History of the Land and Composition of the Population of the Region
Geographically, linguistically, culturally and socially the Barak Valley is an extension of the eastern Bengal. In 1874 A.D., when Assam was organized as a province by the British, two Bengali speaking districts of Sylhet and Cachar were carved out of the Bengal Presidency and incorporated in Assam to meet the revenue deficit of the newly formed province. The twin districts were then placed under a commissionership and came to be known as the Surma Valley Division. In 1947 A.D., the major portions of the Sylhet District was transferred to erstwhile East Pakistan. The remaining part of Surma Valley Division is now known as the Barak Valley which has since been reorganized into three districts of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi within the state of Assam. But, for all practical purposes, the Surma-Barak Valley (i.e. the pre-independence districts of Sylhet and Cachar) forms a single cultural unit since time immemorial.

"The Barak-Surma Valley is nothing but the northern extension of the Megha Valley (Dacca-Mymensing-Comilla). There is nothing like a natural boundary between these two valleys and that is why, the tradition and culture of these districts of East Bengal so easily spread into Sylhet-Cachar in ancient and medieval periods. Even now the society and culture of the Hindus and Muslims of Sylhet-Cachar is bound with the eastern districts of Bengal in one thread."

In order to reconstruct the past of the Barak Valley, frequent reference to Sylhet becomes obvious. There is a dichotomy between the political boundary of the present day and socio-cultural legacy of the past.

The Barak Valley is surrounded by the North Cachar Hills and the Khasi Hills in the north, hills of Manipur in the east and Mizo Hills in the south. The only opening it has in the western direction where lies the districts of Sylhet connecting the valley with the plains of eastern Bengal. The region thus demarcates the natural border between the riverine Bengal and the hilly north-east. This geographical factor itself has a major historical significance.

"The Indo-Aryan settlement extended from Bengal in early times in its spontaneous eastward march to the farthest limit of the plains land. They moved along the familiar terrain and stopped at the foot of the hills, which encircled the valley from three sides, as these hills are not suitable for settled cultivation."
For this reason the Barak Valley, till the late medieval period, remained the easternmost outpost of the Aryanised or Brahmanised India. Brahmanical Hinduism could move further east only in the eighteenth century when a Vaishnava missionary from Sylhet converted king Pamheiba (also known as Garib Nawaz) of Manipur.

Regarding the earliest inhabitants of the Barak Valley, it is presumed that the earliest settlers in the valley were Austric-speaking people. They were followed by groups of people speaking different varieties of Tibeto-Burman speeches whose phased migration started quite early and continued till the nineteenth century. Perhaps fusion between these groups formed the basic strata of the society of the Barak Valley.

As already mentioned, there underwent a vigorous process of Aryanisation or Brahmanisation than any other part of the North-East. Dearth of sufficient data prevents us from formulating a chronological account of the prolonged process of Aryanisation. It was believed earlier that the eastern Bengal came under the full-fledged influence of the north Indian socio-cultural trends and idea during the Guptas. But the discoveries at Wari-Batesvar, Bhairavabazar and some other stray finds manifest a much earlier date of this contact.

On the whole, it has to be asserted even on the basis of the forgoing disjointed data that Wari-Batesvar and the entire area close to the Arial Khan and former course of the Brahmaputra constituted a very significant focus of early historic occupation in the eastern portion of the Bangladesh.

Since the Surma-Barak Valley is an extension of the Ganga-Padma basin, it can be presumed that this early phase of Aryanisation also covered this region.

However, it should be admitted that there are no direct evidences to reconstruct the socio-political scenario of this early historical period of the region. The Nidhanpur Copper plate of Bhaskarvarman is the first indisputable material evidence of the socio-political Aryanisation of the Surma-Barak Valley. According to this inscription, Chandrapuri Vishaya in late fifth or early sixth century A.D., and it has been under the rule of the successive Bhauma-Naraka rulers from Bhitivarman to Bhaskarvarman. Perhaps other region of the valley were under the Samatata rulers as evident from the Kalapur inscription of Marundanatha which
was issued in late seventh or early eighth century. Lokanatha, an ancestor of Marundanatha, conquered Joytungavarsha and Nalinikanta Bhattashali identifies Joytungavarsha with the Jatinga Valley of Cachar and North Cachar districts. Between the eighth and eleventh century, the region often played a dominant role in the political developments of Eastern India as the core zone of the famous Harikela kingdom. In the tenth century, Srichandra of the renowned Chandra dynasty of the eastern Bengal incorporated a major portion of the valley within his kingdom. During this period Chandrapura Matha or Monastery, situated near Panchakhanda region in the repartition subdivision of Karimganj, became a centre of learning of some repute. From the remains of Bhuban hills, it appears that the region around Silchar came under the Pala influence, but whether this cultural influence was backed by the political domination of the Palas, was not depicted clearly. From two Bhatera inscriptions of Govinda Keshavadeva and Ishandeva, it is assumed that about an independent Srihatta Rajya, within which the whole of the modern Sylhet district and a major part of Cachar-Karimganj was incorporated.

