There are various accounts about the origin of the name of "Goalpara". These are: (i) During the region of Deva Kings of ancient Kamrupa (11th Century). Goalpara was under the administration of a Deputy administrator named Iswara Ghosa. It is said that he was influenced by the religious ethic of Buddhism and became too generous to his subjects. He granted a plot of land to Brahmin of the then Gwalittippika district which it may be presumed, formed a part of the modern District of Goalpara. There is a general belief that the present name Goalpara is, perhaps, derived from Guwahatippika, which, literally means Gwali village or milkmen's village. (ii) there was a big Char-reforming of alluvial land on the bed of river near the confluence of the river Manas with the mighty Brahmaputra, which, in course of time, became a suitable place for cowherds. Many cowherds "Goals" as they are called, settled in the Char referred to for grazing their cattle, and the place came to be popularly known as "Goaltuli". It is believed that the name Goalpara, is derived from the term "Goaltuli" in the corrupt form. (iii) The District was named after the Goalpara town which
became the headquarter of the District during British regime. Taking all these together, we may come to the conclusion, that the place came to be known as such as the Goals lived there. Thus, the name Goalpara is associated with the vernacular term 'Gwali' or 'Goal' which means milkman.  

Origin of the District Goalpara under East India Company:

Goalpara District had never been a separate political entity under its own king, and its history has to be considered in connection with that of the various states of which from time to time, it formed a part. It was originally included in the ancient Hindu Kingdom of Kamrupa which is mentioned in the Mahabharata, and which at one time occupied North-East Bengal and a great part of which is now known as the province of Assam. In 1822, the Company Government for the administrative convenience an administrative unit in the name "Goalpara" was established with the headquarters at Goalpara. It lies along with the banks of the Brahmaputra river, extending from 25° to 27° North latitude, and from 90° to 90° East longitude.

Goalpara has experienced several changes of juris-


diction since first came under British rule. The permanently settled portion was originally part of the district of Rongpur. In 1822, it was formed into a separate district known as North-East Rongpur, comprising the Thanas of Goalpara, which Dhubri and Koraibari with headquarters at Goalpara, which together with the Garo Hills frontiers, was placed in-charge of David Scott to promote the desirable object of reclaiming the Garo mountaineers and other rude tribes on the frontiers, and to adopt measures for freeing them from any dependence of the Zaminders.\(^3\)

Frequent Transfer of the District to Various Administrative Divisions:

After the cession of Assam in 1826 by the Yandaboo Treaty, Goalpara was annexed to the Assam Valley Division. For the convenience of the administration, Assam was divided into two parts, namely Upper Assam and Lower Assam. Rongpur was the capital of the Upper Assam and Guwahati was of the Lower Assam. After the expulsion of the Burmese, David Scott was given the charge of the Lower Assam and Colonel Rechards was in-charge of the Upper Assam. However, David Scott, as


Gait, Sir Edward - A History of Assam, P.299;
Barpujari H.K. - Assam in the days of the Company, P.1 (Foot-note)
an administrator, was to retain in-charge of the administration, both civil and criminal justice, revenues and to act as the Superintendent of Police. The area of the District is about 4,104 squire miles, exclusive of the unexplored Garro Mountains. It is founded partly on survey data, and partly, where survey has not reached, on conjectural estimate. It will be seen that the population is estimated at 141,638 souls, and the area of waste and jungle is recorded at 3,427 squire miles. (in 1826).

Robertson T.C. succeeded Scott as the agent to the Governor General in April, 1832. On Robertson's recommendations in March, 1833, the supreme Government accorded its approval for the division of the Province into four districts—Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang and Nagaon; over each was placed a Principal Assistant (P.A.) vested with the power of a collector, Judge and Magistrate.

During the early period of the British rule, Assam was administered under the Government of Bengal by a Commission.

4. Lahiri, Dr. R.N.—The Annexation of Assam—P.P. 235-38.


The Governor General of Bengal was assisted in the task of the administration of the Assam Valley by the Commissioner stationed at Gauhati. The first Commissioner of Assam was appointed to assist the Commissioner, who was also stationed at Gauhati. The six districts of Assam Valley viz., Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, Darranq, Kamrup, Nagaon and Goalpara were placed in charge of a Principal Assistant for it with a number of subordinates. There was also a separate civil-judicial establishment consisting of a Principal Sadar Amin, six Sadar Amin and Seventeen Munsiiffs.

War Between the British Government and the Bhutias: Annexation of the Eastern Duars:

The history of Eastern Duars, a strip of country trying at the foot of the Bhutan Hills, differs in some respects from that of the reminder of the district.

These Duars extended from the river Mannas, on the east to the river Sankosh, on the west, and comprised of five tracts, viz. Bizni, Sili, Chirang, Ripu and Guma. These Duars covered an area of 10,04748 acres or 1569 s.q. miles.

