

## A Historical Survey of the Jalpaiguri District of West Bengal

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**Abstract:** *In prehistoric times the Jalpaiguri district was a part of the kingdom of Pragyotisha, afterwards called, Kamrup, extended to the Karatoya River. Then the area consisted of large tracts of forests, rivers and hills. Various dynasties ruled over it. Taking the opportunity of the jealousy of the Raikot Royal family of Baikunthapur to the Kock Royal family of Cooch Behar the Bhutanese established their sovereignty over the Duars of Jalpaiguri. In this situation, Cooch Behar Raja Dharendra Narayan applied for aid to the British and thereby the British power came to the region and defeated the Bhutias in the battle of Sinchula, 1865, and therefore formed Jalpaiguri district in 1869. Since the formation of the district up to the time of independence of India in 1947 the territorial figure of it was almost unchanged. Only Patgram, Boda, Pachagar, Tentulia and Debiganj police station of the district were attached to the Rangpur and Dinajpur districts of East Pakistan that is present Bangladesh. On 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2014, Alipurduar Subdivision of Jalpaiguri district emerged as separate district.*

**Keywords:** *Bhutias, British, Duars, Jalpaiguri district, Koches, tracts, war etc.*

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### I. Introduction

The name Jalpaiguri might have evolved from “JE-LE-PE-GO-RI” probably meaning the place to exchange warm clothes, blankets etc., with other essential commodities between Bhutan and

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Jalpaiguri. Again there is another belief that the name of 'Jalpaiguri' has been derived from the two Bengali words viz., '*Jalpai*' which means olive trees and '*guri*' which means a place thereby meaning a place where olive trees are available. The name might as well be associated with the deity of a temple located in the Jalpesh village at Maynaguri police station in the district, where the local name of the deity is Jalpeswar (Lord Siva) of the Hindu mythology. However Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal, situated in the foothills of the Himalayas, is also known as the *Duars* region. Some say that the word '*Duars*' came from the Sanskrit word '*Dwar*' which means 'the gateway' as indeed it is to the hills of Darjeeling, Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. National Highway No. 31 runs across the district towards the North-Eastern States of India and thus the district serves as a lifeline for the eight sisters in North-Eastern India. From the geographical point of view, the district lies between 26°16' and 27°00' north latitudes and 88°25' and 89°53' east longitudes. The district before 2014 was bounded by Darjeeling district and Bhutan in the North, Cooch Behar district and Bangladesh in the South, the state of Assam on the east and on the west by the district of Darjeeling and Bangladesh.<sup>1</sup>

Before the establishment of British rule in India, there was no such district as Jalpaiguri. The area consisted of large tracts of forests named Gorumara forest, Boikunthapur forest, Buxa forest, hills i.e., Sinchula hills, Buksha hills and Himalayan foothills, and rivers such as Mahanadi or Mahananda, Karatoya, Tista, Jaldhaka, Daina, Kumlai, Gilandy, Duduya, Mujnai, Torsa, Kaljani, Raidhak and Sankos.<sup>2</sup> Various dynasties ruled over it. The *Bhutiyas* also established their dominance over the whole Western *Duars* (Door or gateway to enter into Bhutan from the plains) that was to form later on a portion of the district.<sup>3</sup> In the course of historical occurrences the British East India Company established their power over this region and formed the district. In the 'Journals' (Travel Dairy) of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker we get the reference of Jalpaiguri as 'Jellpygurri, a struggling village.....'<sup>4</sup>

## II

### Early History of Jalpaiguri

In prehistoric times the Jalpaiguri district was a part of the kingdom of Pragyothisa, afterwards called, Kamrup, extended to the *Karatoya* River.<sup>5</sup> According to the legend '*Jogini Tantra*', in the

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first century A.D., Jalpeshwar temple was built under Jalpeshwar, the first king of Assam.<sup>6</sup> The next king Prithu Raja set up his capital at Bhitargarh<sup>7</sup> (present Bangladesh). After Prithu, Dharma Pal ruled in West Kamrup up to the Brahmaputra valley. Then the dynasty was changed, Niladhvaj, Chakradhwaj and Nilambar came to power and the first among them founded Kamatapur kingdom, the ruins of which are still to be found in Cooch Behar.

