

The Ziratia Problem of Tripura

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The non-resident cultivating tenants who had agricultural lands in Tripura but lived in British India (later on Pakistan, now Bangladesh) were known as the Ziratia tenants. The word 'Zirat' came from the Bengali word 'Zami-Zirat' meaning agricultural land. The Ziratia Problem is a unique problem and it played an important part in the relations between the Tripura Durbar and the British Indian Authorities and also in the Indo-Pak relations in the later days. No research is yet done on this unique problem although we have some files and unpublished records and documents in the Secretariate Archives, Agartala, Government of Tripura.

In the past, large number of cultivating tenants near the border on the side of British India owned, possessed and cultivated lands in Tripura and numerous inhabitants of adjoining British Indian districts earned their livelihood by cutting and selling forest products of Tripura. There are historical reasons why and how these non-resident cultivating tenants from the other side of the border of Tripura came and how their labours had gone a great way in developing the resources of the State and bringing dense jungles and uncultivated lands of Tripura under cultivation. "By far the larger portion of Hill Tippearah", in the words of W. W. Hunter, "is uncultivated jungle...by degrees, however, the land was taken up under what are now called *jangal-abadi* leases, the usual conditions of which are as follows:- The land to be rent-free for a period of from four to ten years, according to the nature of the jungle; then to be subject to rent at the rate of 2 or 3 *annas* per *bigha*, gradually increasing till it reaches a moderate amount, which does not yet equal the rate paid for adjoining lands in Government territory."¹ In the *jangal-abadi Bandobasta* Order of 1293 T. E., 1302 T. E. we find how the Maharaja of Tripura gave an open call to the tenants of his Chakla-Roshanabad Zamindary² in British India to come to

Tripura to clear the jungles for cultivation. Infact, the border areas of Tripura fall within the ambit of Chakla-Roshanabad Zamindary (now in Bangladesh) of the Maharaja of Tripura. Still, there were controversies between the Tripura Administration and the British India counterparts regarding the rights of the Ziratia tenants of Tripura. Let us now quote some important correspondences (unpublished documents) in this regard.

“From,

Captain A. C. K. Maunsell,
Secretary to the Resident for the Eastern States.

To

The Chief Minister, Tripura State.

Dated, Hastings House, Alipore, Calcutta, the 30th
April, 1943.

Sub :- Embargo on the export of Rice from the Tripura
State.

Sir,

The Government of Bengal have written to say that they have issued orders preventing cultivators living in British India from exporting the paddy, required for their own support but grown by them in the State. They have suggested that the Tripura Government might consider the relaxation of this embargo under such safeguards as may be considered necessary so that at least the paddy grown in the State by cultivators living in British India may be brought out for their own support. It is thought that a possible solution might be to allow the export of sufficient paddy only for the consumption of the cultivator and his family.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant
Sd. A. C. K. Maunsell.”

In reply to the above letter, the Chief Minister of Tripura wrote to the Secretary to the Resident for the Eastern States on 11 May, 1943, the following :

“.. the Tripura Government has always been alive to the

interest of the Jiratia tenants of the State in regard to export of foodstuff grown by them.

2. I do not know what the source of the information before the Bengal Government is, but since the letter was addressed to you, in implementing a policy of restriction of export, in view of the high prices prevailing, the State has consistently relaxed such policy by allowing all Jiratia tenants under the direction of the Divisional Officers to export as much paddy and rice as may be needed for consumption by their families residing in British India. Moreover, if facts are investigated it will be found that the Tripura Government has gone much beyond this, and has helped the authorities of neighbouring British Districts by supplying them occasionally with rice to meet urgent demands.

3. I need hardly add that the Revenue Minister of the Tripura Government is always prepared to promptly look into bonafide cases of grievances of Jiratia tenants, on receipt of representation.”⁴

It is interesting to read another letter of the Secretary to the Resident for the Eastern States to the Chief Minister of Tripura State on 11 December, 1943, in this regard :

“.. the Government of Bengal have written to say that they have received a number of representations regarding Order No. 224 dated the 21st June 1353 T. E. published in the Tripura State Gazette dated the 23rd Aswin, 1353 T. E., from the tenants of H. H. the Maharaja and resident in British India cultivating lands within the State boundaries. Under this Order, paddy sent out of the State is liable to an export tax of Rs. 15/-. It is not therefore clear whether this Order has been issued in cancellation of the contents of your letter referred to above or not.

