

Rolling the Ball: History of Physical Culture in Bengali Football (1858-1990)

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Certificate that the Thesis entitled

‘Rolling the Ball: History of Physical Culture in Bengali Football (1858-1990)’ submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts at Jadavpur University is based upon my work carried out under the Supervision of Prof. Mahua Sarkar And that neither this thesis nor any part of it has been submitted before for any degree or diploma anywhere/elsewhere.

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Contents

1. Acknowledgements.....	I - III
2. Introduction.....	1 - 13
3. The Background of Sports History	14 - 24
4. The Rise of New Sporting Culture on Colonial Soil	25 - 36
5. The Kick-Off Stage in Bengal; the White Teams Contesting for Supremacy	37 - 64
6. The ‘Native’ Football Clubs; New Football Competitions in Colonial Time	65 - 100
7. Effects of Partition; Transformation of Football Clubs in Post Independence Period (1950s and 1960s)	101 - 125
8. 1970s, the Golden Era of Calcutta Football: Doubts and Debates	126 - 148
9. Effects and Consequences of the Massacre of August 16, 1980; Temporary Decline and Attempt of Revival of Calcutta Football	149 - 169
10. Conclusion	170 - 181
11. Illustrations	182 - 203
12. Bibliography	204 - 219

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Introduction

The history of sports is a unique discipline in the socio-cultural history of human civilization. From the ancient period the sporting activities played a major role to construct the socio-cultural sphere of each and every civilization. The nature of transformation of social order can be identified with the help of the sporting activities of that particular civilization. Sporting activities also play a significant role in developing the physical and mental skills of human individuals. Therefore sporting events have a very useful historical base. Thus from the ancient time period to the modern phase this physical culture went through several transformations. These transformations also reflect the socio-cultural and economic transformation of the human history. ⁽¹⁾

Method

Recently, the scope of history has been widened by scholars like Peter Burke and Keith Jenkins. From the late 1970s to the beginning of the 21st century, cultural history has been at the heart of the transformation of historiography. This not only reflects an exposure in the range of themes and sources but also has added dimension to the way we understand the traditional fields of political, economic and social history which had too long lived separate existences. It gave priority to formerly obscure topics, sources which refuse to fit into

established patterns of historical construction. The definition of cultural history has been widened to include themes like fashions, cuisines and sports. ⁽²⁾

From the existing literature survey, it appears that the history of sports follows no distinctive methodology. It is the media that has rebuilt an emotional history of sports with its entire informative database. Emotional history has its own value and that does not necessarily mean that it will carry a particular method. The nature of this particular research is unique of its own.

At the same time the history of sports should be understood also in terms of class and other complexities. I have tried to distinguish the over-literary focus of cultural history from my typical historical methodology, based on archival and other primary sources. In my research, I have constructed the history of sports in a proper timescale and urban historical space. The methodology is qualitative and historical.

Literature Survey

As a branch of cultural history Sports history was introduced as a separate discipline of study in the second half of 19th century. Western scholars like Adolf Furtwangler (1853-1907), Julius Juthner (1866-1949), Norman Gardiner; Wilhelm Dorpfeld used the archeological records in their research works. They wrote about the sporting events of ancient civilizations in order to reconstruct the socio-cultural history of that period. Mainly an emphasis on the culture of sports became significant at this time. As a modern academic discipline the history of sports has been introduced in the U.S.A. during 1970s. After the decade of 'Silent 60s', in 1970s the Western Scholarship became much more attentive towards the socio-cultural history of the world and thus as a branch of this study the history of sports has been introduced as an academic discipline. The Lone Star College (Kingwood, Houston) of the U.S.A. first introduced the history of sports in its syllabus in 1973 with major highlights on the history of U.S. Basketball. ⁽³⁾ In 1970s the history of Sports was also introduced in European academia through the works of J.A. Mangan, Wrey Vamplew, Tony Mason, Allen Guttman and Richard Holt. With the establishment of the British Society of Sports it got an institutional base. This was followed by the introduction of 'The International Journal of the History of Sports' under the banner of Frank Ross Publishing House. Towards the middle of the decade of 1980's the social scientists of the Asian countries like China, Japan, North and

South Korea also connected themselves with this special field of study⁽⁴⁾ In fact the gender oriented studies regarding history of sports has been also introduced initially in the U.S.A. in 1990s. With the soccer World Cup victory of the Women's National Team the question of woman sport and gender studies became significant in the U.S. Sports history and Sports Study.⁽⁵⁾

In India, still now, the history of sports is regarded as the youngest branch of socio-cultural history. In our country the two major celebrated sports Cricket and Football, are getting prime attentions of the scholars of sociology and history. Therefore, most of the historical researches regarding Indian Sports and culture have been done on these two particular sports. But it is also true that in the socio-cultural sphere of India, these two colonial games had the maximum influences. Some other works have also been done on the sports like Athletics, Hockey and Kabaddi. These are not enough works to explore the socio-cultural significance of these sports in the regular life. There are ample scopes of research on the past histories of numerous sports issues prevalent in India.

In Bengal since its origin during the colonial period football became an inseparable part of the social life of the state. To construct the footballing history of the state especially that of the city of Kolkata, the most pioneering work had been done by Rakhal Bhattacharya (RB). His '*Kolkata Football*' (first published in 1955) is one of the earliest attempts of reconstructing the sporting history of our country in the modern era. Later on Sibram Kumar carried on this

legacy of Indian Sports history quite effectively. But these historical works are lacking in critical analysis and are basically styled as the direct statistical discussion of the footballing tradition and evolution both in colonial and post-colonial phases. The first research work on Indian football with academic perspective was done by Soumen Mitra in 1988 through his book 'In Search of an Identity: The History of Football in Colonial Calcutta'. ⁽⁶⁾ The critical analysis with cultural significances regarding the historical studies of Indian Sports especially of Kolkata football has been done in recent past by scholars like Kaushik Bandyopadhyay ^{(7) (8) (9)}, Boria Majumder ⁽¹⁰⁾, Jaydeep Basu ⁽¹¹⁾, Novy Kapadia, and other dignified scholars of this field. Western Scholars like Paul Diameo added the Eurocentric visions regarding the discussion of football during the colonial period ⁽¹²⁾. Subhransu Roy gives emphasis on the women football in his significant research work. Though most of his major research works are mainly about the women football of Manipur ⁽¹³⁾ but he has also done certain pioneering research on the women football of Bengal also. ⁽¹⁴⁾ He writes on Shanti Mullick the first Arjuna Awardee of women football, who is also an ex-footballer of Bengal. ⁽¹⁵⁾ Besides these academic research works the mainstream sport oriented novels and short stories by Moti Nandi, Ashok Dasgupta, Shantipriya Bandyopadhyay, Rupak Saha, Dulendra Bhowmik and others are also consulted in this research thesis in order to identify and describe the actual sporting conditions of Bengal and its process of evolution with the passage of time. From the existing literature survey, it appears that the history of

