

## Chapter: 7

### Conclusion

This chapter presents the summary of the findings of the study on the basis of its objectives and research questions. Barak Valley is a truncated portion of Surma Valley of the British period and present Karimganj district as a part of Sylhet was politically a divided area during the medieval period. It is clear that present Karimganj district of Barak Valley was under the Muslim rule as a part of Delhi Sultanate or the Mughal Empire whereas the two other districts of Barak Valley i.e. Cachar and Hailakandi districts were under Tripura and Dimasa rules in succession. Though, Cachar and Hailakandi were never a part of Delhi Sultanate or the Mughal Empire yet, the cultural development of the Valley continued in a uniform pattern over the ages. In other words, it is an established fact that Cachar and Hailakandi are the cultural expansion of Sylhet through present Karimganj district.

As a result, advent of Sufism and the establishment of Muslim settlement in this Valley are associated with the advent of Islam in Sylhet. It is to be noted that in the process of Islamization in this region, Sylhet played the central role surrounding present Karimganj, Cachar and Hailakandi and its peripheries. In this connection, advent of Sufism and the establishment of Muslim Settlement in Barak Valley are directly related to that of Sylhet.

It is a fact that Muslim settlement in Barak Valley started from the early part of the 14<sup>th</sup> century and it can be confirmed from the existence of *Mosques* and *Dargahs* as well as inscriptions in this region from 14<sup>th</sup> Century. Of course, it is said that Muslim settlement took place in Karimganj in 14<sup>th</sup> century whereas in plain Cachar, it was only in 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The Sufism and Muslim settlement started in the early part of 14<sup>th</sup> century in Barak Valley. It is proved from the fact that the great Sufi saint *Hazrat* Shah Jalal in collaboration with his remarkable 360 followers arrived and propagated Islam in Karimganj district, formerly a sub-division under Sylhet district of Bangladesh during the time. *Hazrat* Shah Jalal deputed some of his followers in this region for the propagation of Islam. This fact is historically proved from the findings of some remarkable *Dargahs* of those great saints around this Valley. Many places, schools, madrassas in this Valley are named after *Hazrat* Shah Jalal and those of his followers, that clearly indicates that Sufism and Muslim settlement got a new spirit with the advent of *Hazrat* Shah Jalal and his followers which occurred during the early part of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

From above discussion especially the second chapter of my thesis highlights the fact that an Islamic renaissance was initiated and had been undergoing in this region by the spiritual power of *Hazrat* Shah Jalal and his followers. The Muslim settlement still had existed around this region even before the advent of *Hazrat* Shah Jalal which was historically corroborated with the story of one BurhanUddin and Nuruddin. But a great wave of Islamic awakening in this region was started during the time of *Hazrat* Shah Jalal. Many recently discovered stone inscriptions, archaeological sources, like stone inscriptions, coins, and the relics of some ancient *Mosques* and *Dargahs* are vital evidence regarding the Muslim settlement in this region from the earlier part of 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

The Third Chapter deals with the establishment of *Mosques* and *Dargahs* in Barak Valley. It has been seen that the establishment of *Mosques* and *Dargahs* in Barak Valley started from the first part of 14<sup>th</sup> century. Muslims occupy a unique position in Barak Valley. Settlement of Muslims in different parts of Barak Valley started in the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D. With the settlement of Muslims And due to the coming of Sufis in different parts of Barak Valley, a good number of *Mosques* and *Dargahs* were set up both in village and urban areas to satisfy the spiritual needs and for sanctification of the immortal soul.

The aim was to perform Salat and rectify the soul through fulltime reminiscence of Allah. Meditation as the way to reach Allah spread of spiritual knowledge and Islamic teachings were also the aims behind the establishment of Mosques and Dargahs. Accordingly, with the passage of time a large number of Mosques and Dargahs were set up in different parts of Barak Valley in different years.

The Fourth Chapter of the study aims at focusing the administrative system of the Mosques and Dargahs situated in different parts of Barak Valley. It has been found that the administrative framework of Mosques and Dargahs of Barak Valley is based on purely democratic principles. These Mosques and Dargahs have a Managing Committee to look after the day to day affairs of them. The Managing Committee is formed by the people of the Mallah by direct or indirect representation. The number of Committee members varies from 7 to 21 based on the number of population of the concerned Mosques and Dargahs. The Managing Committee of Mosques and Dargahs is headed by a Muttalli (President) and Secretary. They look after the matters of development and smooth functioning of the Mosques and Dargahs. From the observation, it is seen that the tenure of the Managing Committee is normally 3 to 5 years. A new Committee is reconstituted after every 3 to 5 years and it is done in a general meeting by direct participation of the people of the concerned Mosques and Dargahs. The Managing Committee manages the administration of the Mosques and Dargahs. It is seen that the Managing Committee is constructed with the Muslim people of that particular society. It has been found that the Mosques and Dargahs Committee are to maintain accounts, Preserve the fabric of the *Mosque* and *Dargah* and its buildings, organize and supervise the distribution of alms and food to the needy and visitors and manage various religious festival.

The fifth chapter of the thesis discusses the architectural styles and techniques of past and present time of these *Mosques* and *Dargahs*. From observation it was found that almost all the *Mosques* of this Valley had followed primarily two types of architectural styles- the medieval Mughal architectural style and the modern R.C.C multistoried architectural style. The traditional Mughal architecture consisting of a huge dome in the middle of the roof following two or four smaller domes on sides and corners constructed with the traditional raw materials of *chun-churky*. The modern architectural style consisting of R.C.C multistoried structure equipped with all sorts of facilities.

