

Chapter IV

Nature of Migration in Tripura (1947 to 1971)

The partition of India (1947) had not only changed the geographical landscape but also the political landscape, which had in essence substantial amount of historical implications and consequences. In the wake of partition, India attained independence on 15th August in 1947. The year 1947 has historical significance due to the occurrence of two events; (i) India attained independence in 1947; (ii) Demise of Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur of Tripura. These events marked with the beginning of radical changes in the polity and society of Tripura.

The partition of India produced the political problem of migration not only in India but also in the Princely State of Tripura. Now, keeping aside the issue of migration for a moment, and if we lay stress on the history of independence it is found that the long aspired independence never came to the Indians in a form of delight or pleasures rather it has brought a nightmare for them, especially, for the peoples significantly of Punjab and Bengal. These two states of Independent India have witnessed the worst effect of partition in the form of mass butchery of common people due to communal riots, which ultimately led to the outcome of the problem of refugee.

Partition of Indian sub-continent compelled the people of West Pakistan as well East Pakistan to be migrated into India in quest for

peace and settlement, to leave their place of origin and to move towards their “uncertain home”. Large number of people due to terror of brutality left their place of origin with a hope that peace and security should prevail in their place of destination. However, Penderel Moon had opined, “The dawn of Indian independence was marred by massacres and migrations in the Punjab on a scale unparalleled in world history in time of peace.”¹ Nonetheless, the contours of the problems in Punjab were “more or less settled once and for all.”²

The partition in Bengal had its own character, which had nuances with the state of Punjab. While, the movement of the displaced persons in Punjab was stopped after two or three years of partition, the movement in Bengal continued for long time. Saradindu Mukherji thus said, “The eastern wing of Pakistan, unlike the western wing did not throw out its entire Non-Muslim populations at one go. Here the process was slow, though a large number of Hindus had to leave their hearth and home in the partition riots.”³ The first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, expressed his feelings at Nagpur conference on January 1st, 1950, “West Bengal has suffered more from Partition and its after-effects than any province or any part of the country. The Punjab also suffered, but it suffered more in the sense of mass killing of the people, while economically West Bengal has suffered more...”⁴

¹ Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962, p. 7.

² Anasua Basu Ray Chaudhury, *Life After Partition: A Study on the Reconstruction of Lives in West Bengal*, p.1. www.sasnet.lu.se/EASASpapers/33AnasuaBasuray.pdf.

³ Saradindu Mukherji, *Exodus from Bangladesh and Indian Response*, p. 5. www.repository.forcedmigration.org/pdf/?pid=fmo:1801.

⁴ As quoted in Anasua Basu Ray Chaudhury, *Ibid.*

Nevertheless, in the midst of independent princely states of Indian sub-continent, Tripura was the worst pretentious princely state that became geographically, economically, socially isolated from other parts of the world due to Independence of India and its partition. It is already mentioned in the previous chapter that Tripura remained a princely state still it merged with the Indian Union on 15th October 1949. Therefore, for a better understanding of the issue, the present chapter has been organized into two phases: 1) migration from 1947 to 1949, the period, which was considered as the Period of Regency and 2) migration from 1949 to 1971.

Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur (1923-1947) was the last ruler of Independent Tripura. He was a versatile genius and a very popular ruler. He died on 17th May 1947, just few months before the Independence of India. *Yuvaraja* Kirit Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur was a minor and thus a Council of Regency was molded with his mother Maharani Kanchanprava Devi as the Regent President. However, Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur could realize the prognosis that the fate of Tripura is completely dependent on India. Therefore, without any hesitation he made up his mind and expressed his decision in favour of joining the Indian Union. The intension of Late Maharaja was visible from a notification published by the Political Department.

*Government of Tripura
Political Department
NOTIFICATION
No.425-P/XVII-2
Dated, Agartala, the 11th June, 1947*

It is hereby notified that the late Colonel his Highness Maharaja Manikya Sir Bir Bikram Kishore Deb Barman Bahadur, G.B.E., K.C.S.I, Ruler of Tripura State, having decided to join the existing, Constituent Assembly, nominated on the 28th April, 1947, Mr. G. S. Guha, M.A. B.L. Bar-at-law, Minister, Government of Tripura, as the representative of Tripura State to the said Constituent Assembly, which was duly communicated to the Secretary, Constituent Assembly, New Delhi, by a telegram of the same date.

*B. K. Dev Barman
Chief Minister
Government of Tripura
11.6.47*

Source: Tripura State Gazetteer (Special Edition) 1355 T.E. 12 Magh, Saturday. Agartala.

Regent Maharani Kanchanprava Devi conveyed the last aspiration of late Maharaj, Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur in her public statement on November 11, 1947, when she said, “The accession of this State to the Indian Union was decided by the late ruler after due consideration and full consultation with all sections of the people.”⁵ Thus, the plan of amalgamation was arranged earlier.

Since the earlier chapter focuses that Tripura was surrounded by various districts of Bengal and thus all the communications of Tripura were primarily carried out through the land and water routes of Bengal. However, with the Partition of India, Tripura was virtually

⁵*Tripura District Gazetteers, Government of Tripura, Agartala, 1975, p. 117.*

isolated from the main land of India and for some time, there was no connection between Tripura and the rest of India. Even Chakla Roshnabad, the area that was under the Zamindari of the rulers of Tripura went into the hands of the Pakistani Government. Though Regent Maharani Kanchanprava Devi as well as the people of Chakla Roshnabad never tried to include the area of Zamindari into the State nor did, they put forward a memorandum to the Radcliff Commission for its inclusion. Tripur Chandra Sen thus rightly opined that, “The deal of Chakla Roshnabad is one of the saddest tales of political un-wisdom ever shown in the history of Tripura”.⁶

Hence, it is clear that after partition Tripura became an isolated princely state who had no other alternatives rather than to merge with Indian Union. Also, the penetration of non-Muslims especially the Bengali Hindus into the princely territory of Tripura from East Pakistan (*East Bengal was officially known as East Pakistan after 1954*) due to communal riots and political turmoil, and the internal political chaos along with the separatist tendency of the Muslims of Tripura left no other options, “but to take over Tripura as Chief Commissioner’s province.”⁷ V.P. Menon, in his book *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States* clearly described the whole episode of amalgamation. He opined that, “The ruler was a minor and his mother, the daughter of the Maharajah of Panna, was then the Regent. She came to Delhi with her father and I had discussions with them. The merger agreement was signed by her, on behalf of the minor Maharajah, on 9th September and the administration of the state was taken over on 15th October, 1949.”⁸ Mention may be made here

⁶ Tripur Chandra Sen, *Tripura In Transition (1923-1957)*, Agartala, Tripura, 1970, p. 6.

⁷ V.P. Menon, “*The Story of the Integration of The Indian States*, Orient Longmans Limited, Bombay, Reprint- 1969, p. 288.

⁸ *Ibid.*

that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the then Minister of Home Affairs, gave the following message on the occasion of the Merger of Tripura on 15th October 1949.

"The State of Tripura, with the isolated situation yet occupying a position of strategic importance of the Eastern borders of India, has an ancient history and a rich culture. The partition of the country has, however, brought in each train for this small State a host of problems, which, in the present State of its development was impossible for it to solve on its own resources. The State has potentialities and the sources, which it tapped and properly exploited, would be an asset to the country. For all their reason, the Government of India and Her Highness, the Maharani Regent acting on behalf of Minor Ruler, came to the conclusion that in the interest of the welfare of the State and of the country as a whole, it was essential that the Centre should make itself directly responsible for its administration and its wellbeing. I am most grateful to Her Highness for having come to this agreement. Her was not any easy task in the peculiar circumstance in which she found herself. I am sure that providence will reward her for the courage and boldness with which she has taken this decision. To the people of Tripura, I can only say this: though far (and remote) from the capital city of the country, will always claim our attention and we shall do our best to ensure that its link and connection with the main land are strengthened and it comes nearer to us. They will not stand-alone to battle

with the manifold problems that confront them. They will have the resources and the assistance of the Centre on which they can count. With their cooperation and help, we hope that we shall deal with their problems efficiently and effectively. May God bless our joint effort with success."⁹

Therefore, the partition of India on August 1947 compelled the princely state of Tripura to make an end to her age-old monarchical rule along with the rule of Regent and merge with the Union territory of India on 15th October 1949. The Indian constitution, which came into force on 26th January 1950, classified the units of the federation into four categories and Tripura was included in the C-category of states. A Chief Commissioner was appointed directly by the Government of India to administer the State. To ensure people's participation in the administration, an Advisory Council was formed on 14th April 1953 and Sri Sacindralal Singha, Sri Sukhamoy Sengupta and Sri Jitendra Dev Barman were the three Advisory members of that Council.

The period of Regency (1947 to 1949) was not at all a period of peace and tranquility rather it was period of great turmoil and bewilderment. Tripura on that verge of time witnessed the worst effects of partition in the form of displaced person and communal riots. The flow of immigrants towards Tripura, which was on track before the Independence of India, due to communal frenzy in East Bengal, remained persistent. Tripura always made available room to her immigrants though the aborigines did not whole-heartedly accept it in each and every phase. Thus, Tripura became an easy quarry to

⁹http://www.enotes.com/topic/Tripura_Merger_Agreement.

settle for those people who were politically removed and socially persecuted due to communal turmoil and Partition of India. A large number of displaced persons entered into Tripura during this period of Regency and the table no. 4.1 depicts the clear picture of the statement.

Table No. 4.1. Influx of Displaced persons into Tripura during the Regency period (1947 – 1949)

Year	Number of displaced Persons
1947	8,124
1948	9,554
1949	10,575

Source: R. B. Vaghaiwalla, *Census of India, 1951, Vol. XII, Assam, Manipur and Tripura, Part I-A, Report*, Shillong, 1954, p. 359.

The displaced persons during the period of Regency were generally the inhabitants of the adjoining districts of Hill Tipperah like Sylhet, Tipperah, and Noakhali. Table no. 4.2 depicts the picture of displaced persons by their places of origin.

Table no.4.2. Displaced Persons by Places of Origin (1951).

Place of origin	No. of Displaced person			Percentage of total
	M	F	T	
East Bengal	39,441	36,120	75,561	74.67%
Sylhet	14,117	11,139	25,256	25.05%
Origin unspecified	312	70	382	0.38%
West Pakistan	1	Nil	1	0.00%

Source: Gayatri Bhattacharyya, *Refugee Rehabilitation and its Impact on Tripura's Economy*, Omsons Publications, New Delhi, 1998, p. 15

It is evident from table no. 4.2 that maximum influx of displaced persons during this period occurred from East Bengal and Gayatri

Bhattacharyya observes that only from Tipperah (Comilla) 44,294 people immigrated into Tripura during this period.¹⁰ It was due to the fact that certain portions of those districts were under the *Zamindari* of Chakla Roshnabad, which was directly controlled by the rulers of Tripura before Partition of India. Thus, the people of those areas always considered themselves as the peasants under the Royal family of Tripura. Hence, it became natural that when the situation became much more drastic due to communal riots and Partition of India, they had no other options but to leave their place of origin and migrate into Hill Tipperah for shelter. As in the previous chapter it was stated that the Royal House of Tripura had paid due attention to those migrants who took their shelter in the state and in the period of Regency the same legacy continued. A Royal order, which was translated by Gayatri Bhattacharyya in her book, *Refugee Rehabilitation and Its Impact on Tripura's Economy*, clearly depicts the generous attitudes of the Royal family towards those displaced persons immediately after independence of India.

“By an order of the Regent dated 14.8.1948 A.D. 300 sq. miles out of 1,950 sq. miles previously allotted by the orders of Late Maharaja B.B.Manikya Bahadur Memo. No. 325, dated 7thAswin, 1353 T.E. as tribal reserve areas were released for increasing land revenue, economic growth and particularly for refugee rehabilitation. According to this orders 300 sq. miles in different divisions are released as follows:

*Sd/-
A.B.Chatterjee,
Dewan (Chief Secretary) &
S.C.Datta, Advisor,
Dated 10thAswin, 1358.*

¹⁰ Gayatri Bhattacharyya, *Refugee Rehabilitation and its Impact on Tripura's Economy*, Omsons Publications, New Delhi, 1998, p. 13.

Sadar Sub-Division

- No.1 Block* - South of GharamaraCherra
20 sq. miles North of Sisimacherra, Dhupcherra and SangraiCherra, East of MoujaLambu CherraMekhalicherra T.E. and West of Barmura (only the khas and Taluki land Leased out beforehand is exempted).
- No.2 Block* - In the North UjanGhaniamura and GolaghatiMouja. In the South Sonamura Division, a part of Dhariathal of Sadar andDhepaganj.

Kailashahar Sub-Division – 70 sq. miles

- In the North* Kathalcherra, Manu river and Karamcherra
In the South Gogracherra, Manu river, Chailengtacherra
In the East Kshetricherra and Machlicherra
In the West Longthorai Range.

Belonia

- Block No.1.* – 34 sq. miles
In the West – Manu River
In the South – Charakbaicherra
In the East – Kalsicherra
In the North - Haridasbari, Anthroybari, Kalikabari, Debtha-Bari Darbajangbari and Samsutra lane
- Block No. 2* - 11 sq. miles
In the North - Muhuri River
In the South - Boundary of Sabroom Sub-Division
In the West - Tuigamaricherra
In the East - Kolaiphangcherra

Udaipur

- 30 sq. miles
North - Boundary of Sadar and Udaipur
East - Manuganj and Kalapaniacherra
South - Gumatiriver
West -Boundary of Betaga-Ludhuya Reserve and West boundary of Sabroom

Sabroom

- 10 sq. miles
North - Boundary of Sabroom and Belonia
East - Manuganj and KalapaniaCherra
South - South end of Betaga-Ldhuya Reserve
West - Boundary of Betaga-Ludhuya Reserve and West boundary of Sabroom

Amarpur

- 40 sq. miles
North - Boundary of Amarpur and Khowai
West - Chhangang, Melchicherra, Milchicherrabari,

Haluyabari Mansingbari, Budhisambari and Samsutra line
South - Sirduk and Ekjancherra
East - Ramingbari, Gamaicherabari, Kashidharbari, Dayachandrabari, Dumburabari, Techhlangbari Mahadevbari and Balakmanibari, Boundary line Khowai and Amarpur on Samasutra line.