The common historical developments of the Surma-Barak Valley was somewhat disrupted when Hajrat Shah Jalal conquered Sylhet in the early fourteenth century and the region came under the administrative domain of the Bengal Sultanate. After the fall of the Bengal Sultanate, the region passed on to the Mughals who organised it as Silhat Sarkar. The Sarkar of Sylhet came under the British domination in 1765 A.D., with the grant of Diwani of Bengal to the East India Company by the Mughal emperor.

On the other hand, the eastern expansion of the valley beyond Badarpur was not conquered by Shah Jalal and in later days also neither the Sultans nor the Mughal Subedars of Bengal even tried to incorporate this region within their domain. Most of the territories of the Cachar plains during their period were perhaps under the nominal control of the Manikya Kings of Tripura.

Khalangme, on the bank of Rukni, during the Manikya rule was its capital. It is believed that the present Rajghat on the bank of Rukni was the ancient Khalangma. There still remain relics of the ancient city in Rajghat. The Manikya rule in Cachar came to an end after the land was overrun by Chilarai, the Koch
general, and Kamalnarayan became the chieftain of Cachar in 1540 A.D. It may be taken as a cut off year marking the end of Manikya rule in Cachar. Koches ruled Khaspur for two centuries from 1540-1750 A.D. It is said that ‘Khaspur’ derived its name from the word ‘Koch’ and ‘pur’ meaning the home of the Koch. Of course, prior to it, the place was named ‘Bamhapur’, a meaningful place name indicative of an advance stage of social formation in the land.

The Koch kingdom was divided even during the life time of Naranarayan and officer-in-charge of the Cachar plains within no time freed himself from his overlord and started functioning as an independent ruler from Khaspur, his capital. This petty kingdom was later amalgamated with the Hairamba kingdom through a matrimonial alliance. Since the Hairamba kings were also known as Dimasa Kachari, the kingdom came to be known as Cachar. Therefore the name of Cachar arises from its connection with the Rajas of the Kachari race. Their original capital was at Dimapur in the Dhansiri Valley in the Naga Hills district from which they were driven by the rising power of the Ahoms in the 16th century. They first settled at Maibong on the Mahur river in the North Cachar Hills, but in 1706 A.D., Rudra Singh, the then Ahom Raja, drove them from this in turn and they retreated to Khaspur on the Madura river, in Pargana Udharband. Khaspur emerged as an important city in Cachar from the mid 18th century with a number of rulers in succession who encouraged new settlement, offered land grants, and towards the beginning of 19th century the capital became a centre of art culture with two kings, Krishnachandra (1773-1813 A.D.), and Govindachandra (1813-1830 A.D.), to patron it under the influence of Vaishnavism. Visitors, traders and fortune seekers began to enter the kingdom during Dimasa rule. There are account of the markets in the borders of the kingdom ‘visited by merchants from Burma and China, besides those from Bengal and the Firingis (Europeans)’.

Besides political transactions or cultural regeneration, Khaspur could boast of a city for its archaeological structures, the relics of which are present even today. No other person than a European envoy, F. Hamilton, in his report in 1828 A.D., four years before British annexation, had stated that, Khaspur was a city. Mr. Hamilton, however, did not leave any account of the city. The archaeological remains only show that the Kings had built royal palaces, temples, and excavated
ponds. After all, the kingdom itself was essentially an agro-based with major income from agriculture and forest resources. The capital could in no ways be assumed to have developed as a modern urban centre in the pattern of 18th century urban centres even. The Dimasas, however, had acquired the city from their predecessors, the Koch, who were the first to lay down the foundation of the city.

