

**THE PAST AND PRESENT  
OF  
KRISHNAGAR GOVT. COLLEGE, NADIA**

by

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**History of Foundation :**

Krishnagar Govt. College started functioning from 1st January, 1846. Its original name was Krishnagar College. The foundation of a college at Krishnagar, Nadia, is an important event of social, cultural, educational life of medieval rural Bengal as the establishment of Hindu College in 1817 in Calcutta Society. The activities of teachers and taughts of Hindu College shook the Calcutta Society and shed new light on the thinking and way of life of the people of Calcutta, particularly of the forward looking people of Calcutta Society. Similarly Krishnagar College brought fresh air and new light in the age-old belief and social customs of rural life and injected slowly modernity in the thinking and activities of upper crust of rural society far away from Calcutta. And sowed the seeds of modern Arts, Literature, Science and Culture in Nadia and adjoining districts. As a result there emerged many stalwart persons in literature, music, drama, sports and games. The process of emergence of modernity in the area started with the involvement and efforts of local people for establishing a college at Krishnagar for modern education; as the history of foundation of Krishnagar College bears testimony of advanced thinking, selfless contributions, sincere efforts made by the public in general and leading personalities of Nadia in particular for the foundation of Krishnagar College in order to uplift the society through modern education. Their mission became successful to a greater extent. History of foundation of Krishnagar College bears also the testimony how in olden days the public institutions were established and maintained by close co-operation of public participation and involvement of the Govt. in contrast with the present practice followed in the development works after independence.

Long before the foundation of Krishnagar College Thomas Fisher, a Searcher of old records at East India Company House came across an old Minute dated March, 1811 where it was mentioned that after the establishment of Sanskrit college at Banaras in 1792 Lord Minto expressed desire for setting two more colleges in Nuddea and Trihoot districts. A committee was also formed to implement the plan. But the committee did nothing except preparing a report on the State of Education in Nadia. The report contained the facts that there were 46 schools with about 380 students of ages 25 to 35 years. The Government made further enquiries but no reply was received. So the plan was abandoned. Thomas Fisher compiled these facts into a Memoir in 1827. He added to his Memoir a supplement in which he mentioned that there were 25 toles where instruction was free. The Pandits received funds and grants from the Raja of Nadia and presents from Jaminders. The number of students in a tole was about 20 to 25. They were full grown men. The subject of studies was Nyaya or Logic.

The supplement along with Memoir was placed before the Select Committee of House of Commons on the affairs of East India Company as Minutes of evidence (Feb. to July 1832); but nothing came out of it before Ld. Bentinck.

Lord Bentinck decided in March 1835 that all funds left after making improvement of schools for oriental studies would be employed in imparting knowledge of English Literature and Science to the native population through English language. The Council of Education was formed for speedy implementation of the resolution.

The Council of Education explore the possibilities of starting schools and colleges in various zones and formed local committees at different areas and with the help of local committees a number of colleges were established over the period 1835 to 1836 -- Medical College at Calcutta and Patna College in 1835 and Hooghly College and Dhaka College in 1836 only for Higher Education. In the foundation of these institutions emphasis was laid rather on higher than on popular education which Macaulay stressed in his minutes of February 1835. In the later period institutions were set up on the basis of recommendation made by Lord Auckland in 1839 who pointed out to the General Committee of Public Instruction (appointed in 1823) the necessity for rendering higher instruction efficient in a certain number of central colleges rather than founding ordinary Zilla School.

In consonance with the recommendation, Governor General decided in 1844 to establish a Zilla School in each district sub-ordinate to a central college of a circle of 5 districts. With this objective in view the then Bengal was divided into nine circles of which Krishnagar Circle contained Nadia, Jessore, Burdwan and Bankura and a sum of Rs. 38900.00 a year was sanctioned in September 1845 for completing the educational programme in Hooghly and Krishnagar Circles. The Government also issued an order for foundation of a College at Krishnagar in Nadia and Circulated a General notification in English and Bengali on the 1st October 1845 throughout the districts of Nadia, Howrah, Barasat, East and West Burdwan for admission to the college from 1st November 1845. The notification informed that pupils of any religion or caste below 16 yrs. of age would apply for admission to the local committee formed immediately after the issuance the order for formation of a college at Krishnagar, Nadia. The other information contained in the notification were :

- i) The Course of study would be the same that pursued at the Hindu College at Calcutta and College of Md. Mahasin at Hooghly; ii) the objective of providing education in the college would be to advance the moral and intellectual conditions of the people and to fit them for taking an adequate part in the administration of public affairs and iii) scholarships available on the basis of performance in the Annual Examination.