Khowai Division

Block No. 1 - 8 sq. miles
North - Pakistan Border
East - paharmura Mouja, East boundary of Khowai T.E. and Khowai River
South - Sarbangcherra
West - East Kalyanpur Zamindari and BArmura Hill.

Block No. 2 - 40 sq. miles
North - Pakistan (Ramcherra, Kalengacherra and Udnacherra)
East - West end of Atharamura Hill
South - Samrucherra
West - Mingicherra and West of reserve forest

Block No. 3. - 15 sq. miles
North - Trishacherra and Khowai River
East - Brahmanadi (river) Waraybari, Titamubari, Naukatolibari, Benalepabari, Samsutra line, Ekramacherra, South border of Brahmabill, East border of Teliamura Reserve
South - The middle border of Khowai and Amarpur
West - East side of Barmura Hill

Block No. 4 - 12 sq. miles
North - Bangagadhakbari, Samplaibari and Samasutra Line
East - West side of Atharamura Range
South - Khowairiver and North border of Methrai Taluk
West - Khowai River

Total

<i>Sadar division</i>	<i>30 sq. miles</i>
<i>Kailashahar division</i>	<i>70 sq. miles</i>
<i>Belonia division</i>	<i>45 sq. miles</i>
<i>Udaipore division</i>	<i>30 sq. miles</i>
<i>Sbroom division</i>	<i>10 sq. miles</i>
<i>Amarpore division</i>	<i>40 sq. miles</i>
<i>Khowai division</i>	<i>75 sq. miles</i>
	<i>300 sq. miles</i>

Source: Gayatri Bhattacharyya, *Refugee Rehabilitation and its Impact on Tripura's Economy*, Omsons Publications, New Delhi, 1998, pp. 17-20.

The above Royal order of Tripura evidently mentioned the term ‘refugee’. The immigrants those who took asylum in Tripura during this period were mentioned as refugees. Nevertheless, immediately after partition and communal turmoil, the persons those who entered into India from both the wings of Pakistan, were not considered as refugee, rather they were considered as ‘displaced persons’. Moreover, it was due to the certified definition of the term ‘displaced person’ given by the Government of India. According to the Government of India, “A displaced person is one who had entered India (who left or who was compelled to leave his home in East Pakistan on or after October 15, 1947) for disturbances or fear of such disturbances or on account of setting up of the two dominions of India and Pakistan”.¹¹ Interestingly, the people those who penetrated India before 15th October 1947 due to communal frenzy, were excluded from the previously mentioned official definition of displaced person. Moreover the people those who migrated between the period 15th August 1947 to 15th October 1947 were also excluded from the same term and it was probably due to the fact that the extended period of two months was given to the people for setting themselves in the country of their own choice.¹²

Thus, it follows from the above discussion that there exists no meaningful distinction between the two terms; refugee and displaced persons. It is the same coin, which has been treated differently by different authorities from the point of view of their conveniences. We have found what is refugee to the Regency that is displaced to the

¹¹ *Annual Report of the Department of Rehabilitation, 1965-66*, Department of Rehabilitation, Government of India, New Delhi, 1967, p. 107.

¹² Samir Kumar Das, *State Response to the Refugee Crisis: Relief and Rehabilitation in the East*, in Ranabir Samaddar (ed.), *Refugees and the State : Practices of Asylum and Care in India, 1947-2000*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2003, p.107.

Indian authority. Thus, in our present study we would treat both the terms in exclusive sense.

The flow of refugees during the period of Regency were either voluntary or relatively minor movements because the number of refugees from East Pakistan (East Bengal) during this period was marginal in comparison to West Bengal. Table no. 4.3 depicts the clear picture of the above statement.

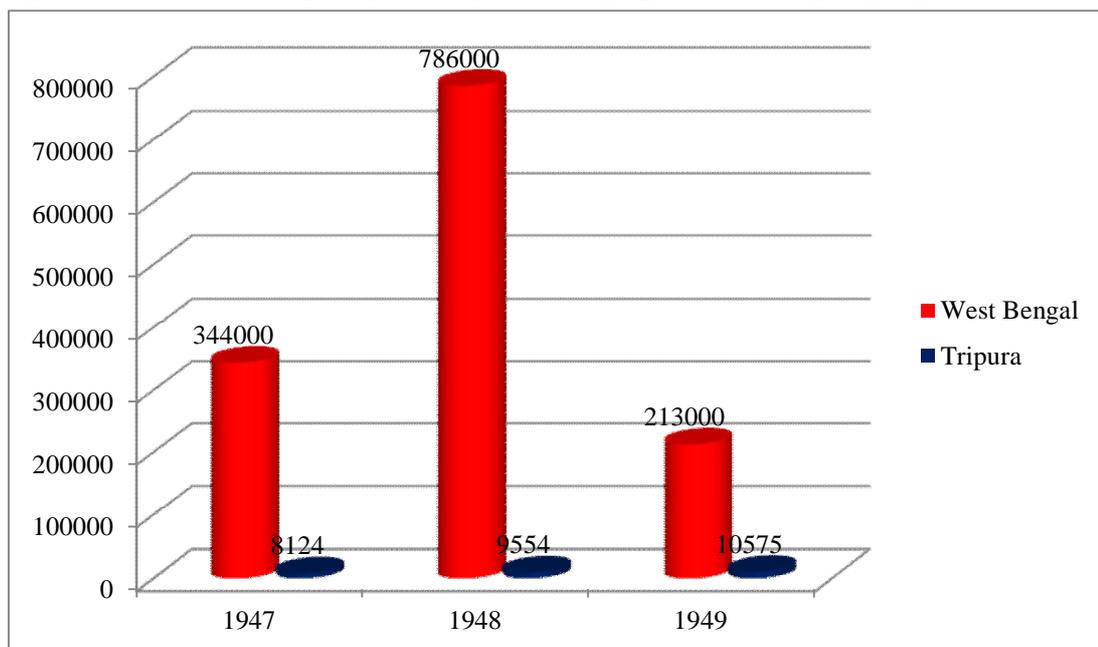
Table.No. 4.3. Number of displaced person/refugees in the specific years

Year	Refugee from East Pakistan	
	West Bengal	Tripura
1947	3,44,000*	8,124
1948	7,86,000*	9,554
1949	2,13,000*	10,575

* Hindu Refugee

Source: 1. Tai Yong Tan and Gyanesh Kudaisya, *The Aftermath of Partition in South Asia*, Routledge, 2002(Paperback edition), London, p.142. 2. R. B. Vaghaiwalla, *Census of India, 1951, Vol. XII, Assam, Manipur and Tripura, Part I-A, Report*, Shillong, 1954, p. 359.

Figure: 4.1. Number of displaced person/refugees in the specific years.



The reasons behind the uneven flow of refugees in two adjacent territories of East Pakistan may be summed up as follows:

1. West Bengal was economically much more stable than the Hilly Princely state of Tripura in the period of partition. The elite, upper class and higher middle class Hindu people of East Pakistan like merchants, specialized classes, landowning and professional classes of the society chose West Bengal, especially Calcutta as their natural destiny, immediately after partition. They were politically alert, could see the future with considerable clarity, and had no illusions about what lay in store for them in the fledgling Islamic Republic.¹³ Of the 1.1 million Hindus who had migrated from the east by 1 June 1948, about 350,000 were urban people; another 550,000 belonged to the rural Hindu gentry and many of the rest were businesspersons. Moreover, several of those families had sufficient alternative assets in West Bengal to survive sensibly.¹⁴

2. It was owing to the fact that the Government employees of undivided Bengal got their opportunity to choose the area of interests just before Partition and accordingly a large number of Hindu officials of East Bengal chose to be in India after Partition.

3. It was possibly because The Inter-Dominion Conference of April 1948 decided that the responsibility for the protection of minorities would rest exclusively with the country in which the minorities resided.¹⁵

¹³ Tathagata Roy, *My People Uprooted: A Saga of the Hindus of Eastern Bengal*, Chapter 6, <http://bengalvoice.blogspot.com/>

¹⁴ Jaya Chatterjee, *The Spoils of Partition, Bengal and India, 1947 – 1967*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2007, pp. 114-115.

¹⁵ Government of India, *Agreements between India and Pakistan reached at Inter-Dominion Conferences held at New Delhi in Dec. 1948, Calcutta in April 1948 and Karachi in May 1948*,

Nevertheless, in late 1949, the pace of flow of the refugees was at once accelerated in Tripura. The communal riots and the political mayhem of the Pakistani Government in East Pakistan were the regulatory force behind those immigrations.

The 2nd phase of this chapter starts from that political juncture where at the one end the influx of refugees started in a massive extent and at the other end Tripura was amalgamated with the Indian Union on 15th October 1949. From the period of amalgamation to the period under study (1971), a huge number of refugees entered into Tripura and table no. 4.4 indicates the year wise number of refugees migrated into the state.

Table No. 4.4. Year wise figures of refugees' population migrated into the state Tripura.

Year	Number of refugees (registered displaced persons)
1949	10,575
1950	67,151
1951(January and February)	2,096
1950-51	184,000
1951-52	23,300
1952-53	80,000
1953-54	3,200
1954-55	4,700
1955-56	17,500
1956-57	57,700
1957-58	3,600
1958-59	Registration of refugee was stopped from 1-5-1958 to 31-12-1963
1959-60	
1960-61	
1961-62	
1962-63	
1963-64	

1964-65	100,340
1965-66	13,073
1966-67	1,654
1967-68	12,299
1968-69	3,120
1969-70	4,334
1970-71	5,774
Total	5,92,320

- Source:** 1. R. B. Vaghaiwalla, *Census of India, 1951, Vol. XII, Assam, Manipur and Tripura, Part I-A, Report*, Shillong, 1954, pp. 359 – 360.
2. A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Tripura a portrait of population*, Census of India 1971, Published by Controller of Publications, Civil lines, Delhi, 1975, p. 54.

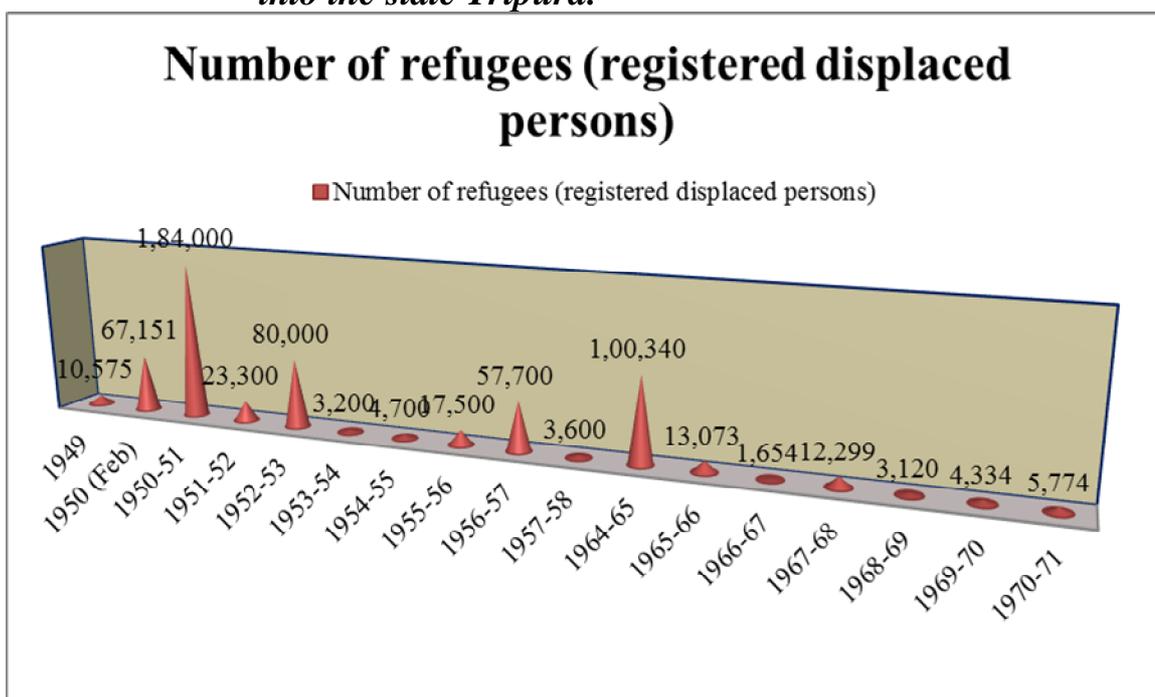
In these two census reports it is found that a major problem regarding the number of refugees into Tripura of some specific years. In *Tripura a portrait of population, Census of India* (page no. 54) 1971, it was stated that in the year 1950-51 the numbers of refugees were 1,84,000. Whereas in the *Census of India 1951, Vol. XII, Assam, Manipur and Tripura, Part I-A*, it is clearly stated “in the year 1950 the number was 67,151 and only in the first two months of the year 1951, the number was 2,096”.¹⁶ It also specified that, “the main refugee influx occurred in the three months, from February to April 1950, during which Tripura received the huge influx of 40, 672. In the first five months of 1950, the entire population of Tripura increased by nearly 10 percent. After the Prime Minister’s Agreement, the stream declined and reached its lowest level in February 1951, when Tripura registered only 804 refugees.”¹⁷ This data totally contradict with the total number of refugee in the year 1950-51, given by the *Tripura a portrait of population, Census of India* (page no. 54) 1971.

¹⁶ R. B. Vaghaiwalla, *Census of India, 1951, Vol. XII, Assam, Manipur and Tripura, Part I-A, Report*, Shillong, 1954, pp. 359 – 360.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Due to the unavailability of other primary sources regarding the number of refugees of that specific year and to avoid contradiction the present study simply follows the census report of 1951, which is considered much reliable than the other.

Figure No. 4.2. Year wise figures of refugees' population migrated into the state Tripura.