sports follows no distinctive methodology. It is the media that has rebuilt an emotional history of sports with its entire informative database. Emotional history has its own value and that does not necessarily mean that it will carry a particular method. The method of this particular research is unique of its own.

Hypothesis

In my M.Phil thesis ‘The History of the Football Clubs in Calcutta; Bengali Identities since the Partition: 1947-1985’, I have worked on the major clubs of Calcutta like Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting and the transformation of their club identities during the post partition phase.

In this thesis I am trying to give a completely new larger dimension to the football history of Bengal by analyzing the consequences of the transformation of the football culture in Bengal in a micro level and its manifestation through the innumerable smaller football clubs of Calcutta. My thesis also signifies the importance of the physical culture and the role of the game of football in this regard. As the game of football is the most popular sporting activity in Bengal since the colonial period so it has direct socio-cultural and political significances over the Indian sporting history in general. All the football clubs of Calcutta have their own involvement and contributions in this regard. Therefore it is very significant to trace the history of physical culture with

special reference to the transformation of the football history of Calcutta. It will enable one to construct the socio-cultural and political history of this particular region through fragmented local micro histories. IT will make the history of sports more focused and will unravel the relationship of football with the contemporary local, national and international ethos.

Research Outline

Football became a metaphor of protest to the *bhadroloks* (though a minority), against the racial superiority of the British during the colonial period in Bengal. After independence, the number of takers increased, but the identity was further fragmented along lines of caste, community and locality.

I want to explore the events through which these happenings can be traced. The scattered identities of the football clubs could not lead to the trajectory of indianness and this picture has affected the status of Indian football in the outer world. My research will reveal how these inner complications were constructed to cater the needs of a diverse nationhood.

Time Scale

In this thesis I have selected the time period in a long duree from 1858 to 1990. The year 1858 is very much significant for the football history of Calcutta. The evidence of first ever record of an official football match organized in Calcutta has been recorded in the year of 1858. From there on the history of Calcutta football went through various stages directly related with the socio-political, cultural and economic history of the city. ⁽¹⁶⁾ On the other hand the year 1990 marked the revival of the football culture with a new outlook and status after the so called decline of the popularity of the game in the city during the decade of 1980s. The year 1990 can be traced as the year of rebirth of the football culture of Calcutta with certain new perspectives completely unknown in the previous era. ⁽¹⁷⁾ During this phase the fall of U.S.S.R. finally ended the Cold War and bipolar world order. U.S.A became the sole controller of the new world order and concept of globalization very much affected the third world countries. India was also not an exception. The effects of globalization also can be observed in the field of sports. It also affected the character of Calcutta Football and it entered in a completely new phase. ⁽¹⁸⁾ So I have chosen the time scale of my research thesis from 1858 to 1990.

Sources

For this thesis I have gone through certain primary and secondary sources. I have used the news paper articles, archieval documents and personal interviews as the primary sources in this respect. I have also gone through the official clubs' records for more authentic primary sources. I have made sample surveys throughout the course of this research work. In addition to this I already went through most of the significant books and research articles for my secondary sources.

Chapters

I have divided this thesis into following chapters-

The first chapter deals with the general background of the sports history. In this chapter I have tried to trace the history of physical culture from the ancient period to this day.

In the second chapter, I have discussed about the origin of Calcutta as a colonial town and also I have discussed in detail about the background of the colonial city of Calcutta where the new sporting culture had been developed among the Bengali masses I trace the circumstances in which this new sporting culture became a reactionary nationalist culture from a pro-colonial cultural

perspective. This chapter also deals how football had emerged as one of the most significant sporting phenomena among the Bengali masses.

In the third chapter I have tried to locate the beginning of the football culture in Calcutta during the colonial period. In this chapter I have discussed about the initiatives and efforts which had been taken by the white lords for the development of the game of football in Calcutta during the initial stages. I have also discussed in detail about the European football clubs that played pioneer roles behind the popularity of the game in the primary stage.

In the fourth chapter I have discussed about the formation of the local clubs in Calcutta football during the colonial period, their gradual emergence into prominence and also the socio-cultural and political effects of this emergence over the local masses during the colonial period.

The fifth chapter deals with the effects of partition on the football culture of Calcutta with special emphasis on the condition of the minor football clubs in the post-independence period, in 1950s and 1960s. This chapter also deals with the economic significance of the transformation of the football culture of Calcutta during the post-independence period.

In the sixth chapter I have discussed about the effects of the football identity over the common masses during the decade of 1970s. I have also tried to locate

the socio-economic and political background of this scenario and have made a comparative analysis of the footballing scenario of the then period.

The seventh chapter marks the temporary decline of the football culture in Calcutta with the beginning of 1980s. It shows how the administration and different club authorities had tried to overcome the critical situation of 1980s throughout this particular decade. The chapter also deals with the socio-cultural analysis of these efforts and their consequences on Indian football with the beginning of the new decade of 1990s.

Thus the history of football teams and culture has enough significance over the socio-political history of Bengal both in colonial and post-colonial period. So the history of the football clubs in Bengal is very much relevant for the proper reconstruction of the socio-political history of this particular region. Football has enough significance over the popular physical culture of Bengal. That is why I have chosen this subject for my Doctoral Thesis.

