CHAPTER V

FORMS AND DIMENSIONS OF THE PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT

In the previous chapter, it has been narrated that the people of undivided Goalpara District started a popular Movement against its separation from Assam. And this was the apple of discord among the indigenous people and the Bengali settlers on the question of the language and the culture of the District and its existence.

Before our Independence, the people of the East of Gauranga adopted Assamese as their medium of instruction, while the West of Gauranga, has Bengali as its medium of instruction in the schools. It was so distinct that Jamdaia, a village, on the East bank of Gauranga had a primary school in which the medium of instruction was Assamese, while other villages of Hakama on the West bank of Gauranga, the Bengali language was the medium of instruction. Assam Sahitya Sabha was very critical of expansion of the Bengali language to the other parts of Goalpara District at 1926 Dhubri Session and 1927 Goalpara Session. The language controversy severely affected the people of Goalpara. The local inhabitants of the District including the tribal were all in favour of Assamese, the Bengali settlers wanted to impose Bengali on them. This controversy strained the various communities of the locality. The local indigenous people astonished on the demand of Goalpara District by various...
political and social organisations of West Bengal. When the question of the reorganisation of the States on the language was on the forefront as the reorganisation of the different States, Goalpara was an Assamese speaking District and keeping it with Assam as its part.¹

In order to sustain the demand of the local people, there were series of meetings, processions, demonstrations, consultation, delegations, conventions, strikes held in the district. Instead of these, other types of democratic means to project the Movement as the popular demand of keeping Goalpara with Assam. Goalpara District Congress Committee and some new organisation came into being and joined the Movement. They were:

a) Goalpara District Immigrant Muslim Association;

b) Anjuman-E-Islam, Dhubri District Unit;

c) Goalpara District Zamindars Association;

d) Mahila Association of Goalpara District;

¹Sinha, S.C - Presidential Speech (Written) Reception Committee, 63rd Annual Session, All Assam Sahitya Sabha, Naranarayan Kshetra, Bishnupur, 1997, published by its sub-committee.

Bargohain, H.; Deka, Dr. N. - "Sarat Chandra Sinha" Biography 1997. P. 94.
These organisations took part in the Movement and held meetings, consultations and Seminar within their respective communities.2

The people of the District took some means to demonstrate the protest against the separation of Goalpara. There were three notable processions launched as the means of protest and vindication of public opinion. Of the three processions, the largest one which started from Bongaigaon was...

2. Source - Written interview taken, during visit at home to Bazlul Basit and Jamini Baruah, the two participants gave these data and accounts of the Movement. Mr. Bazlul Basit, continuously elected M.L.A. from South Salmara Constituency (1954-55), Baruah, a notable social worker and literate of the District.
Gandhi Maidan and concluded at Dhubri Gauripur Maidan covering a distance of 130 K.M. The procession consisted of all types of vehicles, such as Jeeps, Cars, Buses, Trucks and Bi-cycles etc. About 150 vehicle, 800 Bi-cycles, phonetoons, posterings, wall-writing and lakhs of people engaged and participated in the procession. The people also carried flattened rice, Molasses, fried rice and cake with them in their tiffin. The mass-people spontaneously joined the procession. At the starting point of the procession, it looked like the brooks and tributaries with heavy water flows to its mother river - the Brahmaputra, during monsoon season. The National Highway (No. 37) seemed like Brahmaputra where the mass people spontaneously flown. Wall-writing, posterings, leaflets etc. also taken a means geared up the people of the District. Even, the then Deputy Commissioner Lakeswar Sarma, Superintendent of Police Jacob Abraham and the Deputy Inspector of Schools Hariprasanna Tamuly, indirectly helped the people Movement for its grand success.

The people used some slogans in the procession to demonstrate unity, sentiment and the depth of integrity of people of the District. Sarat Chandra Sinha, the then District President of the Congress Committee, spearheaded the Movement, wrote the slogans to be used and guided the whole.

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procession to the ends. The slogans which were used demonstrated are as follows:

1. GOALPARA - FALIBO NOWARA, FALIBO NOWARA
   (Cannot be cut off. Cannot be cut off.
2. JIYE KHUJIBO FALIBO .. OLAI JABO LAGIBO, OLAI JABO LAGIBO
   (who wanted to cut off), (he must go out, go out.)
3. BONGOR DABI - ANGOSHED.. HOBOI NOWARE, HOBOI NOWARE.
   HOBOI NOWARE
   (Bengal's Demand- Separation) (Cannot be, Must not be.
   Never be)
4. ASAMiYAR ADHIKARAT .. HASTAKHEP NACHALIBO. NACHALIBO.
   (On the right of Assamese) (Don't interfere, Don't interfere.