Refugees are considered as the registered displaced persons and if we go through the table no. 4.4, it gives us a clear picture of the number of registered displaced person or refugee in Tripura. The table also reveals the reasons of the displacement from East Pakistan to Tripura. The rhythms of immigration throughout this period, as depicted in the table, were very much fluctuating and the fluctuations of those immigrants were dreadfully regulated by the state of affairs in East Pakistan.

In the year 1949, the numbers of refugees were 10,575, but within two months i.e. from the month of January to February 1950 the number of registered displaced person or refugee went to 67,151

and in the year 1950-51 the influx of the refugees reached its utmost point. The year witnessed a huge flow of displaced persons from East Pakistan to Tripura – the maximum number of refugee influx in the period under study, it was only due to the communal fanaticism, and state sponsored hooliganism in a theocratic state like Pakistan.

The major influx took place following the massacre in several districts of East Pakistan, particularly in village called Kalshira in the Bagerhat subdivision of Khulna district on December 20, 1949. The brutality and the atrocities that were shown by the East Pakistan administration in the Kalshira incident are mentioned in the resignation letter, given by Jogendra Nath Mandal, (the first minister of Law and Labour in Pakistan) to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan (Appendix III)¹⁸

Kalshira massacre was not the only one but it was the beginning of the mayhems of the Pakistani Government towards the innocent Bengali people of East Bengal, specially the Hindus. In January 1950 in Nachole of Rajshahi districts, where villages of Santal were burnt down, they were beaten and tortured by the Pakistani Police mercilessly. The non-Muslim were killed in Nawabganj and Rajshahi jails. In the same month, large number of Hindu shops were burnt and looted in Dacca and more than seven hours' loot, arson and murders displaced about fifty thousand Hindus.¹⁹ On 13th February, 1950, Barisal riot started and thousands of people fled from Barisal to India. On 12th February, 1950, in the Feni sub-division of Noakhali, the Hindus were attacked by the Muslim mobs and were killed pitilessly. The Hindu women were raped and sometimes forcefully married by

¹⁸ http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Resignation_letter_of_Jogendra_Nath_Mandal

¹⁹ Kali Prasad Mukhopadhyay, *Partition, Bengal and After: The Great Tragedy of India*, Reference Press, New Delhi, 2007, p.30.

the fanatic Muslims. The helpless people tried to cross the border and enter into Tripura from Feni but sometimes they were trapped and brutally murdered by those infuriated mobs. Sylhet was also affected by that communal riots, about 203 villages were shattered, and more than 800 Hindu religious places were devastated.²⁰ In Sylhet, a number of Manipuri families were also affected by the riots. Riots started in Mymensingh on 11th February, 1950 and continued upto 15th February, 1950 but within a very short period of time it touches the zenith of its cruelty. On 12th February, the Hindu passengers were brutally slaughtered by the infuriated mobs in the Akhaura-Bhairab Bazar rail route between Comilla and Mymensingh. On the Bhairab Bridge also known as Anderson Bridge, Hindu peoples were methodically picked up from the train and systematically they were slaughtered and thrown on the river Meghna.²¹

Hence, the cruelty and atrocities shown by the fanatic Muslims of East Bengal as well as the Government of Pakistan compelled the Hindu people of East Bengal to move towards India and the peoples from the adjoining territories of Tripura, especially from Sylhet, Comilla, Mymensingh, Noakhali and Chittagong took shelter in Tripura. A. J. Kamra mentioned in his book that 5000 Hindus took shelter only in Belonia of Tripura from Noakhali during this period.²²

The Pakistan Government's inhuman attitudes on minorities created a sense of frustration in their minds and in a bid to get rid of it they started to take shelter in India as refugees. The Government of India expressed apprehension on two speculative

²⁰ Nagendra Kumar Singh, *Encyclopaedia of Bangladesh*, Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 2003, p.112.

²¹ Baizas Lionel, *Thematic Chronology of Mass Violence in Pakistan, 1947-2007*, Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence, Tuesday 24, June 2008, p.19/33.

²² A.J.Kamra, *The Prolonged partition and its Pogroms: Testimonies on Violence Against Hindus in East Bengal 1946-64*, Voice of India, New Delhi, 2000, pp. 71-72.

points of view: (I) it might compound the demographic scenario; and (ii) political instability in India. Thus, to resolve these prospective stalemates, Mr. Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, sought the support of Pakistani Government. Mr. Liaquat Ali was the Prime Minister of Pakistan who eventually came forward and signed on an historical pact the Nehru-Liaquat Pact, popularly known as ‘the Delhi Pact’ April 1950.²³

The explicit intention of Mr. Nehru in respect of the pogrom on minorities of Pakistan is thus depicted in the preamble of ‘the Pact’. It stated,

*“The Government of India and Pakistan solemnly agree that each shall ensure to the minorities, throughout its territory, complete equality of citizenship, irrespective of religion, a full sense of security in respect of life, culture, property and personal honour, freedom of movement within each country and freedom of occupation, speech and worship, subject to law and morality. Members of the minorities shall have equal opportunity with members of the majority community to participate in the public life of their country, to hold political or other offices and to serve in their countries’ civil and armed forces. Both Governments declared these rights to be fundamental and undertake to enforce them effectively.”*²⁴

Furthermore, in the Pact it was also acknowledged by both the Governments that terror and anxiety should be removed from the

²³ Samar Guha, *East Bengal Minorities Since Delhi Pact*, All Parties Minorities’ Rights Council, 1953, p. 86.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

mind of the minorities, an atmosphere should be created along with adequate amenities and steps to be taken to facilitate return of refugees to their homes.

Surprisingly, the Nehru-Liaquat Pact of 1950 was kept on tatter by the Government of Pakistan and by stealth it instructed the Dacca Secretariat to issue circular to the concerned District Magistrates of East Bengal.

“By no means to return land and properties of returning migrants but to distribute them among the Muslim refugees The returning migrants are to be put off on some excuse or other. The first excuse is to be that the claim is time-bared. Then follows a long list of statutes and orders, and relevant legal bars are to be put forward in east case one after another. In dealing with all other matters, the District Magistrates are to bear in mind the instruction in this behalf.... Talk sweetly to the minorities and their representatives with a smile on your lips.... Try by all means to maintain your reputation. Keep these instructions secret.”²⁵

As a result, the Nehru-Liaquat Pact failed to maintain a safe passage on the return of the refugees to their homeland. Pertinently, it produced some serious implications in terms of the problems of immigrants in Tripura. Perhaps due to it in 1950-51, the influx of refugees in Tripura stood at 1, 84,000.

However, the things underwent radical changes in the subsequent years. As such, in 1951-52 the number of refugees in

²⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 86-87.

Tripura from East Bengal witnessed an abrupt decrease. It was because during this period a sense of communal unity developed among the Bengali speaking people of East Bengal on the basis of their common mother tongue. The Pakistani Government wanted to make Urdu as the national language for East Bengal, which was vehemently protested by the Bengali nationalists. A deep sense of communal unity, which evolved from this crisis, compelled the people not to migrate from East Bengal to Tripura.

Again, in 1952-53 the influx was accelerated. Now it was the fear of 'Passport System', which ran after the mind of East Bengal people. In April 1952, Pakistan decided to replace the Permit System between India and West Pakistan by a Passport-Cum-Visa System, and also to apply that system to travel between East Pakistan and India, which was hitherto been free.²⁶ The Government of India apprehended that the introduction of this system would jeopardize the security of the East Bengal minorities. Therefore, the Government of India vehemently opposed this system. In addition, the *Muhajirs*²⁷ protested against the introduction of Passport system. However, without paying any heed to their protests, the Pakistani Government threatened to impose the system unilaterally²⁸ and ultimately on 15th October, 1952 the system came into force. But before the system was imposed, within the month of September and October, 1952, a large number of immigrants from East Bengal migrated to India because of fears of the effects of the Passport-Visa system and as the system was

²⁶ Annual Report 1952-53, The Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, p.11.

²⁷ Muhajir [literally – migrants] is a term commonly used especially by Pakistanis to describe the Muslim immigrants who chose to settle in Pakistan and shifted their domicile after partition of British India into Pakistan and India. Their principal language is Urdu.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhajir_people

²⁸ Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the making of Modern South Asia Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*, Viking by Penguin Books India, New Delhi, 2008, p.181.

introduced, the movements of the immigrants were greatly reduced.²⁹ Thus in the next consecutive years (from 1953 to 1955) the number of the displaced persons from the then East Pakistan were condensed. Indeed, a fear of ambiguity, which was developed in the minds of those mentally anxious Hindu Bengali people of East Pakistan, pushed them to take shelter in the territories of India like West Bengal, Assam and Tripura.

In the year 1955-56 and 1956-57, once again a huge influx of refugee into Tripura from East Pakistan took place. The changing political scenario of the then East Pakistan was responsible for this influx. Under the pressure of the Bengali language movement, the Constitutional Assembly of Pakistan had adopted a proposal in 1956 to make Urdu and Bengali co-official state languages of Pakistan. However, the Pakistani authorities never wanted to make Bengali as a co-official language of East Pakistan and they never gave equal status to both the languages. In the Constitution of Pakistan 1956, the name of the country was adopted as the 'Islamic Republic of Pakistan'. The attitude of the Islamic administration of Pakistan towards the Hindus of East Pakistan is clearly reflected in a Question paper of Pakistan Central Superior Service, 1955. (Appendix IV)

Therefore, *Urduization* and *Islamization* of the administrative structure of Pakistan created havoc in the mind of non-Islamic community, especially the Hindu Bengali community that ultimately activated the refugee movements once again out of East Pakistan to Tripura. The camp populations of the refugees in some of the selected years are given in Table no. 4.5.

²⁹ Annual Report 1952-53. *op.cit.*

Table No.4.5 Camp Population of Refugees in Tripura (1951-1959)

Year	Number of		
	Camps	Families	Persons
1951	49	7200	39,000
1952	28	5100	27,800
1953	28	4200	25,900
1954	12	2100	9,700
1955	1	300	900
1956	20	9500	41,800
1957	20	9800	42,600
1958	19	7900	31,300
1959	14	3750	13,250

Source: Gayatri Bhattacharyya, *Refugee Rehabilitation and its Impact on Tripura's Economy*, Omsons Publications, New Delhi, 1998, p. 34.

However, in the successive year the influx of refugees were once again declined and official registration was stopped from 1st May, 1958. From the year 1958 to 1964, the Indian government refused to recognize the displaced person of East Pakistan as refugee and denied to provide them any sorts of relief and rehabilitation.

However, the official registration of the displaced persons and their rehabilitations were clogged but flow of immigration from East Pakistan to India continued in a slow pace. Based on the report, (Government of India 1974, Appendix – III) Tetsuya Nakatani in the article, “*Away from Home: The Movement and Settlement of Refugees from East Pakistan in West Bengal, India*”, depicted the chronological distribution of refugee influx from East Pakistan to India from 1958 to 1963.

Table No.4.6 Chronological Distribution of Refugee Influx from East Pakistan (in number)

Year	West Bengal	Other states	Total
1958	5000	0	5000
1959	5000	1000	6000
1960	9000	1000	10000

1961	10000	1000	11000
1962	13000	1000	14000
1963	14000	2000	16000

Source: Tetsuya Nakatani, *Away from home. The movement and settlement of refugees from East Pakistan into West Bengal, India*, Journal of the Japanese Association for South Asian Studies, 12, 2000, p. 79.

In the same way within that period, a considerable amount of displaced persons entered into Tripura, which had been published in a weekly, though the numbers of the displaced persons contradict with table no. 4.6. It was published in a largely circulated nationalist Bengali weekly of Tripura, *The Sevak*, that “within one year and one month (from January, 1963 to January, 1964), about one and half lakh people left East Pakistan for Tripura.”³⁰ *Sevak* reports that, within that period only 378 East Pakistani peoples had their legal documents or passport. In addition, it was stated that only in January 1963, 3,725 East Pakistani people entered into Tripura.³¹

However, once again from the year 1964-65 the registration of the displaced persons were started in Tripura and it was only owing to the huge influx of displaced person into Tripura as a result of the communal violence in Khulna, Jessore and other districts of East Pakistan. The communal riots which were started in Khulna and Jessore on 3rd January 1964 were the protest which was shown for the loss of Prophet Mohammed’s hair from Hazratbal Shrine of Kashmir. The anti-Hindu riots in those areas instigated to start anti-Muslim riots in Calcutta. Although the Government of India was able to suppress the riots very quickly but the wave of violence continued to shatter the communal peace in East Pakistan and fresh brutality started against the minority communities (Hindu, Christians and Buddhists) in Dacca,

³⁰ *The Sevak*, (Bengali weekly), 7th February, 1964, Agartala

³¹ *Ibid.*

Narayanganj and other areas of East Pakistan. As a result, large number of East Pakistani Bengali Hindus and tribal people took refuge in the eastern part of India particularly in Tripura. Only in the month of January 1964, 4,192 people took refuge in Tripura and among them only 23 persons had legal documents.³² This flow of refugee continued as the 2nd Indo-Pak war broke out in 1965 on the western part of India on the issue of Kashmir. The Eastern wing of Pakistan was neither directly involved in this war, nor it was directly affected by it but the sense of insecurity which developed in the minds of the minorities directed them to leave their place of origin and took refuge in Tripura and other parts of India. Thus from the year 1964-65 to 24th March 1971 a considerable numbers of Bengali Hindu immigrants entered into Tripura as well as in the other states of India and table no. 4.7 shows the figures of migration of new migrants from erstwhile East Pakistan from 1st January 1964 to 25th March 1971. In addition, according to the census report 1971, the number of immigrants from Bangladesh into Tripura was, 4, 20,847.³³

Table No. 4.7 Figures of migration of new migrants from erstwhile East Pakistan from 1st January 1964 to 25th March 1971.