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Chapter One

The Background of Sports History

The Ancient Period

Sports are the inseparable parts of human society from the earliest days of civilization. Even in the pre-historic phase of human civilization the physical culture is directly related with the sporting activities. Hunting is probably the oldest form of sporting activities. In the pre-historic phase it was a necessity for living but with the passage of time and transformation of civilization hunting was transformed into an activity to display the strength and skills of the individuals. In the Harappan Civilization of Ancient India wrestling and hunting were the most prominent events of physical culture. ⁽¹⁾ After the settlement of Aryans in India various forms of sporting activities developed in Ancient India. Wrestling, Chariot Racing, Archery, Hunting, Sword Fighting and Mace Fighting etc. became the popular physical sporting activities in Vedic period. Mainly the martial class of Ancient India used to perform these sports. Thus the Kshatriyas earned the mastery over these physical sporting activities. In addition to this, many of these skills were also necessary to fight in battles. Apart from the physical development there were certain games that effectively increased the level of human intelligence. In Ancient India the game of dice

developed as a popular indoor game for recreational purpose. But gradually this particular game was started to be used for gambling. Physical perfection has been an integral part of Hinduism. One of the means to fully realize one's self is defined as the body - way or *dehvada*. Salvation was to be gained through physical perfection or *kaya sadhana*, possible only through perfect understanding of the body and its functions. The Yoga was also developed as another form of physical culture. Mainly the Brahamanas and Rishis were the exponents of the Yoga culture. The 'eight - fold method' encompasses techniques associated with breathing control or *pranayama*, body posture or *asanas*, and withdrawal of the senses or *pratyahara*. Religious rites provided the needed impetus to physical culture in ancient India. During the era of the Rig Veda, Ramayana and Mahabharata, men of a certain stature were expected to be well - versed in chariot - racing, archery, military stratagems, swimming, wrestling and hunting. Excavations at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro confirm that during the Indus valley civilization (2500 - 1550 B.C) the weapons involved in war and hunting exercises included the bow and arrow, the dagger, the axe and the mace. These weapons of war, for instance, the javelin (*toran*) and the discus (*chakra*), were also frequently used in the sports arena. Lord Krishna wielded an impressive discus or *Sudarshan chakra*. Arjuna and Bhima; two of the mighty Pandava brothers had attained excellence respectively in archery and weightlifting. Bhimsen, Hanuman, Jamvant, Jarasandha were some of the great champion wrestlers of yore. Women, too, excelled in sport and the art of self -

defence, and were active participants in games like - fighting, quail - fighting and ram - fighting. With the flowering of Buddhism in the country, Indian sport reached the very peak of excellence. Gautama Buddha himself, is said to have been an ace at archery, chariot - racing, equitation and hammer - throwing. In *Villas Mani Manjri*, Tiruvedacharya describes many of these games in detail. In *Manas Olhas* (1135 AD.), Someshwar writes at length about *Bharashram* (weight - lifting), *Bharamanshram* (walking), both of which are established Olympic disciplines at present, and *Mall - Stambha*, a peculiar form of wrestling, wherein both contestants sit on the shoulders of their 'seconds', who stand in waist - deep water throughout the game. The renowned Chinese travellers Hieun Tsang (Xuang Xang) and Fa Hien wrote of a plethora of sporting activities. Swimming, sword - fighting (fencing, as we know it today), running, wrestling and ball games were immensely popular among the students of Nalanda and Taxila. In the 16th century, a Portuguese ambassador who visited Krishnanagar was impressed by the range of sports activity, and the many sports venues, in the city. The king, Raja Krishnadev was an ace wrestler and horseman, himself. ⁽²⁾ Ancient Egyptian paintings also certainly threw light on the sporting activities which were mostly of wrestling images. But the physical culture turned in serious and competitive sports in Ancient Greece. The introduction of Olympic in 8th century B.C. started a new era in the history of sporting culture. According to historical records, the first ancient Olympic Games can be traced back to 776 BC. They were dedicated to the Olympian

gods and were staged on the ancient plains of Olympia. The sporting activities received official competitive outlook with this event. ⁽³⁾ According to Pagan religion 'Hermes' was an Olympian God who was the main patron of Athletics. Therefore the Greeks adopted the sporting activities with very serious measures. In fact physical culture received prime attendance in Ancient Greek city states. ⁽⁴⁾ The Greek legacy in physical culture was successfully carried on by the Romans. During the Ancient Roman civilization the Coliseum was built as the stadium for organizing the sporting events. But certain cruelties were present in the Ancient Roman sports. The killings at circus and the fight between the gladiators were insane and inhuman in nature. But still the event was incredibly popular among the masses. ⁽⁵⁾

The Medieval Period

In the medieval period Turks and Afghans introduced certain new physical culture in India. On the other hand ancient sports like hunting, sword fighting, and archery were still remained in the medieval society. Besides this sports like *Chaugan* (Polo) was introduced by the Delhi Sultans in India. ⁽⁶⁾ In the modern phase certain new advancements have taken place in the sporting culture. In India during the colonial phase with the introduction of neo-colonial culture certain new sporting activities were also included. This thing also

transformed the physical culture in Indian soil. Therefore the history of sports is very much significant for the reconstruction of the social history of any particular period.

The Modern Period

Some historians – most notably Bernard Lewis – claim that team sports as we know them today are primarily an invention of Western Culture. The traditional teams' sports are seen as springing from Europe, primarily England through its British Empire. This can be seen as discounting some of the ancient games of cooperation from Asia (e.g. polo, numerous martial arts forms, and various, now assimilated football varieties) and even from the Americas (e.g. lacrosse). European Colonialism certainly helped spread particular games around the world, especially cricket (not related to baseball), football of various sorts, bowling in a number of forms, cue sports (like snooker, carom billiards and pool), hockey and its derivatives, equestrian (originally of Middle Eastern origin), and tennis (and related games deriving from jeu de paume), and many winter sports, while the originally Europe-dominated modern Olympic Games generally also ensured standardization in particularly European directions when rules for similar games around the world were merged. Regardless of game origins, the Industrial Revolution and mass production brought increased leisure

which allowed more time to engage in playing or observing (and gambling upon) spectator sports, as well as less elitism in and greater accessibility of sports of many kinds. With the advent of mass media and global communication, professionalism became prevalent in sports, and this furthered sports popularity in general. With the increasing values placed on those who won also came the increased desire to cheat. Some of the most common ways of cheating today involve the use of performance-enhancing drugs such as steroids. The use of these drugs has always been frowned on but in recent history there have also been agencies set up to monitor professional athletes and ensure fair play in the sport. So in the modern studies and researches of social history, an immense importance is being delivered on the history of sports. ⁽⁷⁾

