

## DECLARATION

I, **Shyam Mamud Barbhuiya**, is a research scholar bearing Ph.D Registration No Ph.D/1943/12, Dated 25/09/2012 in the Department of History of Assam University, Silchar, hereby declare that the subject matter of the thesis entitled “**Communist Movements in Surma-Barak Valley: A Historical Study (1935-1964)**” embodies the record of original investigation carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. Habibullah Mazumder, Assistant Professor in the Department of History, Assam University, Silchar and the content of this thesis did not form the basis for award of any previous degree to me or to anybody else to the best of my knowledge. The thesis has not been submitted in any other university or institute.

This thesis is being submitted to Assam University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

Dated: Assam University, Silchar

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Shyam Mamud Barbhuiya

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Lastly, I would like to remind the fact that no research work speak the last word. I am responsible for all the omissions, if any and I indulge the cravings of all to excuse me for the lapses which are not done consciously.

Date:

**Shyam Mamud Barbhuiya**  
Research Scholar

## PREFACE

This thesis is the outcome of my research work on “Communist Movements in Surma-Barak valley: A Historical Study (1935-1964)”. The study covers the period from 1935 – 1964 as because of the fact that the communist organization first appeared in Surma valley in 1935 and it was in the year 1964 that there took place a split in the Communist Party of India. The entire thesis is divided into six chapters beginning with an introduction and ended with a conclusion.

At the time of the partition of the country in August 1947, the geographical area of the study (Surma valley) was divided into two parts. At that time the district of Sylhet went under East Pakistan (now in Bangladesh) but three and half *thanas* of the Karimganj sub-division of Sylhet was retained in India by Sylhet referendum and added to the Cachar district. The communist activity and movements of Sylhet after 1950 did not included in the present study and it focused mainly on the study of Barak valley.

Like other parts of the country, the Communist movements of Surma-Barak valley played a vital role in the politics of India during colonial period. Even during post colonial period, communist politics and activity remained an important trend in Barak valley. During the course of study, it has been found that, in Surma Barak valley, the Communists were more active among the peasantry than working class. The simple reason behind this fact is that, except tea industry, no major modern industry developed in the valley during colonial period. So, the communist peasant movements get prominence in the study though some working class movement has also been discussed. Apart from the communist movements, the study has also

emphasized on the emergence and growth of the communist idea, the Communist Party of India and its allied organizations.

Writing on the communist movements on this valley is a difficult task as the communist idea, organization and the communist movements of this valley emerged and developed as a political force in a very unfavourable condition as it was being declared illegal by the Colonial Government. So, the primary source material of the study is based on the Intelligence Reports supported by some administrative records and secondary sources. The names of many early communist leaders of the valley used repeatedly but individual communist leaders did not receive adequate place in the study.

I am nevertheless aware of the fact that for a proper assessment of the communist movements of Surma-Barak valley during the period under study, more research work will have to be conducted. The present study is an attempt to explore partially the communist movements of Surma-Barak valley.

Errors of fact and interpretation, if any, remain mine alone.

**Shyam Mamud Barbhuiya**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AICC	: All India Congress Committee.
AIRTUC	: All India Red Trade Union Congress.
AIPWA	: All India Progressive Writers' Association.
AISF	: All India Students' Federation.
AITUC	: All India Trade Union Congress.
AIKS	: All India Kisan Sabha.
ASF	: Assam Students' Federation.
APTUC	: Assam Provincial Trade Union Congress.
BPKS	: Bengal Provincial Kisan Sabha.
CI	: Communist International.
C.P.I	: Communist Party of India.
C.P.I (M)	: Communist Party of India (Marxist).
CPSU	: Communist Party of Soviet Union.
CRPC	: Criminal Procedure Code.
CSP	: Congress Socialist Party.
DIB	: District Intelligence Branch.
DSB	: District Special Branch.
ECCI	: Executive Committee of Communist International.
HRA	: Hindustan Republican Association.
HSRA	: Hindustan Socialist Republican Army.
IPC	: Indian Penal Code.
IFL	: Indian Federation of Labour.
ILO	: International Labour Organisation.
INC	: Indian National Congress.
INTUC	: Indian National Trade Union Congress.
IPTA	: Indians Peoples' Theatre Association.
ITUF	: Indian Trade Union Federation.
POC	: Provincial Organizing Committee.
RCPI	: Revolutionary Communist Party of India.
SVCS	: Surma Valley Cultural Squad.
USSR	: United Soviet Socialist Republic.
U/S	: Under Section.
WPP	: Workers' and Peasants' Party.



