

A FORGOTTEN DISASTER: BENGAL IN 1872

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Abstract:

The year 1872 can be regarded as a year of cyclone when four successive cyclones had taken place in the same year in different parts of Orissa and Bengal. The cyclones of 1872 had occurred in the month of May, June, September and October. Although the cyclones of May, June and October were localized in their character and extent, the Cyclone of 20th September had affected a vast region of colonial Bengal. The districts of Pabna, Bogra, Dacca, Mymensingh, Jessore, 24 Parganas and Nadia had been affected severely by the cyclone of 20th September 1872. Several human lives were lost, boats carrying commodities were drowned, cattle were lost, crops in the fields were also greatly affected by this disaster. The cyclone had provided a severe blow also to the ecology and economic conditions of colonial Bengal. In this historical background, the present article intends to highlight the occurrence of the cyclone of 20th September 1872 and its impacts on society, economy and ecology of colonial Bengal. The present article has been divided into two main parts – the first part deals with the occurrence and impact of the cyclone and highlights the narrative of damage and destruction caused by the disaster, and the second part investigates the nature of state intervention and the method of colonial relief in the aftermath of the disaster.

Keywords: Bengal, colonialism, cyclone, ecology, economy, relief, state.

Introduction

During the recent years disaster-studies have occupied an important place in the mainstream researches on environmental history of India. Natural disasters have been increasingly examined from the historical perspective to unfold their social, economic and political trajectories. Natural disasters, which have been considered so far exclusively as a matter of meteorological or environmental incidents, are now being interpreted from the perspective of political economy of disaster. Moreover, the ecological and economic aspects of cyclones or earthquakes have become a matter of serious consideration for the environmental and economic historians. The impact of cyclones on society, economy and ecology are being increasingly investigated by the historians in order to broaden the sphere of historical knowledge which further provides a greater scope and dynamism for interdisciplinary study and research. Disaster studies have also included discourses on relief, reconstruction and rehabilitation. The aspects of relief and recovery have received special attention by the historians since they were shaped and dominated by the ideology of colonialism. The political ideology of the colonial state has become one of the most crucial aspects of relief which had been governed by the interests of the colonial administration. Hence, the occurrence of a cyclone or any disaster has tended to usher a new dialogue between ecology, state and society which were massively influenced by the changing character of trade, market and entitlement level of the population in the aftermath of the disaster.

In the recent years, cyclones have received considerable attention from the historians, and the issues of vulnerability and recovery are also increasingly coming to be recognised with their regional diversity. The colonial Bengal had to witness the occurrence of a good number of violent cyclones which had massively destroyed crops, lives and property. Historical scholarship on the occurrence and impact of cyclones has, so far, incorporated issues of vulnerability, knowledge and social and ecological dislocations in order to draw the historical significance of disasters. (Chakrabarti 2012-13: 1-16; Das 2018; Dutta 2013; Ghose 2020: 409-438; Ghosh 2016-17: 52-73; Ghosh 2018; Ghosh 2019: 22-40; Kingsbury 2018; Roy 2014, Roy 2010: 6-22; Samanta 1997: 2424-2428) Although the above-mentioned works have helped to broaden the sphere of cyclone-studies, they have mostly concentrated on the major cyclones which were of crucial importance for the colonial government in terms of loss and damage they had caused. On the other hand, the smaller or the minor cyclones which were not as violent or destructive as the other cyclones (viz. 1737, 1864, 1867, 1874 and

1942) have been completely overlooked by the historians. However, the so-called smaller or minor cyclones which have been ignored so far in the discourse of historical studies of cyclone can be of crucial importance due to their local or regional character, because, according to Hughes, 'a region, more aptly than a nation, can be defined in ecological terms'. (2006: 42)

