

**ECONOMIC  
TRANSITION  
IN TRIPURA**

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**Pravas Ranjan Bhattacharjee**

**DR. PRAVAS RANJAN BHATTACHARJEE** was born in 1940 and obtained his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Calcutta University in 1963 and 1981 respectively. He has the experience of teaching Economics since 1964. At present, he is Reader and Head of the Department of Analytical and Applied Economics, Tripura University, Agartala.

Dr. Bhattacharjee's research interest lies in the economic problems of the North-Eastern Region and he has a good number of published research papers to his credit.

Dr. Bhattacharjee was a member of the Planning Board, Tripura during 1978-88 and he has a first-hand knowledge of the problems of planned economic development of Tripura. Dr. Bhattacharjee is also a member of the North-East India Council for Social Science Research, Shillong.

The book provides an in-depth analysis of the factors having a bearing on economic development of Tripura since the late nineteenth century and effectively fills up a void in this field of study.

The book contains a rigorous yet lucid analysis of the economic problems that Tripura faces and it candidly sets forth the perspectives of development of Tripura for the twenty-first century.

The book is likely to be useful to students of Economics and History of Tripura University at both undergraduate (Hons.) and postgraduate levels and it will also be a valuable source of reference to scholars, planners and administrators.

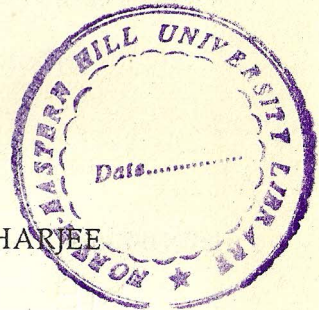
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# Economic Transition in Tripura

PRAVAS RANJAN BHATTACHARJEE



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In sacred memory of My Mother

## Foreword

The princely State of Tripura was integrated into the Indian union in 1949. Thereafter the State has been reckoned among the North-Eastern States which constitute one of the economically backward regions in the country. Within the North-Eastern region, again, inter-state economic disparities are quite striking. Such disparities have been conditioned by differences in ethnic composition of population and the rates and pattern of their growth, cultural ethos of the people, nature and quantum of physical resources and the manner of their exploitation, social and economic institutions of organizing productive activities, the policies and programmes pursued by the community or the rulers, etc. in the respective States. In all these respects Tripura stands alone among the North-Eastern States. The need for making an in-depth analysis of these factors having a bearing on economic development of Tripura since the pre-integration period cannot be overemphasized. Some isolated studies dealing with one or two sectors had been made in the past by some scholars. But no comprehensive analysis of economic development of the State covering all the sectors was made so far. Dr. Pravas Ranjan Bhattacharjee has effectively filled up this void by writing the monograph, "Economic Transition in Tripura".

Bhattacharjee's work represents a rigorous yet lucid analysis of the factors that have influenced Tripura's economic development since the late nineteenth century. While analysing the forces of change he has aptly noted the significant aspects of political and social dualism that have conditioned the development process in the State. He has convincingly shown how Tripura's economic development has been almost exclusively

dependent on exogenous factors as a result of which the endogenous factors of development have remained all but stunted.

Dr Bhattacharjee has methodically worked out the pattern of development of the different sectors of the economy in order to identify the basic imbalances in structural changes in the State's economy. This trend has created a legacy, so to say, of the problems and prospects of future development of the State. In the light of this he has candidly set forth the perspective of development of Tripura for the twentyfirst century.

I am sure the book will be an invaluable source of reference to students, teachers and other scholars who would like to understand the process of economic change that Tripura has been going through over the past more than one hundred years. Even the planners and administrators will find the book very enlightening and useful.

Tripura University  
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J.B. Ganguly

## Preface

In this book, one surveys the process of economic transition that Tripura, a tiny political unit in North-East India, has undergone since the late nineteenth century. The time horizon of the study is slightly more than a century. The central objective of this exercise is to analyse the present socio-economic problems of Tripura in the light of her past history and to search out the ways of tackling these problems. As conventional concepts of Economics have been used for analysing the structural changes of Tripura's economy and for deriving policy implications, the present work may be treated as a humble treatise on economic development. From another viewpoint, the account given through the pages of this book may appear to be a short exercise in economic history of North-East.

