CHAPTER - II

THE URBAN SETTING
Since the focus of investigation on juvenile delinquency was among the people of Tangail paurashava, it is appropriate that details regarding location, geographical, climatic features as well as the social and demographic compositions of the Tangail paurashava are given. Tangail paurashava is the headquarters of Tangail Zila.

Although the name of the district is derived from the present name of its headquarters, the origin of the name “Tangail” itself is lost in antiquity. However, there are some popular stories regarding the origin of the name some of which may be mentioned very briefly:

(i) During the period when Nawab Shaista Khan was the subadar of Bengal, a Mopla navy was recruited to help counter the Portuguese threat. At a later time, when the Mopla navy was disbanded, some of the Mopla soldiers settled down in the Char areas of the nadhi Lohajang. They called the place “Tangail” appropriately, of course, after their religious leaders. Now-a-days the Nikaries (mostly engaged in the fishing trade) who are found in this area are considered as the descendants of the Moplas. It should be noted that the Moplas are the dependents of early Arab settlers along the Malabar Coasts of India (Tarachand 1963).
ii) Another version regarding the origin of the name “Tangail” is that in the early part of the British period an Indigo factory was established between the mouza Akur Takur and Shabalia by the European Indigo-planter named Tengu shaheb. He made an *ail*, that is a raised narrow passage, which the people called “*Tangu-shaheber ail*”. It is presumed that “Tangail” originated from the phonic corruption of that term.

iii) People also speculate that at the height of the Indigo business, innumerable “*Tangas*” (or *Tendum*, a light two-wheeled carriage drawn by a pony), used to park here to take delivery of the Indigo, whence came the name “Tangail” a clear derivation from “*Tanga*”.

(iv) There are people who are of the opinion that the word “Tangail” might have been derived from raised “*ails*” or plot boundaries found in the rice fields of the “*Baid*” lands. These “*ails*” are constructed to store water in the rice fields. The word “raised” is locally termed as “*Tang*”, so the name of “Tangail” was derived from the innumerable raised “*ails*” of the district, a feature of the *Baid* lands.

Whatever might be the origin of the word “Tangail”, it is to be noted that the suffix “*ail*” is a common occurrence in many of the place names in
Bangladesh. The police stations of Tangail, Basail, and Ghatail, have such suffixes. Therefore, it may be safely said that this peculiar physical environment of the areas concerned might be the origin of the place-names ending with "Ail".

Tangail, previously one of the subdivisions of Mymensingh district, emerged as a full-fledged district on the 1st day of December, 1969 (Notification No. 1969). Originally the subdivision’s most flourishing centre was at Atia. The wealth and supremacy of Atia and Kagmari were once more affluent than Tangail paurashava in the middle of the last century. The "Zamindars" (landlords) of Shantosh succeeded in converting the name of Mauza Pardighulia into Tangail.

LOCATION AND BOUNDARY

The latitudinal extension of Tangail district is from $23^\circ 59' 50''$ North to $24^\circ 48' 5''$ North, and longitudinally it stretches from $89^\circ 48' 50''$ East to $90^\circ 51' 25''$ East. The district is elongated north and south and tapering towards the north with its base in the south. The north-south length varies from 70 to 75 miles approximately, while east west breadth ranges from 30 to
35 miles. The southernmost base would not be more than 22 miles long east to west.

The district of Tangail was renamed as Tangail Zila in 1984 (Zila series 1996). The Zila is bounded on the north by Jamalpur Zila, on the east by Mymensingh and Gazipur Zilas, on the south by Manikganj and Dhaka Zila and on the west by Sirajganj Zila.

POLICE-STATION (THANA), AREA

The total area of the Zila comprising 11 police stations is 3414.38 Sq.Km. (1318.30Sq.miles) of which 86.73Sq.Km. (33.49 Sq. miles) reverine and 433.93 sq. km. (167.54 sq.miles) is under jungle (forest) but before the liberation, of the country in 16th December 1971, the Zila had 8 (eight) Thanas only, namely, Tangail sadar, Kalihati, Ghatail, Gopalpur, Madhupur, Basail, Mirzapur, and Nagarpur. After the liberation, for administrative convenience, three more Thanas were further created namely Sakhipur, Bhuapur and Delduar.