The decade 1870s can be regarded as the decade of cyclones when three destructive cyclones had occurred in 1872, 1874 and in 1876 which ravaged different parts of Bengal violently. Similarly, the year 1872 can be regarded as a year of cyclone when four successive cyclones had taken place during that year which had affected different parts of Orissa and Bengal. The cyclones of 1872 had occurred in the month of May, June, September and October. The cyclone of June (1872) had received considerable official attention of the government in regards to the meteorological observation on the origin and circulation of the cyclone. W. G. Wilson, the Officiating Meteorological Officer of the Government of Bengal was assigned to report on the meteorological accounts of the cyclone of June, 1872. Wilson had submitted a full-length report to the government of Bengal on the meteorological developments prior and after the occurrence of the cyclone. (Wilson 1872) Although the cyclone of June had arrived on the 28th June 1872, Wilson had traced the barometric history of the origin of the cyclone from 16th June onwards when 'the barometer commenced to fall at Akyab, Cuttack and Chittagong on that day, and on the 17th at Saugor Island and Calcutta.' (Ibid. 2) The cyclone had caused serious destruction in Orissa, especially in the Balassore district where human lives and cattle were lost considerably. So far the relief operations were concerned, the expenditure for the relief works were instructed to be incurred from the Bengal-Orissa Famine Relief Fund which was constituted six years back.¹ This attitude of the government evidently reflected the ignorance of the situation which was produced by the cyclone of June 1872. On the other hand, the cyclone of 28th October was confined only to the district of Chittagong and the Chittagong Hill tracts.

Although the cyclones of May, June and October were localized in their character and extent, the Cyclone of 20th September had affected a vast region of colonial Bengal. The districts of Pabna, Bogra, Dacca, Mymensingh, Jessore, 24 Parganas and Nadia had been affected severely by the cyclone of 20th September 1872. Several human lives were lost, boats carrying commodities were drowned, cattle were lost, crops in the fields were also greatly affected by this disaster. The cyclone had provided a severe blow to the ecology and

economic conditions of colonial Bengal. In this historical background, the present article intends to highlight the occurrence of the cyclone of 20th September 1872 and its impacts on society, economy and ecology of colonial Bengal. The present article has been divided into two main parts – the first part deals with the occurrence and impact of the cyclone and highlights the narrative of damage and destruction caused by the disaster, and the second part investigates the nature of state intervention and the method of colonial relief in the aftermath of the disaster.

A Tale of Devastation: Ecology and Economy in the Cyclone of 20th September, 1872

The cyclone of 20th September had mainly affected the northern and eastern parts of Bengal. However, it also extended towards the southern part of Bengal. P. Nolan, the Magistrate of Sirajganj (Pabna) had provided the following description regarding the occurrence of the cyclone in his area:

Sirajganj was yesterday visited by a cyclone...there was a strong wind from the east on the morning of the 20th, which gradually increased during the forenoon. At 2 pm rain commenced...at 5 a gale was blowing still from the east. It continued to increase until 6 p.m. when the direction commenced to veer northward...between 6 and 8 pm., while at its great fury, the hurricane had gone round from the east to the north, the west, and finally the south. After that it abated. Towards midnight it ceased to be violent.²

In Chuadanga and Kusthea of Nadia district, the cyclone was ‘severe.’³ At Satkhira in the 24 Parganas the cyclone was accompanied with heavy rains.⁴ Jenidah and Magura of Jessore had witnessed serious inundation as part of the visitation of the cyclone.⁵ Several parts of Bengal were affected by the cyclone of 20th September 1872. The wave of the storm went northward upto Tura after traversing the southern part. In fact, many parts were hit simultaneously by the cyclone in the similar time. Among the northern districts of Bengal, the cyclone was severely felt in the districts of Pabna, Bogra, and Rajshahi though the north-eastern adjacent region of Bengal (Assam) and its some parts were also visited by the cyclonic wind. The Commissioner of the Cooch Behar Division informed that Tura was visited by a cyclone on the night of the 20th September 1872 and ‘all the buildings [were] down blown or greatly damaged; the road to the plains was said to have been quite blocked up by fallen trees.’⁶ The district of Bogra had witnessed severe destruction of trees, houses and lives. W.V.G. Taylor, the Collector of Pabna had reported on 21st September that:

“...the station was yesterday (20th) visited with a severe cyclone, which ha[d] caused considerable damage,heard but of one death. It had been blowing the greater part of the previous night and early yesterday morning, but from 11 a.m. the wind began to increase, and, veering round from east to north-east 2 p.m., it burst upon us with all its fury and continued till about 4-40 p.m., at which time it was due north. Some 6½ inches of rain fell during the storm,...”⁷