As is well-recognised, economic development is a function of both economic and non-economic variables. Therefore, the present study has carefully avoided the orthodox approach and extended itself to the analysis of phenomena which may appear to be of non-economic character at first sight. Moreover, no uniform methodology could be followed in the analysis of events of all periods. Much depended on the nature and quantum of information available from the secondary sources.

The sequence of subject-matter in the work is as follows: At the beginning, the socio-economic situation in the late nineteenth century is portrayed with special reference to reforms and changes that initiated the process of modernisation. Then a brief analysis of the socio-economic structure of Tripura during the 1930s is made. This is followed by specific analyses of the impact of the Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II and more im-

portantly, the aftermath of partition of India. These provide the backdrop of development planning initiated in Tripura in post-integration period. An analysis of the structural changes and performance of Tripura's economy follows next. Then comes the details of sectoral development during the Plan period.

Lastly, perspective for the twentyfirst century is analysed in the concluding chapter no. 9. As the study has been mainly concerned with structural changes, their consequences and policy implications, it could not accommodate extensive discussions of some important topics like the Co-operative Movement, population growth, urbanization, tribal development schemes and the Autonomous District Council, role of the North-Eastern Council in Tripura's Development Planning, etc. There are standard works on some of these topics (for example, population growth, tribal development, etc.) While others (for example, Co-operative Movement, urbanization) should be taken up in future studies.

The writing of this book was greatly facilitated by a research project entitled, "Economic Transition in Tripura" funded by Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi, and administered by Tripura University, Agartala, and the author is grateful to the Directorates of Statistics, Planning, Industry and Agriculture, Government of Tripura; and M.B.B. College, Agartala for providing useful information and for allowing access to rare books and documents.

The author humbly acknowledges his intellectual debt to the social scientists whose works have provided source materials for his book. A special mention must be made of Prof. J.B. Ganguly, the first Vice-Chancellor of Tripura University and renowned economist of North-East India, who initiated the author into economic research and who so kindly wrote a foreword for this book on his last day in office.

Dr (Mrs.) Manika Nandi, Reader in Geography, Women's College, Agartala obliged the author by providing a map of Tripura sketched by her. Dr. P. Nayak, Lecturer in Economics, Tripura University, Sri Bhupal Sinha, Assistant Professor of Economics, M.B.B. College, Agartala and Sri P. Dhanavel, Lecturer in English, Tripura University helped the author in reducing the

number of errors in this book as they went through the manuscript. Thanks are due to all of them. However, the author alone is responsible for all the shortcomings of this work.

Tripura University  
Agartala

PRAVAS RANJAN BHATTACHARJEE

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## Chapter I

# Economic Transition in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

Tripura, one of the seven backward States of the North-Eastern Region and an erstwhile princely political unit, finds herself in a socio-economic situation which is unique in a number of ways. These socio-economic peculiarities and problems arising out of them have originated from the historical process of transition which started in the late nineteenth century. Unless the nature of this transition and the forces released by it are traced and analysed, the roots of today's problems cannot be discovered. History, geography, anthropology and sociology have profoundly interacted with economic factors to bring Tripura to a situation in which there appears to be a pathetic maladjustment between aspiration and ability.

Tripura's position as a backward State cannot be adequately explained merely by her industrial underdevelopment or rural and tribal predominance or even by infrastructural weaknesses in the form of transport bottleneck, etc. The explanation has to be sought in the very nature of her socio-economic transition which started from the time of *Maharaja* [title of some Indian princes] Birchandra whose *de facto* reign began in 1862 and *de jure*

reign from 1870. This chapter, therefore, is devoted to analyse Tripura's socio-economic situation in the late nineteenth century and subsequent changes that took place up to the early years of the present century. In other words, the background and beginning of Tripura's process of modernisation and economic transition are sought to be presented in this chapter.

### Socio-Economic Situation in the Late Nineteenth Century

It is during the rule of *Maharaja* Birchandra in Tripura that the paramount British power started taking active interest in this part of the North - Eastern Frontier of Bengal and intervened to ensure that its colonial interest was promoted in every possible way. Before the British, the Mughals had intervened in the affairs of Tripura with a spate of aggressions culminating in the occupation of Tripura's plains by Mir Habib in 1729; and the occupied territory was renamed Rosnabad. Vicissitudes of history ultimately led to the division of the State of Tripura into *Rajgi* and Mughalan. The predominantly hilly part constituted *Rajgi* or kingdom proper and the occupied plains called *Chakla* [District; estate] Rosnabad was Mughalan or the domain of the Mughals; and in respect of this territory the *Raja* [an Indian king or prince] of Tripura was first the feudatory chief of the Mughals and then he became the *zamindar* of the British.