Smallest local administrative (local govts. unit) unit of urban area is called a ward. Ward has a Ward parishad (council) Smallest identifiable area of municipalities which is known the inhabitants as mahallah.
GEOLOGY AND GEOMORPHOLOGY

Tangail occupies almost the central part of the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna *Bha-dheep*. In the sub-surface this area falls in the hinge zone lying between the Indian platform to the north west and the Bangal foredeep to the south-east. That is, it lies in the transition zone.

According to Morgan and McInter, Bangladesh, along with the Indian state of West Bengal, consists primarily of a larger alluvial basin floored with quaternary sediments deposited by the Padma and the Brahmaputra rivers and their numerous associated streams and distributaries. (Morgan and McInter 1959:319-942). The Quaternary Geology of the Bengal basin (as it is called) can be subdivided into four distinct geologic formations: (a) Tertiary and older Highlands, (b) Pleistocene Terrace (far below the sub-surface), (c) early Tippera surface and, (d) Recent *Banna* (flood) plain of the two major pleistocene terraces, Viz., Barind and the Madhupur, fall within the zilas of Mymensingh, Dhaka and Tangail. This formation has been recognized as the *banna* plains of earlier Padma-Brahmapurta *nadhi* system. But due to lack of Geological fossils, the geological history of the area was rather elusive to previous scholars, which now is determined easily with the carbon-14 method.
The break in the uniform level of Tangail as a whole is the low ridges in the Madhupur jungle, some of which are covered with grasses and underwood end others with jungles. All these miniature hills are accessible to wheeled carriages as regards their slope; and the Mymensingh road (from Dhaka), runs over them. We suppose, it would be quite proper to refer in this connection to a lecture delivered by Mr. La Touche before the Asiatic Society on the 10th February, 1910 where he sought to ascribe the formation of the Madhupur Red Tract jungle area to the glacial period (geologically known as the Pleistocene period or the Ice Age), when it was the delta of river (Bha Dheep of nadhi) entering the sea (Touche 1919:vol.I). But the the geological survey of Bangladesh holds a different view, holding this a “Post-glacial”. F.C. Hirsute, however, says that, “.... the red soil (i.e., of the Madhupur Tract) is more in the nurture of top dressing and that the earlier deposits of the glaciers lie for deeper than any boring can yet reach” (Hirsute 1912:114).

So we find that Tangail is a place which is peculiar in physio-graphic set-up diversified in undulating tract and rise and fall, wavy tracts, not monotonous alluvial plains alone. There are unending series of small plains ringed in by trees. The topography of Tangail as we have mentioned earlier,
is full of contrasts and diversified in nature. It is a zone of *nadhis*, ditches and *jungles*, with irregular depressions here and there, while Tilas and Hillocks are so many jutting out features of the landscape.

However, Tangail is divided into two broad physio-graphic subdivisions according to the nature of geological origin, viz; (i) The Modhupur Tract and (ii) The Recont *banna* plain of Jamuna, though there are considerable variations within each physio-graphic sub-division. For example, in the Madhupur Tract there are considerable variations in elevation, ranging from about 20ft, on the south to about 100ft. above sea level. Higher elevations are found in the western part. Another remarkable characteristic of the Modhupur tract is the abrupt western margin separating the low flat plain from the uneven highly dissected surface of the Madhupur tract. A dendriatic stream pattern was developed in the tract, a pattern emphasized by the dense *jungle* cover on the ridges, and artificially flattened paddy fields in the entrenched stream valleys. These flattened stream valleys are locally known as "*Baid*", possibly derived from the Arabic word "*Wadia*", meaning village.

The Madhupur tract falling within Tangail may roughly be divided into two parts: (i) The Jain Shahi *Garh* (Fortress) on the north and (ii) The
Kagmari Garh on the south, these two being separated by a depression of about three to four miles. The Kagmari Garh is more dissected than the Jain shahi Garh. Kagmari Garh belt has a breadth of 16 miles from Madhupur Thana Headquarters to Dewpara village of Ghatail.