7. Dutta Baruah, Promodnath - Glimpses into the History of Assam, P-314
8. Mali, Dr. D.D. - Revenue Administration of Assam, 117.
In 1864, after the Bhutan was, the five Duars of Goalpara altogether called it as "Eastern Duars" and created a separate district with official head-quarters at Dotma.\(^7\)

**Goalpara Under The Kochbehar Commissionership:**

In 1967, when the Bengal Commissionership of Coochbehar was formed, it, with the newly acquired "Eastern Duars", was included in that Commissionership. In the following years, the judicial administration was restored to the judicial Commissioner of Assam, but the executive control remained with Commissioner of Coochbehar until the formation of the Chief Commissionership in 1874.\(^{10}\)

With regard to the revenue administration, in 1870-71, the Eastern Duars were settled for a period of seven years, Bizni was settled with the Zamindars of Khaustaghat and Habraghat, Sidli with the Raja of Sidli, Chirang

9. Sarma, Sibananda - Goalpara Zilar Ithias, P.153
10. Gait, E.-Ibid, P.299,
Saikia, A.R.-Ibid, P.11,
with the occupied in possession, and Ripu and Guma with the Zamindars of the neighbouring estates of Chapar and Ghurla respectively. The settlement effected in all these Duars except Guma was ryotawari. In Guma, the settlement was Jotedari. In a sense, the settlement in Guma was also ryotawari. Because the tenants of the Jotedars or superior tenants were defined and the rents paid by the Jotedars were collected by farmers.

The periodic settlement which was introduced in 1870-71 had been given good bye. A change in settlement procedure can thus be seen after the creation of the Chief Commissionership of Assam.11

The British Government effected a radical change in administration of certain hill tracts after the annexation of Assam. The unrestricted intercourse which formerly existed between British subjects in Assam and hill tribes living across the frontier, frequently led to quarrels and sometimes serious disturbances. This was specially the case in connection with the traffic in rubber brought down by the hillmen, for which there was great competition. The opening out of tea gardens beyond the borderline also at a time involved the Government in troublesome disputes with the frontier tribes in their vicinity.

In order to prevent the recurrence of these difficulties, power was given to the local authorities by the Inner-Line Regulation of 1873 to prohibit British subjects generally, or those of specified classes, from going beyond a certain line, laid down for the purpose, without a pass or a license issued by the Deputy Commissioner containing such conditions as might seem necessary. As it was not always convenient to define the actual boundary of the British possessions this line does not necessarily indicate territorial frontier, but only the limits of the administered area; it is known as the "Inner Line" and, being prescribed merely for the purpose, it does not in any way decide the sovereignty of the territory beyond. Such a line has been laid down along the northern, eastern and south-eastern borders of the Brahmaputra valley. There was also formerly an "Inner Line" on the Lushai marches, but it has been allowed to fall into desuetude since our occupation of the Lushai hills. Planters are not allowed to acquire land beyond the "Inner Line", righter from the Government or from any local chief or tribe.

The Inner Line Regulation was the first law promulgated in Assam under the authority conferred by the Statute 33 Vict., Chapter 3, which gives to the executive government of India a power of summary legislation for backward tracts, such laws are called Regulations to distinguish them from the Acts, or laws passed after discussion in
the legislature.12

Separation of the Garo Hills Area From Goalpara District:

We have seen that the Garo Hills were treated as part of Goalpara during the first few years of British rule. At this time, the Garo were a terror to the people of the plains. It was decided to appoint an officer to the change of the hills, and, in 1869 they were formed into a separate district with headquarters at Tura.13 When the daily mail streamer service was inaugurated, about a dozen years later, the headquarter of the Goalpara District were removed to Dhubri, which was made the steamer terminus.14

Goalpara Under The Chief Commissioner's Province (1874-1904):

The Commissioner of Assam was subject to the authority of Governor General at first and than the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal.15 The inconveinices of governing

12. Gait E.- Ibid, P.335-36,
Dutta, Debabrata - History of Assam, P.71.
13. Gait E. - Ibid P.317,
15. Dutta Baruah, P.N.- Glimpses in to the history of Assam, P. 315.
Assam as an appanage of the unwieldy province of Bengal had long been recognised. It was remote and difficult of access and few Lieutenant Governors even visited it. The local condition were altogether difficult from those which prevailed in Bengal, and were quite unknown to the officer responsible for the Government of that province, who had not the time, even if they had the indication, to make themselves acquainted with them. But the patronage was valuable, and proposals for its severance were always vigorously opposed until Sir George Campbell become the Lieutenant-Governor. That strenuous ruler, thought he took a greater personal interest in this out-of-the way tract than any of his predecessors had done, speedily become convinced of the impossibility of carrying on the administration of Bengal on the system which the prevailed. He was strongly of opinion that the position of the Bengal Government should either be raised, by amalgamating the Board of Revenue with it, or lowered by the looping off some of its more remote territories. The Government of India preferred the letter alternative, to which Sir George Campbell assisted; and, on the 6th February, 1874, the district which now form the Province of Assam, with the exception of Sylhet and of tracts subsequently acquired, where separated from the Government of Bengal. On the same year Sylhet was incorporated in the new Province of Assam. Shillong was set-up as the Capital of the
new Province.\textsuperscript{16}

Thus, the province that emerged was an amalgam of four disparate elements:

(i) the preliterate hills districts, speaking diverse tongues;

(ii) the five Assamese speaking districts of the Brahmaputra Valley, together known as Assam proper;

(iii) Goalpara of the same Valley where the Bengali and the Assamese cultures overlapped; and