The Government of Bengal have also received representations to the following effect :-

- (1) No British subjects can reap their *aman* crops within one mile of H. M.'s border without clearing all revenues upto the present year.
- (2) No partner-cultivators can reap their crops without paying Rs. 15/- per maund as taxes, even clearing all revenues.
- (3) No British subjects can reap their crops beyond one mile without paying Rs. 15/- per maund as taxes.
- (4) No British subjects can reap their crops without getting permits even clearing all their revenues.

(5) All British subjects are bound to supply 10 seers of paddy to Maharaja's granary.

It is, therefore, requested that if there is no objection this office may kindly be informed of the actual position to enable the Resident to explain the situation to the Government of Bengal.”⁸

Thus during the pre-partition days and also at the time of the Maharajas of Tripura, the British authorities raised some points of clarifications from the Tripura Durbar regarding the real rights of the Ziratia tenants as the Maharaja of Tripura, with the passage of time, claimed certain amount of revenue from the Ziratia tenants. But the overall relations between the Maharaja and the British rulers was not very seriously affected on the Ziratia question, as the Maharaja virtually surrendered to every British demands. But with the partition of India and also with the accession of Tripura to the Indian Union on October 1949, the existing pattern of relation has materially changed. The natural trade route of Tripura lay through the British Districts of Sylhet, Tipperah and Noakhali. Riverine and railway communications of Tripura passed through these Districts, whose vital economic connections with Tripura remained intact for some years inspite of accession of Tripura to the Indian Union. But due to a number of factors the Indo-Pak relations became strained very soon and that necessarily produced adverse effects on the Tripura border embittering the relations of the people of the two States and prejudicially affecting the peaceful and cordial trade and economic relations and connections. The Ziratia tenants now faced new problems.

In the 'Hindusthan Standard' of Calcutta dated 25.12.1948, the following news item was published :- “..Meanwhile, reports about atrocities, extortion, molestation and humiliation committed by Tripura State Police, specially of Sonamura Police Station, and some miscreants on innocent Pakistan people particularly members of the majority community, continued to pour into Pakistan. These reports had natural repercussions in Pakistan also. Retaliatory incidents of same nature are frequently occurring near about Pakistan borders and members of the minority community are the main targets. Police and miscreants on both sides are reaping a good harvest at the cost of the innocent passers by of both communities. All traffic to and from the Tripura State is practically at a standstill.

Recently the Tripura State has promulgated an emergency Order appointing a Military Administrator in the affected area and has posted military piquets on strategic points. The Military Administrator has promulgated certain regulations restraining movements of State people foreigners for maintenance of peace and order. Reports of excesses committed by the military are also current in Pakistan area. In fact a state of panic prevails in Pakistan border. The harvest time is near at hand. On account of prevailing tension and posting of military Pakistan Cultivators dare not enter State territory at present to reap paddy grown by them.

It is worthwhile to mention here that the Tripura State in pursuance of Inter-Dominion Agreement has recently passed an order limiting the export of paddy from the State to 20 mds. per family subject to the payment of export duty at the rate of Rs 1-2-3 pies only. Each family unit according to the said agreement will be treated as consisting of two adults and three minors. Eight mds. of paddy per adult and 4 mds. per minor are to be exported for family consumption. The surplus, if any, is to be disposed of in the State. This order has practically superseded the last year's order of allowing export of entire paddy on payment of export duty. This new regulations has seriously affected the interests of the Pakistan cultivators as they will have to leave behind a large quantity of paddy in excess of the prescribed quantity to be disposed of in the State. The prospect of a very rich harvest is before them this year. Partly due to the strained relation and partly due to the restrictive regulation referred to above they are not in a position to take full benefit of this year's promising harvest. If they cannot reap paddy in time, there is every chance of the crops being damaged and destroyed by wild beasts."