No stones or rocks are found in Tangail which can be exploited economically. References in Ain-E-Akbari and traces of smelting operations, occasionally found in the area, would seem to indicate the possibility of mining operations existing on this place although this is non-existent at present. (Morgan and McIntire 1959:319-942). The only possible source of iron would seem to be the "Kankar" (a coarse grain of sand) a calcareous concertions found at different depths, which have concentrations of iron relatively. The English equivalent of Kankar is, most probably, the "red ferruginous clay" of the Madhupur Jungle tract. It was burnt and irons melted from it; but this had long since been given up, and would probably never again be attempted to in future.

The result of the soil examination made by Morgan and McIntire would seem to indicate that in terms of grain size and mineral content, the soil of the Madhupur tract is almost identical with those of the recent banna plain soil. However, soil of the recent banna plain is typically dark, loosely compacted
and have a high water content and appreciable quantities of organic matter. Tangail essentially, as a matter of fact, owes its soil to the alluvial action of the existing nadhis chiefly the Brahmaputra and the Jamuna, which by constantly changing and shifting their channels have deposited enormous silts over the whole area, Madhupur tract soil, on the other hand is well oxidised, and typically reddish brown or tan and are mottled. Ferrigenous calcareous nodules are common. Lower water content in the soil has resulted in firmer, more compacted material. Organic content is very low and confined only to the surface soil profile.

According the FAO (UNO) report on the soil survey Project of Bangladesh, the soil association of Tangail have been identified as (i) Red-brown terrace soil to the east, (ii) Gray banna plains soil (non-saline phase) to the west and (iii) non-calcareous dark gray banna plain soil in the middle part along the Nadhi Bangshi. (Hess 1967:16).

**NADHI (RIVER) SYSTEMS**

The newly formed Tangail is flanked on the west by the mighty nadhi Jamuna, which is more than 4 miles wide during the Barshakal (rainy season). The Dhaleswari, first on old channel of the Ganges and then of the
Brahmaputra, cuts across the south-western corner of the district on its powerful sweep to join the Meghna near Narayanganj. The old name of Dhaleswari was "Gajghata". It used to flow afterwards by the Salimabad channel and then at last by Porabari channel.(Ahmed 1976:108). A part of the eastern boundary of Tangail runs close to the Banar Nadhi. The Nadhi Bangshi flows almost down the middle of Tangail branching out from the old Brahmaputra to the north from near Jamalpur. Bangshi, falls into Dhaleswari near Savar, in Dhaka Zila. Among other important nadhis of Tangail Lohajang is worth mentioning. It flows past the zila Headquarters of Tangail and is almost dead at present (in moribund condition).

Other nadhis are Khiru, Nanglai Nadhi, Atai, and Jhinai. The old Brahmaputra’s most important off-shoot is the Jhinai; striking off near Jamalpur it rejoins the Jamuna north of Sarishabari, while another branch flows past Gopalpur. Now these sub-systems of nadhis, Viz, Bangshi and Banor, and the Lohajang, Khiru, Nanglai Nadhi, Atia and Jhinai are all dying out because of the shift of the old Brahmaputra Nadhi from its former channel to the present Jamuna channel.
MARSHES AND PONDS

It should be noted that in a country like Bangladesh, with intricate systems of nadhis having a unique geological history of its own, the multiplicity of abandoned nadhi channels, decadent nadhis, and depressions due to fluvial erosion are the natural consequences (Jack 1900). So, a marshy land or a marsh is a permanent and characteristic feature of Bangladesh or the Bengal Bha-Dheep to be more precise. It is a depression in which water permanently lodges. In every Thana of Bangladesh zilas these marshes are to be found which present a singularly desolate appearance sometimes as a flat expanse of rank grass and at others as dark and noisome lake. The level of these marshes (also called beels) is continuously rising from the annual deposit of silt and their size is therefore shrinking as the edges are brought under cultivation. But the centre of the beel is still of considerable depth.

In Tangail old nadhis have left their traces in abandoned and moribund channels, which are now filled with water, forming basins, swamps and beels. Many of these old beds are now full of vegetation and reeds and certainly do not deserve to be called lakes or beels. So far no nadhis and marshes of Tangail, have been used for the cultivation. Tangail has a number of beels and jheels of which the large "Honda beel" south of its headquarter was
originally an old bed of the Khiru Nadhi. It is situated in the Madhupur Police Station. It is transformed into a vast lake during the Barshakal. The “Garibullah” “Tarilla” “Nikrail” are the notable Beels in the Ghatail police station. The “Salla”, “Malda” and “Maisa” Beels are not less important. The “Barta”, “Charan” and “Poila” are the notable swamps of the Kalihati police station. Besides these, there are also big beels located in the south. The Nakulla of Kalihati is one of such big beels (Sachse 1917:231).