Background of the History of Football in the Modern Period

The game of Football was introduced on Indian soil by the white lords during the colonial period. In the mid 19th century the colonial masters introduced the game of football in Bengal. It was an inseparable part of the neo-colonial culture which had been developed during that particular period. ⁽⁸⁾ The game of football has ancient origin. Ancient Greece and Roman peoples used to practice several ball games. Among them the Greek game *Episkyros* is the oldest one. During the Roman era it transformed into the game called *Harpastum*. Later on in the enlightened England this ball game transformed into the game called mob

football. ⁽⁹⁾ On the other hand, according to FIFA the Chinese *Cuju* is the oldest form of football. But many scholars doubted to this argument. Some other sources argued that the game of football actually developed from the Japanese game *Kemari* which is very similar to *Cuju*. However this is also a doubtful statement. But it was the 16th century English Schoolmaster and Lawyer Richard Mulcaster of Derbyshire who introduced almost the modern form of football. The modern form of football came in practice in regular basis during the 17th century England. In the 18th century this particular game earned immense popularity in England and Scotland. The first official international football game was played between these two countries in 1872. Before that the game earned vehement popularity in the domestic level both in England and Scotland. The first ever football association of the world had been established in England in 1863 known as the Football Association (FA). ⁽¹⁰⁾ As England established numbers of colonies all over the world, so as a part of English culture the game of football also spread its popularity in various other countries. In India the game was introduced during the phase of British rule and in Bengal the game earned its major popularity. Gradually football became the inseparable part of Bengali culture and it turned into the most favorite sport of the Bengali masses. With this football entered into the physical sporting culture of Bengal.

(11)

The game of football introduced on Bengali soil in the 19th century. In the initial period the European masters enjoyed complete dominance over the game. In fact the white lords often criticized about physical strength and body structure of the Bengali masses. To prove this idea vogue and bias the Bengali masses started to give enough importance towards the physical culture. Therefore the traditional physical sports like *yoga*, *lathikhela*, wrestling (*mallajuddha or kusti*), sword fighting (fencing) etc received the primary importance. But gradually the colonial sports like football, cricket and hockey also started to receive enough popularity among the local masses. Among the native population football ultimately became the most popular sport and the Bengali masses introduced their own version of the game. Soon it became the most prominent medium to challenge the European masters. As the team sports used to reflect the ideas of unity and togetherness so the native masses started to receive inspirations from these team games. Thus during the colonial period the team sports like football, cricket and hockey started to become popular among the common masses. In respect to other team sports football is much simpler in playing perspective and also has more mass appeal than any other game. So during the late 19th century and early 20th century football became the most significant sporting activity in the physical culture of common Bengali masses. Hockey had found its' popularity mainly among the Anglo-Indians of Calcutta. On the other hand initially cricket also attained enough popularity among the native Bengalis but due to its complex character and blue blooded aristocratic

attitude it didn't turn out to be as inspiring as football in respect to sporting culture of Bengal. Thus football became the most significant entity of physical culture of Bengali masses that had been turned into the most inspiring element of cultural nationalism in Bengal. In fact during 1930s and 1940s the local football teams finally overpowered the European counterparts in Calcutta Maidan. ⁽¹²⁾ After the independence and partition the football culture continued its popularity within the Bengali masses but the competitive matter shifted to a new platform. As the European teams were abolished from the Indian soil the local teams set up neo-footballing rivalry in Calcutta Maidan. This thing also developed a new type of physical culture in the city of Calcutta. ⁽¹³⁾ This event also had socio-cultural and political significance over the history of West Bengal in post-independence period.

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Chapter Two

Rise of Neo-Sporting Culture on Colonial Soil

Rise of a New Urban Culture

According to the colonial scholars like Atulkrishna Roy the city of Calcutta had been properly set by the white colonial masters. ⁽¹⁾ He credited Job Charnok as the founder of the city of Calcutta. Same kind of argument was also present in the voluminous account of Radharaman Mitra. He also argued about the major contribution of the colonial lords in foundation of the city of Calcutta. ⁽²⁾ But the modern scholars like Purnendu Patri ⁽³⁾, Sukumar Sen ⁽⁴⁾, Sripantha (Nikhil Sarkar) ⁽⁵⁾, Radharaman Roy ⁽⁶⁾, Jaladhar Mullick ⁽⁷⁾ and others opposed this theory as they opined that before the arrival of the European traders Calcutta was already emerged as a settlement of the weavers and fishermen. The zamindars like Lakshmikanta Mazumdar (Ganguly), Joyananda Sudramani and Sabarna Roy Chowdhury had their controls over the lands of these areas. ⁽⁸⁾ It is true that the human settlement in Sutanuti, Gobindapur and Calcutta and other neighbouring areas were present before the establishment of the British settlement in Calcutta. In fact it is also true that the Armenian traders had established their trading posts in Calcutta long before the arrival of the British and French traders. But still we cannot deny from the fact that the British

colonial masters started to transform the settlements of this area from rural to urban in character. According to Sripantha (Nikhil Sarkar) the colonial lords only beautified the areas which only consisted with the European households, whereas the major portions of the native settlements remained dusty, unhygienic and completely unplanned human settlements. Despite this fact it is also true that the urban character of the place had been flourished with the British colonial establishment. ⁽⁹⁾

Initially during the reign period of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb the British East India Company got the lease of thirty eight villages of this particular area. The Emperor initially was reluctant to provide this lease to the British company. Because in 1695 the royal ship '*Ganj-i-Sawai*' along with the protector ship '*Fateh Muhammad*' had been plundered by the British Pirate Henry Avery (His famous pirate ship was known as '*Fancy*') in the Indian Ocean during its return from Mocha. In this incident the royal princess; the granddaughter of the Emperor was also humiliated by the pirates. Later the British Government declared Henry Avery a fugitive and they had confirmed that the British East India Company had no connection with Avery only then in late 1696 the Mughal Emperor provided the lease of the above mentioned thirty villages to the company in lure of rupees 3000/- per year. ⁽¹⁰⁾