Khaspur was the residence of the royal personages and their courtiers. Political transactions were carried out from the place, royal sanads issued. A close study of the history of the period reveals that the Kings of the Dimasa state were throughout disturbed by the foreign aggression, and also by the tribal insurgencies. The last two Kings, Krishnachandra and Govindachandra had to constantly move from place to place avoiding assailants. The defence was weak; the capital was not well fortified. The immediate rear of the city also did not have any commercial or industrial base which could strengthen its economy. As such, soon after the British take over in 1832 A.D., the new rulers could abandon the city and look forward to a new place to establish their administrative headquarters.

Khaspur never had the potentiality of a true urban centre with a sound economic background; and soon after the change of political power, the city started eroding. Besides being a kingdom, Khaspur did not grow to be a market place even.

In 1810 A.D., Raja Govindachandra of Khaspur became involved in troubles connected with the throne of Manipur, and the interference of the kingdom of Burma and its attempted annexation of the country led to the entry of the British authorities on the scene. In 1824 A.D., the Burmese forces had entered Cachar from Manipur and Assam. They reached Dudpatil without crossing the Barak, and pitched their camp to resist the advance of the British army. However, the British forces chased the Burmese out of Cachar and reinstated Raja Govindachandra after the treaty of Yandaboo in 1826 A.D. In 1825 A.D., with the help of the British, Raja shifted his capital to Haritikar, about 4 miles west of Badarpur. In 1826 A.D., the Kachari Raja Govindachandra having been replaced upon the throne by the British government executed an agreement by which he was to pay a tribute of Rs. 10,000 a year and to remain in subordinate alliance with the British Government. In 1830 A.D., Govindachandra was assassinated leaving no
heirs and the district was formally annexed to the British Empire on 14th August, 1832 A.D. It then became a part of the Bengal presidency and the Surma Valley Division was formed with the district of Sylhet and Cachar.  

The interim period between the death of Govindachandra (1830 A.D.), the last Dimasa king and the British annexation of Cachar (1832 A.D.), with all the chaos and confusions, claims and counterclaims for the royal throne, and the social tension built up, was a period when Barak Valley was proceeding towards a new course. The social condition was destabilized, and the colonists were busy in winning the heart of the Zaminders and Mirasdars before making the last leap to seize the land. It is noted that some important persons had submitted their documents to the colonists, which shows that the British were entering into the state with full preparation. The Zaminders probably none dared put up resistance except Sona Mia Choudhury of Satkarakandi, who defied the British rulers and had to suffer persecution after they had consolidated their power.

It was a period when politics began to matter the life of ordinary men residing in the rural countryside, British colonists started scaling the pros and cons of the land, old khel system was fast vanishing out, the revenue-collecting mukteers, uzirs losing their hold, as there was no king overhead, and the courtesans, Sengphos, could not choose a legitimate heir to the throne, people expressed their disapproval of the authority of Rani Induprava, the widow of king Krishnachandra, remarried to Govindachandra, against which they voiced their discontent. Under the backdrop of the above socio-political condition, a new administrative headquarters had ushered in, firstly, at Dudpatil, on the bank of Madhura, where Colonel Enis had met the Fifteen Burmese army in 1824 A.D. He had established a camp at Dudpatil, and later on it became the headquarters of Cachar.

Though annexation of Cachar by the British was a smooth affair, the circumstances that preceded the annexation was more or less complicated because of the claims and counter-claims on the throne of Cachar. The situation demanded left handling and after making some preliminary experiments, the government decided to confer on Captain Fisher all the responsibility to administer the district and this arrangement was confirmed in 1833 A.D., when the government of India
appointed Fisher permanently as the superintendent of Cachar. The superintendent was to exercise the powers of a Magistrate, collector as well as Civil judge under the supervision of the Agent to the Governor General.

Socially and culturally, Cachar plains always maintained its close contact with neighbouring Sylhet throughout these periods of political disruptions. It is for these reasons, the Hairamba royal court accepted Bengali as the language of administration and culture even when its capital was situated at hilly Maibong. When the capital was shifted to Khaspur, the royal house encouraged settlements of the Bengalees for economic advancements of the kingdom and the same policy was followed by the British. In 1874 A.D., when the districts of Sylhet and Cachar were tagged with Assam, the Governor-General promised to protect the linguistic and cultural identity of the Surma Valley.

In 1822 A.D., Cachar, like Assam was declared to be a Non-Regulated district, which had its origin in the civil commissionership of North East Rangpur and gradually crept into many other areas of the British dominion in India. It exempted the operation of the normal rules and provided for the administration by an executive upon a mixed system into which the spirit of the Regulation was to be harmonised with the native institutions.