The Local Committee formed for starting a college at Krishnagar was composed of :

- 1) Bruce D.J. Money (District Magistrate)
- 2) E.T. Travor (Magistrate)
- 3) Babu Ram Lochan Ghosh (Principal Sadar Amin)

who happened to be the father of famous Barrister Mono Mohan Ghosh and Lal Mohan Ghosh.

A scheme formulated by the local committee during Lord Hardinge's Government was approved by the Council of Education. Captain D.L. Richardson was appointed as the 1st Principal of Krishnagar College and as a secretary to the Local Committee. The local committee convened a public meeting on 18th November, 1845 at Krishnagar for raising funds for construction of College Building. In the meeting donations of Rs. 13,000/- was raised and that Rs. 7,000/- more was expected from wealthy residents of the district who could not attend the meeting. The proceedings of the meeting was published in the contemporary paper The Friend of India on 27th November, 1845 at page 754.

Captain D. L. Richarson took over charge on the 28th Nov. 1845 and 1st meeting of the Local Committee was held on Dec. 6, 1845 for drawing up a detailed proposals for appointment of staff and renting of a house of Hari Mohan Mukherjee (of Kalighat, Calcutta) near Main Post Office, Krishnagar with extensive grounds covering about one hundred bighas at a monthly rent of Rs. 125. The Government approved the proposals. The Local Committee met again on 31st Dec. 1845 and resolved "Krishnagar College shall be open tomorrow, the 1st January, 1846.

The College started as combined institution of school and college as Junior and Senior sections with provisions for 13 free studentships. The staff members other than Principal were



three European Masters and ten Indian teachers two of them Pandit Madan Mohan Tarkalankar and Babu Ramtanu Lahiri were very illustrious. At the start roll strength was 246 of which only eight students were in the college section. The college was open to all inhabitants of Nadia and adjoining districts irrespective of religion or caste. In this respect the founding fathers of Krishnagar College were more progressive and pioneer in spreading education among all people irrespective of their religion or caste than those of Hindu College. The event of admission of a son of a famous nautch of the Calcutta city to Hindu college brewed up a serious turmoil in the college. The fallout of the crisis led to the separation of the school and college as Hindu School and Presidency College in 1857. Krishnagar College retained its name till 1976 whereafter the college is being known as Krishnagar Govt. College. The school section was separated as Krishnagar Collegiate School in 1908 to accommodate more classes for new courses.

After the start of the college the local committee met on 11 Feb. 1846. The meeting authorised the committee to select a suitable site for the college and to draw up a plan for building of a college of 500 students. A plot of land of over 100 bighas area at a prime location of the city was selected. The selected land is bounded by roads on west, south and east sides and north side by extension of Anjana and two big nilkuthis. The two third of the selected land was donated by Maharaja Srish Chandra Roy of Nadia and Maharani Swarnamoyee of Kasimbazar; and on pursuation by Hon'ble Mr. Bethun an Indigo Planter Mr. Hill sold a plot of land of area over 33 bighas with a Bunglow to the college authority at the price of 6 thousand. The fund for the land was raised by public donations. Messrs. Burn & Co. drew up the plan of the college building.

A picturesque, handsome and imposing building was erected over 3 bighas of land at the central position of the selected land. The building was erected at a cost of Rs. 66876.00 of which Rs. 17,000.00 was public donation and the rest came from fund of East India Company set aside for education of native population. The construction of building was completed by May 1856 and the college was shifted to the new building on 2nd June, 1856. A big flower garden and beyond it two grounds were set symmetrically. In the open vast space in front of the building many trees of various types, typical and rare, were planted to decorate the entire compound. The college compound was enclosed completely with barbed wire on concrete pillars and handsome tall and majestic big pillars were erected at the entrance of four gate ways in 1860. The pillar on the western gateway and one in the eastern gateways still remain in their original positions. The devastating cyclone in October 1867 and great earth quake of 1897 damaged the other pillars.