Let us now take note of the correspondences between I. S. Khan, the District Magistrate, Tippera, Comilla, and R. K. Ray, the Dewan, Tripura State, Agartala, in 1949 in the Ziratia question. In his letter to the Dewan, the District Magistrate of Tippera (now Bangladesh) wrote on 22. 8. 1949 : "The tenants of the Tripura State living in this district have again approached me to represent their grievances to you, viz. their difficulties in bringing home their produce, harassment by petty officials and their illegal levies from these persons. This is the harvest time. I am sure you realize that it affords

plenty of opportunities to the Border patrol parties and petty custom officials. May I request you to consider these difficulties sympathetically and see that they are mitigated as far as possible. The ingress and egress to and from the State of these persons who have necessarily to attend to their fields and crops more frequently now, may be made easier and the export of permissible quantities of paddy more convenient.”⁶

In reply to the above letter the Dewan of Tripura observed (dated 24 August 1949): “.. I have looked into the matter and am afraid my reading of the situation is somewhat different from what has been represented by the Jiratia tenants. These people have prayed that they should be permitted to take out the quota of their crop of paddy without thrashing and they have alleged that though they are willing to pay the prescribed export duty, they are unable to do so for want of adequate customs arrangement for the collection of the same.

“As regards the first point, viz. permission to export paddy without thrashing, I am afraid we cannot agree to this request. If paddy is allowed to be exported before thrashing we will not be able to ascertain correctly the quantity of grain actually exported; in that case the fixing of an exportable quota or the levy and collection of duties will evidently be impossible. Such permission will lead to interminable disputes at every stage and will make the enforcement of our present customs regulations impossible. This question appears to have been fully discussed and decided in the Conference held by my predecessor, Acharya, with the District Officials of Tippera and Noakhali on the 12th January, 1949.

“As regards the second point, viz. the lack of customs arrangements for the collection of duties, we have notified 17 Forest Stations as temporary Land Customs Stations exclusively for purposes of export of paddy, in addition to the 19 permanent Land Customs Stations in the State. This has been done without any request on the part of the Pakistan Government for such action on our part, and I trust you will not mind my observing that we have not been favoured by similar reciprocal action on the part of your Government to anywhere near the same extent. I cannot agree, therefore, that the Jiratia tenants are experiencing difficulty in exporting their paddy for want of customs facilities.

“My reading of the situation is that these Jiratia tenants would all like to take away as much of their crops grown

inside the State as possible, disregarding the exportable quota fixed by agreement between the two Dominions and that they would prefer to do so in every case without paying the prescribed customs duties leviable on such export. In their attempts to do so, they naturally lay themselves open to unauthorised exactions from petty border officials; the only sure way of avoiding this trouble would be for them not to try to take out more paddy than they are permitted to do under the export quota and to obtain proper export permits from authorised customs officials on payment of the prescribed customs duties before they set out to transport a consignment of paddy.

"You will, I hope, easily realise that it is obviously useless for me to issue any general directions to the subordinate border officials for giving general relief to the grievances of the Jiratia tenants. They should be directed to bring individual and specific cases of wrongful harassment of local officials immediately to the notice of the Heads of Departments concerned, like the police and the customs....

"There is one more point in your D. O. letter under reference which I have to comment upon. We have no restrictions on the ingress to and egress from this State against Pakistan nationals in general or Jiratia tenants in particular; it is therefore, not clear to me what particular action has been suggested in this matter by the last sentence of your letter under reference."⁷

With the introduction of the Visa and Passport system, the problem of the Ziratia tenants took a new turn. According to an agreement arrived at between the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police, Tripura on one side and the District Magistrates, Tippera and Noakhali on the other on 5 December, 1952, the issue of passports and visas to the Ziratias were entitled to 'A' category visas, In East Pakistan the bordering District Magistrates were authorised to issue such visas.⁸ But why instead of the Deputy High Commissioner (as it was practiced in the case of India), the District Magistrates of the then East Pakistan were given the power to issue 'A' category visas to the Ziratia tenants? The answer to this question is to be found in a letter of the Chief Secretary, Government of Tripura, addressed to the Under Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, dated 5. 1. 1953.