Year	West Bengal	Assam	Tripura	Total
1964	419,321	173,782	100,039	693,142
1965	81,491	11,062	15,353	107,906
1966	4,057	1,854	1,654	7,565
1967	5,067	7,161	12,299	24,527
1968	3,673	4,821	3,120	11,614
1969	3,713	2,765	3,290	9,768
1970	232,675	11,905	6,580	251,160
1971	6,622	968	686	8,276
Total	756,619	214,318	143,021	1,113,958

Source: *The Times of India, Directory and Yearbook, Including Who's Who, 1973*, The Times of India Press, Bombay, p.148.

³² Ibid.

³³ K. Debbarma, *Insurgency and Counter Insurgency In Tripura*, edited by N. Malla, in *Nationalism, Regionalism and Philosophy of National Integration*, Regency Publication, New Delhi, 1998, p. 177.

Accordingly we can say that from the year 1947, 15th August to 24th March, 1971 the total number of registered displaced persons or refugees were 6, 09,998.³⁴ But there were number of displaced persons in Tripura, those who neither registered themselves as refugee nor did they claim any sorts of Government aids and supports. It is estimated that such unregistered population of refugee from 1951 to 1961 being about 1, 80,000.³⁵ From another Government source, it is evident that the total numbers of people those who took refuge in Tripura from East Bengal, from the year, 1950 to 1958 were approximately five and half lakhs and among them, those who registered themselves in the Relief Rehabilitation Centre were 3 lakhs and 65 thousands of 83,000 families.³⁶ Therefore, it became clear that a considerable number of immigrants entered into Tripura without registering themselves in the Government account and endangered the demographic profile of the state.

However, it is interesting to note that the people those who took refuge in Tripura during this period were not only the victims of violence of East Pakistan rather the causes were much more psychological. A field study made by Tetsuya Nakatani reveals that communal violence was not the only cause of migration from East Pakistan. The Table 4.8 reveals that a very few numbers of displaced persons were directly grieved from actual violence rather it was the fear of violence and harassment, which were more psychological than physical, pushed the people, basically the Hindu Bengali to take refuge in West Bengal or Tripura.

³⁴ On the basis of Table No. 4.3 & 4.4.

³⁵ Prasenjit Biswas, C. Joshua Thomas, *Peace in India's North-East: Meaning, Metaphor, and Method : Essays of Concern and Commitment*, Regency Publications, Indian Council of Social Science Research, North Eastern Regional Centre, Shillong, p.406.

³⁶ *Progotir Pathe Tripura (Bengali), Chapter –Udvastu Punarbasan (Relief Rehabilitation)* Information, Cultural and Tourism Department, Government of Tripura, 1960, p.47.

Table No. 4.8 Reasons why refugees in a Nadia village fled from East Bengal.

Reasons for flight	Number of households
Harassment by Muslims	82
Fear of violence	41
Because they felt or were told that Pakistan was for Muslims and India for Hindus	23
Because everybody fled	16
Suffered from actual violence	9
Business/study	7
Floods/erosion of rivers	5
Anxiety about the future	3

Source: Tetsuya Nakatani, *Away from home. The movement and settlement of refugees from East Pakistan into West Bengal, India*, Journal of the Japanese Association for South Asian Studies, 12, 2000, p. 88.

Another phase of migration starts after March 1971. It was a year of political turmoil for both the country India and Pakistan. The brutality and inhuman cruelties of the Pakistani Government reached its zenith during this year. The horrible atrocities that were tormented on the people of East Pakistan were unexplainable which eventually led to the huge influx of displaced persons into India. Table No. 4.9 gives us a clear picture of the trends of influx of the refugees in India all over the year 1971.

Table No. 4.9. Trends of Influx

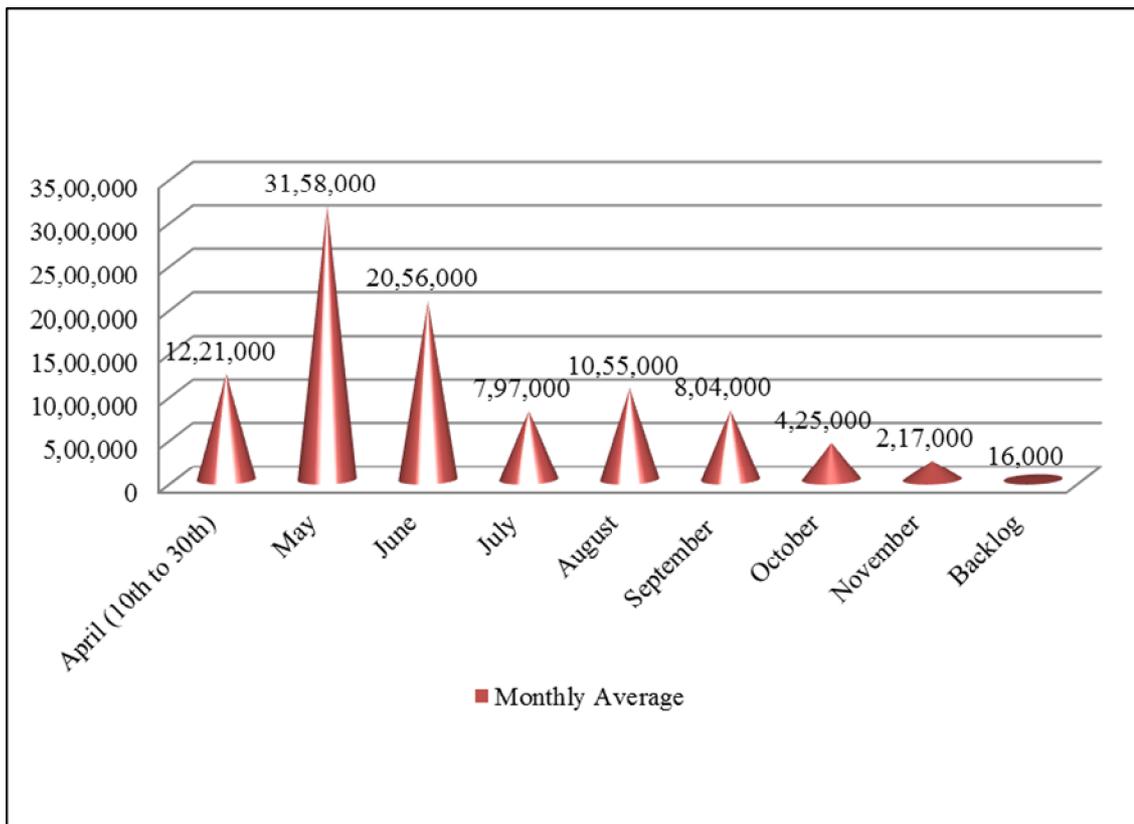
Month (for the year 1971)	Daily Average	Monthly Average
April (10 th to 30 th)	57,000	12, 21,000
May	102,000	31, 58,000
June	68,000	20, 56,000
July	26,000	7, 97,000
August	34,000	10, 55,000
September	27,000	8, 04,000
October	14,000	4, 25,000

November	8,000	2, 17,000
Backlog		16,000
Total		98, 99,000

Source: Bangladesh War of Independence Documents.

As taken from K.C. Saha, *The genocide of 1971 and the refugee influx in the east*, in Ranabir Samaddar (ed.), *Refugees and the State : Practices of Asylum and Care in India, 1947-2000*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2003, p. 243.

Figure No. 4.3. Trends of Influx (for the year 1971)



In December 1970, the Awami League under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won a massive majority in the provincial legislature and all the seats of East Pakistan in the National Assembly. However, Pakistani Government did not accept that success of Awami League and on February 22, 1971 the Generals of West Pakistan decided to smash Awami League. It was also acknowledged by the Pakistani Government that a campaign of genocide would be necessary to eradicate the threat emerged in East Pakistan. Moreover,

the intention of the Government was clearly reflected in the speech of President Yahya Khan at the February Conference, where he stated, “Kill three million of them and the rest will eat out of our hands”.³⁷ Accordingly, on 7th March, 1971, Sheikh Mujib in his historic ‘Racecourse Ground speech’ called for independence and instigated the people to launch a major campaign of civil disobedience and if necessary to organize armed resistance against the brutal Pakistani Government.

Thus, a civil war started in East Pakistan, which ultimately jeopardized the whole administrative structure of the state. To stop the movements the Pakistani Government became much more brutal and violent towards the Bengali people. Only in the month of March alone over 5,000 Bengalis were brutally killed in Dacca, over 5,000 in Chittagong, between 12,000 to 20,000 in Jessore and over 5,000 in Rangpur.³⁸ R. J. Rummel in his book *Death by Government* further depicted that, “The human death toll over only 267 days was incredible. Just to give for five out of the eighteen districts some incomplete statistics published in Bangladesh newspapers or by an Inquiry Committee, the Pakistani army killed 100,000 Bengalis in Dacca, 150,000 in Khulna, 75,000 in Jessore, 95,000 in Comilla, and 100,000 in Chittagong. For eighteen districts, the total is 1,247,000 killed. This was an incomplete toll, and to this day no one really knows the final toll.”³⁹

Not only the genocide but also the Pakistani Arm forces extended much further by dishonoring Bengali society, their culture

³⁷ Robert Payne, *Massacre*, 1972, p. 50. in <http://www.genocidebangladesh.org>

³⁸ R.J. Rummel, *Death by government*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, New Jersey, Seventh paperback printing 2009, p.333.

³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 331.

and women. Susan Brownmiller in her book, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, observes, “Girls of eight and grandmother of seventy-five had been sexually assaulted during the nine-month repression. Pakistani soldiers had not only violated Bengali women on the spot; they abducted tens of hundreds and held them by force in their military barracks for nightly use. The women were kept naked to prevent their escape.”⁴⁰

The horrible situations of East Pakistan once again aggravated the people to move towards India to take shelter and it ultimately caused a huge influx of East Pakistani Bengali refugee into India throughout the year. In a letter, (May 27, 1971) Hon. William P. Rogers, Secretary of State, informed the President of U.S.A, about the influx of refugees in India.

“Pakistani Refugees in India

Mr. KENNEDY.

Mr. President, the number of East Pakistan refugees in India is now over 4,000,000- and the influx continues upward to 100,000 per day. Some 3,000,000 of these refugees are concentrated in the area of Calcutta in the State of West Bengal. The rest are found in other Indian areas bordering East Pakistan, with most of them in the State of Tripura – whose normal population of some 1,500,000 has been increased by at least one-third.

Some of the refugees are being welcomed into the homes of relatives. But the bulk of them are found in makeshift camps near the border, in public buildings such as schools, or in open fields....

*Hon. William P. Rogers,
Secretary of State,
Department of State,
Washington D.C.”⁴¹*

⁴⁰ Susan Brownmiller in her book, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, Ballantine Books, Fawcett Columbine, New York, June 1993, p. 82

⁴¹ www.fhiredekha.com/gallery/albums/userpics/june1cr.pdf

It was also published in *Dainik Sambad*, a leading Bengali daily of Tripura that, upto 21st August 1971 the number of refugees entered from East Pakistan to India were 79 lakhs 62 thousand. It also stated that in the month of June per day 63,000 refugees entered India. In the month of July the number were slightly reduced to 26,000 refugees per day but once again in August it increased upto 40,000 per day.⁴² On the basis of the report given by this daily it can be arranged that, upto 21st August, 1971,

- 1) Total number of Refugee in India – 79, 62,000
- 2) Total number of refugees took shelter in the State relief Camps -53, 44,000
- 3) Total number of State Relief Camps in India – 1030
- 4) 15 nos. of Central Relief Camps with 3, 02,000 refugees in it.⁴³

Upto the month of August 1971 the number of refugees who took shelter in various states of India is depicted in the table No. 4.10.

Table No. 4.10. No. of Refugees in various states of India (upto 20th Aug. 1971)

States	No. of Refugee
West Bengal	61, 90,000
Tripura	12, 69,000
Meghalaya	3, 40,000
Assam	2, 44,000
Bihar	9,000

Source: *Dainik Sambad* (Bengali daily), Agartala, Tripura, 22nd August, 1971.

Almost all the states of Northern and Eastern part of India were affected by that huge influx of refugees. Table No. 4.11 show the distribution of refugees in various states of India in the year 1971.

⁴² *Dainik Sambad* (Bengali daily), Agartala, Tripura, 22nd August, 1971.

⁴³ Ibid.

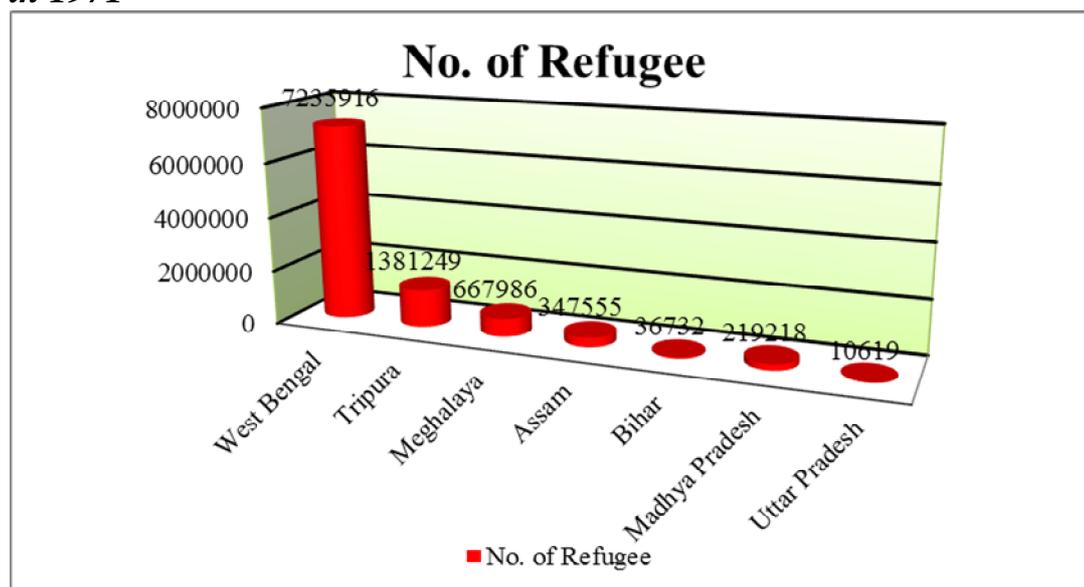
Table No. 4.11 Distribution of Refugees in various States of India in 1971

State	No. of Camps	No. of Refugees in Camps	No. of Refugees on their Own	Total
West Bengal	492	48,49,786	23,86,130	72,35,916
Tripura	276	8,34,098	5,47,151	13,81,249
Meghalaya	17	5,91,520	76,466	6,67,986
Assam	28	2,55,642	91,913	3,47,555
Bihar	8	36,732	-	36,732
Madhya Pradesh	3	2,19,218	-	2,19,218
Uttar Pradesh	1	10,619	-	10,619
Total	825	6,79,7615	31,01,660	98,98,825

Source: Bangladesh War of Independence Documents.