T. F. Bignold, the Officiating Magistrate of Bogra had reported on the 1st October that:

“...the cyclone of the 20th ultimo was felt with considerable severity in the south-eastern and eastern portions of this District, Early in the morning a strong breeze was blowing from the eastward, the cloud aloft being driven with great velocity, the wind increased in force, until after dark gradually veering to the northward, from which quarter it blow with considerable force until about midnight..... throughout Friday the wind is reported to have blown with increasing force from the south, that towards evening it veered to the east, and later on in the night to the north and west, ceasing at about 3 a.m. on Saturday morning the 21st.”⁸

Although the Sudder Station of the district escaped fortunately, the outlying parts were suffered from considerable damage. In Sheerpore, 13 miles south of Bogra, buildings were considerably injured and brunches of trees were torn off, and huts were blown down.⁹ At Dhunat, an outpost at Sheerpore, the cyclone had brought severe destruction. The outpost had been demolished and many native houses in the village had been blown down. Two cases of loss of life within the jurisdiction of this outpost were reported – ‘one man was crushed by a falling house, and another was drowned with a sinking boat, while a third, who was also on board a boat which was lost, [was] missing, and [had] probably been drowned.’¹⁰ Two more deaths were reported within the jurisdiction of Shariakandhe outpost where both persons were killed by falling of houses.¹¹

At Sirajganj of the district of Pabna, the loss of life was much greater and it was estimated that the number of persons drowned could be amounted to ‘hundreds.’¹² Although there were only ‘17 or 18 cases reported to the police’, ‘dead bodies continued to float down the river until the 24th September, if not later.’¹³ The paddy which was sown in the *bheels* or deep water had suffered extremely. The Assistant Superintendent of Sirajganj reported that 80 per cent of the cutcha houses were blown down, and ‘191 large, 500 or 1,000-maund jute boats were submerged under the water’ and it was estimated that the loss in regards to jute was above a lakh of rupees.¹⁴ However, the account of P. Nolan, the Assistant Magistrate of the district of Pabna had vividly described the damage and loss of commodities which showed a

detail account of the number of submerged boats that were carrying jute and other commodities during the time of cyclone.

Table. 1

Damages done to the Sirajganj in the Cyclone of the 20th September 1872.

Nature of Cargo	Number of boats sunk	Maundage of freight sunk	Maundage of freight recovered	Value of freight lost in rupees	Amount of damage sustained by freight received in rupees	Total loss
Jute	83	Rs. As. P 32,309 0 0	Rs. As. P 13,129	Rs. As. P 57,540 0 0	Rs. As. P 3,950 0 0	Rs. As. P 61,498 0 0
Salt	3	561 0 0	.....	1,553 0 0	.....	1,553 0 0
Cotton	2	205 0 0	200 0 0	100 0 0	3000 0 0	3100 0 0
Tobacco	1	225 0 0	.....	1000 0 0	.....	1000 0 0
Straw	1	.....	Received in full.	.....	.....	.....
Mustard	1	250 0 0	.....	800 0 0	.....	800 0 0
Looking glasses, combs, tapes, leads, sundries, and an iron chest, &c.,	1	.....	.....	200 0 0	.....	200 0 0
Rice	1	257 0 0	.....	474 12 0	.....	474 12 0
Pulse	1	125 0 0	.....	150 0 0	.....	150 0 0
Paddy	1	200 0 0	100 0 0	100 0 0	50 0 0	150 0 0
Unloaded boats	15	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Stone	1	.....	Received in full.	.....	.....	.....
Total	111	34,132 0 0	13,429 0 0	61,917 12 0	7,008 0 0	68,925 12 0

Source: Proceedings of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal during October 1872 (General Department: Industry and Science Branch), progs. no. 45, WBSA.