"I am directed to refer to your letter No. D. 3835/52/PV.-III, dated the 26th December, 1952, enclosing copy of a report published in the Free Press Journal, Bombay, on the 13th December, 1952 regarding an interim arrangement made for special certificates for "Ziratia" tenants in Pakistan to enable them to cross the border in order to harvest their crops on lands near the border in Tripura, as stated in that report.

"2. In reply I am to say that a temporary arrangement was made by our District Magistrate with the District Magistrates, Tippera (Comilla) and Noakhali on the 4th December, 1952 for a period ending with 15th January, 1953. The arrangement provides for the issue of permits by District Magistrates to those Ziratia tenants, traders, labourers, hired workers and wood cutters who have applied for Category A visas, to enable them to cross the border without visas.

"3. The circumstances under which this Government agreed to such a temporary arrangement are as follows. On the introduction of the passport system for travel between India and Pakistan, goods of various kinds worth a few lakhs, which were in transit through Pakistan, were detained at the railway stations in Pakistan. These commodities could not be brought across as the traders could not go to Pakistan to take delivery of their consignments... Moreover, the cultivators in Tripura having lands in East Pakistan and those in Pakistan owning lands in Tripura, within a belt of 10 miles, could not manage to secure Category A visas to which they were consequently put to great inconvenience and loss. Considering the difficulties caused and the loss that could continue to accrue as also the dislocation of trade, a temporary arrangement was made by our District Magistrate on reciprocal basis providing for the issue of permits by the District Magistrates. But the issue of permit has been restricted to those who have already applied for visas."

Although there was some complicity regarding the delay in the issue of category 'A' visas to the Ziratia tenants and the Pakistan Government lodged number of protests against that," still, the Government of Tripura, on revenue and other grounds, were interested on the question of entry of the Ziratia tenants in Tripura at least in 1954. This is evident from a letter of R. Ghose, the District Magistrate of Tripura, to V. Nanjappa, the Chief Commissioner of Tripura dated April 20, 1954 ;

"You are aware of the facts that we have got a good number of Jiratia tenants who reside in East Pakistan and cultivate lands in our territory. The season of sowing *Aus* seeds has already set in and most of those Jiratia tenants are not being able to start cultivation as they cannot enter our territory in absence of Passports and Visas though applied for. In this connection, I invite your attention to a copy of the telegraph appended herewith from the District Magistrate, Noakhali, East Pakistan and it appears that a good number of applications old and new for visas are pending for slow disposal and some are being refused probably for formal defects as alleged. Due to non-availability of visas in time they will not be in a position to cultivate the lands as a result of which a considerable area of cultivated land will remain fallow. This will make us to lose the out turns of those lands.

"On the other hand it is apprehended that a portion of the crops will be smuggled but in spite of that we will get a big portion of the yield if those Jiratia tenants are allowed to enter our territory and cultivate their lands on the strength of the permits issued by the District Magistrate, Tipperah, Noakhali and Deputy Commissioner, Sylhet as was done in the previous years which, I think you remember.

"Under the circumstances, I propose as a gesture of good will that the District Magistrates of the Border Districts in East Pakistan (Noakhali, Tipperah and Sylhet) may be informed, if approved, to issue permits in favour of the bona-fide Jiratia tenants to enter and cultivate lands as was done in the previous years."¹¹

But in spite of this 'gesture of good will' by the Tripura Administration, frequent allegations were made in the Pakistani Press about the enhanced rates of Permit Tax, Export Duties, Grazing Tax etc., the harassments of the Pakistani Jiratia tenants at the hands of the officials of the Tripura Government. To quote the 'DAWN' of Karachi, dated 14 November, 1956 :

"Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, President, East Pakistan Awami League, has, in a statement, criticised the Bharati officials for creating 'trouble for the Jiratia tenants to harvest paddy during *Aman* crops'.

"He said : 'Report of untold sufferings of the Jiratia tenants for their inability to harvest the paddy on the other side of the border with valid passport and visa have been daily

pouring in and causing serious anxieties in my mind. Though the Liaquat-Nehru Pact is still in force, I cannot understand, why the Indian authorities are creating these troubles at this harvesting season. The Ziratia tenants were not allowed to bring their *Aus* crops. Now if they are to meet with the same fate about the *Aman* crops, their miseries will know no bound."

