



IMPACT OF REFUGEE: A CASE STUDY IN NADIA DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL

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Nadia or 'Naudia' is famous for its literature, cultural heritage, and historical importance and after all partition and change its demographic features. Brahmin Pandits were associated with intellectual literature discuss knowledge, to do religious oblation and worship. The city was fully surrounded by dense bamboo and marsh forest and tigers, wild pigs, foxes etc used live in this forest. This was the picture of Nadia during the end of 18th century.ⁱ There was a well-known rhyme- "Bamboo, box and pond, three beauties of Nadia". Here 'Nad' means Nadia or Nabadwip.ⁱⁱ

This district was established in 1786. During the partition, Nadia district was also divided. However, according to Lord Mountbatten's plan 1947 during partition of India the whole Nadia district was attached with earlier East Pakistan. This creates a lot of controversy. To solve this situation the responsibility was given to Sir Radcliff According to his decision three subdivisions of Nadia district (Kusthia, Meherpur and Chuadanga) got attached with East Pakistan on 18th August, naming Kusthia district and the remaining two sub-divisions (Krishnagar and Ranaghat) centered into India with the name Nabadwip earlier which is now called Nadia. While studying the history of self-governing rule of Nadia district one can see that six municipalities had been established long before independence. These are Krishnagar (1864), Ranaghat (1864), Santipur (1865), Nabadweep (1869), Birnagar (1869), and Chakdah (1886) oldest municipality in Nadia district. During post-independence Kalyani and Gayeshpur got two municipal bodies in 1995. Moreover, Taherpur and Cooperscamp are Notified municipalities.

The influxes of refugees are slight high than 24 parganas the adjacent district of Nadia. The repercussion of partition has affected very much some of the district in West Bengal among which Nadia is one. It has been reflected in Government's yearly administrative report: "The maximum concentration of evacuees was in 24 Pargansa, West Dinajpur and Nadia."ⁱⁱⁱ In 1947 after the independence Nadia's earlier area has become nearly half; however, because of partition it has huge number of migration influx. Nadia has four stages of migration infused: First, in 1946 when Md. Ali Jinha called for a 'Direct War'. There was a communal riot in Noakhali and Tripura. The Nadia as well as West Bengal started facing a migration influx. Secondly, in 1947 after the disastrous result of partition numerous evacuees came to Nadia. Thirdly, 1964, after the communal riot of East Pakistan the minorities' benign brutally affected left their country. Fourthly, in 1971 during Bangladesh Liberation War being brutally to treat by Pakistan soldiers entered this state.

After partition in 1950s 49.81% people and after Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971s 39.23% people came from East Pakistan (presently Bangladesh) and entered into Nadia District.^{iv} Nadia is adjacent to Indo-Bangladesh border. As a result, refugee concentrates here for their earlier relatives or similar demographic connection.

There are rehabilitation arrangements for the immigrants from East Bengal in 64 areas.^v One year after these places has become populated habitation. Because of the evacuee-influx related problems Chakdah, Birnagar, Taherpur, Bethua, Debogram etc. has turned into a new appearance. With the help of Government aid, land-ownership settlement a vast area in Chakdah, Taherpur, Bethua, Debogram has been rehabilitated for immigrants. A numbers of refugee colonies have emerged. Such as, Pabna colony, Maimanshigha colony, Khosbash Mohalla etc.^{vi} Some Schools have been built by the initiative of local people and with the help of Refugee hard working cultured people. Such as Singhibagan Gosain Daspal Academy (1969), Kamalpur Adarsha Vidyapith (1951), Dhavicha High School (1961).

The refugee had helped to expand the oldest city of Phulia. On the other hand, in 1950 Phulia town has built up including 3 moujas Bouincha, Shukpukuria and Udaipur, at the same time Phulia Polytechnic, Phulia Primary School and general Library have been founded. The town Badkula has formed with the development of local business.^{vii} Like this type of cities made Nadia as ticked populated district.