The college compound with majestic building, flower garden, vast open space with grown up trees of various types, scattered all over the compound assumed a special look different from rest of the city. As a result the teachers, students and general public of the town looked at the college compound with a sense of awe, wonder and respect. To them all, college compound was a sacred place. The visitors used to stand and stare at the panoramic view of the college compound with wonder and reverence. The imposing building with vast surrounding decorated with flower garden, play grounds and trees created a serene and tranquil natural environment conducive to academic pursuit and fostering esthetic sense in the blooming mind of the students and it helped lessening the stress and strain of the minds of the teachers and students alike. The college enjoyed such esteemed position till the end of the 6th decade of last century among the people of the town. Thereafter the college started losing its charm due to various reasons which would be mentioned in proper context.

### **Growth of the College :**

The process of growth is a continuous one. Krishnagar College too grew gradually but with ups and downs due to natural calamities and political movements. The local Committee ran the college for two and a half years after its establishment and handed over the overall management to the Council of Education on 2nd June, 1848. The Council retained the control of the

college till 1st January 1855 when the function of the Council devolved upon the Director of Public Instructions, Bengal.

From the start the classes of Junior section were conducted for Junior Scholarship Examination and classes of Senior Section for Senior Scholarship Examination. The class examinations were conducted strictly to the norm. Maharaja Srish Chandra Roy himself took a personal interest and examined most of the classes in Bengali in the Annual Test. Out of the 19 students in the Senior section 17 sat for the Senior Scholarship examination in 1849. One of the examinees Mr. Umesh Dutta topped the list of all Senior Scholars of Bengal. Later on Mr. Dutta became a renowned English Scholar and the member of the Imperial Education Service (IES). The school section had eight classes of roll strength 246. The inspiring teachings of the teachers, particularly of Babu Ramtanu Lahiri, a student and follower of D'irozio made the students progressive in outlook. When the question of remarriage of Hindu widow became a public issue in Bengal, the students of Krishnagar College came forward to take a solemn oath at a stormy meeting in the college to fight for the cause of widow of the country. Noted educationist Mr. D. Bethune and two other distinguished members of Council of Education attended the Annual Prize Ceremony on 20th February, 1849. Mr. Bethune gave stirring address to the students and exhorted them not only to educate them but to become disseminators of knowledge and learning among people. He came also on another occasion and appealed to the public of Nadia to take up the cause of education of women and to give them their legitimate place in the society. Thus Krishnagar College became not only a centre of modern education but also a centre of social reform for the area. The students of Krishnagar College were also involved in the religious and social movements of Bramho Samaj. Thus with a progress of education in the college social awareness grew gradually among the people of Nadia. Centering the college the promotion of social consciousness of the people continued to grow till the advent of Non-co-operation movement from 1921 when social movements were replaced by political movements. How it affected the academic life of the college would be mentioned later on. The progress in education in Krishnagar College was seriously disturbed at different times due to devastating cyclone in 1864 and great earth quake of 1897 and out break of Malaria in 1871 in the epidemic form in the adjoining areas. But such was the intensity of love of the public for the college that the academic life was restored to its normal condition almost immediately by the selfless help of the people of Nadia and the college moved ahead again with time.

After the foundation of Calcutta University in 1857, the Junior and Senior Scholarship examinations were replaced by Entrance and F.A. (First Arts) examinations of Calcutta University. The B.A. and Law classes were introduced in 1865, the teaching of M.A. course in 1870 and Survey Department were opened in August 1873. University made Chemistry a compulsory Science subject in the F.A. course in 1873. So the teaching of Chemistry got special importance in the college from the next year.

Krishnagar College sent up 13 students for F.A. examination in 1862 and 5 students for B.A. Examination in 1867 as first batch. 9 students were successful in F.A. and 2 in B.A. examinations. The first graduates from Krishnagar College were Mr. Jadunath Mukherjee and Jadunath Bhattacharya. 7 students sat for B.L. Examination in 1872 and 6 were successful. In 1874 Mr. P.N. Bose occupied 5th place in order of merit in F.A. examinaion. He later on became famous scientist and discovered Iron Ores in Jamshedpur area. The college roll strength rose to 127. But due to outbreak of malaria in 1871 in epidemic form in the area, students remained absent in the college and the B.A. classes were abolished. The college thereby reduced to 2nd Grade. This step generated resentment among the people of Nadia. The public of Nadia donated over Rs. 40,000.00 with which the college Endowment Fund was created and the fund was invested in Government Securities in 1878 with a condition for restoration of the college to its First Grade status. The Lieutenant Governor Sir Richard Temple paid a visit to the college and restored B.A. classes.