Earlier, a few specific complaints were mentioned in a news item published in the 'DAWN' of Karachi of October 8, 1956. In the words of the 'DAWN': "Mr. Sharifullah Bhuiya, Secretary of the Kamalia Village Welfare Association, has appealed to the Government to devise means to put an end to the harassment by Bharati authorities of the tenants of Ziratia (situated on Balonia border) possessing lands which fall in the territory of Tripura State (Bharat).

".. Some 1,251 Pakistani families of the Parashuram Police station have 4,857 Kanis of land in Siddiqnagar area of the Tripura state. Recently the Bharati authorities ordered them to pay a revenue of Rs. 1,000-UPP."

When such allegations were regularly published in the Pakistani Press, the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, asked explanation from the Chief Secretary, Tripura Administration, as even the Commonwealth Secretary desired an early report giving the actual position relating to these allegations.¹²

Infact, there were pronounced discontent and resentment among the Ziratias and a number of organisations of the Ziratia tenants grew up on the other side of the border¹³ of Tripura which even went to the extent of claiming that "All the arable lands of the Hill Tripura State (now within Bharat) belong to Pakistani Border people". Thus tension mounted high and a state of panic prevailed in the border of Tripura. Tresspass of hundreds of Pakistani Ziratia tenants who forcibly took away mounds of paddy from the thrashing ground became the order of the day.

Let us now take note of the arrangements and the positions taken by the Tripura Government since 1947. In fact, inspite of allegations and tensions, the rights of the Ziratia tenants were not taken away, though they were the citizens of another country.

The Maharani Regent under an order of the Regency Council dated 26 November, 1948 permitted carriage of paddy by the Ziratia tenants upto the maximum of 28 maunds of

paddy per family per year. This arrangement was operative upto January 31, 1949 (vide Minutes of the Conference held in the residence of the Dewan, Agartala, on 12 January, 1949). It will be observed that the quantum of Paddy had later been increased from 28 maunds to 40 maunds per family.

The next stage was when this matter was considered at the 5th Chief Secretaries' Conference (Inter-Dominion) held at Dacca in January, 1949 which relates to the question of Tripura Government considering whether the quantity of 40 maunds per family per year was reasonable. This, in fact, has no bearing on the Calcutta Agreement of 1948 between the Pakistan Government and the Government of India.

In the 18th Conference of the Chief Secretaries (Inter-Dominion) held in November, 1950, the Chief Commissioner of Tripura quite clearly stated that the previous arrangements by which paddy was being taken out of Tripura under the Council of Regency Order which practically expired on 31 January, 1949 and there was no separate agreement for the revival of this export. At the instance of the Chief Commissioner, Tripura, the Government of India agreed in June, 1951 to the imposition of a total ban on the export of rice and paddy by the Ziratia tenants and the East Bengal Government were informed of this position.¹⁴ Thus tension mounted high when the age-old rights of the Ziratia tenants were withdrawn. However, on humanitarian and other grounds, the Government of India changed its stand very soon. In accordance with the provisions of the Indo-Pak Trade Agreement of 1955, the Ziratia tenants, owning or cultivating agricultural lands within a 10-mile belt of the border of Tripura were allowed, after the harvest, to take, per family, across the border, 40 maunds of paddy or the total produce, if less, on a reciprocal basis. As per the answer of the then Prime-Minister of India in the Rajya Sabha on 18 February, 1958 (nstarred Question No. 21) the number of East Pakistani Ziratia tenants cultivating land in the border area of India was 18,730 and the number of Indian Ziratia tenants cultivating land in the border area of East Pakistan were 889 respectively