Every slogan echoed the sentiment of the people and united them for mighty Movement against separation. Virtually, the procession demonstrated the actual public opinion as well as the threat who acted against the interest of the District.4

Some small procession also started at the same

time, came from interior places of the District and merged with the main procession. Of the three main processions, one of them started from Booirhat, Western most border of Goalpara District and Eastern border of the West Bengal State to Dhubri via Golokganj. The procession met at Gauripur with the largest procession that was coming from Bongaigaon. Dhubri increased the strength. Bhurban Pradhany, D. Chakravorty, J. Adhikary led the procession. The biggest procession started from Bongaigaon, entered into the Dhubri and gathered at Dhubri Gauripur Maidan. All the ethnic groups, immigrant Muslims as well as workers in the fields and factories of entire District except the circle of vested interests rose to a man participated in the procession. There was held a mammoth meeting on 2nd May, 1955. More than one lakhs of people gathered. Mangobinda Chakravorty presided over the meeting. Sarat Chandra Sinha mainly addressed the meeting. In his address Sinha pointing out the people and cautioned, "West Bengal wanted to cut off your own hand. Will you give your hand?" Gathering people quickly replied "Never! Never!!" and repeatedly clapped. He delivered lectures for three and half hours; clearly make out the importance of gathering, significance of procession, purpose of the demand of the District by West Bengal, laws of separation etc. The people of the District openly expressed their opinion by hands up. In the meeting, people promised that the movement against separation of the District would continue until and unless the purpose of the Movement achieved. The meeting started at 2 P.M. and ended at 5.
P.M., leaflets, booklet, pamphlets etc. also distributed among the people. Sarat Sinha remembered the people that separation or cut off of the District would be equal to suicide of Goalparia. In the meeting people excited more and more. This excitement vindicated the unity and integrity of the people of Goalpara. 5

In the beginning, meeting was all peaceful, well organised and disciplined. But, while returning from the meeting there were outburst of violence in many places. Violation stated when some anti-social elements threw a bottle with full of acid on the participants of the procession in front of Town Hotel in Dhubri. Many people seriously wounded. The processionists also started violence by damaging sign boards written in the Bengali language, shops and threatening the separatist people. The leaders of the Movement tried their level best to control the mob. Instead of these, the angry people of the Movement again damaged book stationary and grocery shops, the Matri Mistanna Bhandar tea shop of Bilasipara. In Chapar, shop of Makhan Talukdar.

5. Source - Interview: Mayzuddin Sk., Dalim Kumar Mehto Assistant Teacher and Head Master of Chapar Higher Secondary School, participated in the Movement, remembered and accounted as such in 5.4.95 during discussion in their home.
Gyananendra Devnath and Jagadish Das destroyed and looted signboards and other shops of Bongaigaon also damaged and looted by the excited people. Before starting the procession all the signboards written in Bengali scripts damaged. Other minor incidents also took place everywhere in the District and almost all the signboards of Bengali scripts were damaged. Out of jealousy, some miscreants let out a few dogs in the street of Dhubri and Gauripur town, wrapping the body of those dogs with paper and wrote—"Sarat Chandra Sinha". Due to this insult to the leaders of the people of the Movement, the immigrant Muslims and the local indigenous people became very furious. The Law and order situation was uncontrollable. The then Deputy Commissioner of the District—Lakheswar Sarma, Superintendent of Police—Jacob Abraham, who were sympathetic to the Movement controlled the situation very tactfully; yet 19 persons were arrested and later on released.6

Another notable procession was held in the South Bank of the Brahmaputra. Bazlul Basit of Jamadarhat, the leader of the Muslims was also the president of "Goalpara District Immigrant Muslim Association", and Abdul Karim.

6. Source—Interview: Riazuddin Miah, Ambika Charan Choudhury, the two active participants remembered and explained the situation during interviews, on 5.2.96 at their home.
Secretary of this Association took the main initiative in the meetings, conventions, processions etc. held within the community. Both uprising the immigrant community and made out about the consequences and future loses of the community, to be separated the District. The other members of the Association, as such Alimuddin Mulla, Rohisuddin, Abual Hun, Pandit, Manir Miah, Wahab Ali were accompanied with Bazlul Basit. In South bank, a similar procession (like Bongaigaon to Dhubri) was held in South Salmar to Fakirganj and ended at South Salmar Bazar where there were used festoons, posters etc. Slogans were the same as used in the largest procession from Bongaigaon to Dhubri. After arriving, a public meeting was held under the presidentship of Prafulla Chakravorty of South Salmar. Mainly Bazlul Basit addressed the meeting and made out the consequences of separation of the District, administrative linguistic problems of the local people. Prafulla Chakravorty in his presidential address also said in the same line.