The swamps, beels and jheels of Tangail were once noted for their size and depth. With the gradual deposit of silt most of these have now turned into shallow swampy areas where cultivation, particularly BORO and IRRI paddy is carried on. During the Barshakal, over flooding of areas adjoining these beels is a regular feature, although these stagnant pools of water are the main source of irrigation during Shithkals (winter season), when the field usually remain fallow. This excess water then transfers these fallow fields into radiant green fields.

CLIMATE

The climate is characterized by the seasonal reversal of the wind to a comparatively dry and mild shith (cold), and garam (hot) and shith grishma
Rainfall in Tangail is not distributed throughout the year. At least 80 per cent of the rainfall occurs during June to October (barshakal). The rest of the rainfall occurs mostly during March to May due to northwestern “Kalo-Baisakhi” disturbance.

The temperature continues to be uniform from early March to early October, the range being only 5°F or so only. The average maximum temperature ranges in between 95°F in April to 87°F in October. The average minimum temperature of Tangail as a whole is 54°F in January and the average annual temperature is 78°F.

In short the climate is moderate, and April and May are the garam (hottest) months (recording a maximum temperature of 100°F). The shithkal from November to February is pleasant with temperature falling to 50°F. Frost is unknown (Ahmed 1938:116)

**FLORA**

Tangail possesses a unique variety of plants, medical herbs, fruit-bearing trees, hundreds of jungle shrubs, creepers and climbers, flowering trees, etc. many of which yield valuable products. The principal articles of Jungle produce are bee-wax, honey, wild cotton (Hunter 1875:12) Such as
Kapok and Chirotia, Kachu, etc. Jungles of reeds and canes are also found there. The chief trees of Tangail are Aam (Mango), Kathal (Jackfruit), Lichu, Thethul (Tamarinds), Peach, Peeara (guava), Anarash (Pine-apple), Papaya and various kinds of plums, which grow particularly wild. A very useful fruit is the Nariayal (Coconut). The shell of the fruit is used for hookah (bowls), and the fibre for mats and coir, and the copra for oil.

Kalomegh the medicinal herbs which are found in this area are Kunch Abrus precatorius, (Andrographic paniculata), Sata moll (Asparagus race mosus), Akanda (Calotropis gigantea), Karamcha (Carissa Congesta), Swarnalta (Cuscuta reflex) Dhutoora (Datura alba), Chalta (Dillenia indica), Gab (Dospyros peregrina), Tamal (Diospyros Sp.).

Tangail is reputed for sal(shorea robusta) locally known as Gozari Jungle. It is predominant in Tangail Pleistocene terrace area, between the Nadhi Banor in the east and Bangshi in the west. In the marshy and aquatic habitats, various kinds of plants could be found, such as, Shapla (Nymphaea Nouchali) and Kalmi (Ipomoea aquotica). Besides these flowering plants, several aquatic non-flowering plants are also commonly seen in Tangail. In the jungle areas, a large number of climbers and epiphytes like ferns and orchids grow, particularly during monsoon.
Tangail has the reputation for wild animals which were numerous and of many kinds. Once its Char lands were infested with tigers. But the lands are now gradually being occupied by human habitations. In Hunter’s account, we find that leopards were very often killed in the vicinity of nearly all the civil stations, towns and villages of this area (Hunter 1875:14). Ryenolds also holds that in the middle of the 19th century rhinoceros were also found. Now-a-days though bears are found in Madhupur jungle, tigers are rarely encountered here. A few species of deer such as “sambhar” (Rusa aristotelis), Barasigha (Bucerious duvancelii), Hogdear (Axis pocinus), and Barking deer (Cervulus vaginalis), were once found in abundance every where in Tangail and elsewhere in the prothibeshi areas including the foot hills of Garolands. Barasingho or large deer, is really a beautiful but rare animal. It is a finely proportioned, clean limbed animal. Elephants, though abound in the Garo and Susang hills, sometimes descend and commit great depredations of the crops in the villages below, are scarcely seen in Tangail fields. Same is the case with the buffaloes.