Husain Shah, the Afghan Governor of Bengal (1497-1521 A.D), invaded Kamatapur dynasty and subsequently undertook an expedition into Assam with disastrous results and his failure was followed by an incursion of the Koch tribes.<sup>8</sup> In the sixteenth century the *Koches* under Bhiswa Singha, the son of Haria Mech founded an empire, extended from the upper valley of the Brahmaputra to the boundary of the Purnea district of present Bihar. The Koch kingdom did not last long, but was represented by the Cooch Behar State (presently a district) and two large *Zamindaris*, the *Chaklajat* and the Baikunthapur estate. The *Raikats* meant title of the royal family of Baikunthapur *zamindari* who were a collateral branch of the Cooch Behar family, as the founder of Raikat family named Shiswa Singha<sup>9</sup> was senior brother of Biswa Singha who was the king of Cooch Behar. However Shiswa became Biswa's prime minister and commander of his army; he obtained from him the whole of the Baikunthapur *pargana* wrested from the king of Gour. Thereafter the *Raikats* became more and more powerful. During the reign of Raja Bir Narayan (1621-1625), the *Raikats* ceased to be tributary to Cooch Behar. About 1680 they acted as protectors of the Cooch Behar State. In 1687 they agreed to pay tribute to the *Suba* (Province) of Bengal under Mughals and eventually became *Zamindars* under the British East India Company,<sup>10</sup> as the Company obtained the *diwani* (right to collect revenue) of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II in 1765.<sup>11</sup>

Naturally the big Koch Kingdom fell into decay and nearly the whole of the territory of the kingdom went under Mughals. After a struggle, Patgram and Boda *parganas* of Koch Kingdom went under Mughal control and included in the frontier *Foujdari* of Fakirkundi or Rangpur, and were transferred to East India Company with the cession of the *diwani* in 1765.<sup>12</sup>

Before the formation of Jalpaiguri district in 1869,<sup>13</sup> this area, comprising *parganas* Baikunthapur, Boda, and Patgram, was administered as part of the Rangpur district of present Bangladesh. The Muhammadan farmers rose in revolt against the notorious revenue collector

Raja Debi Singh of Dinajpur (un-partitioned) and he could not suppress the revolt. Therefore British forces were sent against them and finally they were compelled to surrender.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile the *Duars* had passed into the possession of the *Bhutias*, who controlled the whole tract, from the frontier of Sikkim as far east as *Darrang*, and frequently enforced claim of suzerainty over the enfeebled state of Cooch Behar. Since the reign of Upendra Narayan (1714-1763) due to conflicts of the *Koch* Kings the Cooch Behar kingdom became weak, therefore the Bhutanese occupied the border areas of Bhutan and Cooch Behar, namely *Duars*. Being collateral branch of Cooch Behar royal family the *Raikat* family of Baikunthapur had a hidden dream to install their candidate on the throne of Cooch Behar and hence they were jealous and accordingly instigated the Bhutanese to attack Cooch Bihar.<sup>15</sup> After the death of King Upendra Narayan, Debendra Narayan only a child of 4 (four) years old ascended the throne and ran his administration through the ministers, advised by his mother. But after two years, the King was murdered by a Brahmin named Rati Sharma due to a conspiracy of Rajguru Ramananda Goswami. However the security forces killed Rati Sharma and Ramanandra Goswami was sentenced to death by Bhutan Raj.<sup>16</sup>

Dhairjendra Narayan, the son of Kharga Narayan who was the *Nazir Deo* (administrator) of Cooch Bihar became the king in 1764. After ascending the throne, King Dhairjendra Narayan killed *Dewan* (finance minister) Ram Narayan, another son of Kharga Narayan due to the evil counsel of the royal administrators. Due to this action Dhairjendra Narayan was arrested and kept under Bhutanese control, and Rajendra Narayan, the elder brother of Dhairjendra Narayan ascended the throne. After his death in 1772 Dharendra Narayan, the son of Dhairjendra Narayan became king. But the *Bhutiya* king was not satisfied with this coronation and invaded Cooch Behar.