(iv) the two Bengali-speaking districts of the Surma Valley—Sylhet and Cacher.\textsuperscript{17}

In regard to the revenue administration, under the Chief Commissionership of 1874, the District of Goalpara and Eastern Duars also included. During the time of promulgation of Assam Land and Revenue Regulation in 1886. The Zamindars of Bizni, Mechpara, Parbatjuar, Chapar, Gauripur, and Karai-bari, in accordance with the permanent settlement regulation of 1793, they realised the rents Rs.11,414, annually. They were only six Zamindars were not reduced. The terms and conditions were —


\textsuperscript{17} Guha, Dr. Amalendu - Planter Raj to Swaraj: Freedom struggle and Electoral Politics in Assam,1826-1947.P.28
(i) The rent paid to the Government would be the same for ever;
(ii) If anybody became unable to paid the fixed rent in time the Zamindari would be auctioned;
(iii) The Zamindari would be inherited;
(iv) Any claim on the settled Zamindari could claimed only by Zamindaris.

In spite of the terms and conditions, there were no revenue realisation on "Devattar" land i.e. revenue free land.

To the Eastern Duars, there were five Mauzas—namely—Guma, Ripu, Chirang, Sidli and Bizni. Guma and Chirang were unsettled Mauzas like the Mauzas of other districts of Assam. But in 1885, Bizni Mauza was settled for 10 years to the Bizni Raja and Sidli Mauza to Sidli Raja. These terms and conditions would be further extended.18

It is a moot point whether the Bizni estate in Goalpara even came under the decennial settlement which was afterwards made permanent, or whether the annual payment made by its owner is not rather of the nature of tribune, but for all practical purposes the whole of the Goalpara district

may be regarded as settled permanently, except the Eastern Duars, or the northern submontane tract taken from Bhutan after the war of 1864. Three of these Duars are absolute property of Government, the rates are lower, but in other respects they are managed in the same way as the districts of the Brahmaputra Valley proper. The other two are settled with the proprietors of Bizni and Sidli estates.\(^\text{18(A)}\) The following statistics indicates the details of permanently settled estates, and a detailed map also included in the appendix A.

### Detailed of Estates

The following statements gives detail with regard to various permanently settled estates:

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<tr>
<th>Name of the proprietor</th>
<th>Name of estate</th>
<th>Area in Sq. mile</th>
<th>Estimated cultivated area in acres</th>
<th>Revenue demands in Rs. a.p</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bizni Habraghat and Khutaghat</td>
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<td>Gauripur Rani Ghurta, Jamira, Makrampur and Aurangabad</td>
<td>423.54 147006</td>
<td>3299.11.0</td>
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\(^{18(A)}\) Gait, E.- A History of Assam, P.344
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Rent</th>
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<td>Kalumalpuara</td>
<td>54.98</td>
<td>17787</td>
<td>1706-11.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gola Alamganj</td>
<td>13.24</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>21-5.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kayarpar</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13.8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noabad Iaturi</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>1431</td>
<td>11.12.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dhubri</td>
<td></td>
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<th>Rent</th>
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<td>37.163</td>
<td>2.1.5-10-0</td>
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<td>Taluk Goalpara</td>
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<td>1680</td>
<td>59-14-0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dekhoya</td>
<td></td>
<td>73</td>
<td>25.0.0</td>
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<td>Dhar Brahmaputra</td>
<td></td>
<td>118</td>
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<td>39034</td>
<td>2235.8.0</td>
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<th>Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Rent</th>
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<td>Chapar Kasbha</td>
<td>201.49</td>
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<td>603.13.0</td>
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<td>Gila</td>
<td></td>
<td>442</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>620.8.0</td>
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<th>Village</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
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<td>Parbatjoar</td>
<td>275.89</td>
<td>18962</td>
<td>547.40.0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>275.89</td>
<td>18962</td>
<td>547.40.0</td>
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<th>Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Rent</th>
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<td>Koraibari 12</td>
<td></td>
<td>13,246</td>
<td>- - -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do 4 annas Share</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,971</td>
<td>- - -</td>
</tr>
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Mechpara Machapara - 393.21 37.163 2.1.5-10-0
Zamindar Taluk Goalpara - - 1680 59-14-0
Dekhoya - - 73 25.0.0
Dhar Brahmaputra - - 118 45.0.0

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Chapar Kasbha 201.49 11248 603.13.0
Gila
Kazipara 442 22.6.0

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Parbatjoar 275.89 18962 547.40.0
Koraibari 12
annas share - 50.34 13,246 - - -
Do 4 annas Share - - 1,971 - - -

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** The compensation paid by Government of account of loss of market dues exceeds the land revenue assessed.

The religious was as that the 44 percent of the total population in 1901 were Hindus, 28 percent were Mohammedans and 27 percent others. 19

The formation of the Chief Commissionership led to a marked improvement in the Government of the province. The Commission was strengthened by the addition of a number of trained civilians from Bengal, and the proceeding of the local affairs were more closely and efficiently supervised. Every branch of the administration was overhauled, and many

necessary reforms were introduced. Special enactments were drafted to provide for local needs, and the uncertain maze of incomplete and conflicting executive instructions was replaced by clear and precise rules framed under those enactments and deriving these from the force of law.  