As taken from K.C. Saha, op.cit., p. 242.

Figure No. 4.4. Distribution of Refugees in various States of India in 1971



Thus, it is evident from the table no. 4.11 that West Bengal was the most affected states but next to it was Tripura though it was much smaller in size than the other states of India. From the month of April, 1971 to the end of that year the demographic pattern of Tripura was changed remarkably due to the persistent and pervasive influx of refugee from the then East Pakistan.

Based on the report of official records, a report on the refugees and their problems in Tripura had been published in *Dainik Sambad* (Bengali daily) on 10th August, 1971. It was stated in the report that:

<i>“Size of the State:</i>	<i>4916 sq. miles</i>
<i>Permanent Citizens:</i>	<i>15, 59,000 nos.</i>
<i>Arrived Refugee:</i>	<i>12, 21,754 nos.</i>
<i>No. of Camps:</i>	<i>36 nos.</i>
<i>Camp Units:</i>	<i>382 nos.</i>
<i>Total expenditure till date:</i>	<i>Rs. 7, 20, 000, 00”⁴⁴</i>

Geographically, Tripura is surrounded by East Pakistan almost on all sides except an outlet by the northeastern side through Assam and Mizoram. Thus, almost all the districts of Tripura were equally affected by the flow of refugee from East Pakistan. Table No. 4.12 depicts the district wise distribution of registered displaced person or refugees in Tripura.

Table No. 4.12. Districts wise distribution of registered displaced person or refugees in some specific months of 1971.

District	17th August, 1971*	20th August, 1971**	October, 1971***
West Tripura District	5, 82,963	5, 94,963	7, 19,791
South Tripura District	3, 62,477	3, 72,384	4, 33,673
North Tripura District	1, 51,277	1, 51,376	1, 87,361
Total	10, 96,717	11, 18,722	13, 40,831

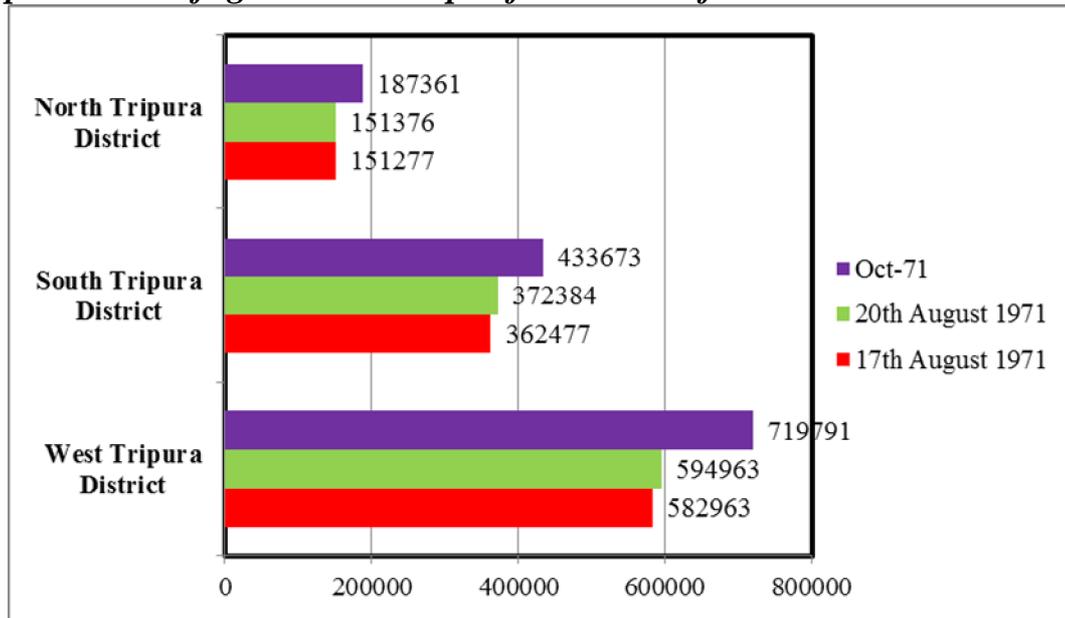
Source: * *Dainik Sambad* (Bengali daily), Agartala, Tripura, 18th August, 1971

* * *Dainik Sambad* (Bengali daily), Agartala, Tripura, 25th August, 1971

* * * *Gonoraj* (Bengali daily), Agartala, 4th November, 1971.

⁴⁴ *Dainik Sambad* (Bengali daily), Agartala, Tripura, 10th August, 1971.

Figure No. 4.5. District wise distribution of registered displaced person or refugees in some specific months of 1971.



The political struggle that was started in the first quarter of the year 1971 in East Pakistan was ended by the surrender of the Pakistani Arm Forces and independence of Bangladesh on 16th December 1971 and thus brought an end to the influx of East Pakistan's refugees into Tripura.

It is also evident from the various sources that during that small span of nine months (from April 1971 to December 1971), a good number of displaced persons from East Pakistan though registered themselves as refugee in Tripura but stayed in Tripura on their own expenses or in the houses of their relatives. It was published in *Dainik Sambad* that in the month of August 1971, (Based on the report of State Government Record Room of Tripura) the number of refugees in the Camps were 6, 92,154, refugees living in their own costs were 1, 50,000 and the refugees living with their relatives were 3, 89,600 in numbers.⁴⁵ Again, from another report it is evident that in the month of November 1971 the people staying in refugee camps in

⁴⁵ *Dainik Sambad* (Bengali daily), *op.cit.*

Tripura numbered 8, 80,316 and 5, 27,100 people stayed with their relatives and friends.⁴⁶

During that period of political turmoil along with the registered displaced persons, there were also a large number of non-registered displaced persons in Tripura. The table no. 4.13 depicts the number of non-registered displaced persons in Tripura of some specific months.

Table No. 4.13. Number of non-registered displaced persons in Tripura of some specific months of the year 1971

Months	non-registered displaced persons (approx.)	Persons living in the relief camps
17th Aug	1,62,700	7,47,140
20th Aug	1,60,400	7,47,140
28th Oct	68,000	8,52,596

Source: 1. *Dainik Sambad*, (Bengali daily), Agartala 17th Aug. & 20th Aug, 1971

2. *Gonoraj* (Bengali daily), Agartala, 4th November, 1971

Along with the registered and non-registered displaced persons in Tripura, there was another group of displaced persons, who were registered, but did not stay in the relief camps of Tripura. In reality, the huge number of refugees in Tripura overburdened the State and thus to solve the problem partially the Government of India transported, 13,165 refugees from Tripura to Assam from mid-June to mid-July 1971⁴⁷ and in the month of August, 1971, about 25,440 nos. of refugees were send to other states.⁴⁸ Again in the daily *Jagaran* (14th Dec. 1971), it was published that, “Up till now 28,203 nos. of

⁴⁶ As taken from K.C. Saha, *The genocide of 1971 and the refugee influx in the east*, in Ranabir Samaddar (ed.), *Refugees and the State : Practices of Asylum and Care in India, 1947-2000*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2003, p.219.

⁴⁷ Richard Sisson, Leo E.Rose, *War and Secession, Pakistan, India and the creation of Bangladesh*, University of California Press Ltd., Oxford, England, 1990, p. 300.

⁴⁸ *Dainik Sambad* (Bengali daily), *op.cit.*

refugees were sent to Assam through aeroplane and 6,639 nos. by train.”⁴⁹

The whole period of refugees in Tripura during that small span of nine months is specified in a statement, given by the Publicity Department of Tripura on 13th December, 1971. It was stated that, until now total 14, 16,281 nos. of East Pakistani refugees took shelter in Tripura. Among them 7,71,962 nos. of refugees took shelter in various camps in Tripura and the numbers of non-registered displaced persons were approximately 51,000.⁵⁰ Thus, from the above statement it also becomes clear that the number of registered displaced persons or refugees who did not take shelter in the refugee camps in Tripura and rather took shelter in their own expenses or in the houses of their relatives were 6,44,319 in numbers. According to Robin Sengupta, the veteran filmmaker of Tripura and the only photographer of Tripura, who had captured every major episodes of liberation war of Bangladesh in his camera, opined that, during that period, “Tripura gave shelter to sixteen lakhs refugees of East Pakistan.”⁵¹

After the independence of Bangladesh, it was the time for the refugees to go back to their own nests. The return of the refugees started from the very first day of their independence and it was evident from the report published in a daily, *Jagaran*, on 18th December, 1971. (Appendix V)

Yet again in a report published in the daily, *Dainik Sambad* on 9th Jan, 1972, that, “Upto 5th January, 1972, 6, 79,729 nos. of refugees

⁴⁹ *Jagaran* (Bengali daily), Agartala, Tripura, 14th December, 1971.

⁵⁰ *Jagaran* (Bengali daily), *op.cit.*

⁵¹ Robin SenGupta, *Chitra Sambadiker Cameray Muktiyudha* (In Bengali), Sahitya Prakash, Dhaka, 2000, p. 17.

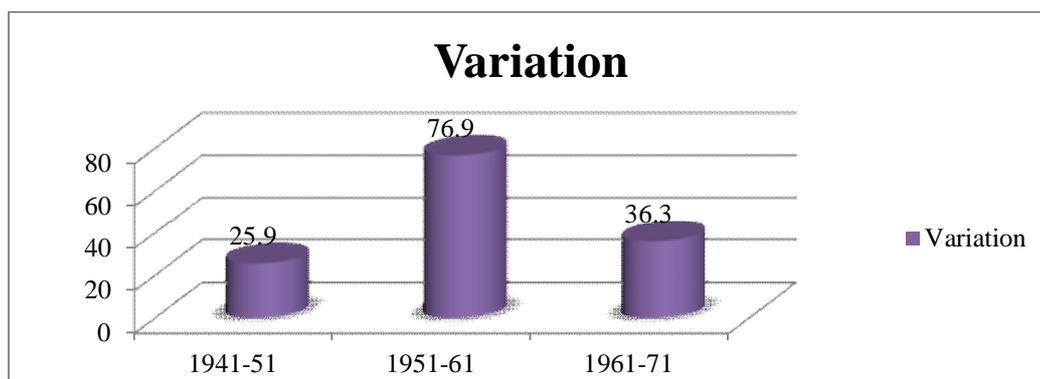
returned back to their home from Tripura.”⁵² However, the exact numbers of refugees who returned back to Independent Bangladesh before 25th March 1972, the deadline given by the Indian Government to evacuate the camps of India, were not recorded anywhere but the changing demographic pattern of the state reveals that quite a large number of refugees permanently settled themselves into Tripura. The three census reports of 1951, 1961 and 1971 (Table No. 4.14 and 4.15) reveals the clear picture of the statement.

Table No. 4.14 Growth and Variation of population (1941 – 1971)

Census	Population	Variation
1941	5, 13,010	+25.9
1951	6, 45,707	
1951	6, 45,707	+76.9
1961	11, 42,005	
1961	11, 42,005	+36.3
1971	15, 56,342	

Source: *Statistical Abstract of Tripura 1978*, Directorate of Statistics and Evaluation, Government of Tripura, Agartala, pp.3-4.

Figure No. 4.6 Variation of population (1941 – 1971)



⁵² *Dainik Sambad* (Bengali daily), op.cit. 18th January, 1972.

Table No. 4.15 Growth of population in Tripura (1951 – 1971)

Year	Total Population	Tribal population	Number of registered displaced person
1951	6, 45,707	2,37,953	95,404 (<i>from 1947 to Feb, 1950</i>)
1961	11, 42,005	3,60,070	3,74,000 (<i>from 1950-51 to 1957-58</i>)
1971	15, 56,342	4,50,544	1,40,594 (<i>from 1964-65 to 1971 24th March</i>)

Source: 1. *Statistical Abstract of Tripura 1978*, Directorate of Statistics and Evaluation, Government of Tripura, Agartala, p. 32.

2. A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Tripura a portrait of population*, Census of India 1971, Published by Controller of Publications, Civil lines, Delhi, 1975, p. 54.

The table no. 4.15 also shows that in the year 1971 while the total population was 15, 56,342, the total numbers of tribal population were 4, 50,544. Thus, the total number of non-tribal peoples were 11, 05,798 and maximum of them were Bengalis, as Bengali was spoken as mother tongue by 68.79 per cent of the total population of Tripura according to 1971 census.⁵³

Refugees were never considered as permanent settlers and they usually evacuate the place when the problems of their immigrations were solved or they find themselves secure in their place of origin. However, a large number of those refugees settled permanently in Tripura. If we compare the growth rate of tribal and non-tribal population in Tripura of this period under study, which is shown in the table no. 4.16, it becomes clear that how the abnormal growth rate of non-tribal population marginalized the aborigines of the State. The abnormal growth rate of population in Tripura during that period was

⁵³ A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Tripura a portrait of population*, Census of India 1971, Published by Controller of Publications, Civil lines, Delhi, 1975, p. 127.

only due to the outcome of the settlement of those immigrants from Bangladesh, who at the time of turmoil took refuge in the State.