The college course included both Arts and Science subjects and students were allowed to take up a course combination of History and Logic with Chemistry, physics or Mathematics and even allowed Honours in combined course in Chemistry and Physics. To meet the growing demands for Science subject College laboratory was set up in 1880 and a separate building was erected in 1904 for Chemistry. The brilliant results in B.A. and F.A. examinations over 1882 to 1904 enhanced the reputation of the college. Mr. Lalit Kumar Banerjee stood first in F.A.; poet D.L. Roy passed F.A. with scholarship and Mr. Satish Ch. Dey Acharya stood second in Sanskrit in B.A. He afterwards became Principal of Sanskrit College, Calcutta.

By this time Calcutta University promulgated new rules and regulations in 1907 for college education. The new rules and regulations demanded overhauling of colleges. Mr. Jackson was appointed as special officer to overhaul the Govt. Colleges. He separated the Colligate School from the college in January, 1908; abolished M.A. and B.L. classes. Affiliations for I.Sc. & B.Sc. courses were obtained; introduced Hons' in English and Mathematics and Pass courses in Economics and Philosophy. A governing body with District Judge as Ex. Officio President was constituted and staff council was introduced. The conditions of Library and Laboratories were improved. New trust funds with individual donations were created - three free studentships in 1916 and students Aid fund in 1929 were introduced by levying one anna per student per month. The college Magazine appeared first in 1908 under the name 'Life and Light' in manuscript form and printed form in 1915 'College Magazine'.

The students' common room appeared in 1905. College Union started its career with common room activities. Later on 1937 Social, Athletic, Study Circle and Common Room activities were entrusted with elected office bearers of the students in order to develop leadership and social spirit among the students. Within a few years students showed their usual interest in Social and Literary activities. During such reorganising process came the thrust of Non-cooperation Movement in 1921 on the college life and the discipline in the college was broken down. College remained closed for nearly a month. But for the people resentment and the report of Principal Eegarton Smith reaffirming the usefulness of the college for Nadia people in 1922; the college was again reopened. Principal Smith's involvement with the cause and dignity for the college was legendary. He prevented a British D.M. from practising horse riding on the college play ground on the ground of damage of the surface of the play ground. Principal Smith also prevented a Police officer from arresting a freedom fighter from college hostel where the freedom fighter took shelter as a guest of a student to preserve sanctity of the college.

Again from 1925 onwards many changes in appearance and in inner life of the college were witnessed. The college Hindu Hostel opened in June, 1876 came to a new Building in 1927. The Muhammadan Hostel started in July 1915 came to Anderson Moslem Hostel opened by Sir Azizul Haque in July, 1936. The college buildings was fitted with electricity in 1938.

Co-education in the college was started in 1932 with one female student who was a daughter of Principal R.N. Sen and rose gradually to 46 in 1945. The student strength in general also rose to 450 with 90 Moslem students. The principals who made great contributions to the development of the college were Mr. Rochfort (Dec. 1846 to Dec. 1855), Sir Roper Lethbridge (1874-1877), Rai Bahadur Jyoti Bhusan Bhaduri (1898-1906), Mr. Satish Ch. Dey (1909-1916), Mr. R.N. Gilchrist (1916-1921) and Principal J.M. Sen. He (Principal Sen) improved the college in many directions. He got new affiliations in Civics in I.A; Arabic in I.A. & B.A. Pass Course; Bengali Pass and Hons' in Economics. Additional section in B.Sc. Pass course was opened. For teaching of Biology in I.Sc. course the construction of a building was started in 1941-1942 which was completed before 1946-1948 session. Principal Sen introduced annual college Sports, annual college Dramatic performance and Old Students reunion with its crowded programme of amusements, matches. As a result Krishnagar College attained the status of a Premier Educational Institution in the area by 1940 and remained so till 1972. Before that time promising students from distant places bee-lined in the college for admission.

Activities of the college union continued to enrich the corporate life of the institution in the later years upto 1972. Principal Sen arranged the centenary celebration with approval of the Governing body of the college on 14th January, 1946 in a befitting manner. He raised in the centenary year a sum of over Rs. 60,000.00 in Government Promisory note and cash from friends, well wishers and old students for creation of endowments for two scholarships, 16 stipends and a fair number of prizes and medals to encourage poor but meritorious students at Krishnagar college. He also collected sponsorship for construction of a pavilion on the college ground in the centenary year at the cost of Rs. 10,000/- of which Rs. 8,000.00 was donated by a business man Seth Bhagaban Das alone. Thus by public and government participation and co-operation Krishnagar college grew into a premier institution for all out development of the students and the college fulfilled that mission upto 1972.