For some years after the creation of the province the Chief Commissioner had no Commissioner to assist him. But the steady increase of works rendered it more and more difficult for him to perform efficiently his duties as head of the administration and, at the same time, to exercise direct control over the proceeding of the district officers. Accordingly, in 1880, he was relieve of the later duty in the districts of the Brahmaputra Valley by the Judicial Commissioner or, as he was now called the Judge, of those Commissioner of a Division in Bengal.  

Goalpara Under The Administration of the Eastern And Assam Province (1905-1911):

Lord Carzon, the Governor-General of India divided Bengal on the 16th October, 1905, and formed a new province "The Eastern Bengal and Assam", the Dacca. Rajshahi and Chitagang division of Bengal were added to Assam and the

21. Ibid. P.341
last Chief Commissioner was Sir J.B. Fuller who was become the first Lieutenant-Governor to administer the new territory with Capital at Dacca and the Shillong as the summer Headquarter.22

As the Shillong was made the summer Headquarter of the province, which beside being a Sanitatirioum lies between the Assam Valley and the Surma Valley.

During this period serious attempt were made for opening up the Country by the expansion of communications joining important place, construction of railways, and the introduction on Western methods of self-Government like municipalities and local Boards and also the spread of Western education. The health of the Country was also looked after establishment of hospitals and dispensaries and by the efforts to eradicate epidemics. It as at this time that first college was opened in Assam in 1901.23

The Presidency of Bengal at one time consisted of besides Bengal proper, Bihar, Orissa, the whole of the United Province including Delhi, portions of Central Prov-

22. Souvenir—Northeast session, AICC, Jawahar Nagar, Gauah-
ti, 1976—PP.34-35;
Prasad, Dr. Rajendra—Divided India, P.270.
23. Marbaniang, Iscot—Assam in a Nutshell, P.52
ince, Chota Nagpur and Assam. "Enormous population and area of Bengal, evergrowing importance of Calcutta, constantly increasing congestion of business in Calcutta Secretariat, in ability of the head of the Government to give personal attention to such a big province" were the factors which brought forth suggestions at different time, for a reorganisa­tion of this Presidency.24

Available official and private papers leave no doubt that one major objective of Curzon Plan was "to split up and there by weaken and solid body of opponent to our rule.25

He sought to destroy the "noncent nationalism in Bengal by dividing the Bengali speaking people and taking every advantage of the separatist tendencies of the Mohamme­dans of the Province. The full text of the resolution of the Government was Published in the Official Gazette of India on 12 December, 1903.26

Inevitably the announcement of the Partition Scheme was followed by prayers, protestations and demonstra­tion throughout the Province of Bengal. The Indian National

25. Guha, A. - Planter Raj To Swaraj, P.71
Congress in its annual Sessions, in 1903 and 1904 respectively protested against the preposterous scheme. Presiding over the Congress Session in Bombay, Sir Cotton Henry denounced the Plan as "the most arbitrary and unsympathetic evidence of irresponsible statesmanship."

Curzon was not the man to be unnerved by population agitation and pressure. He was declared to carry out the scheme of partition became a fait accompli on the 16th October, 1905. The Province of "Eastern Bengal and Assam" came into being "consisting of an area of 1,06,540 Square miles and a population of 31 Millions souls." Sir Fuller J.B., the Chief Commissioner of Assam, assumed charge of the new Province as Lt. Governor at Dacca. A Legislative Council and a Board of Revenue consisting a two members were given to assist the Lt-Governor; the jurisdiction of the Calcutta High Court, was however left undisturbed. To win the confidence of the people, soon after his assumption of new office, Fuller paid a visit to Assam. In reply to an address of new welcome presented to him by the Gauhati Municipality on 1 November 1905 he said that he had no doubt that the new changes had resulted in the laws of Assam's individuality, but the enlargement of the Government would be beneficial to the people of Assam.

The Partition was a "Great National Disaster" to the people of Bengal and latter resolved with grim determination to meet challenges with mighty agitation. A Programme responding to the call of the Bengal leaders, protest meetings were held at Dhubri, Gauripur, Goalpara, Gauhati and Dibrugarh. In a public meeting at Goalpara presided over by Sahab Abdul Aziz took resolutions renewing Swadeshi for carrying on the agitation till partition was annulled or modified were passed and the first being moved by a Mohammedan. But the Mohammedan population of East Bengal had generally held aloof from the anti-partition agitation as few could foresee that Bengal would be partitioned again.

Again, Goalpara Under Chief Commissioner's Province (1912-20):

On account of serious agitation against the Partition of Bengal, the Province of "Eastern Bengal and Assam" was dissolved and Assam was constituted again a separate Province under the Chief Commissioner - the first being Earle Archadle - in April, 1, 1912 which continued till the

formation of Assam as a Governor's Province. This act, was done in a "darbar" held in Delhi, December, 1911. His Majesty George V, King Emperor, announced "the creation at as early a date as possible of a Governorship-in-Council for the Presidency of Bengal of a new lieutenant Governorship in Council administering the areas of Bihar, Chota Nagpur and Orissa and of Chief Commissionership of Assam. But, Assam reverted to a Chief Commissioner's Province with a Legislative Council of its own at Shillong. The resolution of "Status quo" by itself was a welcome relief of the Assamese and the local press hailed with joy the decision of the Government.