Madhupur Jungle is infested with the donkeys. The pig is seldom seen. Among smaller animals, the mongoose and bagdasha (vivet-cat) are very
common in this region. Hares and *lepus hespidus* (black rabbit) frequent Madhupur Jungles. Often *booloocks* or gibbons are encountered at the fringes of jungles.

Small game was found in abundance such as peafowl, *jungle* fowl, partridge, and several varieties of pheasants. The florican and snipes are plentiful in the sand banks and *chars* of this region. Quail especially, the blue breasted quail and the gray quail are some time seen in grassy jungles. The *Sorash*, (crane), common crane are found in Tangail marshes and swamps. The rare pink headed ducks *'Kayem'* (*Rhodonessa chryophyllacea*) are also common, the water-cock or *kora* are also *Shithkal* visitors in Tangail riverine lands, along with rare sheldrake and the bar-headed goose and the grey goose. The marsh bubbler or *Dahook* is found in reeds and the *Brahmini Kites* fish eagles or *Korrol*, large gull, ospreys and king fishers are numerous in water founts and *beel* areas. From the late *sharathkal* (autumn) to *bashanthakal* (spring) the *beels* and marshes of Tangail are swarmed with pintail and many other kinds of ducks including the sport-billed ducks.

All the eight varieties of storks are found on the “*Chars*” of the Jamuna namely the adjutant stork, the painted stork, *Gungchill* and the white necked stork, “*manikjor*”. A Somewhat uncommon bird is the great goggle-eyed
plover found on the Jamuna. There are other birds which include Bulbul, Bangal blackheaded oriole, babbler, yellow-breasted wren-babbler, the common babbler or seven sisters. Indian corby crow, magpie, mynas, canary, wood-peckers, common barbet, owl, vultures and doves.

Gokhur (cobra) is somewhat rare in Tangail. The commonest poisonous snake is the banded krait easily distinguished by its brood black and yellow bands. The ordinary krait called “Dhomun”, is also locally, found. This snake is difficult to identify as it is susceptible to much change in colours. A poisonous water snake (Hydroptus nigrucunetus) distinguished by its flat-tail is reported to be seen in Jamuna. Its colour is greenish oil encircled by about fifty rings. Pythons are also found. Lizard and guisaps are inhabitants of jungles. Crocodiles were at sometime quite common in the Jamuna, (but are not found now).

FISH AND FISHERIES

The nadhis, beels and marshes are abound in fish. With the commencement of the Barshakal, fishing activities commence nearly in all paddy fields, ditches and rivulets. The most favoured edible fish are the “Rohit”, Katol (Mrigal) two varieties of “Baus” and Cyprinodae which grow
to a large size in the various nadhis. The Singi Magur Boal and Ghawra, among the Siluridae, the Chital (Mystus Chitala) and the ‘fesha’ or herring are common ‘Maha Sail’ is worthy to note. “Maha Sail” is a very oily fish and require to be cooked immediately on being caught otherwise it becomes unedible and foul smelling. This big fish resembles a “Rohit” though a little bow-shaped and is often captured in the Jamuna. The Commoner varieties of fish like “Hilsa” are abundant, Hilsa is also imported being caught in the Jamuna below the confines of Tangail Chingri (Prawns) are very common.

In Tangail there are quite a good number of Mazees (nearly two thousand or so) big and small situated specially in 10 police stations, e.g. Basail, Bhuapur, Ghatail, Gopalpur, Kalihati, Madhupur, Mirzapur, Nagarpur, Sakhipur, and Tangail Sadar of which the first Six Thanas Contain as many as 62% Mazees. Among the important Mazees of Tangail, the names of following may be noted: Charan Beel, Kalidasha (Rangamari-chata Kuri fishery), Dhuleswari-Purabari fishery, Sunshi Beel, Kasi fishery, Jogini Daha, and Mir Daha.
TANGAIL MUNICIPALITY AND TANGAIL PAURASHAVA

The Tangail municipality was established on the 1st July, 1887 with an area of 5 square miles divided into 4 wards. The municipality was constituted by ten and five nominated commissioners. The main sources of income were taxes on persons and buildings and the main expenditure was on conservancy. In 1912 income of the municipality was Rs. 12,620 and expenditure was Rs. 10,848.