In the centenary celebration report, the public contributions and co-operations have duly been recognised - "The labour of many teachers and public men of Nadia has gone into the making of the institution. May their example of unselfish service ever inspire the youths of Krishnagar in years to come and make them worthy of their rich heritage." . In this context the message sent by the Syndicate of Calcutta University is note worthy

"The University of Calcutta offers its most cordial greetings and felicitations to the Krishnagar College on the occasion of its Centenary Celebration. The University recalls with pleasure and gratification the great role which the college has played in the advancement of learning in the province, through its eminent Principals and teachers of whom Capt. D.L. Richardson was the first and also through its alumni among whom are some of the famous sons of Bengal. The University hopes and trusts that the noble efforts of the College for the advancement of learning will be crowned with ever increasing success as they have been in the past."

But age old tradition of public participation in the development of the college was discontinued after independence. Thereafter the affairs of the college became the sole business of the Government officials and the name of the college was accordingly changed to Krishnagar Government College; perhaps to imbrue the mind of present generation with the idea that Krishnagar College is not a college of the people of Nadia but purely of Government institution to be looked after by the Government officials alone.

The consequence of snapping the age-old relation of the public with college proved disastrous on many accounts. First the college was not developed in the direction set forth in the centenary year when it was declared that the college would be further developed to cater to the educational needs of all the communities inhabiting the district. For such purpose it was proposed that the basic science subjects in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishery should be provided by Science Departments at College and practical training by Government Agricultural, Fishery Farms and Horticultural garden. But the college was developed in a direction not in conformity with the proposal. Secondly the public involvement helped much in restoring the college rapidly from disorder in the growing period of the college ; on the contrary due to lack of public participation in the later period the college could not yet recouped degradation of its academic discipline and atmosphere, loss of land and building for want of public help and the 150th anniversary celebration was a stale affair of the officials of district and higher education departments. As there was no scope for public participation in any manner as it was in the centenary celebration, nothing memorable was added to the life of the college in 150th anniversary. Whereas centenary of college was celebrated in January, 1946 in befitting manner with participation of people of all walks of life. They donated generously over Rs. 87600.00 for scholarships, stipend, prizes, medals and for a pavilion on the play ground. The donors were of wealthy individuals to common people, trading communities (Marawary Association, Alamdanga; Bengalee Merchant Association, Seth Bhagaban Das), companies (Renwick & Co., Kusthia; Ramnagar Cane and Sugar Co.

Ltd.; Darsana Sugar Mill) Community e.g. Beel Resha Dhibar Samity; staff and students of schools, e.g. M.E. School, Kurulgachhi. The donations were in the range of Rs. 15,000.00 to Re. 1. The collection of fund was in excess of requirement. The fund in excess was deposited as Krishnagar College Fund which remained unutilised till 1993. Thereafter a major part (over Rs. 1,78,000/-) of the accumulated amount has been withdrawn and used for what purposes is not clear to anybody else. Here lies real difference between the development of the college by joint participation of Government Officials and public and without public. The main motto of the officials is to manage the situation somehow without considering spirit and importance of it and how to get better posting or promotion.

### **Introduction of new courses and the associated problems :**

Despite the radical change of outlook of the college authority after independence the college continued to function with the same spirit for all out development of the students under full care and guidance of Principal and Teachers. The spree of education and enlightenment through vigorous class teaching, sports and games, debate and discussions, music and dramatic performances continued as usual unabated till 1972 and Honours courses in Chemistry and Physics were introduced in 50s and 60s; Botany and Zoology in eighties of last century after proper development of the infrastructural facilities. The normal rhythm of academic and cultural life in the college were suddenly disturbed and began to disappear gradually day to day due to continuous onslaught on the tranquil and natural environment of the college in an unusual law and order situation prevailing in the town and for a notion of derision to government property developed among a section of political minded people after food movement in 1966 onwards and as a result removing of beautifying elements of the college compounds and buildings became a rampant activities of inner and outer miscreants. The charm of the college compound thereby began to wane in a fast pace.