But, like Sylhet; Goalpara too once formed a part of the Bengal Presidency before 1874. A section of the people of Goalpara particularly of the permanently settled areas, felt unhappy like the Sylheties, and almost on identical ground wanted reunion with Bengal. It was the Bengali employees serving under the Zamindars who spearheaded this separatist movement in the Goalpara District by completely

31. Mabarnieng, Iscot - Assam in a Nustshell, P.52;
   Dutta, D.B. - Ibid, P.60(Chepter-XII);
   Dodwell, H.H.-The Cambridge History of India Vol.- VI , P. 239.
indentifying themselves with the Bengali culture and ignor­ing the sentiments of indigenous people who generally speak­ing Assamese. Enjoying the patronage of the Zamindars, like Baruah Chandra Probohat of Gauripur, the Bengali intelligent­sia formed the Goalpara Association in 1918 to fight out the issue. The Government was, however categorical on its stand: "As majority of the people of Goalpara Sub-Division are Assamese or speaking Assamese whereas, in the Dhubri Sub­Division there is a minority who are in similar case. On this ground alone it is impossible to contemplate separating this District from Assam.33

Goalpara With Assam : Under The Governor's Province (1921):

Edwin Montague, the Secretary of the State for India, came to this country to ascertain the Indian opinion in November, 1917. A delegation of Assam Association pleaded before him in Calcutta on 6 December for the political advancement of Assam on a "Par" with the major Provinces.34 So, a further change occurred early in 1921 when in accordance with the provinces of the Government of India Act, 1919, Assam was constituted a Governor's province.35

34. Guha, A.- Planter Raj To Swaraj, P.112.
35. Ibid., P.338.
From the early period, the relation among the Zamindars, Jotedars and tenants was not satisfactory, regarding their terms and condition; but when the time had gone the terms and conditions of the Zamindars, Jotedars and tenants were changed.36

In 1926, A.J. Haine was once appointed more special officers on duty to draft a Bill on the Goalpara Tenancy, in pursuance of the Committee's work, introduced in 1927 in the face of dogged opposition from Zamindars and Jotedars, the Goalpara Tenancy Bill emerged through the Selection Committee stage in a diluted form and was presented for the Council's consideration on 4 March, 1929. The Bill granted occupancy rights to tenants over any land under their continuous cultivation for a period of 12 years or more. An infractuous attempt to get this provision dropped could master only four votes. The Bill also provided that in no case should the rent be enhanced by more than three annas in a rupee at one time. The Swarajist attempt to limit such enhancement to annas was defeated. On 12 March, the House voted 26 to 5, to pass the substantive Bill as amended. All Goalpara Zamindars voted with the officials for the Bill, while the Swarajists were decided among themselves.37

37. Guha, A.- Planter Raj to Swaraj, P. 201.
In another installment constitutional reforms was effected by the British Parliament, by the Government of India Act of 1935, Provincial Autonomy was introduced in all the Governor's Provinces, including Assam. This system of Government continued till India attained her Independence on 15th August, 1947. During Partition of India, Goalpara District remained with the Province of Assam.

After the Independence of India, several attempts were made regarding Land and Revenue Regulation, the Assam Land Revenue Regulation (Amendment) Act 1947. The abolition of Goalpara Tenancy Act of 1929 in 1951, The Assam Non Agricultural Urban Areas Tenancy Act, 1955 etc.

Frequent Change of Administrative Divisions and Its Impact On Tradition and Culture:

The victory in the battle of Plassey in 1757 laid the permanent foundation of British East India Company in Assam, P.F. 316,317.

Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. And subsequently in 1765, East India Company acquired Dewani on Bengal Bhihar and Orissa. Calcutta made the headquarters from where the Company had been running their civil, criminal and judicial administration. The East India Company did not import all service personnel and other official from Britain and appointed from within their administrative jurisdiction. Bengali Hindus took this advantages and had been appointed in the various departments of the Company and subsequently trained them for efficient administration. Gradually, the Company extended their administrative jurisdiction in the north, sought, west and the east of India.

Inflow of Service Personnel and Businessmen to Goalpara and to the East:

The frequent administrative changes from one division to another division by the Company's Government in India was made for their own convenience and interest. The District Goalpara, an administrative unit of Dacca Division was frequently changed. But its impact on its tradition and cultural was tremendous and developed a new trend in the district. Later on, this new developing trend created a controversial problem and social tension.

Before creating the district of Goalpara for their administrative unit, the area of three Thanas - Goalpara, Dhubri and Kokrajhar which was hitherto, a part of the district of Rangpur in Bengal where the land and revenue administration had been running with Lord Cornwallis's Settlement. After creating a district in 1822, with headquarters at Goalpara and subsequently changes to Dhubri, the land and revenue administrative system were not basically changed. The British occupied Assam in 1826 and Goalpara was placed under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Assam. Hence, it became the bordering district of the Bengal Presidency and the westernmost district of Assam Province. In the mean time, Goalpara became permanent District of Governor's Province of Assam till Independence. In the mean time, we discussed about the nature of changes and their characteristics of administration.