P. Nolan had furnished the above account as an estimate of loss of properties caused by the cyclone in Sirajganj where 111 boats, carrying 34, 132 maunds of goods, were sunk and the total damages were amounted to Rs. 68, 925. On the Ichhamati River some two large laden boats and a few small ones were sunk, and on the river Padma there might 'have been many lives lost. The crops, too, [might]...have suffered everywhere.'¹⁵ The Mymensingh-Sirajganj mail boat also sank in the Jamuna river. (O'Malley 1923: 46)

At Sirajganj, 'the Sub-Divisional Officer's house was unroofed, every police building and government office was blown down, and almost all the records were destroyed.' (Ibid.) The cyclone had initiated considerable ecological dislocation in the district of Pabna. W. D. Pratt, the District Superintendent of Police of Pabna had mentioned in his report that

"... During the cyclone the Challun Bheel altered its appearance entirely. No green was to be seen, but an angry sea, with its waves tearing along, rooting up the rice, and breaking up everything on shore that was exposed to its fury.one-eighth of the Challun Bheel rice crop has been damaged.....Within the limits of the municipality ten boats were broken up, about 2,000 mango, jack, and other fruit trees were blown down, and 5000 cutcha houses were levelled to the ground."¹⁶

The Collector of Pabna had reported that the velocity of winds had suddenly increased from 11 am onwards on the 20th September, and this sudden increase and change of direction of winds had caused the principal damage in different parts of the district.¹⁷ It can be observed that the sudden and changing twist of the wind within a short span of time swayed in different parts of the district in a different manner. But there remained some possibilities of exaggeration of the condition which were evident from the different accounts. In the town of Pabna about 20,000 fruit trees were blown down and 5,000 houses and huts were razed to the ground and crops were also suffered severely in several parts of the district. (O'Malley 46) The district Gazetteer of Pabna had informed 'about 20,000 fruit trees were blown down', whereas the District Superintendent of Police's account noted that 'about 2,000 mango, jack, and other fruit trees were blown down'; however, the number of the damaged houses in both the accounts remained same i. e. 5000. (O'Malley 46) In such a situation it appears that any specific or accurate estimate of damage done in the Pabna town (especially for the municipality area) regarding the destruction of trees cannot be determined. Sugarcane and all high crops have suffered severely and the Sub-Inspector had estimated that the rice had suffered to the extent of 1/16th of the crop on the ground. Moreover, two deaths and the loss of eighteen more boats including that of with 1,315 maunds coal were said to have been

reported.¹⁸ Ten deaths were reported to have occurred within the limits of Sirajganj municipality. Apart from this the District Superintendent of Police had also provided the number of deaths which were reported from different parts of the district. It was reported that in Doolai total five persons were killed, in Sirajganj, in addition with the previous number, eleven more deaths were occurred, from Raiganj and Shazadpore one and four deaths were reported to have occurred respectively.¹⁹ Total thirty-seven deaths were reported from different parts of the district of Pabna till 6th October.²⁰

In the district of Jessore, the sudder division was badly affected. The Collector of Jessore was of the opinion that 'the greatest loss' had taken place at Naldanga where damage to crops had been chiefly caused 'by the waves which the force of the wind sent from the bheels into the low paddy lands.'²¹ The Deputy Magistrate of Magura had designated the cyclone as 'a wild type' and argued that there was 'scarcely a house in Magoorah which [had] not sustained more or less damage.'²² In Dacca, the cyclone caused much damage at Goalundo where the government road had been washed away near the bridge and the telegraphic communication between Goalundo and Calcutta had been interrupted. The Government and the railway lines had been broken, and the railway lines were washed away in several places between Rajbari and Pangsa.²³ At Jamalpur (Dacca) three persons were drowned and two persons were killed by falling of houses. Fifteen boats were lost in the river near Goalundo and a woman and her two children were killed at the Pangsa thana jurisdiction.²⁴ The western part of the district of Mymensingh was severely affected by the disaster. Several buildings were greatly damaged in this part of the district. Numerous boats were wrecked in the Jamuna and Jhenai rivers, and in the upper parts of the Brahmaputra. Seventeen persons, mostly women and children, were killed by the fall of their houses.²⁵ However, it was said to believe that the actual loss of life had, no doubt, been considerably greater than this.²⁶ The whole of the Subankolly bazar, including the post office there, was completely blown down and the river in its up-stream from Tangail had suffered greatly.²⁷ The intensity of damage was increasing rapidly further northwards where many lives were reported to have been lost.²⁸