In the middle of eighties of last century pass course in Statistics was introduced without developing any specific infrastructure for the course. As a result classes are being held here and there as per availability of spare rooms in the college. In the first part of nineties Honours course and a few years later post graduates course in Geography were introduced without development of infrastructure for them by suddenly occupying newly renovated original chemistry building erected in 1904 exclusively for Chemistry Department with special attention for ceiling-height, ventilation and water drainage on the floors. The renovation was initiated by the department of Chemistry for mitigation of space problem with special permission from higher authority of P.W.D. whose local authority did everything for demolition of the building. The building was taken over for Geography while resetting the desks (over 70 in number) in students' practical room, research laboratory and in lecture theatre for demonstration of experiments had been going on with valuable plants obtained by processing over 25 long and medium size voluminous Kari (Beam) and Barga of Burma Teak set free by recasting the entire roof of the building with reinforced concrete. As a result of sudden taking over, a huge volume of Plants of Burma Teak and large number of porcelain sinks and basins were lost and the Dept. of Chemistry became handicapped due to shrinkage of space. The taking over of the building was opposed by the Dept. of Chemistry as well as by the Staff Council of the College. Later on the Gas Plant was demolished for releasing the valuable fittings. The plant if retained would have been an exhibit of science and technology for the students and people alike. Here it may be mentioned that department of Chemistry brought much glory to the college due to research activities and Honours teaching.

The research activity in the department of Chemistry was initiated by Dr. Suresh Chandra Sengupta before independence and continued till middle of sixth decade of last century. He himself got D.Sc. from C.U. and his work became world famous as Bardhan-Sengupta Synthesis as it is considered as the precursor of Hormon Synthesis much required in fishery, forestry,

agriculture, horticulture, and in medicine. Dr. Sengupta guided also two teachers who obtained Ph.D. from C.U. Along with them two more teachers under the guidance of two teachers of Science College, Calcutta carried out research in the same laboratory and got one teacher D.Sc. and other Ph.D. All of them except Dr. Sengupta proceeded abroad with Postdoctoral fellowship of Western Universities. The students passed with Honours in Chemistry from the college have also occupied place of honour in Schools, Colleges, Universities, Atomic Energy Organisation and in Government and Non-Government Organisations at home and abroad as teachers and scientists. But who cares for achievement of the department but for personal interests. The achievements of Physics Department are of the same level except research culture.

Other notable changes that were introduced in the college are the discontinuation of posts of professors in Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Economics and in Sanskrit introduced first in the 1st part of 7th decade of last century; snapping of age-old relationship of the college with the University of Calcutta established at the very inception of the university due to reorganisation of the colleges under Calcutta University. At the very start of 21st Century, postgraduate courses in Geography, Philosophy and in Bengali were introduced in the college without expanding the infrastructure of the college simply by abolishing the Higher Secondary Courses and appointing a few part-time teachers in the vacant posts to mitigate partially the teaching load of the regular teachers.

Over this period the college gradually lost not only its material wealth but also its inner strength i.e. student - teacher ratio and discipline were being diminished and academic processes such as admission, class promotion, conduct of examinations, sending of students for university examinations lost to greater extent their significance and purpose and became mere rituals. On the other hand co-curricular activities for which Krishnagar College had a prominent position among the colleges of West Bengal became non-existent. The social and cultural activities nurtured through debate, discussion, recitation, extempore speeches, music and drama, games and sports practices and class competitions under active guidance of the teachers were discontinued gradually from 1972 onwards. Thus college from 1972 onwards began to lose everything essential for standard education for all out development of human beings and became a centre for earning mere degrees. In that period the college lost its beautifying elements and the compound began to lose its charms and tranquil atmosphere due to intense political movements over the period 1972-1975. The contact of the local people with the college was completely lost; academic devotions and urges for cultural activities of the students stooped to the lowest which in turn inevitably led to the fall of standard of not only education but of other essential elements required for good education in the college.

#### **Degradation and Sacrilege :**

It has already been pointed out that the extremist movement over the period 1972-1975 and heavy influx of vast number of people from erstwhile East Pakistan, now Bangladesh in the area brewed up crisis in the academic and cultural life in the college. Of course political trouble started in the town with the students' food movement in 1966 for Kerosine and Rice at fair prices. Under the combined influence of extremists movements and heavy influx of people law and order situation in the town broke down heavily and every one suffered from sense of insecurity. Under the spell of insecurity the original inhabitants of the town lost their special urge for cultural activities in Arts, Literature, Sports and Games, Drama and Music for which Krishnagar had a special reputation in the cultural world and gradually became involved in current politics. This degrading trend in cultural activities in the town and the sense of insecurity cast their shadows on the academic and cultural life in the college. Under the spell of abnormal situation in the town, activities in the college became limited to mere class teachings; even that too began to be held irregularly as teachers left their messes and began to commute from distant homes. The students also left their hostels as at that time they thought living in the hostel was not safe for them.