The weavers coming from Tangail (now in Bangladesh) were engaged in making Tangail Saree. Along with Phulia there were weavers coming from Tangail, Dacca and Pabna viz. basaks and Debnath community refugees started weaving Jamdani, Tangail Sarees as well as general sarees in Nabadweep too. The refugee has started struggle to quest for their lives. As an uprooted influx population engaged themselves anywhere any profession. However, exceptional was Shantipur surrounding area.

It is seen, the peasant refugees took refuge mainly in Karimpur, Tehatta, Cahpra, Krishnaganj and Hanskhali thana are and middle-class refugees spread over mainly in Krishnagar, Ranaghat, Shantipur, Nabadweep and Chakdah town rail station associated area. They mostly boycotted many prejudices, started social effort to break conservative institution. Unhealthy production Beedi has been rapidly spread by the influence Murshidabad. Because, Murshidabad is the adjacent district of Nadia the highest manufactures of beedi.

Sections of refugee are associated with trade and agriculture by the side of the different river bank. The centre of business was located near river banks, because naval transport still did not lose its importance. For example, Nabadeep, Shantipur, Chakdah on the bank of Bhagirathi, Karimpur, Krishnagar on the bank of Jalangi, Krishnaganj on the bank of river Mathabhanga and Hanskhali and Ranaghat on the bank of river Churni. But due to the change of direction of the river the transport of goods has become so less that there was no importance of the above-mentioned places as river ports. As a result of great improvement of railways Krishnagar, Shantipur, Ranaghat, Chadah, Birnagar etc. are getting grandeur around the rail transport. Big markets and shops are all made near rail station area. Even the places near the halt-stations are getting developed rapidly. As an example, Phulia near Shantipur is a small township. Phulia has its dual importance, first it is birthplace of poet Krittibas and secondly, it is one of the resorts of handmade sarees. Shantipur, as being the centre of handloom industry, the weaves coming from East Bengal was inclined to handloom industry has expanded through Phulia. Handloom-Cooperative was founded. As a result Phulia area has become a small town around the rail station. The markets and show emporium near the station are especially worth mentioned. Everyday lost of handloom clothes move from Shantipur and Phulia through railway. Gradually it is going to have a full-fledged from of self-sufficient town.^{viii}

Another job which is totally based on transport depended like train and bus, train station and bus stand. In this concept once more subject can be mentioned that after the partition a big part of refugees start hawking in train-compartments. Each and everything is available in railway compartments. Hawkers keep hocking with lot of items from morning to night. An expanded mobile unorganized area is seemed to be spread over the compartments. Needless to say, most of them are doing this without taking any permission from the Railway authority. Therefore, it is clear that on the one hand and urbanization process has been taken place in Nadia regarding this railway service. On the other hand, likewise a peculiar economic activity is revolving here.

Heavy or small-scale industry did not develop equally from all places in the district. The industries have been grown up in different places of the district. If a map can be drawn it will show that old and hereditary industries have been developed in some particular areas. Such as handloom industry in Shantipur and Nabadiweep, clay- industry in Krishnagar, bronze-brass industry in Matiari, Dharmada etc. however, modern and engineering industry have been centralized specially in Kalyani and Ranaghat areas. This can be said indeed that some special industries have been centralized in some special places. As a result, that special industry has an important part in the economic activities of that area. Thus, it helps to manifest the urbanization.

In the beginning of 1970s, there are 16 power looms-oriented cooperatives in this first. Besides this, there were private owning 1400 power looms working in areas like Ranaghat, Shantipur, Chakdah, Nabadweep, Birnagar, Krishnagar etc. Bengal's handloom saris got expansion everywhere through Tantuja and Tantusree. After many struggles Bengal's handloom saris are competing with other states handloom clothes of India for its quality and design.

The production of the handloom from this district helps to income more within the county and in international market. Clothes, wall hanging crafts, jute-made artifacts and fancy items are exported to Japan, Italy, England, Australia, Denmark, France every year with the help of Handloom and Handicraft Export Cooperation. Very recently it is known that the quantity of the total export in currency is Rs. 2.5 crore.^{ix} In this production huge number of refugee population are engaged.