The birth rate and the death rate in Tripura in the year 1971 were respectively 35.8 per thousand and 15.3 per thousand and the natural growth rate in rural area was 21.1 per thousand and in urban area was 15.5 per thousand.⁵⁴ Based on “indirect method”⁵⁵, Dipak Kumar Adak and Sarit Kumar Chaudhuri had calculated the net migration values in Tripura and observed that the net migration rate during 1961-71 in Tripura was 3,82,432 (24.57 percent of total population).⁵⁶

Table No. 4.16 Growth of Tribal and Non-Tribal Population in Tripura

Year	Population	Tribal population	Non-tribal population	Tribal growth (%)	Non-tribal growth (%)
1941	5,13,010	2,56,991	2,56,019	-	-
1951	6,45,707	2,37,953	4,01,074	(-) 7.40	59.26
1961	11,42,005	3,60,070	7,81,935	51.31	91.76
1971	15,56,342	4,50,544	11,05,798	25.12	41.41

Source: S. R. Bhattacharjee, *Tribal Insurgency in Tripura*, Inter-India Publications, New Delhi, 1989, p.39.

Therefore, it was evident that a good percentage of refugees stayed permanently in Tripura and as a result, the growth rate of population increased enormously in the state. However, if we compare

⁵⁴ Dipak Kumar Adak and Sarit Kumar Chaudhuri, *Birth Rate and Death Rate of Tripura (1971-1989): A Study of Time Series*, J. Hum. Ecot., 7(3): 169-173 (1996), p. 170

⁵⁵ Indirect method – According to this method Net Migration (N. M.) = I-E=Pt-Po-B+D, where I=Immigration, E=Emigration, Pt= Population size at the end of an interval, Po= Population size at the beginning of the Interval, B= Births in the interval, D= Deaths in the interval.

⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 172.

the demographic characteristics of India and her states, which were directly affected by the influx of Bengali refugees from East Pakistan (table no. 4.17), it becomes clear that Tripura had the highest growth rate of population in 1971 than the other states of India. This was only due to the huge influx of refugees and their permanent settlement in the state.

Table No. 4.17 Some Demographic Characteristics of India, State and Union Territory

	Population (in '000)		Decennial Growth Rate	Density of Population per sq.km. 1971	Proportion of Urban Population in 1971 (%)
	1961	1971			
India	439,073	547,950	24.80	178	19.91
Assam	11,128	14,958	34.71	150	8.87
West Bengal	34,926	44,312	26.87	504	24.75
Meghalaya a	745	1,012	31.50	45	14.55
Tripura (Union Territory)	1,142	1,556	36.28	149	10.43

Source: *The Times of India, Directory and Yearbook, Including Who's Who, 1973*, The Times of India Press, Bombay, p.145.

The displaced persons who took shelter in Tripura from East Pakistan and amalgamated with the mainstream population during the period under review and increased the growth of population of the state Tripura, were the Bengalis of both Hindu and Muslim

communities. The table no. 4.18 focuses on the population growth in Tripura based on religion from 1951 to 1971.

Table No. 4.18. Population according to religion in Tripura (1951-1971)

Year	Total	Hindus	Muslims	Buddhists	Christians	Sikhs	Others
1951	645707	484231	136981	17552	6181	21	141
1961	1142005	867998	230002	33716	10039	49	201
1971	1556342	1393689	103962	42285	15713	318	375

Source: *Statistical Abstract of Tripura 1978*, Directorate of Statistics and Evaluation, Government of Tripura, Agartala, p. 39.

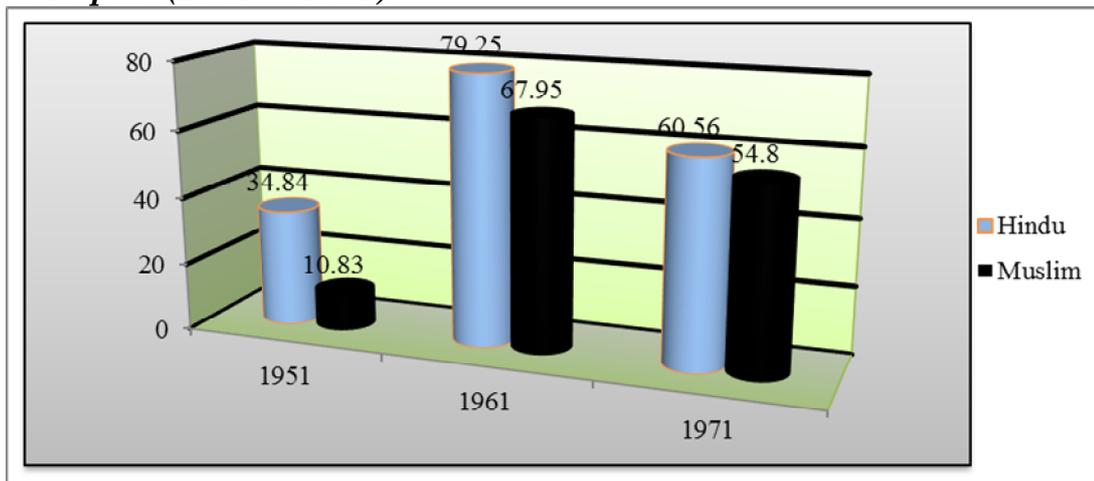
However, if we see the decadal variation and percentage of both the Hindu and the Muslim populations in Tripura from the year 1951 to 1971, which is depicted in the table no. 4.19, it becomes clear that immediately after partition and amalgamation of Tripura with the Indian Union the immigration of both Hindu and Muslim Bengali population were less in number. On the other hand, within the period from 1951 to 1961 due to the political mayhem and social disorder in East Pakistan, both the Hindu and the Muslim populations took refuge in Tripura and hence increased her population abnormally. In the next decade, it was due to the communal tension and political mischief generated by the Pakistani Government compelled the Hindu Bengali to take shelter in Tripura.

Table No. 4.19 Decadal variation and percentage of Hindu and Muslim population in Tripura.

Year	Decadal Variation of Hindu	% of total Hindu population	Decadal Variation of Muslim	% of total Muslim population
1951	34.84	74.99	10.83	21.21
1961	79.25	76.01	67.95	20.14
1971	60.56	89.55	54.80	6.68

Source: Based on the table no. 4.18

Figure. No. 4.7 Decadal variation of Hindu and Muslim population in Tripura(1951 to 1971)



Now to understand completely the nature of migration it is necessary to realise the socio-economic background of those displaced people who took refuge in Tripura in the different phases of migration of the period under review. It has been discussed earlier that among the displaced persons, who entered into West Bengal immediately after partition of India, a large fraction belonged to the elite and educated stratum of the society. However, that group of peoples also penetrated into Tripura during the period of Regency (1947-1949) from East Bengal. According to the Census Report, 1951, 62.98 percent of the displaced persons came to Tripura mainly from non-agricultural classes.⁵⁷

It is obvious that the rich and elite groups of people would prefer the urban areas than the rural and in Tripura due to the absence of any satisfactory expansion of industry, trade and commerce except Agartala, no other place was treated as town for the purpose of Census during the year 1901 – 1951.⁵⁸ In the year 1961, Tripura was divided into ten sub-divisions, viz, Amarpur, Belonia, Dharmanagar,

⁵⁷ Census of India, 1951, Tripura State Census Handbook compiled from pp. 262 - 267

⁵⁸ A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Tripura a portrait of population*, Census of India 1971. Op.cit. p. 68.

Kailashahar, Kamalpur, Khowai, Sabroom, Sadar, sonamura, Udaipur, but for the first time in that year excluding Agartala, five more sub-divisional headquarters viz. Khowai, Kailashahar, Dharmanagar, Udaipur and Belonia were recognised as towns. Nevertheless, according to Tripura District Gazetteers, in 1961, apart from Agartala, there was no municipality in any sub-divisional headquarters and thus there was only one urban area in Tripura, and that is the capital town of Agartala.⁵⁹ Tripura District Gazetteers also depicts that in the year 1961 Agartala had 54,878 numbers of people while the towns like Belonia had 8,744, Dharmanagar had 13,240, Kailashahar had 8,575, Khowai had 8,782 and Udaipur had 8,778 respectively.⁶⁰ Hence, with such a small population and infrastructural deficiency, except Agartala, the other towns cannot be considered as urban areas rather we can say that it became necessary to the administration to declare those areas as towns due to its administrative importance,

Now if we go through the population chart of Agartala, (Table no. 4.20), then it reveals that the population of Agartala increased abnormally during the period of 1941 to 1951. Hence, if we consider it as an abnormal growth then it can be said that it was due to the influx of those educated, elite and intellectual middle class people from East Pakistan in Agartala, who always prefer to live in the urban areas.

Table No. 4.20. Population of Agartala (1911-1961)

Year	Total population	Increase	Decadal variation
1911	6,831	-	6.48
1921	7,743	912	13.35
1931	9,580	1,837	23.72
1941	17,693	8,113	84.69

⁵⁹ *Tripura District Gazetteers*, op.cit. p. 135.

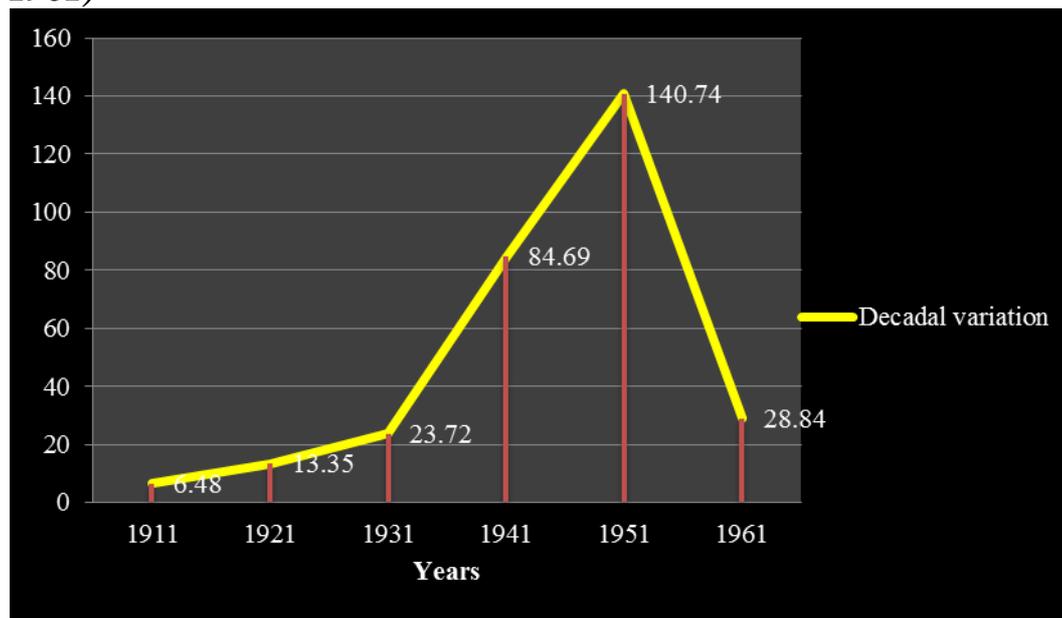
⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

1951	42,595	24,902	140.74
1961	52,878	12,283	28.84

Source: 1. *Tripura District Gazetteers*, Government of Tripura, Agartala, 1975, p. 135.

2. *Statistical Abstract of Tripura 1978*, Directorate of Statistics and Evaluation, Government of Tripura, Agartala, p. 76.

Figure: 4.8. Decadal Variation of the Population of Agartala (1911-1961)



If we analyse it from a different perspective, then also it proves the reality of the above statement. The total number of population increased in Agartala in the year 1951 was 24,902 (Table no. 4.20) and the total number of displaced person in Tripura from the year 1947 to 1949 were 28,253 (Table No. 4.1). Hence, we can state from the above two statements that a considerable amount of displaced persons settled in Agartala and those displaced persons were basically rich and educated. Romaprashad Dutta, the owner of Romaprashad Gobeshonagar, Agartala opined that, “during that period a large number of rich business class, basically the people from *Saha* and

Banik communities, immigrated into Tripura from East Bengal and settled permanently in Agartala town.”⁶¹

As it is discussed earlier that in the next phase (from 1950-51 to 1957-58) the number of displaced persons increased abnormally in Tripura but remarkably, these displaced persons were not only from the elite and educated sections of the society but maximum of them were poor, and basically they were agricultural labourers. According to 1951 census, it was about 38% whereas in 1961 about 55% of the displaced persons settled in agricultural sectors.⁶² As observed by the Report of the Administration of the Union Territory of Tripura for the year 1957-58, that, till the end of 1957, 53,318 refugee families settled in Tripura and among them 30,429 families were agricultural families and 43,322 families settled themselves in the rural areas.⁶³ In addition, the large tracts of land in Tripura, which were available for immediate agricultural use, facilitate the agriculture based rural immigrants to settle themselves permanently.

Hence, if we differentiate the rural-urban population of Tripura (Table No. 4.21) of some specific decades then it brings out the fact that proportion of urban population to total population is still quite low in Tripura.

⁶¹ From the personal interview with Mr. Ramaprashad Dutta (Paltu da), the owner of Ramaprashad Gobeshonagar, Agartala, time 12.30, p.m, dated: 31/05/2010.

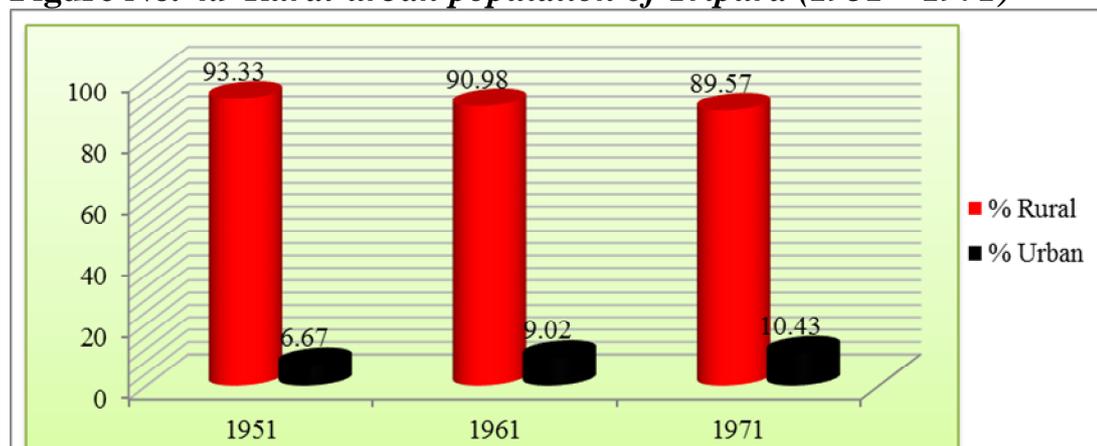
⁶² Gayatri Bhattacharyya, *Refugee Rehabilitation and Its Impact on Tripura's Economy*, Omson's Publications, New Delhi, 1988, p. 32.