Few promising boys of the college lost their lives in the movement and college office was ransacked. The college looked deserted long ahead of the closing hour. Under the clout of fear and insecurity the moral and administrative authority of the Principal and the Teachers lost its importance and significance essential for shaping the academic and cultural life in the college and never recovered again to its original state even when normalcy returned in the area. As a result all activities in the college other than class teachings became mere rituals without spirit and significance. Two important processes, admission and sending of students for University examinations could not be carried out as per norms from 1972 onwards.

The extremists at that time spread hatred against the current education. As a result the college began to lose its inner wealth - the discipline, students' earnestness and love for education and urge for cultural activities and academic interest to a greater extent. On the contrary a section of the students, particularly of low and medium merits imbibed mentality for real politics as they were in thinking that political activity would be more beneficial to them in life than devoted pursuit of education. The students of such mentality became very much active in every sphere of college life and became trouble maker and in fact later on they began to control admission and sending of students for university examinations. Some students of this section of educationally ill-equipped emerged later on as political leaders of various category. During that period some teachers too began to feel that the political linkage to a party would be more gainful in life than dedicated and sincere service. In fact some of them, not all, gained in service but all of them were deprived of satisfaction and prestige of dedicated service. Through such politically motivated students and teachers the political persons stepped into the affairs of the college and were getting invitations in the college functions in preference to prominent educationist.

The combinations of these factors derailed the normal academic life prevailed so long in the college and trouble and disturbances became not rare but frequent affairs. The trouble and disturbances could not be tackled by moral authority alone. Consequently college authority from that period onwards became heavily dependent on general administration whose help was not required at all before the extremists movements. The general administrations took full advantage of this situation disregarding the academic interest and dignity of the college.

In abnormal situation the activities of the insider and outsider miscreants became rampant. They took away all the beautiful cast iron railings fitted in between the majestic pillars on the Varandah of the main building and all the lightning arresters fitted on the top of the main building and looked like a crown on it. The students and teachers noticed with astonishment on the reopening day after a Puja Vacation that all the beautiful spherical brass knobs fitted in the majestic doors for opening, closing and locking them had been replaced by iron rings and beautiful brass chains in the form of twisted creepers with foliage and flowers of the College Hall were replaced by iron tubes. On the occasion of functions and lectures by distinguished speaker all the lights were on, and the scattered light made the foliage and flowers glittering which created a special environment in the college Hall. Sand stone flooring tiles were removed from varandah and from some of the rooms of the main building and the floor was cemented which in a short period assumed the look of a stable floor and the heritage character of the building was lost. Similarly beautifully coloured Italian marble tiles were removed from some of the rooms of Krishnagar Collegiate School building shortly after independence. The building was once the residence of famous Barristar Manmohan Ghosh. There is a rumour that the house was sold to the Government on the condition that nothing in the building could be removed. This is not all; many other articles were lost in this period from the college. Cast iron retorts, weights on gas plant and even coal were being stolen off and on at that time. As a result gas supply in the Chemistry Department was stopped and practical classes were being conducted with the help of Kerosine stoves and spirit lamps over a long period. At the same time college garden was being ransacked by breaking blooming branches and uprooting flowering plants from the beds, removing barks of

some of the permanent flowering plants. As a result the charms of the college compound were lost gradually which once was so beautiful that Prof. Binayak Sanyal published a book on the college compound. But from the same compound in the first half of 90s, some valuable old and partially damaged timber trees were stolen in the darkness of night in quick succession. The I.B. dept. was perplexed and carried out enquiry and sent report to the Higher Education Secretary, W.B., Government. What action, if any, was taken is not known to the others.