In the year 1830 A.D., Raja Govindachandra was assassinated, and there being no descendent either lineal or adopted, the country was annexed to the British territories, by proclamation on the 14th of August, 1833 A.D., in compliance with frequent and earnestly expressed wishes of the people. A liberal provision was made for the Ranees and their dependents, and the management of its affairs was entrusted to Captain Fisher, an officer of approved ability and great local experience.

British Regime in Cachar had a gradual evolution during the period from 1832 to 1854 A.D. After the consolidation of the administration by the British, they brought into prominence new township. In 1828 A.D., the only town was Khaspur at Cachar. British annexation reduced the position of Cachar from an independent kingdom to that of a district under a provincial headquarters at Cherapunji. After the annexation, the British established the district headquarters in Dudpatil and functioned from there for one year. To keep communication with
Khaspur, as well as with Cherapunji by river, Dudpatil was the ideal place, as the road system did not develop by then. The new rulers had to keep in touch with Khaspur following the annexation, as it is evident; they had to complete the process of annexation by taking accounts of the assets and liabilities of the state. Having settled the accounts with the Dimasa Kingdom, Captain Fisher, the Superintendent, in consideration of the new possibilities, crossed over the river Barak and marked a patch of land close to Janiganj to build his sadar station, which were to expand and develop into an important centre of the town in Barak Valley. Captain Fisher, agent to the Governor General continued to be administered Cachar from Cherapunji for some months, but in consideration of practical difficulties, early in 1833 A.D., he had shifted his headquarters from Dudpatil to Silchar for the sake of convenience.22

Regarding the name 'Silchar', till no authentic evidence has been found. Therefore, Silchar, as Sadar station of Cachar came into existence definitely in 1833 A.D. But there were no mention of the place-name 'Silchar', in any document of the pre-annexation period. Even immediately after annexation, it is not sure exactly since when the name 'Silchar' began to be used. Whether Captain Fisher had used the place-name is also uncertain; no document of Fisher with the place-name 'Silchar' could be found. There is a reference to Fisher's coming to Silchar in a letter written on 1839 (February, 8) by the Superintendent, Burns, who wrote:

When Captain Fisher first came to Silchar he sent in a statement of the quantity of land that would be required for public buildings including his own house and the bazaar. But, the copy of the 'statement' could not be traced. Burns further wrote - No copy of any letter...... after the most diligent search be found in this office.

Most of the dispatches of the period were issued from 'Cachar District', never from 'Silchar'. It was R.B. Pamberton, who in his report in 1835 A.D., mentioned the place-name, Silchar23. Besides the place-name never occurred in any reference prior to it, i.e., from 1832 to 1835 A.D., either in the Statistical Account (Hunter) or in the Gazetteers of the entire north east region. Silchar, however, had its entry in the official documents since 1836 A.D.
A list of 24 villages that had existed during the reign of Govindachandra (1813-1830 A.D.) in which ‘Silchar’ is absent. There were mention of Kanakpur, Ambikapur, Dudpatil, Rongpur but not of Silchar. Ambikapur, Kanakpur, Rongpur, ‘some important villages’ had existed on their own, not as a part of Slichar as they exist today, as Silchar was yet to emerge by then. They had proceeded up to Bikrampur, Jaynagar, Tarapur, Dudpatil, Silchar, Barenga, Kanakpur during the rule of Laksmichandra.

Laksmichandra ruled from 1772-73 A.D., and the Natha yogis had settled in the above-mentioned places during the period. According to the statement, Slichar had existed by then. While furnishing the list of the important persons and their villages during the rule of Govindachandra, omitted Silchar, Bikrampur, Jaynagar, Dudpatil, Kanakpur. There is perceptible reason why ‘Silchar’ should not have been listed among the important places during the rule of Govindachandra, if it, in fact, had existed during the rule of Laksmichandra. Had Silchar as a place really emerged by then, it would have earned a mention if not for its place-value, surely for the persons who would have resided in that centrally located place under any circumstances. “When the place-name Silchar became all-pervasive that its existence in between Dudpatil and Barenga did not seem unnatural to the author at the time of preparing the manuscript; it surely escaped his notice and remained without any justification”.

In view of the above, it can be said that Silchar did not exist prior to 1832-1833 A.D., in that nomenclature. It was Captain Tomas Fisher, who spotted a patch of land on the bank of river Barak to lay down the foundation of the town. Fisher’s name may be associated with Silchar the same way the name of Job Charnok is associated with Calcutta. Captain Fisher established his Sadar office in what was known as Janiganj bazaar at that time. The bazaar in all probability existed in the pre-annexation period. A letter written by the D.C. Office, Mac William in 1871 A.D.