The whole District was surcharged, after the three notable processions. By following these processions, the mass people spontaneously bring out hundreds of small processions in their respective localities, both in North and South bank of the Brahmaputra of the District. The people held discussion, consultations, debates and meetings in

7. Notes - Bazlul Basit, Alimuddin Mullah, explained the accounts during interviews.
every villages, bazar, clubs, library, educational institution and tea-shop by instruction of Sarat Chandra Sinha. Immediately, the Movement became popular and the people of the District promised to foil the demand of West Bengal. It was the virtual uprising of the people of Goalpara District. The Movement became so popular that the District Committee termed it "People's Movement". In the Goalpara Sub-Division of the District, Khagendra, Sahadat Ali, Jalandar, Ratneswar Das and Anadibala Rava took the initiative, organised and went to door to door of the people. In Kokrajhar and Gossaigaon, Biren Brahma Patgiri, Kali Charan Brahma, Mohini Mohan Brahma, Jagadish Brahma, Amritlal Basumatary were so active and mobilised the people against separation.

To be geared up the People's Movement some leaflets, booklets and the copies of News-Papers etc. were published and distributed among the people; such as "Sach Asom Basir Prati Ahban" (leaflet), published from Guwahati by Sailen Sarma, "Goalparar Dabi" (daily paper), published from South Salmara, edited by Bazlul Basit, "Asom Grash".

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8. Source - S.C. Sinha: the architect of the Movement, the then President of the District Congress, explained the definition of the People's Movement of the time during discussion on 3.4.51.
Koriboloi Pachim Bongor Apocheesta” (booklet), 1955 edited.

Sibanada Sarma, "Asomiya Angoshed" (1st May, 1955, leaflet)
published and edited by Umoruddin (popularly known as Haider Saheb) daily News-Paper "Goalparar Batori" published from Goalpara town, edited by Subhas Chakravorty, "Pranta Ba" by Sibendra Narayan Mandal (Gauripur). These leaflets, booklets and the News-papers contributed much to increase the consciousness of the people of the District against separation. "Deka Asom" by Ambika Giri Rai Choudhuri strongly supported the movement.9

Goalpara District Congress Committee and its local units - Mandal Congress, maintained the co-ordination among the various ethnic groups, social and cultural organisations and persons of other parties who individually took part in the Movement. Sarat Chandra Sinha and Sayed Ahmed Ali were president and Secretary of the District Congress Committee (1952 - 59) respectively who had ultimate responsibility, in the success of the Movement. Sinha played the vital role to achieve the ultimate goal of the People’s Movement.10

9. Source - Interview: Jamini Kanta Sarma, Senior lawyer Dhubri Court in active participated and the then student leader account from his memories at his home on December, 1995.

10. Source - Interview: Sayed Ahmed Ali Secretary, District
The Bengali Hindu community as a whole in the District under the banner of Dhubri Unit of All Assam Parishad lodged complaint before the All India Congress Committee against the District Congress Committee, particularly on its president - Sarat Chandra Sinha, making him responsible for the entire violence and torture on them. The West Bengal-based papers particularly "Ananda Bazar Patrika" badly criticised the Movement and termed as "Bengali Kheda Andolan" (Bengali Hindu Expelled Movement). The Bengali language-based papers and other media of communication were succeeded to create public opinion against the Movement, Bengali those who were repeatedly said that it was only the "Bangal Kheda Andolan", launched by the Assamese chauvinists people of Goalpara District; "Gana Chabua". Bengali based paper published from Dhubri also played a vital role against the Movement among the same community.

It is notable that Manikata Das and Harsha Congress, Accounted this situation during interview. Ahmed Ali at that period appointed as the Cabinet Minister, Government of Assam (1973-76), now his age is 82 years living in Guwahati permanently.