On account of the frequent changes, there has been a certain amount of internal movement of population within the country from West to East Bengal and back again, from East Bengal to North Central Bengal and from both these tracts to North Bengal.41

From 1773 to 1912, Calcutta served as the capital of British India, giving the Bengali people and the Bengali

41. Das, D. - Kamatai Language, P.26;
language a significance and centrality unique in history. Every extension of British power at this period beyond the north-east frontier of Bengal meant an incredible push and recognition to the Bengali languages. The British civil officers of the Company serving anywhere in Bengal Presidency were required to pass in Bengali. The British, again needed, trained officials to man the Raj in the annexed territories and this functional need was served by the novel system of colonial administration. 42

Early in British administration, the British sought to make use of high ranking officials from the Ahom Government, especially in revenue administration and the judiciary. But these officials did not fit into the Anglo-Mughal administrative structure created by the British in Assam. They had never kept written records; even judicial proceedings were conducted without recording the statements of witnesses, complaints, or defendants. Moreover, the new administrative offices and titles created by the British, such as "Tahshildar" or district revenue collectors, were not based on indigenous Ahom administrative structures, but

42. Kar, Makhanlal- Linguistic Situation in North East India, (article) edited by Mrinal Miri, 1982, P.12
Marcus, F.- Political Development and Political Decay in Bengal. 1971,P.14;
Hazarika B.B. - Political History in Assam, P.447.
were adopted from British Governance in Bengal. It was no wonder, therefore, that the British increasing imported trained Bengali officers to work in Assam. David Scott, the agent of the East India Company in Assam, expressed his concern that Ahom and Assamese functionaries were rapidly losing their position of wealth and power as more and more Bengali came in, he "was equally aware of the extreme difficulty of finding local officials component to serve the company." 43

During the occupation of Goalpara District, the British civil officers brought the Bengalis for the smooth running of their colonial administration of the British civil officers with Bengali and their dependence on the Bengali functionaries that account for the inflow of population from the district of Sylhet, Decca, Mymensing and Rangpur into the region. 44 First they moved into administrative positions. Then, since the Bengali Hindus were among the first social group in India to study at the British created missionary and government colleges, they entered the modern professions. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the doctors, lawyers, teachers, journalists, clerks, railway and post-office Officials, as well as Offic-

43. Weiner, Myron - Sons of the Soil, P.92.
ers of the state government were Bengali Hindu migrants.45

In Goalpara, the amalaha of Mughals were replaced and appointed those officials who were loyal to the British administration in both the sub-division of the district. Not only service personnel but also the business men came and been living in adjacent to the administrative headquarters - Dhubri and Goalpara. In inspite of this inflow of personnel, the Zamindars of the District, except the Raja of Sidli also imported service personnel from Bengal. Along with them, the business men, artists, painters, carpenters, blacksmith, goldsmith etc. also came and permanently settled in the bazar, town of the District.

The important posts were held by Bengali Babus. After all, in Goalpara District the post of Talukdar, Hoy Chowdhury, Sarkar, Adhikary, Nayeb, Mazumdar, Chaudhuri, etc. of the Zamindaries were mostly filled up by the Bengali Hindus46. In some towns in Goalpara District, the Bengalis constitute over 40 percent of the total population. Another way of looking at it is that only 5 percent of the Assamese

45. Weiner, Myron - Sons of the Soil, P.93.
people in the Brahmanputra Valley live in urban areas, as compared with 40 percent of the Bengalis.\footnote{Weinar, Myron - Sons of the Soil, P.P. 94,95.} Instead of these, the most of the Zamindars built alternative residences in Calcutta City, for the betterment of communication and maintain close relation with the British Indian Central Headquarters. But they came scarcely to their Zamindans except on account of revenue collection. During stay at Calcutta for long time, the Zamindars and their big tenants learned and gathered knowledge about Anglo-Bengali language, culture and tradition and subsequently practiced the same in day to day life.\footnote{Sarma, S. - Goalpara Zilar Itihas, P. 106.}

In addition to these inflow of Bengali service personnel, others also imported through the scheme of Tea Plantation in the district. These tea gardens are - Chapar, Choibari and Krishnakali tea estate. Managers, typists, accounts and other categories of staff were brought from Bengal. On the other hand, Gossaigaon, Sidli and Mornoi have one tea estate each, but all the technical and non-technical staffs were brought from the same place and community.

The tea garden labourers came mainly from Orissa and Bihar, mostly from the uneducated tribals and the tea garden office workers of technical staff came from Bengal.\footnote{Daka, U.D. - Background of Assam Movement, P.90}
Creation of an Elite and Aristocratic Class: Development of a new trend:

Later on, the role of the service personnel, businessmen and other Babus were controversial. The day to day functioning and mode of life had impact on the local language, culture, customs, convention and usages etc. Most of the Zamindars, Jotedars, owner of the tea-estates, their service personnel and businessmen were grossly created an elite and aristocrat class in the district. This aristocracy class had practiced and followed the Bengali language, culture and the mode of life. The Bengali amalas and businessmen felt themselves to be higher in all respects with the local people and their language and culture.\textsuperscript{50}

Since the Bengali and Assamese languages and the scripts are similar, the Bengalis were able to persuade the British government and the Assamese was only a corrupt and Vulgar dialect of Bengali" a patois bearing to it the same relation which Yorkshire bears to the literacy English, and that it ought in no way to be encouraged, but it the crushed out as quickly as possible, by using Bengali as the official