There are certain centers in the district which are famous for ordinary household pottery. These places include Ranaghat, Habibpur, Nabadweep, Kaitapara, Briddhanpur and Goaj in Krishnagar, Production in this industry is carried on with the help of



simple machineries and tools, the principal raw materials being earth and sand. In 1951, the total number of establishments in being earth and sand. In 1951, the total number of establishments in the district was 187 engaging 548 persons including women and children under 15 years and less.^x There has not been any substantial improvement in the employment situation since, owing to non-expansion of the trade. The artisans usually face competition from light and more durable aluminium and enameled products. From a survey conducted by the State Statistical Bureau, Government of West Bengal, it has been found that most of the establishments of the district sell their finished products directly. In some cases, however these establishments also work only partly for other customers like mahajans and other such middlemen, a part of the sale being affected through these agencies. Most of the establishments are run entirely by the family member. In Ghurni, the north-eastern suburb of Krishnagar, has been famous for several centuries for its manufacture of clay figures and models of remarkable excellence. The industry is carried on by a few men of the Kumar caste and their skill has received with recognition. This trade, however, is on the decline owing to the absence of newcomers in the field. The younger people of the new generation are gradually engaging themselves in other trades or vocations for securing better livelihood. It is becoming difficult for the few artisans who are still engaged in this price of their products in leading more and more people to purchase cheaper handicraft products for room-decoration and such other purposes, the dolls and other models being easily breakable, it is difficult to send them for sale in distant places. The artisans are carrying on the trade in their house and arrange through their ships at Ghurni. The refugee people are joining to make as helping assistant the main artisans. The clay modeling artisans are famous in all over India for their artistic artifacts. Few numbers of clay modeling artisans had gotten presidential award in different years. However, last few years few numbers of refugees received different type of award from different organization.

In the middle of 1963, there was a survey over pottery industry published by statistical Bureau of West Bengal Government. It showed the average value of products of clay was Rs. 783.0. On the other hand, the average income of each family was Rs. 597.23.^{xi} In both cases it was the third place of the whole state. We have seen earlier that the demand of Krishnagar's clay idol is very high. Things are sold items are Rs. 1 lakh per year.^{xii} The small-scale industry departments for sale within the state, even in different places of the country through government sales counter. That means there is an important role of the people associated with clay works in financial activities of the village. Likewise, this has gained the fame as one of the industries of the main cities in the district.

The industry, though of long standing was in a more or less moribund condition and only 16 establishments, 6 manufacturing per, all products of poor quality, were found in Nabadwip town; outside Nabadwip town only 3 establishments were found. There was also a group of 15 units engaged in the manufacture of coarse quality chatai from the date palm leaves in Tehatta and Karimpur police station. They consumed on an average 5.3 mounds of date palm leaves product locally and provided on an average annual income of Rs. 35. In Ranaghat subdivision, out of 71 establishments as many as 33 were located in Cooper's camp, a refugee transit camp, where the refugees had taken to this as a subsidiary occupation.^{xiii}

There is a village called Halapur near Ranaghat of Nadia districts on the bank of river Churni. The identity of the village is 'Village of Silver'. There are 5000 villagers in this village, each house has small industry. Silver ornaments-making continues from dawn to night in almost every house. All villagers are artisans. It 60-70 bhori silver works are done in a month and their income is round Rs. 1000/-. Apart from Halapur, Jafannagar, Ranagnathpur and Aronghata have handful silver ornament makers.^{xiv} A section of refugee artisans of this village works at Gujarat as a diamond cutting migrant labour. They have facing very crucial situation at present condition in Covid-19.

It would be concluded that huge number of uprooted influx people search their lives in different field of handicrafts, business, hawking, small shops, agriculture etc. Lives always try to find out primary needs which are hidden in anywhere. The Bangladeshi refugees had begging hard work for their lives for their new settlement for their new settlement and for their new identity.

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