PREFACE

Growing up in the atmosphere of socio-political turmoil of partitioned Bengal I was deeply perturbed from my childhood days. Naturally the history of freedom movement drew my attention. I had the privilege to come across many activists of the freedom movement of twentieth century Bengal and amongst them some were also legislators of the period. Some of my relatives were also actively associated with the freedom struggle. I could not reconcile why in spite of the presence of so many tall persons the catastrophe could not be averted. The history of the period is vast and it could be discussed from different angles. I took the legislative politics of 1937-47 as my research theme as a part of my earlier curiosities. So here the main objective of research is to present the evolving scenario of Bengal politics as it had been reflected in the legislative arena of pre-partition Bengal.

I am really grateful to the important leaders and activists of the period who were kind enough to give me their views. Their recollections helped me a lot.

I am grateful to the Librarians and Directors and their associates of the libraries and the archives where I have worked, notably National Library, Calcutta, Calcutta University Library, West Bengal Legislative Assembly Library, National Archives of India, New Delhi, West Bengal State Government Archives (Writers' Building), Calcutta, Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Library and Museum, New Delhi, Dacca University Library, Dacca, Bangla Academy Library,
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Dacca and Chandannagore Public Library, Chandannagore, Hooghly. I am also grateful to Anisuzzaman, Editor of the Azad (Dacca) for giving me access to the old files of the daily. Though Calcutta was the publishing centre of the daily from its inception (1936) to 1947, copies are not available here.

Last but not the least, for supervising the research work I must express my profound gratitude to Professor Mohit Bhattacharya, Centenary Professor of Public Administration, Calcutta University - presently Vice-Chancellor, Burdwan University.

Calcutta
June 1, 1990. Jahanara Begum
MAP 1  NUMBER OF MUSLIMS PER 100 OF THE TOTAL POPULATION OF BENGAL (AS SHOWN IN THE CENSUS REPORT OF 1931, VOLUME V). DISTRICT BOUNDARIES ARE SHOWN IN MAP 3.
MAP 2  NUMBER OF HINDUS PER
100 OF THE TOTAL POPULATION OF
BENGAL (AS SHOWN IN THE CENSUS
REPORT OF 1931, VOLUME V),
DISTRICT BOUNDARIES ARE SHOWN IN MAP 3
MAP 3 DISTRICTS OF PRE-PARTITION BENGAL

7. Rajshahi 17. Jessore A. Cooch Behar State
10. Dacca 20. Birbhum