Relief, State and Society in 1872

The cyclone of 20th September, 1872 is crucial enough in order to trace the micro-history of relief and reconstruction. Although the cyclone had affected a comparatively limited portion

of colonial Bengal, it also provides a scope to critically examine the relief policies which were adopted by the colonial government for the sufferers of the disasters. The initial problem with which the colonial administration had to deal was the recording of accurate time of occurrence of the cyclone and the subsequent wind direction. Although there were some hypothetical assumptions regarding the direction of wind, there was not any definite consideration on the time of the occurrence or the time of shifting direction of wind. It was stated by the Magistrate of Mymensingh that 'the observers [did] not seem to have been sufficiently collected to be able to give particulars of the time during which the wind blew from each direction, or of the hour when it shifted.'²⁹ Excessive human dependency for the technical aspects of the disaster showed the relative backwardness of colonial science which lacked instrumental developments in the realm of meteorological research.

Alike the previous natural calamities, the government of Bengal once again had embarked on collecting reports and information from the officials deputed at the concerned regions. The then Junior Secretary of the Government of Bengal had instructed the Commissioner of the Rajshahi Division to 'furnish an immediate report as to the damage' caused by the cyclone of September, 1872 in the *thana* of Sirajganj and the district of Bogra of Rajshahi Division.³⁰ However, a great deal of information was based on the assumption and hypothesis which had influenced the minds of the colonial administration and these were ultimately reflected in the preparation of the final report by the Collector of the district of Pabna regarding the effects of the cyclone in his district.

The principal difficulty that emerged in the post-calamity days was the scarcity of bamboos, thatching grass and labour. The sudden increase of demand had not only contributed to the rising prices of these articles but these had become scarce and continued to remain beyond the official control for a longer period. It was said to believe that 'with this difficulty of course no official aid could deal.'³¹ Reports of the officials from various parts of the district of Pabna had demonstrated not only varied accounts of the cyclone, these had also contradicted to a great extent. However, the accounts of the disaster which were distinctive from the other districts remained very useful for the reconstruction of the history of the cyclone of September 1872. The varied information and data collected from different parts of the district showed that how the region was fell under the cyclone with varying degree of severity and damage.

Although the colonial administration had tried to gather information about the loss and damage which the cyclone had caused, it was not successful enough to obtain every detail of the account of devastation. It was acknowledged in the official circle that since ‘the report from the different police stations were more or less meagre’,³² it was not possible for the administration to gather information for all the police stations of the district even after the fortnight of the disaster. However, it was frequently asserted by the district administrations that the number of lives lost in the disaster could be greater than what had been mentioned in the official report. The administration was aware of the fact that ‘some lives were lost, of which the police [had] not been informed.’³³ Despite of this fact, the local administration did not conduct any rescue operation to recover the dead-bodies of the drowned people. It is not known either that whether any operation was carried out for rescuing the body of the people who were died by falling of houses or trees. The people who were died by drowning or falling of tress or houses were belonged to the poorer section of the society, for which government had no official concern, especially in the post-disaster period. The colonial administration was only concerned about the official buildings, European houses and loss of commodities. For Pabna, it was estimated that the sum of Rs. 2,664 was necessary for the repairs and reconstruction of police buildings and ‘a large sum [was] also required for the reconstruction of the Government buildings at Sirajganj.’³⁴

The government officials had different opinions regarding the damage of buildings which was caused by the disaster. In regards to the damage of native houses, the Officiating Magistrate of Bogra was of the opinion that ‘the people of this district [were] well off, and quite able to help themselves under such immoderate disaster as the present.’³⁵ On the other hand, in regards to the damage of the official buildings, the Deputy Commissioner of the Cooch Behar Division had complained ‘of the badness of the construction of the buildings’ which had been damaged. However, it was pointed out that ‘it would be impossible for the Deputy Commissioner, in the cold season now beginning, properly to supervise the road work and construction of buildings...therefore that the Public Works Department [might] be instructed to furnish an officer for the purpose.’³⁶ It is to be noted here that the administration had responded promptly regarding the repairing of government road and official buildings which were of administrative uses, but the issue of repairing or reconstruction of thatched houses or village roads were not present in the official discourse. In fact, the houses which were affected or blown away by the cyclone were the only shelter of the poor people who

became homeless after the disaster. However, they were not even provided with any temporary relief or assistance. Although the Magistrate of Pabna was advised to approach the Pabna Town Committee for the remission or suspension of 'the quarter's demands on the poorer residents whose houses' had been destroyed by the storm, in reality no such recommendation had been forwarded by any section of the government officials.

