

SUMMARY

The sericulture industry was significantly prosperous in Malda before the colonial and during the early phase of colonial rule, because the history of silk industry was attached with the economy, polity and socio religious aspects of the people. 'Silk' has been mentioned as 'queen of textiles'. This concept was purely applicable for Malda in pre-British domination. This writing is a summary of my thesis entitled 'THE SILK INDUSTRY AND SILK TRADE IN MALDA: 1770 – 1833'.

I have mentioned in my thesis of the real condition on silk industry and silk trade of Malda through the different chapters during the period 1770 – 1833. The origin of the culture of the silk weaving industry and silk trade of Malda did not evolve in recent times. The workers with their self outstanding ability carried on the activities of silk industry from generation to generation. Their artistic value was acclaimed in the different Asian and European countries. As a result, demand of their silk made cloths was very high.

During the pre-colonial period, life of native people was peacefully generated through the economic security along with political mobility by the 'Native State'. The rulers were always encouraged and patronized to the native home based silk industry with also silk workers and others industrial artisans. So, silk industry flourished and silk piece goods were exported not only in the internal market, but also in the external market with high reputation. Up to the Mughal rule, the state did not interfere to stop the development of the silk industry. Under this stable and suitable situation, the silk cultivators, rearers, reelers, weavers and other supporting staffs were engaged in all the silk related work without any kind of obstacles.

Under the colonial condition, mainly after Plassey in 1757, the authorities of the English East India Company interfered in the silk industry of the Bengal province, especially in Malda to derive maximum profit from this industry. In 1770, the Company founded silk filature factory in Malda for collecting huge raw silk. Due to the colonial technique and policy, the native silk business oriented middlemen sections were entirely attached for the economic development of the English East India Company. Besides the management of the native merchant class, the Company also seized both the internal and external market. The English East India Company reached the highest economic level through their monopolistic trading capacity. The total economy of this place was generated by the English East India Company.

Besides the commercial improvement of the English East India Company in silk trade, the silk worker of Malda, as well as of Bengal entered into an unknown labyrinth. They wanted to free themselves from this economically bonded condition under colonial power, but they did not succeed.

Sericulture was the enlarged economy oriented industrial sector in rural Malda, besides the agricultural activity. The English East India Company occupied the whole industrial advantage from their concerned colonial area up to the Regulating Act in 1833. In the pre-colonial period, the renowned silk workers of Malda, worked as 'independent artisans', but in the post-Plassey period, they were marked as only 'colonial subject'.