11. Source - Dwijendranath Chakravorty, another lead of the Movement remembered the facts during
Goswami of Assam visited Darjeeling for their personal works immediately after the Movement. They were beaten by the Berni seeking people for the sake of revenge of "Bangal Andolan". The Annual Session of All India Congress Committee held in 1955 at Behrampur. Nobody represented Assam due to the expertise view against the People's Movement of Goalpara District. The leaders of Assam Pradesh Congress Committee did not actively participate in the Movement, but moral support given in it. So, they did not participate in the Behrampur Session. After getting allegation, the All India Congress Committee took serious views of the outburst of violence and sent its General Secretary, Nayar to enquire into the matter. Atulya Ghose, treasurer of All India Congress Committee also accompanied with Nayar and observed every fact in connection with the Movement. Accordingly, he inquired into the matter and submitted his reports. After that the All India Congress Committee asked Pradesh Congress Committee to take action against District Congress, particularly on its president - Sarat Chandra Sinha made him responsible for the act of violence that was committed during the Movement. Accordingly, Assam Pradesh Congress Committee drew the "Disciplinary Action Proceedings". Sarat Chandra Sinha properly replied. Keeping in view of the reply of the explanation submitted by Sinha, he had interview and long discussion at Bishnishipara Sahitya Sabha Session.
visited Delhi, where he stayed for more than two months. During his stay in Delhi, All India Congress Committee organised series of discussions with the leaders of West Bengal including the Members of Parliament, like Purba Mukherjee, Atulya Ghose, Ashok Sen etc. Sinha vividly discussed with them about the situation of the District, sentiment of the people and nature of the Movement. The leaders were satisfied with the discussion and ultimately convinced. Resulting in the acceptance of reply, the "Disciplinary Action Proceeding" was later dropped. Sinha also regretted for the act of violence that was reluctantly happened in the Movement. It was also noted that the President of All India Congress Committee U.N. Dhevar, accompanied with Sinha during his tour in the various States of India. He gathered sufficient experience about the qualities of good leaders' and practical knowledge.12

Visit of States Reorganisation Commission:

In pursuance to the People's Movement, two of the three Members of the States Reorganisation Commission, K.N. Panikar and H.N. Kunzru visited Goalpara District, with a view to study the situation and spot verification in 19 May 1955. On way to Dhubri, the Members of the Commission stopped

12. Source - Interview and Discussion with Sarat Sinha Borgohain, Homen and Deka, Dr. N. - "Sarat Chandra Sinha" (a short life history), 1973, P.17, Guwahati.
for few minutes at North Salmara and in Chapar Higher Secondary School. The people of both the locality welcomed the Commission with festoon hung on the 37 National Highway. The local people of Chapar used slogan against separation which was "Goalpara District — Part and Parcel of Assam". The slogan wrote by Naresh Mitra who was more excited against the demand of separation. After that, the Members of the Commission seated at the then Dhubri Local Board Conference Room and started to meet the leaders of all social-political organisations and also important intellectuals. Sarat Chandra Sinha introduced the leaders of all organisations and individuals with the Members one after another. The Hon'ble Members called for one by one to express their opinion in favour of or against the separation of the District and its merger with the West Bengal. During interview all except one, expressed their opinion against the separation of the District by submitting memoranda before the Commission. The following organisations submitted memoranda against the separation:

I. Goalpara District Congress Committee,

by Sarat Chandra Sinha and Sayed Ahmed Ali, its President and Secretary.

II. Goalpara District Zamindars Association,

Ajit Narayan Deb and Prabhat

13. Tisimuddin Ahmed of Chapar the then Student leader of the District described the situation during consultation with him at his home on 3.2.95.
Chandra Baruah, its President and Secretary;

III. Mohila Association of Goalpara District by Rani Manjula Devi as its President;

IV. Goalpara District Rajbonshi Kshatriya Sammilan - Bhuban Chandra Pradhan and Jadavananda Adhikary, President and Secretary;

V. Revolutionary Socialist Party - Pramit Chandra Baruah as its Secretary;

VI. Goalpara District Association by Dinan Chandra Baruah, Pratham Nath Chakraborty, Jogen Mandal and Giyasuddin Ahmed (Old Giyas) the then Member of Parliament;

VII. Goalpara District Cultural Association, Umaruddin on behalf of the organisation;

VIII. Immigrant Muslim Association of Bazlul Basit, Abdul Karim, Abdul Hussain pandit, its President, Secretary and one of its Members submitted their memorandum before the Commission;

IX. Anjuman-E-Paigam-E-Islam, Dhubri led by Khan Bahadur Sahabuddin as its leader;

X. Communist Party of India - Giyasuddin
Ahmed, Hiren Sarma and Alacd... Sarkar;

XI. Goalpara District Tribal Council
Rupnath Brahma, Biren Brahma Patgiri, Mohini Mohan Brahma, its President, Secretary and its one of the Members.