*It appears that the land on which Janiganj Bazar is built, is a part of some talook settled by one of the Rajahs of Cachar upon the Mirasdars of Ombikapur towards the end of the last century.*
From it appears that Ombikapur had existed in the last part of 17\textsuperscript{th} or early part of 18\textsuperscript{th} century, and Janiganj also existed on its own. From the same letter it is evident that this part of Ombikapur talook was resumed by Raja Govindachandra sometime before his death in 1830 A.D. It was exactly the spot which Captain Fisher fixed as the site of the sadar station and commenced building upon the resumed land. Thereafter, the Mirasgars, rejected by the king applied for compensation, which firstly Captain Fisher agreed to grant, but the order was reverted, and the matter was referred to civil court; but the claimants preferred not to move; thereafter, the following ten years the position of the land remained unsettled waste in the records of the collectorate. During the period the district was re-settled twice in 1838 A.D., and in 1843 A.D., when Janiganj was shown as Khas. The last attempt of the mirasgars of Ombikapur to restore their possession was of no avail and thus remained khas all along.

Although the plot of land, on which the foundation of the town was laid in 1832-33 A.D., and which was the centre of so much of litigations, did not acquire its place name, Silchar. It seems, although the word is of local origin, it were the British who popularized it having given it the official recognition.

The word Silchar is derived from the Bengali word shil, meaning rock, and char, meaning shore or bank. The town situated on the 24.49\degree N. Latitude and 92.48\degree E Longitude, comprising of 13.24 sq. km. of land is surrounded by river bank on all three sides, except the south, and is indeed a char in ordinary sense of the term, which seems to have risen from the water. Of course, the shore is not a rocky shore anyway, and how then it came to be termed as Silchar. There are indeed cluster of rocks on the eastern bank of river Barak for long, which were perceptively brought by the human beings, not a natural rock formation anyway; and these human beings were none but the traders of Janiganj, and thereafter, the British rulers who brought the stones to protect the bazaar from the ravages of Barak.

Janiganj emerged as a trading centre in the pre-annexation period, and thereafter it was steadily growing in importance. With the sadar station established, more and more people began to come to this place. Seeing the cluster of rocks on the bank of the river, where trading boats used to land (the place also came to be
known as Sadarghat, thereafter Jahaj Ghata), people began to refer to the place as ‘Shiler Char’, and it is precisely from this, the British officials had picked up the word ‘Silchar’.

Besides, there was a popular belief that the triangular land on the bank of Barak stood on a vast rock; without, of course, any geological basis. But still, there is no reason, why this unfounded folk-belief could not contribute to the creation of the nomenclature of the town.  

But soon Silchar developed into a modern town after Captain Fisher shifted the Headquarters from Dudpatil to Silchar. The history of Silchar began with Janiganj Bazar which was settled by Raja Krishnachandra upon the Mirasdar of Amicapur Estate towards the close of the Eighteenth century but was resumed by Govindachandra before his assassination in 1830 A.D., probably with the idea of converting it into his capital. When the Sadar station was fixed at Silchar by the British most of the official buildings were built there.

Measures were taken to bring under Government control all fallow lands and lease them out along with Revenue, Judicial, Police and Defence. Mirasdars or Zamindars were the lease holders and thus were direct tenants of the Government. Many people from the adjacent districts of Bengal settled down permanently in Cachar due to the abundance of land and increase of employment facilities under the new regime. In 1850 A.D., to deal with the rehabilitation of immigrants, a settlement officer called Deputy Collector was appointed. All lands brought under assessment and the Khel system was abandoned.

In the 50s of the 19th century, the British Government tried to develop the economy of Cachar through the introduction of the tea industry in Cachar. David Scott, the Agent to the Governor General of North East Frontier, had collected some specimens of tea plants in Cachar in 1831 A.D. The discovery of tea plant in Cachar in 1855 A.D., was not the result of any conscious effort on the part of any person. After the discovery, wide publicity was given inviting people to Cachar and to undertake the work of cultivation receiving the grants of land, from the government. As numerous applications were pouring in asking for grants of land, the Government became apprehensive of over speculation. Some of the letters betray this apprehension. But the tea industry started to develop from 1856 A.D.,
after the introduction of Grant of Waste Land Rules of Assam into Cachar in 1856 A.D. The first tea estate in the then Cachar was established at Mauza Barsangan in 1856 A.D. In the beginning the planters in Cachar had to overcome a number of problems like import of machines, seeds, skilled persons and manual labourer. To solve the problem of labour, large number of coolies were imported from Northern India. Therefore, the introduction of the tea industry had completely changed the very outlook of the district through rapid socio-economic transformation. Thus Silchar town was set up to act as wholesale market. This transformation necessitated to set up steamer station, roadways and railways by the British.