### III

#### Coming of the British and Anglo-Bhutanese Conflicts

In this situation Cooch Behar *Raja* Dharendra Narayan applied for aid to the British through *Nazir Deb* Kharga Narayan and ultimately a treaty was signed between Col. Warren Hastings and the *Raja* of Cooch Behar on the 5<sup>th</sup> April, 1773. By the terms of the treaty the British East India Company agreed to drive out the *Bhutias* from *Duars* of Cooch Behar<sup>17</sup> and rescue the

arrested king Dhairjendra Narayan. In return Cooch Bihar would bear all the expenditure for the war and also be a part of the Bengal Presidency. Moreover Cooch Bihar agreed to pay ½ % (half percent) levy of her total collected annual taxes to the Company. Consequently Cooch Bihar became a tributary state under the British Government.<sup>18</sup>

According to the terms of the treaty the British Company sent a force to assist the *Raja* of Cooch Bihar. Subsequently the invaders were expelled and pursued into their own territories. The fourth Durk Desi (king) of Bhutan Tendzing Rabgye petitioned Lhasa (administrative capital of Tibet) for assistance from the Panchen Lama, who was serving as regent for the youthful Dalai Lama. In correspondence with the British Governor General of India, the Panchen Lama instead punished the Dark Desi and invoked Tibet's claim of suzerainty over Bhutan. Failing to receive help from Tibet, the Dark Desi signed a treaty of peace<sup>19</sup> with the British East India Company on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 1774.

In 1783, Captain Turner was deputed to Bhutan with a view of promoting commercial intercourse, but this mission proved unsuccessful. From this period, little intercourse took place until the occupation of Assam by the English in 1826. It was then discovered that the *Bhutias* had usurped several tracts of low land lying at the foot of the mountains, called the *Duars* or passes for which they agreed to pay a small tribute. However they failed to keep their word and availed themselves of the command of the passes to commit depredations within British territory.<sup>20</sup> Captain Pemberton was accordingly deputed to Bhutan to adjust the points of difference. But his negotiations yielded no definite result; and every other means of obtaining redress and security proving unsuccessful. The Assam *Duars* were wrested from the *Bhutias*, and the British Government covenanted to pay Rupees 10,000 (ten thousand) per annum to Bhutan, during good behaviour, as compensation for the loss. Continued outrages and aggressions were, however, committed by the *Bhutias* on British subjects in the *Duars*.<sup>21</sup> Notwithstanding repeated remonstrances and threats, scarcely a year passed without the occurrence of several raids on British territory headed by *Bhutia* officials, in which they latter plundered the inhabitants, massacred them, or carried them off as slaves.<sup>22</sup>

In the cold weather of 1863, Mr. Ashley Eden, I. C.S., was sent as an envoy to Bhutan, to put a stop to these depredations and outrages and to demand reparation.<sup>23</sup> In April 1864, Mr.