The sixth chapter highlights the influence of those *Mosques* and *Dargahs* in the social life of this Valley where we find that those religious institutions have remarkable influence in socio-cultural and spiritual field of Muslim population of Barak Valley. Thus, *Mosque* has been playing a vital role in the formation of socio-cultural and religious ties among the Muslims of this Valley. It is a surprising matter that though the *Dargahs* are specially related to Muslim Sufi saints but still the Hindu people equally pay their homage and respect with deep devotion through regular visits and offering votive to those *Dargahs* and *Shrines*.

Thus, *Mosques* and *Dargahs* of Barak Valley had been playing a significant role in bringing out unity, brotherhood, religious harmony among all the communities of this Valley. It is evident from the visit of the both Hindu and Muslims to the *Dargahs*.

## MAJOR FINDINGS

The major findings of the research work are mentioned below:

1. The advent of Sufism in Barak Valley had appeared in the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The *Dargahs* of *Hazrat* Shah Jalal's disciples like Shah Badaruddin, Shah Sikandar, Shah Abdul Malik, Shah DiyaUddin, Shah Adam Khaki, Mirul-Arefeen and Shah Nathan etc. are still in existence in Badarpur of Karimganj district and its adjoining areas are being regarded as its proof for advent of Sufism in Barak Valley.
2. The establishments of a few *Mosques* in Karimganj district of Barak Valley in the first half of 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D. are the proofs of Muslim settlement in Barak Valley. These *Mosques* are BundashilJameMosjid, GorekafanJameMosjid, KhadimanJameMosjid, KhadimparaJameMosjid, HatkhalaJameMosjid etc.
3. The establishment of Muslim settlement in modern Karimganj district of Barak Valley goes back to the time of Shah Jalal i.e. early 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D. This fact is also later verified by the five archeological remains found at different time and different places of Karimganj district, the western part of Barak Valley are as under:
  - i) A stone inscription at Hatkhala (Asimganj) in 1463 A.D.
  - ii) A stone inscription at Fauzdar or Suryadas (Kaliganj) in 1502 A.D.
  - iii) A stone inscription at Ballia (Nilambazar) in 1531 A.D.
  - iv) A stone inscription at Settlement Bazar *Mosjid* (Karimganj town) in 1531 A.D.
  - v) A stone inscription at Pir Nagar (Suprakandi) in 1539 A.D.
4. The extent of Bengal Sultanate headed by Muslim rulers like Jalal Uddin (1418-31), NasirUddin Muhammad Shah (1442-59) and Rukn Uddin Barbak Shah (1459-74) in the modern western Barak Valley during 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D. is evident from numismatic sources. A hoard of 177 silver coins of various denominations restored at Aylabari Tea Estate, about 05 K.M. south west of Karimganj town. Thus, the archeological evidences as well as the numismatic sources ascertain the

existence of Islam and the establishment of Muslim settlement in the western part of modern Barak Valley during the 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D. And another part of Barak Valley i.e. Cachar and Hailakandi is found to have been inhabited with Muslim settlement in 17<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

5. The establishment of *Mosques* in Cachar and Hailakandi districts or eastern part of Barak Valley goes back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century A.D. This fact is also verified by the existence of *Mosques* found at different time and different places of the said area. These *Mosques* are PaikanJame*Mosjid*in Gumrah, BarkholaPacca*Mosjid*, Buribail Old Jame*Mosjid*, KanakpurPuratanPacca*Mosjid*, Cachari*Mosjid*in Silchar town, BarnagodJame*Mosjid* in Algapur and MuhammadpurJame*Mosjid* etc.
6. The administrative framework of *Mosque* and *Dargahs* of Barak Valley is based on democratic principles. Every Mosque and Dargahs has a “*Managing Committee*” to look after all affairs of the institutions.
7. In the Barak –Kushiyara Valley, numerous sites with ruins of *Mosques* in the Karimganj district alone have begun to show the attention of the scholars. The area under the Karimganj only contains the remains of as many as five *Mosques*. Viewed from the chronological and stylistic stand points, all the five *Mosques* at Hatkhala, Kaliganj, Balia, Maijdi and Pir Nagar may be divided into two groups. The Hatkhala Mosque and Kaliganj*Mosque* are the remains of the pre- Mughal days while the others belong to the Mughal period.
8. After the decay of traditional Mughal style of architecture a flat roof multistoried *Mosques* building structure has been emerged since two decades as found during study.
9. There is no specific architectural type (style) for *Dargahs* which varies greatly in size and extension. However, they all follow the traditional design of the turbo or tomb and generally have a dome over a rectangular base. In Barak Valley all the *Dargahs* are of same style i.e. generally have a big dome over the grave which are rectangular based during the whole period of study from 14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century A.D.
10. The *Mosques* occupied a unique position in the Muslim society. The Muslims perform their everyday prayers and even sometimes *Eid*prayer is done here if it

rains. The Imam of Mosques delivers speeches on Islam and maintains the peace and harmony in the society.

11. Sufis *Dargahs* in Barak Valley are a symbol of humanism. Sufis were famous for their multifaceted personalities, social reforms, leading the Muslims and above all they were the advocates for social harmony and communal harmony. They can also be called as ambassadors of Hindu-Muslim unity because of their love for all the community people in Barak Valley. That is why people from all community visit their *Dargahs* till today.