A court order in 1829 declared the *zamindari* of *Chakla* Rosnabad as an "integral portion of the impartible *Raj*" and thus the dual role of the *Raja* of Tripura as the ruler of a princely state and a *zamindar* of British Bengal was established<sup>1</sup>. Besides *Chakla* Rosnabad, the *Raja* of Tripura also acquired other *zamindaris* in the districts of Noakhali and Sylhet in the then British Bengal. This political dualism combined with geographical vicinity gave birth to an intimate socio-economic intercourse between British Bengal and Tripura and shaped the latter's destiny during the late

nineteenth century and the first half of the present century (till the division of India in 1947). The pattern of this intercourse was dictated by the policy of the British in favour of "guided" modernisation so that Tripura could serve the imperial interest.

The extent of the interaction was determined, *inter alia*, by the desire of the *Raja* to maximise his revenue. The consequence was that while the *Raja* could depend for his prosperity on the rich plains of his *zamindari*, he made his Rajgi Tripura subservient to and dependent upon the economy of British Bengal in several ways. The British, like the Mughals, were prevented from annexing the "Hill Tippera" (as Tripura was known to the British) by the "unremunerative character of such an undertaking" but took every care to ensure subordination of the *Raja* to the paramount power.

Hunter<sup>2</sup> provides a vivid account of the milieu of Tripura in the 1870s. According to this account, in 1871 a British officer was appointed as the Political Agent to Tripura in order that he might protect British interest and advise the *Raja* whose relation with the British was not guided by any treaty but by payment of succession duty for the Rajgi part and land revenue for the *zamindari*. In 1873, *Maharaja* Birchandra was found to run a despotic and patriarchal administration where his word was law. Even the government service in all departments assumed a nature of family arrangement. All the high officials were related to the king and the subordinate officials in their turn were connected with their superiors almost in the same way. The pay of the officials was nominal and they were assumed to add to their income by earnings from questionable practices.

Thus till the early 1870s Tripura was, for all practical purposes, a medieval socio-political entity. But a slow trend of modernisation was discernible since 1873 when Babu

Nilamani Das, an officer under the Bengal Government was appointed as the *Dewan* [the prime minister or finance minister of an Indian State] under the *Raja*. In 1873-74, nine enactments were passed including the Criminal Procedure Code, Civil Procedure Code, Police Guide, etc. and the budget system was introduced to modernise State finance. Some socio-cultural preconditions of modern economic development were also fulfilled during Birchandra's reign by abolishing slavery, *sati* system, human sacrifice, witch-hunting, etc. through legal measures.

The social dualism involving the tribals and non-tribals which poses a problem of adjustment in Tripura today and accounts for the economic inequality between the two social groups has its roots in the development process during the nineteenth century. Hunter observes that the population of Tripura in his time was composed of two entirely distinct elements—the people of the plains and those of the hills. The plainsmen had closeness in every respect with the population of British Bengal and they inhabited a narrow strip of land along the frontiers, averaging about four miles (6.43 km) in breadth. The hill people were mainly nomadic in nature as they practised *jhum* cultivation or shifting cultivation. These people lived in villages called *Khanabari*. Each *bari*, named after its headman, was subject to periodic shifting.

According to Hunter, the estimated population of the State of Tripura in 1874-75 was 74,242. Of them, 47,523 (64 per cent) lived in the hills and 26,719 (36 per cent) in the plains. But the total population of hill tribes was estimated at 41,345 (57.04 per cent) and people not classified as hill tribes numbered 31,897 (42.96 per cent). Even allowing the under-enumeration of the hill tribes, the fact emerges that the non-tribals began to be present in a large number in the hills as early as the late nineteenth century. The tribal population was subject to both immigration and emigra-

tion. The tribal immigrants in that period mainly consisted of the Chakma people in search of good *jhum* land. The Lushai Kukis who were then in a critical phase of transition often raided the tribal as well as the non-tribal villages. From the economic viewpoint, these raids were often substitutes for exchange when the tribal economy was in crisis. The Lushai-Kuki raids and also the extortions by the King's officials led to occasional tribal migration to the British territory. During Birchandra's reign, the process of Sanskritization of the tribals in Tripura was accelerated and some groups among them were given the social recognition as *Kshatriyas*, an upper caste of the Hindu society. Although this had a meaningful impact on the urban tribals, it had nothing to do with the economic disparity and dissimilarity between the tribal and non-tribal social groups in the rural areas.