⁶³ Report of the Administration of the Union Territory of Tripura for the year 1957-58, p. 79.

Table No. 4.21. Rural-urban population of Tripura (1951 – 1971)

Year	No. of Towns	Percentage of rural population to total population	Percentage of urban population to total population
1951	1	93.33	6.67
1961	6	90.98	9.02
1971	6	89.57	10.43

Source: A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Tripura a portrait of population*, Census of India 1971, Published by Controller of Publications, Civil lines, Delhi, 1975, p. 83.

Figure No. 4.9 Rural-urban population of Tripura (1951 – 1971)

Now if we correlate the various events of the decade (1951 – 1961) viz. the political turmoil in East Pakistan, strained Indo-Pak relations, Permit system, language movement, abnormal growth rate of Muslim population in Tripura and maximum settlement of the displaced persons in Tripura in the agricultural sector, then we can draw a tangible picture out of it.

During this decade due to political mayhem in East Pakistan both the Hindus and the Muslims left their place of origin and took refuge in the state Tripura. This time the displaced persons were not only from the elite sections of the society but the common people,

basically the Hindu and Muslim peasants of various districts of East Pakistan adjoining to the border of Tripura, viz. Sylhet, Mymensingh, Comilla, Noakhali, Chittagong and some from Dacca and Brahmanbaria. Mr. Sunil Krishna Paul, retired T.C.S officer and former Assistant Survey Officer of North and South district of Tripura (1971), opined that, “during that decade maximum of the displaced persons –

- 1) from Noakhali settled themselves in Belonia sub-division and partly in Sabroom, Amarpur, Sadar and Udaipur
- 2) from Chittagong, settled in Sabroom.
- 3) from Sylhet to Dharmanagar, Kamalpur, Kailashahar, Khowai.
- 4) from Comilla, Brahmanbaria to Sadar sub-division”.⁶⁴

He also observed that, during that period most of the Muslim people settled themselves in the sub-division like Sonamura, Udaipur, Amarpur, Belonia and Kailashahar.⁶⁵

The statement given by Mr. Paul can be justified from the table no. 4.22 where we find the increase of population due to the heavy influx of displaced persons, of those specific sub-divisions of Tripura, adjoining to the border of East Pakistan. In addition, table no. 4.23 depicts that the Muslim population were increased in those sub-divisions of Tripura, as mentioned by Mr. Paul. Now if we look at the geographical location of those subdivisions where the Muslim population increased then we find that those sub-divisions were at the border of those districts of East Pakistan (viz. Noakhali, Chittagong, Comilla and Sylhet) which were under the *Zamindari* of the rulers of Tripura before 1947 (and were named as Chakla Roshnabad which is

⁶⁴ Sunil Krishna Paul, retired T.C.S. Officer (1995) and former Assistant Survey Officer (North and South district of Tripura) in 1971, interview taken on 22nd May, 2010.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

discussed in the previous chapter) except Sylhet. Thus, it can be said that the abnormal growth rate of Muslim population during the decade (1951-61) was due to the influx of Bengali Muslim displaced people from those adjoining districts of East Pakistan owing to political mayhem.

Discussing the causes behind the huge influx of Muslim displaced people during the decade (1951-1967-1) Dipannita Chakraborty opined that it was due to the establishment of the Directorate of Rehabilitation in the year 1949, so that the refugees were settled and their settlements were recorded.⁶⁶ But Anjali Chakraborty in her article, *Muslim Inhabitants of Tripura: A Demographic and Socio-Cultural Profile*, 2009, had mentioned a different cause behind the huge influx of Muslim population during that decade. Accordingly she said, “One of the causes of abrupt increase in number was the political intrigue and motivation of taking away Tripura in favor of Pakistan.”⁶⁷ Though she did not give any relevant document with her statement, Mahadev Chakravarti had stated in his article “*The Ziratia Problem of Tripura*” that, “Since the late fifties secret intelligence reports came to the Government of Tripura that the East Pakistani Ziratia tenants were either coming in large numbers to Tripura to construct houses or their lands lying within Tripura for permanently settling down as Indian citizens or they were selling their paddy lands.”⁶⁸ He also stated that after independence due to the insecurity of their livelihood the *Ziratia* peasants became discontent and in the border of East Pakistan a

⁶⁶ Dipannita Chakraborty, *Land Question in Tripura*, Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi, 2004, p.41.

⁶⁷ Anjali Chakraborty, *Muslim Inhabitants of Tripura: A Demographic and Socio-Cultural Profile*, Folklore and Folkloristics, Vol.2; No.1, June 2009, p. 7.

⁶⁸ Mahadev Chakravarti, *Proceedings of North East India History Association*, Fifth Session, Aizawl, 1984, pp. 189-190

number of *Ziratia* tenants organizations grew up to humiliate the people living in the border of Tripura. They even went further and claimed that “all the arable lands of the Hill Tripura State (now within Bharat) belong to Pakistani Border people.”⁶⁹

Thus whatever may be real cause but it was true that the Muslim population increased during that decade and most of those Muslim displaced people were *Ziratia* peasants and they were basically poor. Thus they put pressure on the agricultural fields of Tripura. The number of agricultural labourers or the cultivating labourers thus increased in 1961 from 1951 in Tripura.⁷⁰ Those *Ziratia* peasants migrated from the areas like Noakhali, Comilla and Sylhet districts of East Pakistan and immigrated in various sub-divisions of Tripura like Sonamura, Udaipur, Belonia, Sadar, and Kamalpur (Table no. 4.22). Hence, the *Ziratia* peasants, who basically belonged to the poor Muslim community and were considered as temporary migrants (details in the previous chapter) before the partition of India, immigrated to Tripura for permanent settlement in the decade (1951-1961). Dipannita Chakraborty made a field survey in the Belonia sub-division, where quite a vast region was marked as *Ziratia* land and in the survey it was revealed that almost all of the families of the locality came over to Tripura from East Pakistan during the 1950s and 1960s to settle in Tripura permanently.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Ibid. p. 188

⁷⁰ Pravas Ranjan Bhattacharjee, *Economic Transition in Tripura*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1993, comparing both the table no.5.7 and 5.8, pp. 82-83.

⁷¹ Dipannita Chakraborty, op.cit., p. 86

Table No. 4.22 Growth of population since 1941 (by sub-division) and variation (1951-1961)

Sub-division	1941	1951	1961	1971	Variation 1951 - 1961	
					No. of Increase	Percent
Amarpur	36,072	28,280	56,365	78,453	28085	+99.3
Belonia	32,149	40,209	84,827	1,38,134	44618	+111.0
Dharmanagar	53,001	82,545	1,27,548	1,73,393	45003	+54.5
Kailashahar	65,036	58,624	1,04,126	1,41,181	45502	+77.6
Kamalpur	24,922	30,372	61,675	88,455	31303	+103.1
Khowai	54,072	55,560	1,29,948	1,77,993	74388	+133.9
Sabroom	20,773	23,680	43,397	58,934	19177	+83.3
Sadar	1,49,404	2,23,416	3,66,076	4,72,729	142660	+63.9
Sonamura	32,630	44,544	77,969	1,00,877	33425	+75.0
Udaipur	44,951	58,477	90,074	1,24,207	31597	+54.0

Source: *Statistical Abstract of Tripura 1978*, Directorate of Statistics and Evaluation, Government of Tripura, Agartala, pp. 3-4.

Figure: 4.10 Growth of population since 1941 (by sub-division)

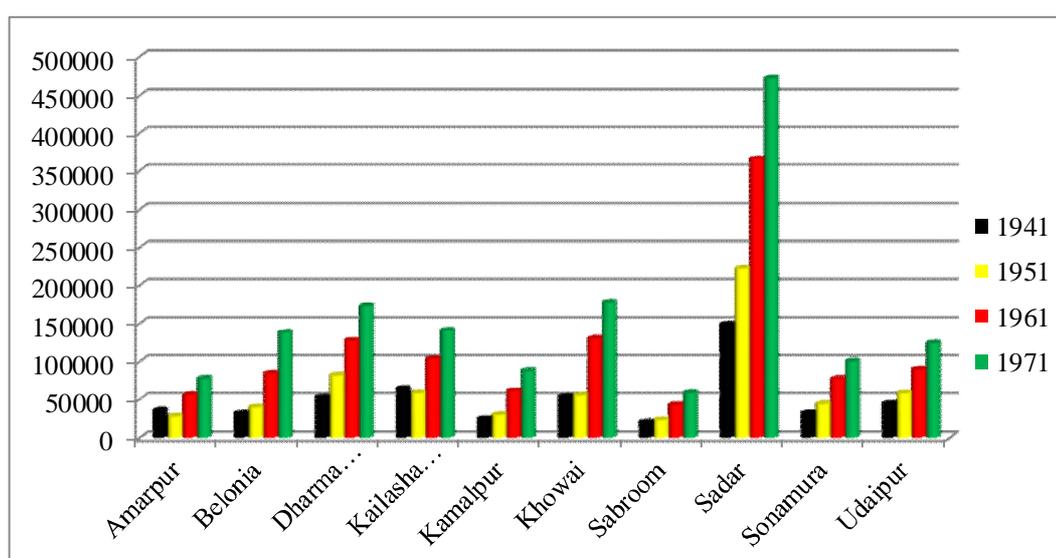


Table No. 4.23 Muslim population of Tripura (sub-division wise) of some specific year

Sub-division	Muslim Population			
	1901	1931	1961	1971
Amarpur	-	948	10139	1182
Belonia	5565	5513	15665	2782
Dharmanagar	3068	13585	28718	21558
Kailashahar	5703	12667	15166	13483
Kamalpur	-	-	4088	2940
Khowai	542	3385	9239	778
Sabroom	-	1189	2960	90
Sadar	20434	25887	50306	19058
Sonamura	10011*	18227	48084	28795
Udaipur		19319	45637	13296

* During the period of census (1901) Udaipur division was under Sonamura division

Source: 1. Atish Chandra Choudhury, Census Report 1310 T.E. (1901 A.D.), Tribal Research Institute, Government of Tripura, Agartala, Re-print 1995, p. 12

2. Thakur Sri Somendrachandra Debvarma, *1340 T.E. Census Bibarani of Tripura (in Bengali)*, (Census Report of Tripura 1340 T.E.), Tribal Research Institute, Government of Tripura, Agartala, Re-print 1997, Provincial Table No. 2. p. 145.

3. Anjali Chakraborty, *Muslim Inhabitants of Tripura: A Demographic and Socio-Cultural Profile*, Folklore and Folkloristics, Vol.2; No.1, June 2009, Table No. 3. p. 3

4. *Statistical Abstract of Tripura 1978*, Directorate of Statistics and Evaluation, Government of Tripura, Agartala, p. 39

In the next phase i.e. from the year 1961 to 1971, it was totally due to the communal riots in East Pakistan that a huge number of displaced people entered into Tripura and that time the displaced

persons were basically Bengali Hindu community from all socio-economic stratum. The table no. 4.22 and 4.23 though indicated that the number of population increased in the several sub-divisions of Tripura from the year 1961 to 1971 but the number of Muslim population decreased enormously. According to a scholar, “the decline of Muslim population in 1961-1971 was the result of ‘push-back’ operation policy of the government.”⁷² Actually, the Immigration Act, which was passed by the Indian Government in 1950, was enforced in Tripura on 1960s. As a result a large number of Bengali Muslim immigrants returned back to their home and reduced the number of Muslim population from 2,30,002 in 1961 to 1,03,3962 in 1971 (From table No. 4.18). Whatever may be the Government policy, it was true that it was due to the flow of immense number of Bengali Hindu immigrants into Tripura, which outnumbered the Bengali Muslim population in Tripura.

Now keeping the Bengali immigrants aside let us discuss about the Tribal immigrants into Tripura in the period under study. Table No. 4.24 depicts the number of tribes of Tripura based on various census reports.

Table No. 4.24 Tribe wise population of Tripura at a glance (1931-1971)

Name of the Tribe	1931	1951**	1961	1971
Bhil	-	41	69	169
Bhutia	-	19	7	3
Chaimal	-	220	50	-
Chakma	8730	7277	22386	28662
Garoo	2144	7352	5484	5559
Halam	12713	1644	16298	19076
Jamatia	11090	2764	24359	34192

⁷² Anjali Chakraborty, op.cit.

Khasia	-	151	349	491
Kuki	1479	2721	5531	7775
Lepcha	-	5	7	14
Lushai	2175	1947	2988	3672
Mag	5748	3789	10524	13273
Munda, Kaur	2058	51	4409	5347
Noatia	27405	1916	16010	10297
Orang	979	-	2875	3428
Reang	35881	8471	56597	64722
Santal	735	736	1562	2222
Tripuri	79074	150971	189799	250545
Uchai	-	-	766	1061
Unspecified	-	2218	-	36
Total	190211	192293	360070	45044

Source: Table wise population of Tribes of Tripura at a glance (from 1931-2001), compiled from various Census data of India and distributed by Tribal Research Institute, Government of Tripura, Agartala.

