

POST-INDEPENDENCE DISTURBANCE IN BENGAL A STUDY OF FOOD MOVEMENT IN WEST DINAJPUR

PARTHA DUTTA

Associate Professor and Head, Department of History, Sidho Kanho Birsha University, West Bengal, India

ABSTRACT

The most thrust area of writing history at recent time is the study of local history. As a consequence of the paradigm shift of the historical studies, actual local history can be derived through the in-depth studies of various historical phenomena of the districts. From this insight, through the cross-examinations of the districts of Bengal also may usher the real history or may promote its historicity. In this point of view, as the district of West Dinajpur of West Bengal witnessed so many post-Independence disturbances, particularly in 1950's, this district definitely claims a special attention.

One of the greatest disturbances in the district was 'Tebhaga Movement' in 1946-47 in the eve of the Independence of India. The historic Tebhaga movement unified the rural poor and created a point of inspiration for kisans in the then united Bengal. Another disturbance was the 'Anti-Banga-Bihar-Merger Movement' in 1950's. In the same decade, Balurghat subdivision witnesses a serious and challenging movement which turned into disturbance was the 'Movement against the Shifting of District Headquarters'. The subdivision of the district, Raigunj observed another movement which took a serious place was the 'Refugee Movement' immediate after the Independence.

The most important and significant one was the 'Food Movement of 1959'. In the mid-1950, the severe state-wide food crisis, we witnessed. The movement highly affected Balurghat subdivision. The district of West Dinajpur was severely dominated by the native Zamindars. They were much aggressive towards the refugees and even towards the common people. Their dominance in society and also the political influence were deep rooted and henceforth their exploitation was unrestrained.

KEYWORDS: Tebhaga, Zamindar, Share-Cropper, Michhil