This was the beginning of the British settlement in Calcutta. During the early eighteenth century Charles Eyre built the Fort William and gradually Calcutta

transformed into a trading centre for the British settlers. With the help of the Armenian trader Khwaja Israel Sarhed they had secured the firman (royal decree) from Mughal Emperor Farrukhsiyar in 1717 which provided them more stable condition in Bengal. ⁽¹¹⁾ Though initially they faced some political resistance from the house of Nasiri and Afsar of the Bengal Nawabs but after the execution of Siraj-ud-Daulah in post Plassey period provided open opportunity for the British traders to turn Calcutta into the major colonial eco-political centre. ⁽¹²⁾ A great section of the newly emerged influential comprador class of the local native people of Calcutta like Gobindaram Mitter, Banamali Sarkar, Krishnajiban Mazumdar and others were always in favour of the British settlement due to financial causes. They wanted to make Calcutta the financial centre instead of Murshidabad and thus provided active assistance to the colonial lords. ⁽¹³⁾

Emergence of New-Sporting Activities in Calcutta

Thus from the second half of 18th century a colonial culture started to develop within the native masses of Calcutta. The native comprador class mainly consisted with the native educated Hindus of Calcutta became the chief assisting force in the eco-political affairs of the company. By taking the advantage of the Permanent Settlement and the Sunset Act of 1793 this newly emerged native nobility not just only developed their financial status but also attained higher

status in the colonial society and became the absentee landlords of the rural sectors in various places of Bengal. ⁽¹⁴⁾ They also preferred to adopt the western culture and thus various social-reform programmes had been initiated by the newly developed westernized and modernized native intelligentsia where the colonial administrators like Lord William Bentinck, Lord Dalhousie and the European intellectuals like Alexander Duff, David Hare and others played active roles along with the native reformers like Raja Rammohan Roy, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, Keshabchandra Sen and the members of the Young Bengal groups and others. ⁽¹⁵⁾ Though a section of the colonial administrators and intellectuals had positive thoughts about the intellects and scholarly attitude of the native Bengali masses but most of the colonial administrative officers and journalists were very much critical about the physical construction and physical cultural of the Bengali masses. According to them the Bengalis were very much idle in attitude and they were completely unfit for hard physical labour. They believed that the Bengalis were not at all interested in physically hard challenges and thus they did not have any positive sporting activities. The British administrators like Thomas Babington Macaulay and journalists like J.W. Stephens and G.S. Wilson were very much critical about the physical construction and physical strength of the Bengalis. ⁽¹⁶⁾ They even made several harsh and humiliation comments about the physical structure of the Bengali masses in general. In fact in the police and military jobs the colonial authority always preferred to employ the martial classes like the Sikhs, Gurkhas, Punjabis

and other North Indian communities. In the police service of Bengal the most celebrated native officer was Mangal Singh Rathod who was a Rajput. Among the Bengali Police Officers '*Daroga*' Haradhan Mukherjee and Kaliprasad Dutta were only the exceptions during the late 19th century. ⁽¹⁷⁾

A group of youth Bengali intelligentsia decided to counter the myth of physical weakness and thus they introduced physical activities in Bengali society with top priority. At first this new phase of physical culture developed in Calcutta and among the '*Bhadralok*' community but later spread also among the other urban classes and rural communities too. This revival of physical activities developed a new sporting culture in Bengal which had the prime objective to successfully counter the English myth of weak physical structure and lack of proper sporting heritage of the Bengali masses. Therefore automatically the mastery of the natives in different sporting activities and also achievements in various sporting field introduced a sense of national identity within the native masses. So the sporting activities and physical cultures of colonial Bengal during late 19th century and early 20th century invoked a national pride within the native masses which also encouraged the anti-colonial national struggle. ⁽¹⁸⁾

Initially the educated section of Bengali youths gave emphasis to the traditional '*Akhada Culture*' during the second half of 19th century. The physical exercises and combat games attained much attention in this era of the promotion of '*Akhada Culture*'. Activities like *yoga* and other traditional freehand exercises

along with stick fighting, fencing, wrestling etc. started to be practiced regularly. The aristocratic Bengali Hindu families of Calcutta and neighboring regions provided the early patronage in this regard. The famous Tagore family of Jodasakon, Roy family of Jodabagan, Das family of Janbazar etc. provided the early patronage in this regard. Gradually numerous akhadas and gymnasiums started to build up in various places of Calcutta and later this thing also spread in other parts of Bengal too. The *akhadas* of Chhatubabu and Latubabu, gymnasium of Nagen Pal in Kansaripara and the famous gymnasium of Narayan Chandra Basak at 3 Gourmohan Mukherjee Street attained the attention of the Bengali youths. ⁽¹⁹⁾

But in this regard the most significant role was played by the Guha family of Hatibagan. Shivcharan Guha had established an akhada in Hatibagan in 1843. His grandson Ambikacharan Guha alias Ambubabu turned it into a great centre to learn wrestling and transferred it to the Majidbari Street region. His sons Ramcharan and Kshetracharan Guha were the best wrestling trainers of that time. Great national leaders and personalities like Narendranath Dutta (later Swami Vivekananda); Rakhal Ghosh (Swami Brahmananda); Jatindranath Mukherjee (alias Bagha Jatin) also took the training of wrestling in this particular akhada and directly from Ambikacharan Guha and Kshetracharan Guha. Swami Vivekananda always argued about the importance of physical strength and stability for the awakening of any national and nationality, whereas

Bagha Jatin later turned to be a great symbol of national pride and physical strength for the Bengali masses. ⁽²⁰⁾ The Bengali pehlwans (wrestlers and weight lifters) like Aghor Ghosh, Shyamakanta Bandyopadhyay, Pareshnath Ghosh, Bhavendranath Saha (Bhim Bhavani) and others became the most prominent figures of the Bengali Physical Culture during this period. They played great roles in destroying the myth of 'effeminate Bengali' created by the British administrators like Thomas Babington Macaulay. ⁽²¹⁾