*** The figures of the tribes of Tripura given in the District Census Hand Book of 1951, Tripura is a clear case of gross anomaly owing most probably to typing or printing mistake. Whereas the Tribes in every census show a tendency of steady growth, a decrease in such a percentage is really abnormal. Also in the Statistical Abstract Tripura 1978, page no. 32, it is written that the total number of Tribal population in the year 1951 in Tripura was 2,37,953 which did not match with the total population of the above table. Dr. Jagadis Gan Chaudhuri, in his book The Reangs of Tripura agreed with this anomaly and opined that the decreased of 79% of Reangs in the year 1951 was really abnormal.⁷³ B.P. Misra also opined in his book Socioeconomic Adjustments of Tribals that "Census of 1951 was not satisfactory due to politically disturbed condition of Tripura."⁷⁴*

According to the Census of 1961 and 1971 of Tripura, there were 19 major tribal communities in Tripura. Among those tribal

⁷³ Jagadis Gan Chaudhuri, *The Reangs of Tripura*, Directorate of Research, Department of Welfare of Sch. Tribes and Sch Castes, Government of Tripura, 1983, p. 6

⁷⁴ Bani Prasanna Misra, *Socioeconomic Adjustments of Tribals*, People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1976. 24.

communities Chaimal, Halam, Jamatia, Kuki, Noatia, Reang, Tripuri, Uchai were real aborigines of the State, while other tribes are migrated. Among the others the most important Chakma and Mag migrated into Tripura from Chittagong Hill Tracts (discussed in the previous chapter), while the others came from the various states of India (Table No. 4.25). However, there were no sign of any huge immigration of the various tribal communities into Tripura during the period under review. Based on decadal growth rate of Tribal population in Tripura from the year 1961 to 1971, we can conclude that there were not any abnormal growth of tribal communities except the Bhil, Lepcha, Khasis and the Santals (Table No. 4.26.). But those communities were negligible in number and the Bhil, Khasis and the Santal communities were immigrant tribes and concentrated in the Tea gardens.

Table No. 4.25 Place of origin of the tribal communities of Tripura (1951–1971)

Name of the Tribes	Place of Origin
Chaimal	Tripura Tribes
Halam	
Jamatia	
Kuki	
Noatia	
Reang	
Tripuri	
Uchai	
Chakma	
Mag	
Garo	Assam Tribes
Khasi	
Lushai	
Bhutia	N.F. Tribes
Lepcha	
Bhil	Central and Eastern Indian Tribes
Munda	

Santal	
Orang	

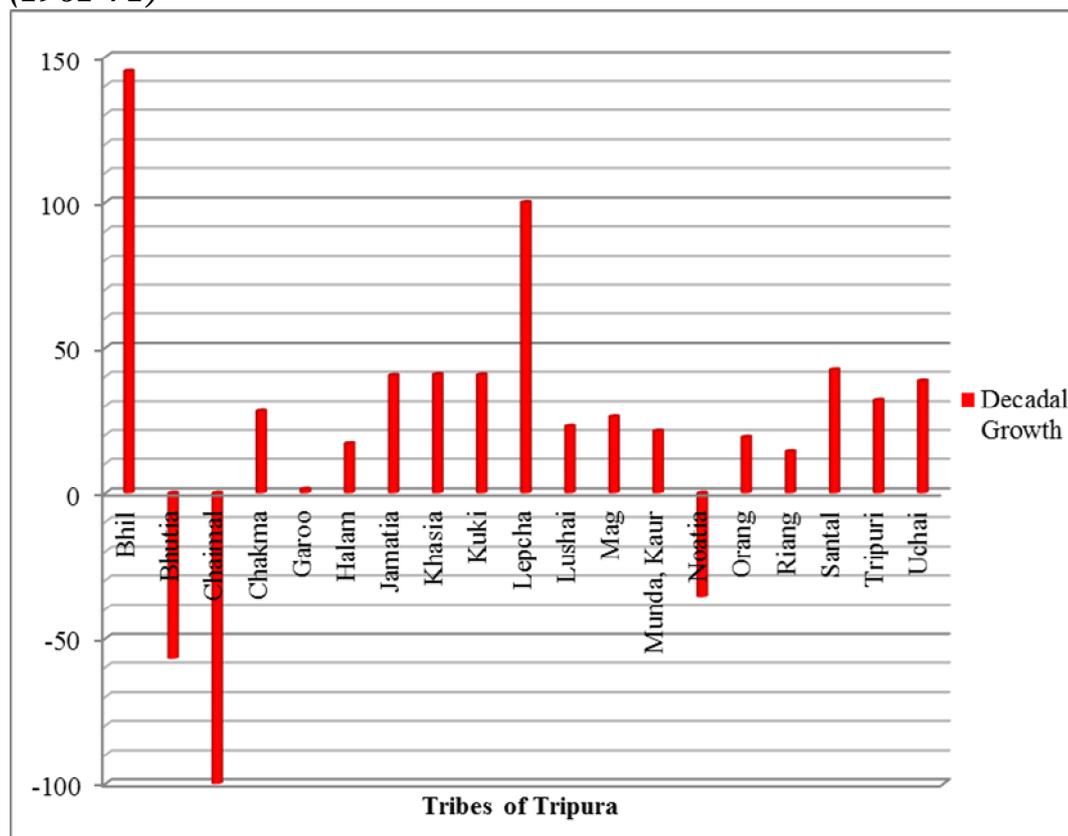
Source: O.S.Adhikari, *Four Immigrant Tribes of Tripura*, Directorate of Research Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Tripura, Agartala, 1988, p.13.

Table No. 4.26 Decadal growth rate of Tribal population of Tripura (1961-71)

Name of the Tribe	1961	1971	Decadal Variation
Bhil	69	169	144.93
Bhutia	7	3	-57.14
Chaimal	50	-	-100.00
Chakma	22386	28662	28.04
Garoo	5484	5559	1.37
Halam	16298	19076	17.05
Jamatia	24359	34192	40.37
Khasia	349	491	40.69
Kuki	5531	7775	40.57
Lepcha	7	14	100.00
Lushai	2988	3672	22.89
Mag	10524	13273	26.12
Munda, Kaur	4409	5347	21.27
Noatia	16010	10297	-35.68
Orang	2875	3428	19.23
Reang	56597	64722	14.36
Santal	1562	2222	42.25
Tripuri	189799	250545	32.01
Uchai	766	1061	38.51

Source: *Table No. 4.24*

Figure: 4.11 *Decadal growth rate of Tribal population of Tripura (1961-71)*



Now let us discuss about the number of people those who migrated from other places of India and abroad into Tripura except East Pakistan in 1951. (Table No 4.27)

Table No 4.27. Migration from other places to Tripura in 1951

From where they came to Tripura	No. of Persons
A. From India	
Uttar Pradesh	432
Bihar	2215
Orissa	1821
West Bengal	2979
Assam	9908
Manipur	330
Madras	43
Mysore	3
Travancore-Cochin	4
Bombay	52
Saurashtra	6

Madhya Pradesh	6
Rajasthan	410
Punjab	19
Patiala & East Punjab States Union	1
Jammu & Kashmir	146
Delhi	129
Ajmer	5
B. From outside India	
Burma	122
Nepal	270
Asia Unspecified	15
Born place not stated	126

Source: R.A.Gopaldaswami, *Census of India, 1951, Vol. I, India, Part II-A – Demographic Tables*, Govt. of India Press, Delhi, 1955, p. 251.

The above table depicts that till 1951 a large number of people from the various parts of India and abroad immigrated into Tripura. However, those people were not political migrants rather they came to Tripura for their livelihood. The persons coming from Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Ajmer, Rajasthan, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Bombay and Burma were basically traders and merchants. Many Punjabi and Marwari people permanently settled in Tripura during that period. Most of the people coming from Bihar, Orissa and Assam were tea-garden and brick factory labourers and some of them were working as day labourers and coolies. The Nepali peoples settled themselves in the urban area i.e. in Agartala. But due to unavailability of the sources it is not possible from our end to collect the data of immigrants of Tripura coming from other states and countries except East Pakistan, during the year 1951 to 1971. However, on the basis of the numbers of speakers of the scheduled languages in Tripura according to 1961 and 1971 census we can get some idea about the immigrants and their place of origin. The Table No. 4.28 depicts the language wise

distribution of people in Tripura and the decadal variations of the speakers according the census report of 1961 and 1971.

Table No. 4.28 : List of mother tongues of Tripura and the decadal variations (census 1961 and 1971).

Mother Tongue	1961	1971	Decadal Growth	Mother Tongue	1961	1971	Decadal Growth
Afghani/ Kabuli/ pashto	3	4	33.33	Kashmiri	3	7	133.33
Angami	9	4	-55.56	Kharia	237	186	-21.52
Assamese	123	176	43.09	Khasi	332	388	16.87
Baghelkhandi	-	53	-	Koch	334	100	-70.06
Benjua	229	155	-32.31	Konda	220	61	-72.27
Bhimchaura	129	96	-25.58	Konkani	-	10	-
Bhojpuri	-	50	-	Kumauni	18	46	155.56
Bhotia	3	1	-66.67	Larka	32	79	146.88
Bhumji	20	61	205.00	Madrasi	65	190	192.31
Bihari	13	213	1538.46	Magahi	-	3	-
Bilashpuri	-	4	-	Mahili	-	7	-
Bishnupuriya	13	9884	75930.77	Maithali	-	4	-
Bongcher	6	30	400.00	Malayalam	34	314	823.53
Burmese	230	1023	344.78	Manipuri	27940	17144	-38.64
Deswali	2	30	1400.00	Marathi	20	196	880.00
Devanagari	11	170	1445.45	Marsum	4486	3430	-23.54
Dogri	-	100	-	Marwari	8	40	400.00
English	22	42	90.91	Meithei	-	4463	
French	2	21	950.00	Mundari	185	189	2.16
Garhwali	101	91	-9.90	Naga	-	16	-
Gorkhali/ Nepali	14/ 1682	2107	25.27	Oriya	11582	13911	20.11
Gor	192	85	-55.73	Paite	-	1	-
Gujarati	40	21	-47.50	Persian	418	272	-34.93
Gurmukhi	33	5	-84.85	Punjabi	78	300	284.62
Hindi	18451	22203	20.33	Rajastheni	33	69	109.09
Hindustani	349	22	-93.70	Savara	818	358	-56.23
Jaintia	1	5	400.00	Tamil	49	82	67.35
Kachari	3	1	-66.67	Telugu	1713	1958	14.30
Kaipang	1977	2241	13.35	Turi	2	32	1500.00
Kannada	5	18	260.00	Urdu	21	67	219.05

Source: A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Tripura a portrait of population*, Census of India 1971, Published by Controller of Publications, Civil lines, Delhi, 1975, pp. 128-133.

Tripura District Gazetteers, Government of Tripura, Agartala, 1975, pp. 407- 408.

An additional group of people those who were migrated in a large number from East Pakistan were the Manipuri people. It was

discussed in the previous chapter about their immigrations and about their social categorization viz. Bishnupuriya and Meithei. However, it is very interesting to note that in the List of mother tongues of Tripura – 1961 census (Table No. 4.28), both the Bishnupuriya and Manipuri language had been stated in the list. There were no sign of Meithei dialects. Again, in 1971 census three dialects had been stated viz. Manipuri, Bishnupuriya and Meithei. (Table No. 4.28). Now, it was confusing because Manipuri people speak only two different dialects viz. Meithei and Bishnupuriya. Nevertheless, whatever may be the linguistic metamorphosis in the census report, it was true that after Bengali and major tribes in Tripura, the number of Manipuri people were much more than one percent of the total population of Tripura. As in the previous chapter, it was discussed that the Manipuri people were mainly agriculturalists and they knew the art of plough cultivation back to front. However, as the political turmoil originated in newly created East Pakistan after 1947, along with the Hindu Bengalis the Hindu Manipuri peoples were also became the worst sufferers. Thus, in every episode of political and communal disturbances of East Pakistan pushed the Hindu Manipuri people to immigrate into Tripura mostly from the Sylhet district of East Pakistan. Manipuri people were concentrated in the Sylhet district and thus they immigrated into the sub-divisions like Kamalpur, Kailashahar, Dharmanagar and Khowai.

Discussing the various streams of migration into Tripura from the year 1947 to 1971, in condense we can say that the whole period was full of disturbances and restlessness and it was owing to the fact that after partition of India, the political horizon of South Asia was scorched. That scorches condition emerged due to political disorder

and communal resentment in the newly born country like Pakistan as well as in India. In 1947, the Princely state Tripura under the rule of Regency witness the joy of independence of India and pain of her partition and most significantly experienced the flow of immigrants in her soil from the then East Pakistan, whom they considered as refugees. But, after 1949 15th October, when Tripura amalgamated with the Indian Union, the term ‘displaced person’ was used by the Tripura Government. Whatever term may be used but the reality is that, they are all “political migrants”⁷⁵.

Most of those displaced persons between the years 1949 to 1971 in Tripura were the Hindu Bengali immigrants and were purely the victims of political and communal disorder of East Pakistan. Other than the Hindu Bengali immigrants, the Manipuri community in a large number penetrated into Tripura due to the communal violence and political atrocities in East Pakistan. Hence, they are all political migrants. During this period the Muslim Ziratia peasants, the tea garden labourers or of the brick factories entered into Tripura. They are purely ‘Economic migrants’.⁷⁶ Also in 1960s a large number of traders, merchants and labourers viz. the Marawaris, Nepalis, Punjabis etc. and various tribes from Assam, Meghalaya, Bihar, West Bengal etc. entered into the State (Table No. 4.22). They are all economic migrants. In fact, in this period the huge influx of Bengali displaced person outnumbered other migrants in size as well as in importance.

⁷⁵ Political migration considers people moving to escape political, religious or ethnic persecution, or conflict. Political migrations differ from other migrations by attempting to change aspects of a political system. These changes are accomplished by modifying the demographics of a specific region. The focus on demographics necessitates an emphasis on migration towards low-population regions or artificially creating high-population regions.

1.) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_migration

2.) <http://dailyinfopages.com/definition-of-migration/>

⁷⁶ A person who leaves their home country to live in another country with better work or living conditions is considered as economic migrant.

<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/economic-migrant>

Hence, after exploring the entire chapter a clear discrepancy in the nature of migrations between the present and the previous Chapters (Nature of migration in Tripura from 1900 to 1947) was found. Therefore, a comparative study between both the natures of migration becomes necessary to know the real essence of migration in Tripura in the 20th century.