Services	2765	56.69
<b>Total</b>	<b>4879</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Government of West Bengal, Census 1961 : West Bengal  
District Census Hand-book, Darjeeling.



## NOTES AND REFERENCES

## Notes :

- (i) Kipat : A system of land tenure under which an individual obtains the right to hold land by virtue of his membership in a series of nestling kin group, prevailed among tribals in the eastern part of Nepal before the conquest of the part by the Shah Kings.
- (ii) The Census of 1961 divides the general population of Darjeeling district into two broad categories; namely, workers and non-workers of which the former comprises people adopting the following nine types of livelihood:
- (I) Cultivation,
  - (II) Agricultural Labour,
  - (iii) Mining, quarrying, forestry, fishing, hunting and activities connected with livestock, plantations, orchards and allied spheres,
  - (IV) Household Industries,
  - (V) Manufacturing other than household industries,
  - (VI) Construction,
  - (VII) Trade & Commerce,
  - (VIII) Transport, Storage and Communications; and
  - (IX) Other Services.

REFERENCES

1. West Bengal District Gazetteers : Darjeeling, Government of West Bengal, 1980, p. 1.
2. Annual Action Plan 1984-85: Under Integrated Rural Development Programme of District Rural Development Agency, Darjeeling, p. 1.
3. West Bengal District Gazetteers : Darjeeling, Government of West Bengal, 1980, p. 2 and Census 1961, West Bengal, District Census Hand-Book : Darjeeling, p. 10.

4. Government of West Bengal, Plan for Darjeeling Hill-Areas: 1980-85, Mid-Term Review and Annual Plans 1983-84 & 1984-85 ; Volume-I (Darjeeling : Development and Planning Department, Hill Affairs Branch Secretariat), p. 1.
5. West Bengal District Gazetteers : Darjeeling, Government of West Bengal, 1980, p. 4.
6. O'Malley, L.S.S., Gazetteer of Darjeeling District (Alipore, Bengal Government House, 1907), p. 2.
7. Hooker, J.D., Himalayan Journals (London, 1854), pp. 165-66.
8. O'Malley, L.S.S., Gazetteer of Darjeeling District (Alipore, Bengal Government House, 1907), pp. 2-3.
9. West Bengal District Gazetteers : Darjeeling, Government of West Bengal, 1980, pp. 24-25.
10. Annual Action Plan 1984-85 : Under Integrated Rural Development Programme of District Rural Development Agency, Darjeeling, p. 3.
11. West Bengal District Gazetteers : Darjeeling, Government of West Bengal, 1980, p. 35.
12. Annual Action Plan 1984-85 : Under Integrated Rural Development Programme of District Rural Development Agency, Darjeeling, p. 3.
13. Ibid, p. 3.
14. Ibid., p. 7.
15. Census of India, 1981 : District Census Hand-Book, Darjeeling District.
16. West Bengal District Gazetteers : Darjeeling, Government of West Bengal, 1980, pp. 36-38.
17. Annual Action Plan 1984-85 : Under Integrated Rural Development Agency, Darjeeling, p. 7.
18. Ibid.

19. O'Malley, L.S.S., Gazetteer of Darjeeling District  
(Alipore : Bengal Government House, 1907), p. 19.
20. Ibid, p. 20
21. Ibid, p. 21
22. Ibid, p. 21
23. Ibid, p. 21
24. Ibid, pp. 22-23
25. W.B. Jackson, C.S., Report on Darjeeling, Selections from  
the Records of the Bengal Government, No. XVII.
26. O'Malley, L.S.S., Gazetteer of Darjeeling District  
(Alipore : Bengal Government House, 1907), pp. 23-24.
27. Ibid, p. 23
28. Ibid, p. 24
29. Ibid, pp. 24-25
30. Ibid, pp. 25-26
31. Ibid, pp. 26-27
32. Ibid, pp. 26-27
33. Dash, A.J., Bengal District Gazetteer: Darjeeling (Alipore:  
Bengal Government House, 1947), pp. 41-43.
34. Ibid, pp. 42-43
35. Ibid, pp. 42-43
36. Ibid, pp. 42-43
37. Government of West Bengal, Plan For Darjeeling Hill Areas,  
Mid-Term Review and Annual Plans 1983-84 & 1984-85:  
Volume-I (Darjeeling : Development and Planning Department  
Hill Affairs Branch Secretariat), p. 6.
38. Dash, A.J., Bengal District Gazetteer : Darjeeling (Alipore:  
Bengal Government House, 1947), p. 49.
39. Census of Bengal : 1881 : Vol-I (Calcutta : Bengal Secretariat  
Press, 1883), p. 155.
40. O'Malley, L.S.S., Gazetteer of Darjeeling District (Alipore:  
Bengal Government House, 1907), p. 36.

41. Ibid, p. 36.
42. Furer Haimendorf, C. Von, "Elements of Newer Social structure" in Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 82, I-29, Year 1956.
43. Ibid.
44. Caplan, L., Land and Social change in East Nepal : A study of Hindu Tribal Relations (London : Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), p. 3.
45. Ibid, p. 5.
46. See Waci's Report available at the District Commissioner's Library, Darjeeling.
47. Government of West Bengal, Census 1961, West Bengal District Census Hand book : Darjeeling, p. 25.
48. Ibid, p. 35
49. A Techno Economic Survey of the Hill Areas in Darjeeling District (Economic Planning Stream, Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organisation and Siliguri Planning Organisation, Development and Planning (Town and Country Planning) Department, Government of West Bengal, 1975), p. 29.
50. Census 1961 : West Bengal, District Census Hand Book : Darjeeling, p. 33
51. Bandyopadhyaya, N., "Removal of Backwardness in Hill Areas of Darjeeling : A case study of Co-operative Effort", Development of Hill Areas : Issues and Approaches ed. by T.S. Papola; H.S. Verma and others (Bombay Himalaya Publishing House, 1983), p. 334.
52. O'Malley, L.S.S., Gazetteer of Darjeeling District (Alipore, Bengal Government House, 1907), p. 75.
53. Dash, A.J., Bengal District Gazetteer : Darjeeling (Alipore: Bengal Government House, 1947), pp. 120-121.

54. Bhattacharya, B., "A Genetic classification of Settlements and Their Hierarchical order in the District of Darjeeling", Geographical Review of India, Vol. 33-34, Year 1971, pp. 186-87. Henceforth "A Genetic classification of Settlements".
55. Ibid, p. 188.
56. Ibid.
57. Ghosh, Mitra, "A Study of the Functional Character of Rural Settlement in the Darjeeling Himalayas", Hill Development Programmes : Plans and Strategies ed. by R.L. Sarkar (Darjeeling : Indian Institute of Hill Economy, 1983), p. 109.
58. "A Genetic classification of Settlements", p. 189.