XII. Dhubri District Scheduled Cast Association - by Rabindra Nath Choudhury and others;

XIII. Dhubri unit of Goalpara District Sabha - Dinesh Ranjan Sarkar as President;

XIV. Goalpara District Nath-Jogi Sanmilita
Khagendranath Nath, its President;

XV. Goalpara Zila Chatra Parishad - Nripendra Chandra Das and Subhas Chakravorty as its representatives;

XVI. Mangovinda Chakravorty - Vice President
District Congress Committee Submitted memorandum to the Commission personally.

Memorandum Submitted in Support of Separation:

XVII. Dhubri Unit of All Assam Bangla Parishad - Ramani Kanta Borah its President the then a great Inof Dhubri Head Quarter Court;
Taking all the memoranda from the interested parties, the Commission asked only two organisations.

1. Dhubri unit of All Assam Bangla Parishad, its President and other leaders;

2. Goalpara District Immigrant Association – its President, Secretary and one important Member to express opinion.

The Members of the Commission asked Ramani Bose, Vice President of All Assam Bangla Parishad and the President of Dhubri Unit of All Assam Bangla Parishad to express his opinion about the Movement and their stand regarding Goalpara District. Bose expressed his opinion in favour of separation of the District from Assam and to merge it with West Bengal State. About Movement, he argued that the District Goalpara should be separated and to merge with West Bengal. He also argued that the Movement launched was against the Bengali Hindu Community of the District and driven away from it. Not only gave opinion but also put forward these particulars during discussion with him.


Reajuddin Ahmed (68), the then student leader (Belongs to Immigrant Community) has given these particulars during discussion with him.
forward arguments to establish their demand of separation. In his arguments he tries to confirm his opinion that the majority of the people of the District were Bengali including the Bengali speaking immigrant Muslims who were migrated from various districts of East Bengal only before fifty or hundreds year, settled in the District and subsequently in the entire Assam. They were originally Bengali by mother tongue. He also put forward many documents in favour of establishing his arguments; such as:

a) Old Assembly proceedings in which the debates of the Members, elected from Goalpara District were made in the Bengali language.

b) Produced all land documents of the District which were written in Bengali.

c) He cited the correspondence of Court in which also used the Bengali language.

d) He placed other examples, such as latter-correspondence, old hand write marriage registrations, vouchers and slips of the Hat-Bazar to prove the case.

e) He also submitted the list of educational institutions which were originally of Bengali medium, only a few years.
Sarat Chandra Sinha, at that time, was sitting with the Member of the Commission and observed very carefully the situation.

Thereafter, the Commission took the interview and evidences from the leaders of the "Goalpara District Immigrant (Muslim) Association". Bazlul Basit, and Abdul Hadi and hazi Abdul Hussain Pandit appeared before the Member. These immigrant leaders firmly expressed their opinion against the separation of Goalpara District from Assam and to remain a part of it. They argued that the immigrant Muslim agriculturists had migrated from Eastern Bengal about fifty to Hundred years ago and gradually changed their mother tongue from Bangali to Assamese and tried to assimilate into the main stream - local Assamese, with a view to peaceful co-existence, social security and for economic survival. They also argued that their children were also getting education through Assamese medium. The entire immigrant community after Independence, accorded their names as

15. Source - Interview: Abdul Karim, Senior Advocate. Dhaka Court and Secretary Immigrant Association reminded the facts during interview and discussion at Ohel Bar Chamber on 3.2.94.
Assamese and the mother-tongue as Assamese language in the first Census of India, 1951. Over and above, by dint of having Assamese, all the Bengali Muslim immigrants also became a major part of Assamese community. Expressing much like, the leaders vehemently opposed the transfer of the District and it would be kept at any cost with Assam. Members of the Commission astonished that "how a community or class of people could change their mother-tongue within fifty to hundred years or accepted one language by surrendering their original one". The Hon'ble Members confused but practically seen during the visit at Dhubri.16

The migrated Muslims were conservative to their religious teachings than their language and culture. The chief reason behind the acceptance of another language for their religious teachings, from Prophet Hazrat Mohammed the 622 A.D., spread from Madina (Saudi Arab). The ethical teaching was - "Umma yahibba", i.e. "You should love the country where you are living and assimilate with its environment by retaining your fundamental religious teachings. So, the Muslims of any part of the world may accept any

16. Source - Bazlul Basit and Abdul Karim, the two immigrant leaders still living (age 72;75 years) remembered the accounts during interview - in 13.5.94 and in 14.5.94 respectively.
language without any religious obstacle.  