Eden returned from Bhutan and reported the ill-success of his mission. He had failed to obtain from the Government of Bhutan either satisfaction for past injuries or security for the future. He had been subjected to gross insults, and obliged by force to sign two papers, agreeing to make over the Assam and Bengal *Duars* to Bhutan, and to surrender all run-away slaves and political offenders. It appeared that the *Deb* and *Dharm* Rajas were in reality mere puppets, and that the chief power in the State had been usurped by the Tongsa Penlop (Provincial Governor of Bhutan); and that it was the Tongsa Penlop and his faction who had treated the envoy with indignity. On Mr. Eden's return, the British Government at once disavowed the treaty which he had been forced to sign, suspended all communications with the Bhutan Government, and strengthened the police force on the frontier. In June, the British Government addressed a letter to the *Deb Raja* and *Dharm Raja*, announcing the permanent annexation of the district of Ambari Falakata (the Bengal *Duars*), and declaring that the annual payments previously made by the British Government to Bhutan, of Rupees 2,000 (two thousand) as rent for Ambari Falakata, and of Rupees 10,000 (ten thousand)<sup>24</sup> as revenue from the Assam *Duars*, had ceased forever.<sup>25</sup> The letter demanded also the release of all British subjects, as well as subjects of Cooch Behar and Sikkim, numbering in all, it was said, more than 300 (three hundred) persons, who had been detained in Bhutan against their will; and the restoration of all property which had been carried off from British territory, or Cooch Behar or Sikkim, within the previous five years. The letter concluded by stating that, unless these demands were fully met by the commencement of the ensuing September, further measures would be taken to enforce them. To these demands, the *Deb Raja* in whose name all official communications from the Bhutan Government were usually made sent no reply whatever. In August, however, a letter was received from the *Dharm Raja*, offering no apologies for the gross insults offered to the envoy, and altogether ignoring the Government's threat of coercion, but proposing to receive a fresh envoy or to send one himself. This proposition was considered to be out of the question. If the *Dharm Raja* had manifested any intention of liberating the captives or of restoring the plundered property, the proposal to receive an envoy from Bhutan might have been entertained, but as it was, the action of the Bhutan authorities left no option to the British Government but to enforce its demands, and to compel the *Bhutias* to respect the frontier for the future.<sup>26</sup>

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Accordingly, it was resolved to carry out the permanent annexation of the Bengal *Duars*, amounting to an advance north-ward for a distance of twenty to thirty miles along a line of about a hundred and eighty miles in length, so as to command all the passes into the plains; and at the same time to confine the Britishers' occupation to a tract of country which was peopled by a race which had no affinity with the *Bhutias* and had long suffered from their tyranny, but who were closely allied with the people of Bengal, and were expected to co-operate cordially with the British authorities.<sup>27</sup> On the 12<sup>th</sup> November 1864, Government issued a proclamation permanently annexing the Bengal *Duars*; and it was determined that an expedition should advance in four columns, which were to take up their several posts at Diwangiri, Sildi, Pasakha, and Dalimkot. Instructions were also issued that no overtures from the Bhutan Government were to be taken into consideration except upon the following basis:-

[1] That the Bhutan Government surrender all the Bengal *Duars* and the hill territory on the left bank of the *Tista*, up to such points on the water-shed lower range of hills as might be laid down by the British Commissioner.

[2] That the *Bhutias* give up the two documents extorted from Mr. Eden, and send a chief of rank to apologize for the flagrant misconduct towards the envoy.

[3] The surrender of all captives still detained in Bhutan against their will.

[4] That the Bhutan Government enters into a treaty of friendship and fair dealing for the future.<sup>28</sup>

In the event of these conditions being accepted, the British Government offered an annual grant of Rupees 25,000 (twenty five thousand)<sup>29</sup> to be hereafter increased, with reference to the prosperity of the tract annexed, up to the sum of Rupees 50,000 (fifty thousand); but this grant was to depend entirely on the will and pleasure of the British Government, and on the good conduct of the *Bhutias*.<sup>30</sup>

#### IV

#### Defeat of the *Bhutias*

On the 7<sup>th</sup> December 1864, four British columns made a simultaneous advance; within six weeks they had driven in the *Bhutias* with slight loss, and occupied eight or ten of their posts

along a frontier of about 180 (one hundred eighty) miles of difficult and *jungly* (full of jungle) heights. Subsequent to these successes, the civil authorities set to work to introduce rule and order into the *Duars*, to implant confidence in the minds of the inhabitants, and to arrange generally for the administration of the newly annexed territory. They also concerted measures in communication with the military authorities for establishing a strict blockade of the passes, with the object, by cutting their supplies and thus inducing the *Bhutias* to come to terms.<sup>31</sup>