To promote the physical culture among the Bengali masses gradually the Muslims also came forward by joining hands with their Hindu brothers. Though the British lords considered the Muslims better in physical activities than the Bengali Hindus still they had lack of respect for the Bengali Muslims (*Atraf*) than their North Indian counterparts (*Ashraf*). ⁽²²⁾ So the Bengali Muslim community attained early expertise in the physical activities like wrestling and fencing and then they shared their skills with the Bengali Hindu communities. Bagha Jatin learned his early wrestling skills from Jadumal Ostad of Gattiya village during his stay in Koya in the maternal home of him. ⁽²³⁾ Martaza Hossain also taught fencing skills to the Bengali Hindus and became a member of the Anushilan Samiti. Gradually a considerable number of the Bengali Hindu youths attained mastery over various sporting forms of '*Akhada* culture' and many of them directly used their skills in nationalist struggle by taking the membership of Anushilan Samiti and Jugantar Dal. Jadugopal Mukhopadhyay

(Master in stick fighting/*lathikhela*), Atul Ghosh (Master in *lathikhela*), Nagen Dutta and Suradas (Boxers) were the great names in this regard. During the stay of the Buar prisoners in Calcutta a great number of interested Bengali youths had learned the technique of Boxing from them. It is also true in this regard some liberal minded and open hearted Europeans also provided their aid and assistance. ⁽²⁴⁾

As the part of the new colonial cultures certain new sporting cultures started to develop in the city of Calcutta during the second half of 19th century. Thus the team oriented colonial sports like football, cricket and hockey introduced to the native soil during this time. Though the game of cricket was introduced in Bengal in late 18th century and the Calcutta Cricket Club was established in 1793 as the second oldest cricket club of the world (Only next to Sevenoaks Vine Club of Britain, Estd. 1734) ⁽²⁵⁾ but it remained strictly restricted within the Europeans and the Anglo-Indians (Henry Louis Vivian Derozio was also a regular Anglo-Indian amateur cricketer) ⁽²⁶⁾ until the foundation of the Ballygunj Cricket Club in 1850. Towards the end of the 19th century cricket attained certain popularity among the native masses. Still it remained restricted among the blue blooded aristocrat native families. ⁽²⁷⁾ On the other hand hockey attained its popularity in the native soil towards the close of the 19th century but still the complex rules of the game restricted its popularity only among the Anglo-Indians. ⁽²⁸⁾

On the other hand though the evidence of first recorded football match in the city of Calcutta had been founded in the year of 1858 but the game attained rapid popularity among the native masses. ⁽²⁹⁾ Towards the close of 19th century the game became immensely popular within the native masses. The Bengali masses also developed their own style of the game through the bare foot football which also popularized the game tremendously among the native masses. In fact the Bengalis founded the joy of defeating the colonial masters in their own game through the game of football. ⁽³⁰⁾ Thus the footballing culture founded an integral encouragement within the physical activities of the Bengali masses. Initially the nationalist group of Bengali intelligentsia was reluctant to adopt the colonial sports and they directly opposed the integration of colonial sports within the native physical culture. But the successes of the native players in the football field gradually transformed the colonial character of the game of football and with the beginning of the 20th century football became a nationalist sporting symbol of Bengali physical culture. ⁽³¹⁾ Thus it attained tremendous popularity among the Bengali masses and became an inseparable part of the Bengali physical culture.

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Chapter Three

The Kick-Off Stage in Bengal; the White Teams Contesting for Supremacy

Football was introduced in India during the second half of 19th century by the colonial rulers. As Calcutta was the capital as well as the main center of company administration the white lords introduced the game of football in Calcutta. Due to its association with mental and physical strength the game of football used to be practiced regularly in the army regiments and cantonments. So in the initial stage the game was started to practice at first in the army camps. At that time it was a symbol of imperialist muscularity of the Europeans on Indian soil. ⁽¹⁾ During this period the game was introduced as an inseparable part of the neo-colonial culture. The Europeans used to enjoy complete dominance over the game during this period. ⁽²⁾

Gradually the game of football started to spread outside of the army camps but until the second last decade of the 19th century, football remained limited within the white population of Calcutta. The European administrators, business elites, military officers and a section of the Anglo-Indian community became the early patrons of the game of football on Indian soil. Though at first the practice of football in Calcutta started in a scattered way but soon the British lords took it under proper discipline. With the foundation of the football clubs, the

organization the football matches became more frequent and regular. Within a very short period the competitive measures entered in the football matches. The most significant role behind the gradual progress of the game of football in the colonial city of Calcutta was played by the Europeans. In fact the game started to get its popularity among the native masses also. But still the control of the game was completely remained with the European section of the city. The white teams were formed with the master players of the game, while the native players were just the apprentices during that period. This statuesque was maintained by the white lords till the 1930s. ⁽³⁾

The kick-off

As to the records the first football match in Calcutta was played at Esplanade in the second week of April in 1858. The match was played between the Calcutta Club of Civilians and the Gentlemen of Barrakpore. During this phase of time the military personals used to practice football regularly in Fort William as a form of regular physical exercise. In 1858 officially the British government took over the administrative duty of India from the East India Company. Thus certain changes were appeared in the governmental policies. This event also affected the socio-cultural sphere. During this period the game of football came out from the boundaries of the army camps and the football matches were started to organize more frequently in the various places of the white town area of

Calcutta. But most of these matches were not properly documented. The first serious competitive football match was played between the Etonians and The Rest in 1868. The gradual increase of the organization of the football matches in the city finally led the way to the foundation of the football clubs in the city. In the early phase the all European teams came in existence. Later on the native teams were started to establish one by one. In this regard the Calcutta Football Club emerged as the first football club in India. ⁽⁴⁾

Emergence of the White Teams (*Gora Dal*)

In 1872 the Calcutta Football Club was established as the first football club of Calcutta. Gradually one by one the other football clubs were also started to establish in the city by the Europeans. At that time the white lords of Calcutta used to live separately from the local masses as they thought of themselves superior in character than the local masses. The Eurocentric and Hellenized attitude of Evangelical ideology made them to live within the boundaries of particular regions of the imperial city. This region of the city was especially reserved only for the Europeans. Thus it was known as ‘White Town’. So the local masses also addressed them as the Gora Shahibs or White Lords. The football clubs established by the Europeans in Calcutta became popular among the local masses as the Gora Dal or White Teams. ⁽⁵⁾