Since the late fifties secret intelligence reports came to the Government of Tripura¹⁵ that the East Pakistani Ziratia tenants were either coming in large numbers to Tripura to construct houses on their lands lying within Tripura for permanently settling down as Indian citizens or they were selling

their paddy lands. Questions were raised in the Parliament on the migration problem and also on the point whether the buyers of land in Tripura formerly owned by the East Pakistani Ziratia tenants were denied to get ownership right over such land even after registration. A new problem emerged. Dasarath Deb moved a cut motion in the Lok-Sabha in 1957 as the Government of India failed to adopt a definite policy on land¹⁶ owned by Pakistani Ziratia tenants. The Secretary of the Sonamura Divisional Committee of the All India Kisan Sabha in his long representation to the Chief Commissioner of Tripura, dated 24.10.1957 vehemently protested against the Order of the S. D. O., Sonamura Tripura that no one who had purchased lands of the Ziratia tenants even before fifteen years or more were allowed to harvest the paddy of such lands if they could not obtain the harvesting permit from their respective Tahasil and depositing the paddy of such lands to the Government godown (as the Ziratia tenants did), after proper *Namzari* (mutation).¹⁷ The AIKS also pointed out how the Border Outposts Police were harassing the peasantry, even though they were Indian nationals. In the words of the AIKS "Situation is really very unhappy, if one thinks in terms of the interest of the peasantry particularly the poor peasantry.... We are at a loss to understand why the ownership of the purchasers in question would be challenged when they have got registered deeds, and why they would be harassed in this way....."¹⁸

Thus a lot of complicity was created regarding the ownership of lands of Pakistan Ziratia tenants. In fact, the question of Indian ownership of lands of the Pakistani Ziratia tenants still remained unresolved in many cases of Tripura, as in all old land Deed in which the word 'Kotwali' was mentioned it was presumed that such lands belonged to the Ziratias. Regarding the official policy about the rights of the Ziratia tenants in the fifties of the present century it is better to quote the letter of the Chief Secretary, Government of Tripura addressed to the District Magistrate and Collector, Tripura on 28.10.1957: "I am desired by the Chief Commissioner to make the position very clear to you in this respect. As you are no doubt aware, under the terms of the Agreement between the Govt. of India and the Govt. of Pakistan, the Ziratia tenants are permitted to take away to Pakistan the entire produce of paddy of their lands situated in this Territory or 40 maunds

thereof, in case such produce exceeds 40 maunds every year. Since most of the Zirantias had already taken away the permissible quantity of paddy from out of their last crop during this year, they are not being permitted to take away any portion of their *Aus* crop. While this is as it should be, it must be ensured that while they would not be permitted to take any more paddy across to Pakistan, the District authorities must not interfere with their discretion to dispose of their paddy within the Territory of Tripura in any way the Ziratia tenants like. In other words, there should be no compulsion for them to sell it to any Co-operative Society or any other agency nominated by you. Of course, since some of these Ziratia lands are situated at places where facilities for disposing of the produce which they cannot carry away to Pakistan under the rules do not exist, it would be in order for you to assist them in disposing of their paddy provided they ask for such assistance. I am to request that the correct position in this regard be brought to the notice of your subordinate officers immediately, so that there is no unnecessary harassment of the Ziratia tenants.”¹⁹

Thus it is evident from the above letter that the official attitude towards the Ziratia cause was sympathetic. But as per official records and documents, the Indian Zirantias owning lands in East Pakistan were not allowed by the Government of Pakistan to lift into Tripura the quantity of produce as agreed to by the Indo-Pak Trade Agreement. According to that Agreement the Ziratia tenants residing on both sides of the border within a ten miles belt should continue to be allowed to take across the border within a reasonable time after the harvest 40 maunds of paddy per family. But the Pakistan authorities did not extend this right to the Indian Ziratia tenants. In a letter to the Under Secretary, O & M Vigilance Department, Tripura Administration, the D. M. & Collector of Tripura pointed out: “Since 1957 the share of Indian owners is being taken away by the Pakistan Authorities without making any payment or issuing any receipt for the paddy taken. The Borgadars are required to carry the share of the Indian owners to the nearest Pakistan Military Camp at their own cost and labour. There is no special arrangement of transferring the income of Indian Zirantias owning lands in Pakistan except under normal Foreign Exchange Regulation.

"In the above circumstances this Administration did not extend any special facilities to the Pakistani Ziratias owning lands in this Territory. They are required to comply with the normal Foreign Exchange Regulations. As has been said above, this Administration is not permitting the Pakistani Ziratias to remove their crops from Tripura. The produce is being purchased by the Administration through the agency of the Govt. purchasing agents. The sale proceeds of the share of the produce of the Pakistani Ziratias are being kept deposited in the Treasury after realising arrears of land revenue, if any, due from the Ziratias. Detailed account in the name of individual Ziratias is maintained."²⁰

Thus the old rights of the Ziratia tenants were practically withdrawn from both the sides with the imposition of some restrictive measures. But a new problem arose.