\textsuperscript{50} Bordoloi, Rajen - English Medium School and its impact on language and culture, (Article) published in Uanya Jiban, Special issue, 6, Oct./94.(1994)
tounge and teaching it in School.51

The Persian was the court language of the Bengal Presidency of which Assam was not an administrative unit. Few of the new English in place of Persian. In April 1831, made Bengali in place of Persian the court language of Assam on the ground that it was very difficult and to costly to have replacement where a Persian Scribe was on leave or left the services; Bengali was actually introduced in 1837. The services of the Bengalis immediately become indispensible in the Anglo-Vernacular and Vernacular School, since local teachers not available in adequate numbers in only case to impart lesson in Bengali, which had since became the medium of instruction.52

Martin Dr. C.A. Inspector of School, advocated a dichotomy of policy as he asserted that the people had expressed their choice in favour of Bengali. As regards Middle School, higher classes of High School and Normal Schools, he suggested the retention of Bengali, "for in these classes the most difficult subjects will be taught and the more

51. Weiner, Myron -Sons of Soil-P.93.
52. Kar, M. - Linguistic Situation in North-East India. (Article), edited by Mirnal Miri 1982 P.23.;
difficult the subjects, the more nearly, most language approach to good classical Bengali.53

The local Zamindars, amalahs and businessmen were in favour of retaining Bengali as their medium of Instruction in the Schools and worked accordingly. Even the Zamindars of Dhubri Sub-Division established Bengali medium schools in their respective civil administrative headquarters such is the Indra Narayan Academy of Bilasipara in 1929, established in memory of Indra Narayan Choudhury, the father of the Zamindars Nripendra Narayan Choudhury, Aat-Ati Zamindar in the name of H.N. Seminary, Bagribari, 1914. Ghurla (Gauripur) Zamindar at Gauripur in the name of Prabhat Chandra Baruah, (P.C. Institute, 1899). The British Government also established some Primary, Middle and Higher Secondary Schools at the District and Sub-Divisional Headquarters, in which there was taught in various languages except Assamese Language. Prior to establishment of these schools, Gauripur Sanskrit Tol had only the educational institution on the Dhubri Sub-Division, where there taught only religious teaching in the Sanskriti language. In the Goalpara Sub-Division, Lakhipur High School was established by the Zamindar or Mechpara, Bizni Zamindar at Abhayapur.

in the name of Rani Abhayaswary H.S.M.P. School established in 1905, a Government Higher Secondary School at Goalpara Town. In addition, there were some Primary and Middle English Schools also established with the inspiration of the so-called Bengali amalahs and the Government.

The Schools are supported by the local funds and subscribed by the Zamindars. The boys are taught English, Bengali and Persian. The Garo School is held in it, and numbers eight boys. It is supported by a Government grant of Fifty Rupees out of which the boys are maintained at a cost not exceeding three rupees each. These boys are taught Bengali and Persian.54

For the burning need of education, the local indigenous students having no other alternative, the admission in the Bengali medium schools was obligatory. When the outsiders came with the British rule, the Assamese people were apprehensive of being dominated by the other cultures, specially the Bengali Culture, as the core of foreign influx was the Bengali. More were the representatives outsiders, to the Assamese minds. The word "Bengali" in Assamese meant outsiders, and the British were denoted by the word "Boga Bengali" meaning White Bengali and not by the word "Pheren-

gi" which was used in whole India to do not Europeans.55

This was not only the impact of Bengali amalahs on education but also on religious rites, dresses, food habits, manner, building of houses, music, culture and other social functions. The Bengali people were more pious in Idol worship than the local Assamese and other ethnic peoples; Sankardev, the famous Vaishnabite Saint of Eastern India brought to the area the light of Krishna cult, after Chaitenyaism was introduced in the area and is still dominating North-Bengal and Western part of undivided District of Goalpara.56

On the Contrary, Goalparia culture, customs and social system differed from the newly imported Bengali culture, custom and social system. Bengali Hindus were very conscious about their language, culture, tradition, customs and social system, So they imposed their language, culture and other habits in any pretext upon others. In Goalpara District, and later on in entire Assam, with the help of British, the Bengali amalahs tried their level best to impose and implemented in the society, the Bengali language, culture and other habits. They had succeeded and permanently

55. Deka, U. Dr. - Social Background of Assam movement. P.11.

sowed the seeds of impact on the socio-cultural life of the local indigenous people.  

Gunabhiram Baruwa wrote a long article "Bengali" in "Assam Bandhu" in 1985 to discuss, in this perspective, "the Bengali Assamese relations, which were already tending to develop into a love and hate spectrum. He noted that, whether desirable or not, Bengali Babu or Bhadralok had become the model for the growing Assamese middle class. The acculturation that was going on - he suggested (through not in so many words) - was but a simultaneous of Westernization and Sanskritisations. Traditional Assamese dress, hair-do, manners, culINARY art and even other forms of culture - all had begun to undergo rapid changes in the townships under Anglo-Bengali influence. People like Gunabhiram and Bolinar-ayan on the whole, hailed such changes as encvitable and necessary.  