Though the Calcutta Football Club was established in 1872 but it was also disbanded as early as in 1876 but again revived in 1884. In the mean time the clubs like Dalhousie Athletic Club (1880), Howrah Union Club (1884) etc. emerged in the football scenario of Calcutta. Gradually the clubs like Hastings Football Club (1889), Rangers Club (1896), Y.M.C.A. and some others were also established towards the closing period of the 19th century. ⁽⁶⁾

Mainly the upper mentioned clubs were established by the administrative and business elite section of the Europeans, who lived in Calcutta. Therefore generally these clubs were referred as the Elite Clubs or Gentlemen's Club. But during this period another branch of white football teams attained certain achievements in Calcutta football. These were the army regimental teams like the Durham Light Infantry, Gordon Highlanders, Rifle Brigade, Middlesex Regiment, East Surrey Regiment etc. Though these teams were from army background, they inflicted the competitive feeling in the Calcutta football as they preferred only but the win. Sometimes army regimental teams from other part of British India also attained fame in Calcutta football like the East Yorkshire regiment. It is beyond doubt that due to the efforts of these white teams (both elite and army) the game of football attained primary popularity in Indian soil and ultimately the internal competition of these teams made the situation inevitable for the coming of severe competitive tournaments in the black soil of the colony. ⁽⁷⁾

The Beginning of White Rivalry

Most of the white teams of colonial Calcutta were financially well sound and also equipped with developed equipments and modern techniques of the game. The white lords or the '*gora*' sahibs were the masters of the game of football so they easily produced high standard of matches during this time. Players like Knight, Calvin, Duncan, Hogue, Sherman, Campbell, Cooke, Bennett, Davis, Armstrong, Pratt, Bell, Graves and many others enriched the Calcutta football with the amazing display of power and skill in the football field. They also left great inspiration for the young generation and increased the popularity of the game. In fact Rakhal Bhattacharya argued that these white teams of colonial period were even better in standard than the pre-first world war German and Swedish teams like Corinth and Eslington. ⁽⁸⁾

During the last decade of the 19th century the white teams developed their internal competitive measures into serious rivalry. First of all a rivalry was emerged between the civilian white teams of Calcutta and the army regimental teams. Their internal competitive rivalry gave birth of two different tactical styles of football. The civilian white teams like Calcutta Football Club and many others gave more emphasis in style and skill of the game rather than physical strength, which later became popular among the Indians whereas the army teams used the technique of physical strength and speed. These teams tried

to win over their opponents through their physical advancements. Another tough rivalry also appeared within the different regimental teams as for all these teams victory in the football matches were directly related with the prestige and pride of their own respective regiments. ⁽⁹⁾ John Horn is of opinion that the army involvement in the sports of Asia during the colonial era also increased the strenuous and competitive character of the sporting culture in Asia. Another form of white rivalry can be traced between the civilian white football clubs of Calcutta. It was completely based on the achievements earned by these teams during this time in Calcutta football. ⁽¹⁰⁾ This kind of rivalry emerged between Calcutta Football club and Dalhousie Athletic Club during the colonial period. In fact the gradual introduction of various competitive tournaments increased the mode of rivalry in Calcutta football in the colonial period.

This situation made the way easy for the introduction of various competitive tournaments. From the last decade of 19th century number of football tournaments started to emerge on Indian soil. Durand Cup (1888, Simla), Rovers Cup (1891, Bombay), IFA Shield (1893, Calcutta), First division Calcutta Football League (1898) etc. started to organize during this time. The Indian Football Association (IFA) also came into existence in 1892 as the first ever football association on Indian soil. In addition to these the tournaments like Coochbehar Cup, Trades Cup and Gladstone Cup etc. were also introduced during this phase. The later mentioned tournaments were became the ideal

grounds for the flourishing of the budding football talents. The native teams also participated in some of these tournaments but during this stage they were no match to the white teams. Therefore the early achievements in Calcutta football were totally attained by the white teams. It also developed the quality of the game in Calcutta Maidan and proved beneficiary for the future development of the football culture in Bengal. ⁽¹¹⁾

Clashes between the White Teams

Almost during the entire colonial period especially up to 1930s the Calcutta football was completely dominated by the white teams. But the competitions became tougher and because of that at this stage not a single team could become the superpower. Due to the almost equal qualities of the white teams the rivalry became tougher in Calcutta football. For example, in the history of the IFA Shield during the colonial period, the Royal Irish Rifles (won in 1893 and 1894), Calcutta F.C. (won in 1903-1904 and 1922-1924) and the Gordon Highlanders (won in 1908, 1909 and 1910), Sherwood Foresters (won in 1926, 1927 and 1928) are the white teams who won the trophy for consecutive two or more times. ⁽¹²⁾ In the Calcutta Football League in addition to the teams of Royal Irish Rifles, Calcutta F.C. and Gordon Highlanders; the Dalhousie Athletic Club and King's Own Regiment also attained the successes of winning

the League title consecutive times. These statistics clearly reflect how the competition became tough for all the teams. ⁽¹³⁾

Many of the white teams though started their journey in football ground in great style but could not survive for long in the battle of tough competition. For example, Glossators won the very first edition of the first division championship of the Calcutta Football League in 1898 but could not maintain the status for long and later on failed to win even a single title of any championships in the later period. On the other hand teams like King's Own Regiment and 92 Highlanders reached to the peak of success very soon but could not maintain the regularity of their performances for a long time as they were overpowered by the other white teams. In fact the elite clubs in general maintained more regularity in performances than the military football teams. The professional attitude of the game was no way present at that time. Especially the army officers had their other important works to do. Therefore, they could not continue their hold over the championships for a long time. The white teams replaced the position of the champion. It made the rivalry very much tougher. ⁽¹⁴⁾

In spite of that, teams like Calcutta F.C. and Dalhousie Athletic Club became the arch rivals to each other as they proved to be the most consistent white teams of Calcutta football during the colonial period. Calcutta F.C. became the most successful white team among all the white teams of Calcutta football by

winning the maximum IFA Shield titles (9 times) and first division Calcutta Football League titles (8 times) during the colonial period. On the other hand Dalhousie Club became the toughest competitor of the Calcutta F.C. as Dalhousie Club won the Shield title twice and the first division of the Calcutta Football League for 4 times and also finished as the runner-up in both the tournaments for considerable occasions.⁽¹⁵⁾ The consistent performances from both the teams turned them arch rivals to each other and during the colonial period especially at the primary stage the rivalry between Calcutta F.C. and Dalhousie Athletic Club attained the first effective popularity in Calcutta football but this rivalry was of gentleman's rivalry which only related with the English pride and honour.⁽¹⁶⁾ But it is also true that Dalhousie Club had much better record in the Trades Cup than the Calcutta F.C.⁽¹⁷⁾