With the passing of time, the cases of trespassing and the number of incidences of 'forcible taking away of maunds of paddy from the thrashing ground', cases of lifting of crop, cattle and forest products of Tripura border increased thousand folds and became the order of the day. The disturbances in the border area of Tripura became chronic.

References

1. W. W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. VI, Delhi, 1973, p. 505.
2. The Chakla Reshanabad Zamindary included fifty-three paraganas and extended over 377,100 acres of land. It stretched along the whole length of Tipperah District, from Sylhet on the north to Noakhali on the south being about a hundred miles in length and ten to fifteen in breadth. In 1765, at the time when the District of Tipperah came under the control of the East India Company, this estate was under the immediate rule of the Maharaja of Tripura, who paid a tribute to the British Government. In 1776, a settlement was made for the fifty-three paraganas. In 1782, on the failure of the Maharaja to pay the assessed revenue, the whole Chakla was attached by the British Government. At the time of the Permanent Settlement (1793), this estate was settled permanently with the Maharaja of Tripura at an annual revenue.

3. Eastern States Agency, No. W. 3-77/42-4571, From, Captain A. C. K. Maunsell, Secretary to the Resident for the Eastern States, to the Chief Minister of Tripura State, dated 30.4.1943.
4. B. No. 4/S.No. 25/1963, letter no. $\frac{229}{11-1/55}$ p. dt. (unpublished), Secretariat Archives, Govt, of Tripura, Agartala.
5. Letter No. $\frac{D514}{W. 2-34/42}$ dt. 11.12. 1943 (unpublished), Sec. Arch., Govt. of Tripura, Agartala.
6. BA/S17/1949-50, Sec. Arch., Agartala, letter no. D. O. 1131/C, dt. 22.8.1949, (unpublished).
7. *Ibid.*, letter no. 980/H/28/F, dt. 24.8.1949, (unpublished).
8. B 26/531/1952/FN XX-113/52, Sec. Arch., Agartala, letter No. 7018-P, dt. 15.12.1952, (unpublished).
9. B 38/1954 F. N. 16(20)-PP/54, Sec. Arch., Agartala, letter No. 64-P/XX-113/52, dt. 5. 5. 1953 (unpublished).
10. *Ibid.*, D. O. No. 264/DHC, dt. 12. 6. 1954, letter of the Deputy High Commissioner for India in Pakistan, Dacca, to the Chief Commissioner, Tripura, (unpublished).
11. *Ibid.*, letter No. GL-519/MM/XXX IV-7/54, dt. 20.4.1954 (unpublished).
12. Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, D. O. No. F. 29-54/56-Pak II, dt 17. 12. 1954, Sec. Arch., Agartala, B 235/511, (unpublished).
13. See 'Organisation of the Ziratia Tenants' by Mahadev Chakravarti, in *Educational Miscellany*, Govt of Tripura, Vol. XIII, 1984.
14. Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India, letter No. F. 12-17/49-Pak. III, dt. 25. 2. 1952.
15. B 60/1955, Sec. Arch., Agartala, letter No. 1D/1-8, dt. 3. 5. 1956. (unpublished).
16. Cut Motion in the Lok-Sabha, S. N. 1347, Demand No. 61, List No. 44, Demands for Grants in respect of General Budget - 1957-58.

17. B 241/S17/F. N. 2(21)-P/58, Sec. Arch., Agartala, Representation of AIKS, 24. 10. 1954.
18. *Loc. cit.*
19. Letter of S. K. Sarkar, Chief Secretary, Govt. of Tripura to M. Ramunny, D. M. & Collectoer, Tripura, D. O. No. 207-1D, dt 28. 10. 1957 (Unpublished).
20. B 313/S14/F. N. 3(10)-1 P/62, Sec. Arch., Agartala, letter No. 14951-53/XIII-5 (A)/DM/FP/59, dt. 4. 7. 1962 (unpub).