The college play grounds were also being damaged by holding of frequent political meetings and trade fairs on the college grounds from eighties onwards. As a result of these the college building and its compound lost their beauty, charm and tranquility, maintained over long period by foreign rulers and public of Nadia. From eighties a new form of onslaught began to come from Government officials of various departments. They tried to solve their departmental problems at the cost of the college. In the thirties of the last century the demand for hostel accommodation increased greatly and a second hostel was opened in a nearby Nilkuthi on rental basis. Once Sir William Jones, the founder of Asiatic Society, Calcutta, used to stay there occasionally for translation of Sanskrit literature into English with the help of Pandits of Nabadwip. Before leaving the place forever the owner of the Nilkuthi offered the Kuthi with its surrounding land to the Principal with whom the owner had a good rapport to purchase the house. He sold his Bungalow to a teacher of the College. The British Principal accepted the offer and purchased the property at a nominal price. About the source of money there are two opinions in vogue -- some says the Principal managed the fund from DPI and others say that a local wealthy person with whom the Principal had good rapport offered the money for the property with the condition that the hostel therein already would have to be named after his beloved daughter Haimanti demised untimely. So the hostel was named Haimanti Hindu Hostel where the writer of this article stayed there for the period 1957 to 1959 as a student of the College.

The hostel building was at the centre of large plot of land enclosed by brick wall and provided with fruit bearing trees of various types and a circular flower garden in the forelawn with water spring head at the centre and majestic wide gate way with wooden doors fitted to tall pillars. The hostel remained vacant over few years during extremists movement. The DI schools, Nadia, wandering here and there took advantage of the situation and the office was shifted in the vacant hostel. When students' demand for hostel rose again a few years later new hostel was built in a comparatively inferior environment. This is an example how the interest of education is looked after by the present authority. This is not all there are many more disgraces befell on the college.

Further more a large number of old beautifully designed wooden chairs and tables in the class rooms and teachers' common room was suddenly replaced by ordinary chairs and tables made of steel frame. Such replacements generated resentments among the teachers and an enquiry committee was set up by the staff council to enquire into the matter. The findings of the said committee were submitted to the Principal in writing. But no action has yet been taken. The controlling authority of Krishnagar Rabindra Bhavan built on the college land in 1961-62 for promoting cultural life of college students and of the inhabitants of the Krishnagar City was taken away from Principal in mid seventy and became afterwards a centre of mainly trade union and political meetings and conferences. Not only that college play grounds are being used for political meetings from 1980 onwards. Even class rooms and lecture theatres are being used for trade union meetings and conferences on Sundays and holidays. The delegates left their plastic or Sal leaves plates and plastic glasses and cups used for serving meals and refreshments here and there in the college campus, making in dirty and unethical. This is not all; there are much more.

The ground of the college is now being used as motor training ground; a college building and its adjoining area is being used as a storing centre of PWD department. Private parties have been using college grounds for selling stone chips, sand and bricks; small tea stalls have sprung up here and there. All these activities made the college compound a place of veritable nuisance

which are vitiating academic environment and further development difficult. The last nail to the coffin of college development is being driven by the ongoing construction, it is alleged, of sports complex on the college play grounds destroying the serene natural set up meticulously developed over long period. By whose permission the ongoing construction is going on is not yet clear to those who are against the construction of sports complex on the College Compound by extraneous agency. Only the source of fund for the construction is known from the hoarding. The completion of sports complex and activities therein would definitely destroy not only academic environment of the college but also natural and aesthetic set up of the college created by founding fathers for the pursuit of knowledge and for fostering aesthetic sense in the blooming mind of the students and would be a source of nuisance for the college.

Furthermore, the college was black listed by the U.G.C. in March 1975 due to non compliance of complete account of a grant given to the college and remained so till 1996 and thereby the college was deprived of development and research grants over twenty years. The black listing was lifted in March 1996 due to sustained pursuance of the case over two years with U.G.C. and the grants for development, seminars and research works have again started coming to the college. Recently U.G.C. sent NAAC Peer Team for gradation of the college. It is heartening that the NAAC Peer Team has granted 'Grade A' status to the college which would come to help the college for its development in the future.

All these are glaring instances how the infrastructure provided by the forefathers for the academic benefit for generations to come are being made to shrink day by day by the self seekers of today. What is going on in the college compound is nothing but sacrilege of sacred temple of learning and breach of trust of the donors of land for educational purposes. Oh, my countrymen just see, how we degrade an institution developed by foreign rulers for all out development of the inhabitants of Nadia and adjoining districts. It may be remembered here that it is not the best interest of any country to relegate even temporarily educational issues to a position of comparative unimportance as education pays richer dividends in the long run than any other activity. Exactly this sense of importance of education in social development led the forward looking people of Bengal to come forward to establish educational institutions first in the early stage of British rules.

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