Meantime in the beginning of 1865, the *Bhutias* appeared to have resolved on a bold effort to recover the territory they had lost, and to drive the invaders from their country. They suddenly sent a force along the frontier, threatening the whole line of military posts excepting the western one at Dalimkot. On the 4<sup>th</sup> February 1865, the *Bhutias* so far succeeded in their design as to capture the eastern post at Diwangiri.<sup>32</sup> This was the more surprising as the garrison at Diwangiri had expelled a far more formidable attack which had been made on the 30<sup>th</sup> January. However, on the second occasion, the garrison abandoned its position with the loss of two mountain guns; its retreat was almost entirely unmolested by the enemy. At one other post, Tajagaon, which was apparently untenable, the commanding officer found it necessary to retire, and did so in perfect order. At all the other posts the garrisons held their own, although threatened in force by the *Bhutias*. On the 15<sup>th</sup> March, General Tytler re-occupied the position at Tajagaon, and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April General Tombs re-captured Diwangiri. With these two affairs all active operations ceased.<sup>33</sup>

In this situation the *Bhutias* lost heart, and looked forward for a peace settlement with the British power. Then they were also warned that, unless they acceded to these terms in their entirety, the British force would enter Bhutan in the ensuing cold weather, and exact its own conditions at Punakha and Tongsa, the *Bhutia* capitals.<sup>34</sup> At the same time, preparation was taken for the dispatch of two columns into the heart of Bhutan, one from *Buxa*, and the other from Diwangiri; and the construction of roads into Bhutan territory was conducted with considerable energy.<sup>35</sup> The Bhutan authorities were soon convinced, by the reality of these preparations, and accepted the terms of 1864 with the additional stipulation of the two guns, abandoned in the retreat from Diwangiri and that possession of the Tongsa Penlop should be restored to the British Government.<sup>36</sup> Therefore a treaty of peace known as Sinchula Treaty<sup>37</sup> on these terms was

accordingly concluded on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 1865; and it was fairly anticipated that the material guarantee for the good conduct of the *Bhutia* chiefs which the Government possessed in the shape of withholding payment, either altogether or in part, of the annual grant, would secure the peace of the border and generally put a stop to the raids and scenes of rapine which were of such frequent occurrence in former years.<sup>38</sup> However the war ultimately ended with a complete defeat of the Bhutanese and the British force became victorious in all respects. Bhutan not only lost all the territories which it captured previously from Cooch Bihar and Sikkim and enjoyed for long but also forced to surrender some parts of its sovereign territory in the hills.

## V

### Formation of the District

After the annexation of the *Duars* in November 1865, they were divided into the Eastern and Western *Duars*, the former of which now forms part of the district of Goalpara in Assam. The Western *Duars* was divided into three *tahsils* (term used for a specific area of land for the collection of revenue), i.e. the *Sadar*, comprising the tract of country between the *Tista* and *Torsa* rivers with its head- quarters at Maynaguri; the *Buxa tahsil* extending from the *Torsa* to *Sankos* rivers, with its head- quarters at Alipur; and the *dalimkot tahsil*, which included the mountainous part of the annexed territory. Mr. F.A. Donough, Assistant Commissioner of the British Government, was deputed to Maynaguri for criminal and civil work and was succeeded, after a few months by Mr. J. Tweedie, who was appointed in 1866 the first Deputy Commissioner of the Western *Duars*. Mr. Donough then went to *Buxa* as Civil Officer and was succeeded in 1867 by Colonel Hedayat Ali Khan. In 1867-68 *Buxa* was formed into a Regular Sub-Division. In January 1867 the *Dalimkot tahsil* was transferred to the Darjeeling district and at the same time the criminal jurisdiction of the Titalya Sub-Division of Rangpur, comprising the police circles of Boda, Sanyasikata (now Rangpur district of present Bangladesh) and Fakirganj (now Jalpaiguri), was made over to the Deputy Commissioner of the Western *Duars*, the civil and revenue jurisdiction remaining with Rangpur. This arrangement lasted until January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1869, when the Titalya Sub-Division was separated completely from Rangpur (with the

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exception of the civil jurisdiction) and was united to the Western *Duars* to constitute the district of Jalpaiguri. Therefore it was formed in 1869.<sup>39</sup> Actually the district was created with the Western *Duars* since 1865 and the Jalpaiguri and Rajganj *thanas* of Rangpur district since 1869.