The cyclone had caused massive destruction of crops and commodities. The cargo-boats which were carrying commodities during the time of the disaster had been massively destroyed. A great number of boats had been also destroyed in the rivers from where majority portion of commodities could not been recovered. The government was much concerned about the loss which was sustained by the merchant communities due to the sinking of boats and commodities. However, the local government was prompt enough to rescue the commodities as far as possible, a gesture which had been praised by the local merchant communities. During the occurrence of the cyclone, the Ichhamati river rose to several feet, and had inundated a part of the Pabna town. Due to the large-scale destruction of crops, prices of food grains and country produce rose enormously, and they had not been fallen till the fortnight to the rates that prevailed before the 20th September.³⁷ The increase of prices of food grains had further intensified the crisis for the victims who were already suffering from homelessness, hunger and loss of their relatives. Moreover, the government had not extended any material relief to the victims through the remission of land revenue or through any other means. The government ultimately believed that it 'was not such as to call for a chief measure on the part of the Government.' Hence, the recovery of the population and economy took longer time than it actually needed.

Endnotes:

¹ Proceedings of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal during October 1872 (Hereafter Progs. of Oct. 1872) (General Department: Industry and Science Branch), Progs. No. 20-21. West Bengal State Archives (Hereafter WBSA).

² 'From P. Nolan, Esq. Asstt. Magistrate of Serajganj to W. V. G. Taylor, Esq. Magistrate of Pubna. No. 390, dated Sirajganj, the 21st September 1872', in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 9, WBSA.

³ From C. C. Stevens, Esq. Offg. Magistrate of Nuddea to the Commissioner of the Presidency Division. No. 2818, dated Krishnagar, the 23 September 1872, in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 12, WBSA.

⁴ From Baboo Bejoy Madhub Mookerjee, to A. B. Falcon, Esq. C. S. Magistrate of 24 Parganas. Dated Satkheera, the 20th September 1872, in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 14, WBSA.

⁵ From J. Monro, Esq. Collector of Jessore, to the Officiating Commissioner of the Presidency Division. No. 260, dated Jessore, the 21st September 1872 in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 19, WBSA.

⁶ From Colonel J. C. Haughton, C. S. I., Commissioner of the Cooch Behar Division, to the Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal. – (No. 267, dated Julpigoree, the 3rd October 1872), in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 22, WBSA.

⁷ Memorandum by the Officiating Commissioner of the Rajshahye Division. – (No. 249, dated Berhampore, the 28th September 1872.), in *Proceedings of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal during November 1872* (General Department: Industry and Science Branch), progs. no. 17, WBSA.

⁸ From T. F. Bignold, Esq., Officiating Magistrate of Bograh, to the Commissioner of the Rajshahye Division, Berhampore. – (No. 946, dated Bograh, the 1st October 1872, in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 41, WBSA..

⁹ Memorandum by the Officiating Commissioner of the Rajshahye Division. – (No. 249, dated Berhampore, the 28th September 1872.), in *Proceedings of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal during November 1872* (General Department: Industry and Science Branch), progs. no. 17, WBSA.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² From P. Nolan, Esq., Assistant Magistrate of Serajgunge, to the W. V. G. Tayler, Esq., Magistrate of Pubna. – (No. 396, dated Serajgunge, the 26th September, 1872), in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 43, WBSA

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ From W. D. Pratt, EsQ., District Superintendent of Police, to the Magistrate of Pubna. – (No. 913, dated Pubna, the 6th October, 1872), in *Proceedings of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal during December 1872* (General Department: Industry and Science Branch), progs. no. 11, WBSA.