Up to the early twentieth century, Tripura was proverbially rich in forest resources. Traditionally, a tribute from the *Raja* to the Mughal court in Delhi used to assume the form of elephants captured from the forests of Tripura. In the late nineteenth century, the *Raja* earned a good amount of revenue from elephant capture. Forest revenue was an important source of revenue of the State. But forests were mostly managed on the farming system and let out at very low rents. In the late nineteenth century there was no systematic trade in forest produce and the hillmen engaged themselves in the collection and sale of forest produce as a subsidiary occupation. The entire system of forest management initiated a process of wanton destruction of forest wealth right from the nineteenth century. The drain on forest resources assumed an alarming proportion as the population of British Bengal increased and its demand for fuel, fodder, housing materials, furniture, etc. went on rising.

Although very slack in regard to forest management,

the King and his officials were quite particular in collecting *ghar-chukti kar* (family tax) from the tribals with some exceptions for which unpaid service to the king had to be offered. The King's relationship with his tribal subjects assumed a semi-feudal character. The King of Tripura was regarded as *Maharaja* and he had *Raja* or feudatory chiefs under him who used to assemble at Agartala during the *Durga Puja* festival in September-October to settle with the King the rates of *ghar-chukti kar* which differed from tribe to tribe. Thus a semi-feudal socio-economic structure was superimposed on the nomadic tribal economy. The poor tribals exposed to double extortions by *Raja's* men and local chiefs had the only consolation in having almost unlimited land for *jhum* cultivation in which labour and not land was the strategic factor of production. Hunter found the hill people, as a rule, very poor and improvident and a bad season was next door to starvation. The sale proceeds of cash crops like cotton and sesamum were used by tribals to pay tax and for petty purchases. In most respects the tribals had nearly a self-sufficient subsistence economy without much surplus creation or accumulation and *jhum* cultivation was then a way of life for them.

In the plains, rice was the only crop grown in any considerable quantity and in the 1870s the portion of land under cultivation was small even in the plains. The non-tribal economy was also mainly one of subsistence in nature. The *Raja* was the only *zamindar* or superior landlord in respect of plains land: but he made grants of lands in perpetuity and at a fixed rental. He also farmed out collections creating small *taluks* or perpetual tenures. Thus was created a class of intermediaries in the plains and this class consisted of both elite tribals (relatives and high officials of the *Raja*) and non-tribals. The elite tribals came closer to the non-tribals in the plains in respect of socio-economic characteristics while the *jhumias* were left outside the ambit of what-

ever development took place in the State. Although poor, the *jhumias* were averse to wage labour and, consequently, there was great scarcity of wage labour which encouraged and even compelled the use of outside labour and induced immigration of working class people from the outside (mainly from the adjoining districts of Bengal and Assam).

The transition of Tripura's economy in the late nineteenth century was effected through extension of cultivation in the plains with a very liberal land tenure system known as *jangal abadi* leases. Immigrants were invited to clear jungles (forest land) and settle; and no rent was charged for four to ten years. Then a very low rent and subsequently moderate rent was charged and in any case, rents in Tripura's plains were kept lower than that in the neighbouring districts of Bengal. Along with the permanent settlers came the *ziratia* tenants who used to cultivate plainsland in Tripura but continued to be the residents of British Bengal. Most of them were landless Muslim cultivators of British Bengal and the Sonamura division in Tripura provided them alluring opportunities. The burden of land revenue on the plainsmen was rather light in comparison with the burden of *ghar-chukti kar*, compulsory and customary services and other liabilities imposed on the hillmen, if we consider the production potentials of the two socio-economic groups. Thus right from the nineteenth century a process of socially unbalanced growth started and it gained momentum in the twentieth century.