The Deputy Commissioner of Western *Duars* further removed his headquarters from Maynaguri to Jalpaiguri town, on the west bank of the *Tista*, and the district was divided into two Sub-Divisions- the *Sadar*, which included the former Titalya Sub-Division and that part of the Western *Duars*, which lies between the *Tista* and the *Jaldhaka* rivers; and the Falakata Sub-Division which comprised the rest of the *Buxa* Sub-Division, the headquarter of the Sub-Divisional Officer being removed from *Buxa* to Falakata. The headquarters of this Sub-Division were again transferred to Alipur in 1876.<sup>40</sup> On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1870, the civil jurisdiction of the Titalya Sub-Division was vested in Jalpaiguri and Patgram police circle was transferred to the Falakata Sub-Division. In 1874-75 Patgram was attached to the *Sadar* Sub-Division. Jurisdiction list Nos. 13 and 24, respectively, of thana Kaligunj, district Rangpur, and which under Government Notification No. 314 pl., dated 31<sup>st</sup> January, 1935, was included in police station Patgram, district Jalpaiguri<sup>41</sup> and since this change, the Jalpaiguri district had remained unaltered until the independence of India.

On 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947 at the time of independence some parts of the district named Patgram, Boda, Pachagar, Tentulia and Debiganj police station were taken from it and attached to the Rangpur and Dinajpur districts of East Pakistan (presently Bangladesh).<sup>42</sup> Since independence Jalpaiguri district has remained the same in its territorial outline. Only some changes have been made in its administrative zones.

The district so, formed in 1869, bounded in the North by the Darjeeling district and the independent state of Bhutan, in the east by Eastern *Duars*, which forms part of the district of Goalpara of Assam, in the south by Rangpur and Dinajpur Districts of present Bangladesh and Cooch Behar State (presently district) and in the west by Darjeeling district, Purnea of Bihar and part of Bangladesh.<sup>43</sup> The respective areas of the two subdivisions of the district *Sadar* and Alipurduar have varied from decade to decade.<sup>44</sup> It was the largest district of North Bengal, covering an area of 6245 sq km. Again the district can be shown into two tracts in accordance with the land revenue system and agrarian relations namely permanent settled portion, mostly

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situated to the West of the *Tista* comprising Baikunthapur pargana and the *chaklas* (area of tracts) of Boda, Patgram and Purba bhag where the *Jamindari* system was introduced, the second portion of the district was Western *Duars*, declared non-regulated area mostly situated between the *Tista* and *Sankosh* rivers. No permanent settlement was introduced in the Western *Duars* and as it was a non-regulated area, the Government was proprietor of the land.<sup>45</sup> However Jalpaiguri district town and the royal palace of the *Raikot* family was built up at the western bank of the *Tista* river,<sup>46</sup> and the *Sankosh* river separated the district from Goyalpara of Assam.<sup>47</sup>