¹⁵ *Memorandum by the Officiating Commissioner of the Rajshahye Division.* – (No. 249, dated Berhampore, the 28th September 1872.), *Progs. of Nov. 1872*, progs. no. 17, WBSA

¹⁶ There were four large *bheels* (water bodies) in the district of Pabna viz. the Challun, Gozna, Borra, and Demra Bheels. 'The Challun [was] the largest, 30 miles long by about 15 broad, extending far into the Bograh and Rajshahye districts.' These *bheels* were planted with rice, and average depth was 10 feet or 15 feet. Rice crop in these *bheels* had suffered extremely due to excessive wind and rain during the cyclone. From W. D. Pratt, EsQ., District Superintendent of Police, to the Magistrate of Pubna. – (No. 913, dated Pubna, the 6th October, 1872), *Proceedings of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal during December 1872* (General Department: Industry and Science Branch), Progs. No. 11, WBSA.

¹⁷ From W.V.G. Taylor, EsQ., Collector of Pubna to the Commissioner of the Rajshahye Division. – (No. 468, dated Pubna, the 21st September 1872.), in *Progs. of Nov. 1872*, progs. no. 17, WBSA.

¹⁸ From W. D. Pratt, EsQ., District Superintendent of Police, to the Magistrate of Pubna. – (No. 913, dated Pubna, the 6th October, 1872), in *Progs. of Dec. 1872*, progs. no. 11, WBSA.

¹⁹ From Shazadpur four deaths were reported, two by drowning and two by fall of houses. Fifteen boats were wrecked at the town, containing 5,000 maunds of jute, 200 maunds of rice, 500 maunds of paddy, and 50 maunds of goor (molasses). Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ From J. Monro, Esq. Collector of Jessore, to the Commissioner of the Presidency Division. No. 262, dated Jessore, the 23rd September 1872, in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 25, WBSA.

²² From Baboo Kedarnath Mullick, Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector of Magoorah to the Collector and Magistrate of Jessore. No. 503, dated Magoorah, the 21st September 1872, in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 27, WBSA.

²³ From W. H. Page, Esq. Assistant Magistrate, Goalundo, to the Magistrate of Faridpur. No. 1A, dated Faridpur, the 22nd September 1872, in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 30, WBSA.

²⁴ From T. A. Donogh, Esq. Deputy Magistrate in Charge of Jamalpur Sub-division to the Magistrate of Mymensingh. No. A, dated Jamalpur, the 21st September 1872, in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 33, WBSA.

²⁵ From H. J. Reynolds, Esq. Magistrate of Mymensing to the Commissioner of the Dacca Division, No. 462, dated Mymensingh, the 30th Sept. 1872, in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 36, WBSA.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ From E. S. Andrew, Esq., Deputy Magistrate. & Deputy Collector of Attea Sub-Division to H. J. Reynolds, Esq. Magistrate and Collector of Mymensing. No. 109, dated Tangail, the 29th Sept., 1872, in *Progs. of Dec. 1872*, progs. no. 2, WBSA.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ From H. J. Reynolds, Esq. Magistrate of Mymensing to the Commissioner of the Dacca Division, No. 462, dated Mymensing, the 30th Sept. 1872, in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 36, WBSA.

³⁰ From J. Ware Edgar, EsQ., the Officiating Junior Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Commissioner of the Rajshahye. – (No. 3532, dated Calcutta, the 1st October 1872), in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 38, WBSA.

³¹ From T. F. Bignold, EsQ., Officiating Magistrate of Bograh, to the Commissioner of the Rajshahye Division, Berhampore. – (No. 946, dated Bograh, the 1st October 1872, in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 41, WBSA.

³² From W. D. Pratt, EsQ., District Superintendent of Police, to the Magistrate of Pubna. – (No. 913, dated Pubna, the 6th October, 1872), in *Progs. of Dec. 1872*, progs. no. 11, WBSA.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ From T. F. Bignold, EsQ., Officiating Magistrate of Bograh, to the Commissioner of the Rajshahye Division, Berhampore. – (No. 946, dated Bograh, the 1st October 1872, in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 41, WBSA.

³⁶ From Colonel J. C. Haughton, C. S. I., Commissioner of the Cooch Behar Division, to the Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal. – (No. 267, dated Julpigoree, the 3rd October 1872), in *Progs. of Oct. 1872*, progs. no. 22, WBSA.

³⁷ From W. D. Pratt, EsQ., District Superintendent of Police, to the Magistrate of Pubna. – (No. 913, dated Pubna, the 6th October, 1872), in *Progs. of Dec. 1872*, progs. no. 11, WBSA.

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