The impact of elite class and neighbouring Bengal on the life and society of Assam was tremendous. The Bengali language and culture took a good position in the North-East region, particular in the Goalpara District. So, the impact  

of Bengal on the life and culture of Assam was also not less. The process which began since the closing year of the Ahom rule continued without any breaking, till the closing of the 19th Century. In spite of their animosity against linguistic domination, the intelligentsia was not slow in adopting Bengali dresses, usages, customs and even good habits. To counteract the evils of westernization, this was welcomed even by the orthodox section of the community with their progressive neighbour.59

Assamese gentry were addressed as Babus and the latter evinced an increasing fascination for the Punjabi, swal and Santipuri Dhuti of Bengal. Assamese students studying in Calcutta adopted wearing Saris from Bengal abandoning their traditional customs. Samachar Darpan, Samachar Chandrika and Masik Patrika had readers even in interior villages.60 The worship of the deities like Durga, Kali, Chandi, Annapurna, some of which were introduced even during the later part of Ahom rule, became common not only public but also in private residences occasionally in the accompaniment of Jatras or dance, drama parties from Bengal. Musicians.

drummers, dancers (Baijees) began to add attraction to the festivals. Even the gassiness on the priests' instruments in lieu of the indigenous ones. What was worse, there was evinced a sneering contempt amongst a section of the Assamese.

The Zamindars, Jotdars, and their amalaha created an artificial language, culture and tradition. Some local people who served under the Zamindars and subsequently under British Government also practiced and followed the language, culture of the amalaha of the British. They had not only practiced them in the office but also in their residence and day to day life. That is why the father once ridiculously said to his son:

"Nunak Kay Laban, Telak Kay Tailo
Mor Baba Ajir Para Sarker Hoilo".

Generally, it was assumed by common people that this Bengali was the honourable language spoken by the Bengali Babus of that day. Some local educated youths had already picked up and followed the language, culture and traditions of amalahas. They had felt themselves than the other common people of the locality. The common people respected them more and

The impact of Bengali amalaha felt in the District not only on customs, manner and culture, but also on the names of the places, some of them tabled below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old name</th>
<th>reformed and new name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilasupara</td>
<td>Bilasipara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manikerchar</td>
<td>Mankachar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sukchar</td>
<td>Sukhchar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahamaithan</td>
<td>Mahamaya than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shapat gaon</td>
<td>Shapat gram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fakiragaon</td>
<td>Fakiragram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogai</td>
<td>Bongai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garobada</td>
<td>Garobanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuleswar</td>
<td>Fulerchar.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Anglo-Bengali impact was not only confined within Goalpara District but also on the North-Eastern region. The Bengali officials and clerks for some decades had the upper hand in Assam, Assamese was worked upon as a dialect of Bengali and only Bengali was taught in the

64. Sarmah, S.- Ibid , P.127.
Assamese Schools to exclusion of Assamese. The actual position was that the Bengali, the common language of the district, and returned by 69 percent, of the population in 1901. Assamese was spoken by less than 3 percent. In both cases the form of dialect in use is far from pure. The tribesmen are, however unusually faithful to their own peculiar form of speech, and nearly a fourth of the total population use Kachari, Rava or Garo, all of which are akin. Many of the villages in the Eastern Duars can understand no language other than their. In the other district of Assam Valley-Tibeto-Barman tribes are generally bilingual, and know enough of Assamese to enable them to carry on a conversation with their Hindu neighbours. This is not the case in Goalpara, and in the Eastern Duars intercourse within the villagers is much restricted for any one who does not happen to have studied much.

After all, the frequent changes of Goalpara District to the various administrative divisions of British India gave the maximum opportunity of inflow of Bengali service personnel, businessmen, artists, priests, carpenters, goldsmiths etc. Subsequently they lived in the District

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permanently. The service personnel with the help of the Zamindars, inspired the authority to impose the Bengali language as the medium of instruction in the School, Courts and Offices, in the District. At length, the Government imposed the Bengali language in Goalpara and subsequently in the entire Province. Gradually, they had succeeded to develop Anglo-Bengali culture, instead of the development of the local language and they created a new culture.

The local people like Koch-Rajbonshi, Nath-Jogi, Deshi Muslim, Kalita, Rava Mech, Bodo etc. the majority of the communities of Goalpara vehemently opposed to develop Anglo-Bengali language and culture, instead of their own. Prior to the British occupation of the District Goalpara in 1763, the local language, culture traditions and customs were in good position. But after occupation, speedy development of Anglo-Bengali language and culture. It created discontentment among the local people. This new trend of Anglo-Bengali development of language and culture. Once it was confronted and created a controversy and social tension among the local people.

Educated Assamese people in the late nineteenth century were resentful not only of Bengali domination in the administrative services, but of the efforts of the Bengali is to treat them as culturally inferior provincial cousins. It is true that leading Bengali intellectuals "discovered" Assamese classical literature, Buranjis or Chronicles.
Assamese translation of Sanskrit poems and many other indigenous Assamese literary works, but the legacy of this early effort at "Bengalization of the Assamese" remained."\(^{67}\) About this confrontation, controversy and social tension we have discussed with more details in the Chapter III separately.

67. Weiner, Myron - Sons of the Soil, P.94.