The Tangail Municipality comprised 15 commissioners, out of whom one Chairman and one Vice-Chairman were elected by the commissioners under the provisions of an Act passed in 1932. Tangail was formerly a subdivisional town. In 1951 there were two courts, one civil and one criminal. The Tangail municipality had one Sub-registry office, One post, Telegraph and Telephone Office, one Police Station and one Fire Station (Tangail District Gazetteer 1983:275).

The Tangail Municipal Committee was constituted under the Municipal Administration Ordinance, 1960. There were 4 union committees under the Municipal committee and each union committee had 4 members. The Municipal Committee itself consisted of 8 members of whom 4 were elected,
were nominated. The S.D.O. was the ex-officio chairman of the committee. The population of the Municipality was 21513 according to the 1951 census, 23,730 as per the 1961 census and 42,434 as per the 1974 census. Total number of tax-payers was 4,639 in 1971-72 and 6,803 in 1976-77. Total length of the road in Tangail was 34 miles, out of which 10,27 miles were *pucca* roads and the rest 23,73 miles were *kutcha* roads.

There were 37 kerosene lamps for street-lighting prior to 1961, when electricity was arranged by a private electric supply company. Initially 200 electric bulbs were fixed for street-lighting. Now the number has increased to 700. Tangail municipality which was 60 miles to the south-west of Mymensingh became the Zila headquarters of Tangail Zila on the first day of December in 1969.

The executive powers and functions of the Municipal committee were governed by the Municipal Administration Ordinance, 1960. Functions detailed in part IV of the ordinance included looking after public health, water supply and drainage, animal husbandry, town planning, public buildings and streets, public safety, trees, parks, gardens, education, culture and social welfare (Tangail District Gazetteer 1983:275). After independence of Bangladesh, the Tangail Municipal Committee was replaced by the Tangail
paurashava according to the Bangladesh Local councils and Municipal Committees (Amendment) order, 1972. As per provisions of the Bangladesh Local Government (Union Parishad and Paurashava) order 1973, Government was pleased to determine the number of commissioners to be elected from different constituencies of the paurashava.

The Tangail paurashava now consists of four constituencies of erstwhile Nagar Panchayets which along with the elected commissioners are as follows:

i) Betka-3 ii) Central-2 iii) Deghulia-3 iv) Shantosh-2. A total number of 10 commissioners, a Vice-Chairman and a Chairman constitute the paurashava (Tangail District Gazetteer 1983:275).

The paurashava was connected by metalled road with Dhaka and Mymensingh. Tangail paurashava lies on 24°15' N.latitude and 89°55' E.longitude, comprises an area of 35.23 sq.km. with a population of 106,004 persons according to the 1991 census. It is also the headquarters of the Tangail Thana as well as Tangail Zila, which has under its jurisdiction 5 wards and 52 mahallahs.
Tangail Paurashava has a composition of heterogeneous population professing different religions. The significant portion of residents of this paurashava is constituted by Muslims, and they are conspicuous everywhere. The second in majority are Hindus found in Adalat para, Bajitpur, Bhovani, Shakrail, Shantosh Bairchar, Aloa Bobani, Shantosh and Shabalia.

The park and wide play ground which we find today in Tangail paurashava were made by banking up one of the big basins of the Lohajang nadhi. Shantosh, the barí of former Kagmari Zamindars, is two miles away on the otherside of the nadhi. Tangail in olden days had a bad reputation for malaria. The Shantosh family founded a dispensary and handed it over later to the paurashava. The mausoleum of Mazlom Jananatha Abdul Hamid Khan Vashani is here.

Tangail is a thriving business centre. The business establishments have been mostly in Chhayanir Bazar, Pachanir Bazar, Adalat para, Stadium market, Thana para, Victoria Road, Moshjid Road. The business has also penetrated into the side streets and alleys of Tangail paurashava area. Tangail is famous for handloom and bell-metal industries, Porabari's Chamcham, Thathear sari, dood and milk products. All kinds of vehicles