## GLOSSARY

Taluk	:	A revenue circle comprises of some villages.
Abwab	:	Illegal taxes (cesses) collected by landlords from their tenants.
Adhi	:	Half.
Adhiar	:	Share-croppers who share the crop in the basis of half.
Adhi Bhag	:	Half of the produce.
Agrahayan	:	8 <sup>th</sup> month of Bengali calendar. (November-December)
Aleka	:	Area.
Annas	:	A former monetary unit of India equal to one sixteenth of a rupee.
Bandh	:	A general strike.
Babus	:	Addressing word for Bengali gentlemen.
Baithaks	:	Indoor meeting.
Bhagi	:	Share-cropping system.
Bhaginama	:	Written agreement between land owner or mirasdar and share cropper.
Bhag Chasi	:	Share-cropper (in Cachar).
Bargadar	:	Share-cropper (in West Bengal).
Beggar	:	To render obligatory physical labour without any wage to the landlord by the peasants./ Forced labour.
Bhdrolok	:	Gentlemen.
Bourgeois.	:	A social class who control the mode of production and accumulate wealth or capital.
Chakran	:	System of rendering service without any wage.
Cha-Bhagan	:	Tea Garden.
Comintern	:	Communist International. An International Body of the Communist Parties of the World.
Coolies	:	Labourers (Mainly used in case of Tea Gardens.)
Dhan	:	Paddy.
Ejahaar	:	Written Complaint to Police Station.
Farog	:	Money receipt of land revenue.
Ghat	:	A flight of steps leading down to a river/ River port for boat and ships.
Haat	:	Weekly market day in rural areas.
Hajot	:	Temporarily jailed/ Judicial custody.
Hod-beggari	:	To render physical labour to the landlord without any wage/ Forced labour.

Jhulum	:	Torture.
Jomi	:	Land.
Jenmi	:	Landlord or 'lord of the soil' as a matter of birth-right.(Particularly in Malabar).
Jotedars	:	Intermediary landholder between the zamindars and the lower peasants.
Khamar	:	Trashing floor.
Kisan	:	Peasant.
Krishak	:	Peasant.
Khetmazdoors	:	Agricultural wage labourers.
Karmacharis	:	Employees.
Kear	:	A land measurement unit in Sylhet and Cachar districts equivalent to one third of an acre.
Khandan	:	A social concept based on the belief of the superiority of a particular family.
Kural	:	Axe
Langal	:	Plough.
Lathi	:	Traditional weapon like a long stick.
Lathials	:	Knives/Musclemen of landlords.
Mahila	:	Women.
Mahajans	:	Village money-lenders.
Mazdoor	:	Labourer.
md. (Mond.)	:	Unit of measurement of paddy in rural Barak valley. 1 Mund = 30 Kg.
Nazarana	:	Gift (either cash or kind) made out by tenants to their landlords to retain or secure leases./A type of illegal exaction practiced by the zamindars of Sylhet.
Patni	:	Boat Sailer
Pattha	:	Registration of landholding.
Paikashi	:	A system of land relation between land owner and cultivator. Here the tenants would get no ownership right over land but must give $\frac{3}{4}$ <sup>th</sup> of the produce,(or as per agreement) mainly paddy, per <i>bigha</i> to the owner of the land.
Pous	:	9 <sup>th</sup> month of Bengali calendar. (December-January.)
Proja	:	People/Subjects
Proletarians.	:	Working class in Marxist Philosophy.
Purohita	:	Priest.
Ryot	:	A tenant.
Sanmilan	:	Association/Organisation
Sabha	:	Organisation/ A body of common people.
Thana	:	Police Station.