## VI

### Post Colonial Administrative Blocks of the District

In the post colonial period up to the twentieth century the district consisted of three Sub-Divisions, namely Jalpaiguri Sadar, Mal and Alipurduar. There were in all 17<sup>th</sup> Police Stations in the district. Jalpaiguri (*Sadar*) comprised 6<sup>th</sup> Police Stations viz. Rajganj, Bhaktinagar, Jalpaiguri, Maynaguri, Banarhat (p) and Dhupguri. Mal Sub-Division comprised of 4 Police Stations, namely Mal, Meteli, Nagrakata and Banarhat (p). Alipurduar Sub-Division comprised of 8<sup>th</sup> Police Stations, namely Kumargram, Falakata, Madarihat, Birpara, Kalchini, Joygaon, Alipurduar and Samuktala.<sup>48</sup> There were a total of 13<sup>th</sup> Community Development (C.D.) Blocks in the district which were distributed in the above mentioned three Sub-Divisions. There were four C.D. Blocks of Jalpaiguri Sadar Sub-Division viz. (i) Rajganj, (ii) Jalpaiguri, (iii) Maynaguri and (iv) Dhupguri. Mal Sub-Division consisted of three C.D. Blocks viz. (i) Mal, (ii) Meteli and (iii) Nagrakata. There were six C.D. Blocks in Alipurduar C.D. Block viz. (i) Kumargram, (ii) Falakata, (iii) Madarihat, (iv) Kalchini, (v) Alipurduar-I, and (vi) Alipurduar-II.<sup>49</sup> The district had 40 urban units out of which included maximum part of Siliguri Municipal Corporation and three Municipalities viz. Mal, Jalpaiguri, and Alipurduar. The oldest Municipality in the district was Jalpaiguri Municipality which came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1885. Alipurduar Municipality was compatibly modern and was established on 7<sup>th</sup> February, 1957. The Municipality of Mal came into being in the year 1989. However in the post colonial period there were 12 (twelve) Assembly Constituencies, which were [i]. Kumargram (ST), [ii]. Kalchini (ST), [iii]. Alipurduar

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(SC), [iv]. Falakata (SC), [v]. Madarihat (ST), [vi]. Dhupguri(SC), [vii]. Maynaguri (SC) , [viii]. Jalpaiguri (SC), [ix]. Rajganj (SC), [x]. Dabgram-Phulbari (SC), [xi]. Mal (SC), and [xii]. Nagrakata (SC). Regarding Assembly Constituencies of the district a map is enclosed herewith.

## VII. Conclusion

Thus, it is seen that in the pre-colonial period there was no Jalpaiguri district. Then it consisted of large tracts of forests, hills and rivers. Various dynasties ruled over it. Once it was a part of the Pragytisha or Kamrup, later it became a tributary of Cooch Behar kingdom, again some parts of it went under the control of Mughal Subedar and the Duars were under the Bhutias. Gradually the Bhutanese power established de-facto rule over the whole Duars of the tract as well as Cooch Behar Kingdom. In the course of circumstances the British East India Company was welcomed by the King of Cooch Behar for driving out the Bhutias from Duars and the British power came forward to help the Cooch king. As a result the war of Sinchula in 1865 took place between British and the Bhutia powers. The Bhutanese were defeated and Jalpaiguri district was formed<sup>50</sup> under the British Government in 1869. Since the formation of the district up to the time of independence of India in 1947 the territorial figure of it was almost unchanged. Only Patgram, Boda, Pachagar, Tentulia and Debiganj police station of the district were attached to the Rangpur and Dinajpur districts of East Pakistan (present Bangladesh). However, after the establishment of tea gardens and railway communications the geographical environment and administrative blocks of the district underwent changes. Numerous migrant tribes came to the district and settled themselves as tea garden coolies. As a result the indigenous tribes felt a territorial crisis.

## Notes & References

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<sup>1</sup> Census of India 2011, West Bengal, Seris-20, Part-XII-B, District Census Handbook, Jalpaiguri, Directorate of Census Operation, West Bengal, p.12; In 2014 Alipurduar became a separate district

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- <sup>5</sup> Allen, B.C., E.A, Gait, C.G.H. Allen, H.F. Howard, op.cit., pp.222-223.
- <sup>6</sup> Grunning, John F., op.cit., p.33.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.33.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp.23,24.
- <sup>9</sup> Miligan, J.A., Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in Jalpaiguri District, N.L. Publishers, Siliguri, West Bengal, ,2011,pp.8-9.
- <sup>10</sup> Grunning, John F., p.24.
- <sup>11</sup> Sinha, Narendra Krishna (ed.), *The History of Bengal ( 1757-1905)*, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, reprint 1996,pp. 22-53.
- <sup>12</sup> Grunning, John F., op.cit., p.24.
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