During the reign of Maharaja Birchandra, Tripura had no towns and its capital, Agartala, was itself a village of moderate size (with a population of 875 in 1864). Population agglomeration took place around market places and export points and tax collection centres (ghats) on the banks of the rivers which were used as export routes. The principal exports of Tripura were cotton, timber, *til* (sesamum), bamboo canes, thatching grass and firewood. In 1872, fifty-

four thousand maunds (1 maund = 38 kg approximately) of cotton were exported. The State possessed no manufactures worth mention except coarse cloth and country liquor. Hunter remarks that every necessity except rice and every luxury except country liquor used to be imported. In normal years a slight export of rice would be observed but even in respect of rice there would be occasional needs of small imports. Again, what appeared to be exports of rice were mostly associated with the return of the *ziratia* tenants after harvest. The nature of imports and export trade of Tripura during the late nineteenth century goes to show that the emerging "modern" sector of Tripura's economy in the plains at that time was "feeding" itself indirectly on the exports from the hills and partially on the revenue collected from the *Raja's zamindari* in British Bengal. Capital, when acquired, was usually hoarded or lent at exorbitant rates of interest in connection with unproductive purposes like consumption needs, festivals, etc.

In the absence of reliable data relating to production in various sectors, one can try to understand the structure of Tripura's economy from the accounts of revenue collected by the State from various sources. Table 1.1 provides an abridged account of sources and amounts of revenue of Tripura in the late nineteenth century.

Table 1.1  
*Revenue of the State of Tripura in 1873-74 and 1874-75*

Source	Amount of Revenue			
	1873-74		1874-75	
	Amount (Rs)	Per cent	Amount (Rs)	Per cent
1. Land revenue in the plains	38,650	23.66	38,789	20.75
2. Family tax in the hills	24,667	15.10	24,217	12.95

Source	Amount of Revenue			
	1873-74		1874-75	
	Amount (Rs)	Per cent	Amount (Rs)	Per cent
3. Tax on forest produce exported	27,329	16.73	40,396	21.61
4. Duty on cotton and <i>til</i> exported	45,695	27.97	47,181	25.24
5. Royalty on elephants captured	18,106	11.09	24,000	12.84
6. Other sources	8,900	5.45	12,349	6.61
Total	1,63,347	100.00	1,86,932	100.00

Source: W.W. Hunter(1876), *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Volume VI, Trubner & Co., London: Reprinted by D.K Publishing House, Delhi in 1973, p.578.

The table shows that tax on exports of forest produce and royalty on captured elephants taken together contributed about 28 per cent of the State revenue in 1873-74 and more than 34 per cent in 1874-75. This proves the importance of forest in income generation in the late nineteenth century and also shows how the State went on eating up its "natural resources". The importance of the semi-primitive *jhum* economy is illustrated by the fact that family tax and duties on exports of cotton and sesamum combined together contributed 43.07 per cent of the State revenue in 1873-74 and 38.19 per cent in 1874-75. In comparison, the contributions of land revenue realised from the settled lands in the plains were only 23.66 per cent in 1873-74 and 20.75 per cent in 1874-75. Diverse other taxes and duties contributed only five to six per cent of the State revenue. Therefore, economy of the hills was much more predominant than the economy of the plains in determining the total economic situation in Tripura during the nineteenth century.

## Subsequent Changes

The modernisation process and the rate of expansion of the economy of the plains got accelerated at the advent of the twentieth century. *Maharaja* Radhakishore Manikya (1879-1909) introduced a number of reforms and strengthened both the administrative infrastructure and social overhead. He established a new high school, a number of girls' schools and primary schools in different parts of the State. In 1900, the *Maharaja* opened a free boarding school for the *Thakurs* (relatives of the Royal family) and the *Kumaras* (princes). A second-grade college at Agartala was established in 1901 but it was subsequently closed in the face of the opposition of Calcutta University. So, special scholarships and stipends were granted to help indigent students for pursuing studies outside the State.

The *Maharaja* of Tripura was also emerging in this period as a socio-cultural leader of Bengal. He befriended Rabindranath Tagore, the great poet, and extended financial assistance to Hemchandra (poet), Dinesh Chandra Sen (writer), and J.C. Bose (scientist). He also paid a large sum of money to the Bengal Technical Institute in Calcutta. These acts of the *Maharaja* strengthened the socio-cultural links between Bengal and Tripura and had an impact on the economic development of the latter via cultural changes.