Measures were taken to improve the communication system. The Silchar branch of the Assam-Bengal Railway was opened in 1900 A.D, and supplied a new connection with sea through the port of Chittagong. From the trade point of view the roads of the district are of little importance as compared with waterways. River Barak is navigable by steamers, and connection with Calcutta is maintained by this route throughout the year. Katakhal and Sonai are also navigable throughout the year.

During the rainy season small streams and even big haors become navigable and boats can approach nearly every village. In the Sadar subdivision, the Local bound roads radiate from Silchar as a centre in all direction; as a rule they are unmetalled. In 1853 A.D., there was only one major road in Cachar. But during the thirty years from 1870 A.D., a number of roads were constructed at the initiative of the Public Works Department, the District road Committee and other local organisations. Attempts were make to extend medical facilities to the people by eradicating malaria, kalazar, cholera and diarrhoea. People were also induced to take modern medicine in lieu of traditional herbal drugs. At the initiatives of Captain Fisher, a medical centre was established at Silchar in 1835 A.D., which was improved to the status of a hospital in 1864 A.D.

“The population of Cachar is entirely engaged either in rice cultivation or on the tea gardens. There is only one town with a population of more than 5000 souls, namely, Silchar, the civil station and head quarters of a regiment of native infantry, which in 1881 A.D., contained 6567 inhabitants. In conjunction with the neighbouring villages, Silchar had been constituted a municipality, with an income
of £ 1167 in 1881-82 A.D. A large trading fair is annually held in January, attended by about 20,000 people." After the annexation by the British the population in Cachar marked a gradual increase in this valley.

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After the formation of the Station Committee in 1882 A.D., at first and then Second Class Municipality in 1893 A.D., Silchar has been expanding both in terms of area and population. During the period from 1871-1991 A.D., the population of Silchar had increased more than twenty three times but area had expanded about three times. The growth rate was negative during 1901-1911 A.D., decade and low during 1911-1921 A.D. This is because during this period, “The region was a dumping ground for malarial fever, Kalazar, Cholera and small pox usually levied huge toll on human lives”. Again from 1921 to 1941 A.D., the growth rate was moderate, but from 1941 A.D, the growth rate was very high. Partition of India in 1947 A.D., and referendum of Sylhet district (which was included in Assam) in June, 1947 A.D., and communal disturbance in East Pakistan in February, 1950 A.D., led to the arrival of large number of the Hindus in Silchar. During the period
from 1971-1991 A.D., the growth rate of population of Silchar was also high because of the political disturbances in the neighbouring states like Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and also Bodo areas of Assam. Many people left those places and settled in Silchar. During Bangladesh War in 1971 A.D., many people came to Silchar and some of them did not leave the place and settled here and there. The Bengali speaking people are the dominant part. Manipuri, Naga, Nepali, Dimasa and Assamese are the rest components. Hinduism and Islam are the dominant part of population and besides them Christianity and Jains are also found.

This way the process of urbanisation of Silchar had a humble beginning which flourished into a full-fledged township and this process would form the basis of our subsequent discussion.

Notes and references:

5. Gupta, Kamalakanta, op. cit., P-150.
11. Deb Laskar, Sanjib, Urbanization in Barak valley, A study of the origin and transformation of Silchar in the 19th century. The original title of the paper
was town Formation in Barak Valley, a paper presented in the National Seminar of History and Society of South Assam, Assam University, Silchar, (Unpublished research paper), 1996, P-5.

12. Mahur, a river, one of the main river of North Cachar Hills District of Assam, originated from Borail Hill.

13. Madura River, a tributary river of Barak, originated from the state of Manipur and joined Barak at Madura.


16. Dudpatil, a small village of modern Cachar, situated on the northern bank of river Barak.

17. Bhattacharjee, J.B., Cachar under the British Rule in North East India, New Delhi, 1977, P-72.


27. Katakhal, a river, a tributary river of Barak, originated from the state of Mizoram and joined Barak at Katakhal.

28. Sonai, a river, a tributary river of Barak, originated from the state of Mizoram and joined Barak at Sonaimukh.