When Hazi Abual Hussain Pandit, one of the responsible members of the Immigrant Association had been asked by one of the Members (H.N. Kunzru) of the Commission about his identity by putting some questions: "What is your mother tongue?" He replied, "Amago Matri Bhasa Assaimma. Amago Ma Bangali Asal, Amra Assaimma Hoya Besi." (Our mother tongue is Assamese, our father and mother were Bengali, I became Assamese). The Member again asked supplementary question, "Now, in which language you are speaking?" He again replied, "Aahane Assaimma Bhasai Kotha Koitesi." (Now, I am speaking in Assamese). Ramani Kanta Bose, was a reputed lawyer had been observing the situation. Immediately, pointing out to the Members of the Commission, "He does not speak Assamese but Bengali. How he became Assamese?" Soon, Chandra Sinha also had been observing the interviews too soon he also replied, "Whatever might be the case, he (Hazi Abul Hussain (Pandit) knows, what is his mother-tongue?" Thereafter, Commission did not allow any putting further question. Thus, ended the interview of Pandit. The argument of Sinha seemed to convince the Members of the Commission.  

17. Source - Riazuddin Miah (68), retired Head Master, F.A.A., High School, Alomganj, a participant as student leader in the Movement.  
18. Source - Bazlul Basit, Abdul Karim, Riazuddin Miah (68)
In addition to this arguments, the memorandum of the Vice President of the District Congress submitted personally before the Commission also refuted the claims of the West Bengal Congress Committee and the Dhubri Unit of the Assam Bangla Parishad and others. The important arguments were:

1. That after the Partition of Bengal, a great exodus of the Hindus of Pakistan to India, but also of the Muslims of Assam (mostly of Goalpara) and West Bengal in Pakistan took place. The Hindu refugees were rehabilitated in West Bengal, Assam, Bihar and Orissa according to plan and the quotas prescribed by the Central Ministry. Subsequently, however, the Nehru-Liaquat Ali pact caused a wholesale migration of the Muslim refugees from Pakistan to Assam – mainly to Goalpara – to respective houses. They got full possession of their land. On the contrary, the Muslims of West Bengal did not return to their houses except a very negligible number of them. So, there has been a scarcity cultivable land in Goalpara, but so much in West Bengal on account of the rehabilitation of the displaced persons. A thorough survey was made by the authorities. Whatever 'Khas' land was available in the nook and corner...
these districts was settled with the new comers - the refugees, even when our indigenous land less people are yet loitering as 'Borgadars.'

2. Cultural and Linguistic affinities:

"To my humble opinion, culture in its higher form as its aesthetic and ethical manifestation can not be isolated and kept within the boundary of a country less within a Province. But if we consider culture having regard to the habits, customs and social life performed by the people, we find as a fact that the people of Goalpara and other parts of Assam have the same culture and have almost no affinity, worth the same, with West Bengal."

It is no exaggeration to point out the fact that the indigenous people of Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri were under the Koch Raja of Old Kamrup. The vast tract of land lying between Sadiya in the North East and Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri and a portion of Rangpur in the South-West are still culturally one with the people of Assam. Though the political line of demarcation of Assam and West Bengal is between Goalpara and Coochbehar in the West of Assam, it is my humble opinion that the boundary of Assam in the West.

should not have been what existed now; as on the basis of culture, the real line of boundary can vividly be traced out including Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri in Assam.

The indigenous people of Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri still use 'Tambool' and 'Pan' and eat 'Khar' as a diet and perform the vedic rites and ceremonies following the system of the 'Khannasakh' system of the 'Yoyurveda' by the priests of Kamrup, similar to the Assamese Hindus. No 'Bhat' priest of Bengal has yet been able to breath through this system of culture in the above mentioned districts of Bengal.

The presence of the Assamese made of Religious-worship performance of 'Bhaonas' (religious dramas) and singing of 'Kirtan' in Assamese form of sacred 'Nam' and 'Kirtangha' of Assam in the temples Bheladanga and Madhupur Satras of Coochbehar give evidence of the spread and continuance of Assamese culture up to Coochbehar. So, if reshuffling of Bengal is deemed necessary in cultural line, I think, Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri should be annexed to Assam if the natives of these district desire it themselves.20

Language

The late Dr. Banikanta Kakati thesis on the da...
opment of Assamese language from the Koch or Raibeni dialect of Coochbehar under the patronage of the Royal Court of Coochbehar is an authority stating that this bonshi dialect is from the Assamese language.