The rural agricultural sector in the plains of Tripura expanded through settlement of immigrant farmers of both permanent and *ziratia* class. The gross revenue of the state (excluding the *zamindari*) increased from Rs 4,74,468 to Rs 10,08,536 in *Maharaja* Radhakishore's time<sup>3</sup>. Land revenue collection was placed on a more sound basis as the survey and settlement procedure was streamlined. To develop agriculture, the *Maharaja* opened a model farm. He also started experiments for silk rearing in 1904. A technical school was established at Agartala with a view to develop-

ing cottage industries and handicrafts. Under *Maharaja* Radhakishore, the Public Works Department also started activities common in the modern period. In 1903, an amount of nearly three lakh rupees was spent for the development of Agartala town. About 100 miles (160 kms) of roads were constructed during the time of *Maharaja* Radhakishore, the most important being the Akhaura Road, connecting the capital town of Agartala with the railway junction of Akhaura in British Bengal. The Victoria Memorial Hospital (now Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital) at Agartala was established in 1904 and this marked the real beginning of modern health service in the State. The *Maharaja* also opened several post offices in order to strengthen the communication infrastructure. Thus from the time of *Maharaja* Radhakishore, the state started assuming a role in economic development—although this role was extremely limited in extent.

*Maharaja* Birendra Kishore ascended the throne of Tripura in 1909. He also established several schools and dispensaries in various parts of the State and made attempts to open out distant areas of his State with a network of roads through British Bengal. Semi-urban centres of Tripura which were developed as divisional headquarters were located with an eye to utilising transport and communication facilities of British Bengal. This strengthened Tripura's economic link with the urban centres, transport nodes and ports of Bengal. In a bid to further promote silk-rearing and weaving, the *Maharaja* opened a model school for agricultural and sericultural education and training. He also modernised administration and introduced State civil services examination.

One of the most important measures of far-reaching consequence undertaken by the *Maharaja* in 1916 was the incentive to begin tea cultivation which introduced an organised agro-industrial sector in the State. In 1919, leases

were granted to 24,000 acres of land for tea cultivation. Within 11 years as many as 40 gardens were set up in Tripura and the aggregate capital invested by tea gardens in the State exceeded one crore of rupees. This meant devising a new way of utilising Tripura's main natural resources—her hill slopes. But as the industry was fully dependent on labour engaged from the outside and capital invested by outsiders, the local people, specially the tribals, were left untouched by this development. The *Maharaja* also tried to explore the mineral resources in the State but without success. In March 1918, the opening of Carmaichal Bridge over the river Haora and the Ronaldsay Road connecting the capital with Bisalgarh, a trade centre, marked the beginning of an age of development of internal surface transport.

The modernisation process that started during the reign of *Maharaja* Birchandra found its culmination during the reign of his great grandson, *Maharaja* Bir Bikram who became the nominal ruler in 1923 and assumed full power in 1927. He introduced far-reaching reforms in his administration and started working with a set of bodies like an advisory council, legislative council and executive council that brought modifications to the feudal character of administration. Unfortunately, the King's tribal subjects were still left at the mercy of the tribal chiefs and self-seeking officials. The *Maharaja* also set up an improvement committee which formulated a development scheme involving Rs 52 lakh to be spent over a period of 19 years. This included construction of railway lines, water supply schemes, establishment of a state bank, construction of roads, electric supply schemes, etc. His officials also launched schemes for the weaving industry, cane and bamboo craft, manufacture of molasses and other cottage industries. Although schemes like construction of a rail line connecting Akhaura railway station in Bengal with the capital, Agartala, and

the trade centre, Ranirbazar, did not eventually materialise, a number of improvement schemes were implemented.

During the World War II, the Agartala Airport was built up and the *Maharaja* also took the initiative to set up the Vidyapattan Agricultural University which eventually took shape as Maharaja Bir Bikram College after his death. His reign also witnessed the beginning of the process of peasantisation of the nomadic tribals. The Maharaja declared an area of 11,000 *drona* (110 square miles) in the Kalyanpur area of Khowai division as tribal reserve area for the Tripura, Noatia, Jamatia, Riang and Halam tribes in 1931. As this was deemed inadequate, a new area of 1,95,000 *drona* i.e, 1950 square miles was declared reserved for the tribals in Kailasahar, Khowai, Sadar, Udaipur, Amarpur, Belonia and Sabroom divisions in 1943<sup>4</sup>. These measures were designed not only for inducing the tribal *jhumias* to adopt the occupation of settled cultivation but also for protecting them from the unequal competition with the land-hungry immigrants.

As socio-economic development during the reign of *Maharaja* Bir Bikram constitutes history of the recent past, as more data are available for this period and as the events of this time have more direct links with the contemporary economic scene, some of the subsequent chapters are devoted to detailed analysis of the economic transition taking place during this period.

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