In Bengali language the negative follows the verb, while in Assamese language and also in the dialect of Goalpara, Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri the negative precedes the verb. Some instances given below to justify the statement:

**English**
1. I do not go.
2. I do not eat.

**Bengali**
1. আমি জাবনা (Aami Jabona)
2. আমি নেজাউন (Aami Nejaon)

**Eloquent:**

**Assamese**
1. মূঘ নামাচ (Moi Najaohn)
2. মূঘ নামাচ (Moi Nakhaon)

**Dialectary:**
Coochbehar,
Jalpaiguri and
Goalpara

1. মূঘ নামাচ (Moi Najaohn)
2. মূঘ নামাচ (Moi Nakhaon)

Without going further to the philological controversy, it is enough to state that the whole of the District of Goalpara and its people including tribals who are original inhabitants, the Muslim migrants and the refugees have Assamese as the medium to instruction in all the primary school in rural urban areas. In the secondary stage
Assamese is the medium of instructions, though in addition to it a provision for optional Bengali, Garo, Hindi and other languages have been made. So, any change due to the transfer of Goalpara to West Bengal will cause a great setback to progress in education and thus the inevitable change in language will disturb the existing place and progress without any benefit to West Bengal.

Strategic Importance and Communication etc.

Goalpara, Garo hill and Cachar are the border districts of Assam. So their strategic importance with reference to communication and defence is the matter mainly with the Centre and is never overlooked by the Central Government from the day of Independence till now. The State of Assam has ably functioning with the administration of these areas in all matters under the directives and guidance of the Central Government to the entire satisfaction. This is no doubt that the occasional border troubles and difficulties of communication may occur. But that is natural in every front and will however be dealt with and adjusted under the carefully prescribed plan which is being partially worked out by the State under the able guidance of the Centre. Mere transfer of certain areas of Assam to West Bengal is no guarantee for the betterment. Therefore unnecessary disturbance in the existing order is likely to

create undesirable difficulties, if not chaos, causing an extra burden to the Centre, like that caused by the reference question hanging as an Albatross.

The argument that, because Goalpara was once excluded by the British Raj in Bengal for a temporary period, so it should again be transferred there, it is absolutely untenable as much as the British Government’s claim on India on the same ground. Even on more strong ground, we do not claim Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri which once formed part of Kamrup (Assam).

Greater Bengal, by the annexation of even the smallest part of Assam will surely make Assam issue in vogue and cause of unemployment not only among those in the provincial job, but even the local teachers of the District of Goalpara will be thrown out of employment due to the inevitable change of the medium of instruction from Assamese to Bengali in the Schools.22

The "Kamatapur" originally ruled by Kocheswar Biswa Sing and his elder son Naranarayana. At the later period, the Kingdom divided into several parts among the offsprings and legal heir. After our Independence, of the two parts of original Kamatapur Kingdom remained with Assam.

22. Chakravorty, M. - Ibid, P.5
the heart of the Kingdom with its Capital Coochbehar ruled by Maharaja Jagaddipendra Naranayan Bhup Bahadur, 1st Maharaja of Coochbehar. The Coochbehar Kingdom merged with the Indian Union on the 28th August, 1949 with an agreement between the Government of India and the Maharaja of Coochbehar. After that, Coochbehar Kingdom made only a district of West Bengal State. Another part of Coochbehar Kingdom, Rangpur remained with East Pakistan. Most of the people of Koch-Kingdom was Koch-Rajbonshi. The language and culture of original Kamatapur Kingdom was Rajbonshoi-dialect. At the later period, the Rajbonshi-dialect known with various names - Deshibhasa, Goalparia, Koch-Bhasa etc.

The demand of Kamatapur State created at the time of the Partition of India. The demand raised by the Raja of Sidli - Ajit Narayan Deb and Zamindar - Prabhat Chandra Baruah. But the Government of India did not accept the demand. During the visit of States Reorganisation Commission at Dhubri, in connection with the People's Reorganisation Movement, the Zamindar's Association headed by Raja Ajit Narayan Deb, Zamindar Prakitish Chandra Baruah, Pratibha Kumar Chakravorty and Sontosh Kumar Baruah again took the opportunity for the creation of "Kamatapur State". They had submitted a memorandum before the Commission to create "Kamatapur State" by comprising the District of Goalpara, Garo Hills, Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri and a part of Darjeeling districts. They argued that the District of Goalpara and
was under the Kamatapur Kingdom. The administration of the District frequently divided into various administrative divisions during British India, and at length, it included with Assam. Historically proved that the Kamatapur region was culturally, linguistically and socially integrated. Yet the demand of Kamatapur was a legal demand of the people of Goalpara. But they did not launched movement for getting support of the people of the District. Some of the people in Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri supported the Movement but there was not created any movement.23

The Members of States Reorganisation Commission visited Assam in May, 1955. During the visit, the Commission stayed in Guwahati and met various political and social organisations and took memoranda from them. Most of the memoranda opposed the separation of Goalpara District from Assam. These were:

A. Bijoy Chandra Bhagawati, General Secretary Assam Pradesh Congress Committee, submitted a memorandum before the Commission on behalf of the Congress Party in May, 26, 1955.

Assam Pradesh Congress Committee examined the terms of references of the Commission in relation to the conditions.

23. Source - Interview: Jadavananda Adhikary, Riazuddin Miah, Dwijendranath Chakravorty, Gaurikanta Brahma were the active participants of the People's Movement of 1955, explained the demand of Kamatapur State when inquired.
in Assam and submitted to the Commission of the Pradesh Congress's views on them.

The Assam Pradesh Congress Committee opposed such moves either to form a separate state with Manipur, Tripura joined with certain parts of Assam or to take some areas from Assam for inclusion in West Bengal. Such moves are not only harmful for the State and the people of Assam but also for the Union and the People of India as a whole. Assam Pradesh Congress Committee did not press for its claim for merger of Coochbehar with Assam but wanted that the will of the people of Coochbehar of Assam should prevail in this matter, and that will be determined by democratic methods.

B. Raghunath Choudhury and Harendranath Baruah, President and Secretary and thirty four others, on behalf of the Assam State Reorganisation Conference, consisting of different parties as well as non-partymen of the State of Assam, submitted a memorandum to the Commission in the 14th May, 1954. The memorandum consulted on the terms of reference on

the Commission and opposed the demand of West Bengal on the parts of Assam. On the contrary, Conference demanded that Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling should be merged with Assam on the historical, cultural, geographical unity with Assam and to maintain integrity and unity of Assam as a whole.

C. Umesh Chandra Sarma and Ambikagiri Raychoudhury submitted a memorandum before the Commission on behalf of the Assam Jatiya Mahasabha in 20th May, 1954, emphasising the historical, cultural, economical unity of Assam as well as of the people of Goalpara.

D. Kulakanta Das, Secretary and other seven members of the Gauhati Lawyers' Association, submitted a memorandum in the title, "The Case For Assam Before The Commission", in May, 1955, considering the different factors - historical, linguistic, cultural, economic and administrative. The territories of the reorganised state of Assam should consist of the present State of Assam including the North Cachar Frontier Agency, the district Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling and the part of C state of Manipur and Tripura.

E. Nalinibala Devi and Atul Chandra Hazarika, President and Secretary, Assam Sahitya Sabha and other six members Nilomoni Phukan (Ex-President), Biswanath Rajbongshi (Silchar), Devendra Chandra Das (Goalpara), Paragdhar Chandraha, Satyandranath Sarma and Maheswar Neog presented a memorandum before the Commission in the 10th May, 1955, et
Gauhati. The claims based on, mainly from the historical, cultural and linguistic view-points. Assam Sahitya Sabha beg to advance the modest and legitimate claims for the reconstitution of the State of Assam:

(i). By keeping the present area of State of Assam, as at present constituted intact:

(ii). By completely integrated the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) with the State of Assam, as originally proposed by the Hill Sub-Committee of the Constituent Assembly.

(iii). By amalgamating the district of Coochbehar now in West Bengal, with Assam:

(iv). By amalgamating the district of Jalpaiganj and Darjeeling, now West Bengal, with Assam, subject to the will of the people:

(v). By integrating the present part-C state of Tripura and Manipur with Assam, provided that their people so desire and if the Commission consider it desirable from the standpoint of administrative convenience and the unity security of India.25

tion with Assam and with the districts of West Bengal's Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling and adjacent to the State of Assam.

The Government of India have accepted these features to the correct and their authenticity should no longer be challenged.26

During stay in Guwahati, some committees of the ethnic people of the North-Eastern region submitted memorandum before the Commission by claiming "Autonomous State", "District Council", "Union Territories" etc., based mainly the cultural, linguistic and economic interest.

Most of the memoranda of the state level organisations, vehemently opposed the separation of Goalpara district from Assam and to merge with West Bengal. On the other hand, the aforesaid organisations demanded the inclusion of the districts of West Bengal - Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling. An analytical study of the Commission's Report, made on the basis of spot verification and on memoranda collected from the various political and social organisations and from individuals are examined in the next chapter.

Lakhs of people participated in the People's Movement for its grand success. We included a list of persons those who were actively participated in the main programme of the Movement in Appendix – D.