We cannot overlook the importance of the teams like Rangers and Hastings behind the growth of competitive rivalry in Calcutta football during the colonial period.⁽¹⁸⁾ Though, both these teams were considered as two of the consistent and powerful teams of Calcutta football but both these teams could not win much of the tournaments but their consistency in the game took them to the semi-finals of the knock outs and third place in the league for number of times and therefore they used to deliver tough challenges to the champions to make the contest even harder.⁽¹⁹⁾

Most of the white teams of the colonial period in Calcutta football were of equal strength and therefore the competition between them became more and more tough and with it the rivalries between these teams also became serious in character. This ultimately turned football into a very serious sport and thus paved the way for its development in the black soil of the colony.

Effects of the White Rivalry

Though it is true that the white teams were in the commanding position in the colonial football in Calcutta but it does not mean that the local Indian teams had done nothing in this period. The Indian teams started to learn the football skills and tactics very carefully and gradually developed their status as the serious contenders of the game of football. In the colonial period, the standard of Calcutta football was set in a very high position by the white teams. In one hand their rivalry in the game motivated the teams to deliver better strategy and skill in the football ground. It also increased the popularity of the game in the city of Calcutta. The rivalry between the white teams made the competition tougher and therefore it also played significant role behind the development of the infrastructures necessary for the game. ⁽²⁰⁾

The white lords not only brought the game of football and played the primary role behind its development but also used it as a symbol of their imperial

masculine superiority. At the initial stage, the white teams earned the expertise in the game and thus became the masters of the game. The Indians at that time were merely the learners. They learned a lot regarding the game from their skilled masters and in this case the rivalry between the white teams played a great role as it spread the interest and passion of the game among the Indians. The learners also started to reply strongly to their masters from the beginning of the 20th century. This thing introduced a new kind of football rivalry in Calcutta Maidan. ⁽²¹⁾

The white teams of Calcutta football thus played very significant role in its development. Through their rivalry they set the standard of Calcutta football to a new height. The great combination of power and skill was also introduced by the white teams in the Calcutta football and these teams produced the great players like Knight, Calvin, Bennett, Duncan, Hogue, Sherman and many others who left their deep impact in the history of Calcutta football. ⁽²²⁾

In the colonial period the white teams gave tough challenges to each other in such a way that it became impossible to predict that who would be the champion of which tournament. The rivalry emerged between the white teams in the colonial period mainly emerged from the English sentiments of pride, honour and western masculinity which had a very unique feature and thus played a great role behind the development of the Calcutta football in every aspect. ⁽²³⁾ It can be said that the infant and childhood phase of Calcutta football

were efficiently nursed by the white teams. The white teams made the standard of Calcutta football very high which played significant role behind the future development of football culture in Calcutta.

IFA Shield Finals in Colonial Period

Years	Winners	Score line in Finals	Runners Up
1893	Royal Irish Rifles	0-0, Replay 1-0	W.D.R.A.
1894	Royal Irish Rifles	2-0	Rifle Brigade
1895	R.W.F.	3-1	S.L. Infantry
1896	Calcutta F.C.	3-0	S.L. Infantry
1897	Dalhousie A.C.	4-0	41 st Field Battery
1898	Gloucester	1-0	42 Highlanders
1899	South Lancashire	2-0	Barakpore Artillery
1900	Calcutta F.C.	0-0, Replay 6-0	Dalhousie A.C.

1901	Royal Irish Rifles	5-1	Black Watch
1902	93 Highlanders	3-0	Dalhousie A.C.
1903	Calcutta F.C.	0-0, Replay 1-1, 2 nd Replay 2-1	K.O.S.B.
1904	Calcutta F.C.	1-0	Kings Own Regiment
1905	Dalhousie A.C.	4-0	Calcutta F.C.
1906	Calcutta F.C.	1-0	H.L.I.
1907	Highland Light Infantry	0-0, Replay 1-0	Calcutta F.C.
1908	Gordon Highlanders	2-0	Calcutta Customs
1909	Gordon Highlanders	1-0	Calcutta Customs
1910	Gordon Highlanders	0-0, Replay 2-0	Calcutta F.C.
1911	Mohun Bagan	2-1	East Yorkshire
1912	Royal Irish Rifles	1-0	Black Watch
1913	Royal Irish Rifles	2-1	91 Highlanders

1914	King's Own Regiment	1-0	Calcutta F.C.
1915	Calcutta F.C.	0-0, Replay 3-0	Calcutta Customs
1916	North Stafford	2-1	Calcutta F.C.
1917	Middlesex	2-0	Breconshire
1918	Training Reserves	1-0	Signal Service
1919	Breconshire	1-0	Calcutta F.C.
1920	Black Watch	1-0	Kumortuli
1921	Worcestershire	2-0	Royal West Kent
1922	Calcutta F.C.	1-0	Dalhousie A.C.
1923	Calcutta F.C.	3-0	Mohun Bagan
1924	Calcutta F.C.	2-0	R.F.A.
1925	R.S.F.	5-1	Cheshire Regiment

1926	Sherwood Foresters	2-1	Cameron Highlanders
1927	Sherwood Foresters	3-0	Calcutta F.C.
1928	Sherwood Foresters	2-0	Dalhousie A.C.
1929	Royal All Star Rifles	2-0	Rangoon Customs
1930	Sea Forth Highlanders	3-0	Loyal Regiment
1931	H.L.I.	1-1, Replay 2-1	Durham Light Infantry
1932	Essex Regiment	2-1	Sea Forth Highlanders
1933	D.C.L.I.	2-1	King's Royal Regiment
1934	King's Royal Rifles	2-2 (Declared as Joint Winners)	Durham Light Infantry
1935	East Yorkshire	1-0	Loyal Regiment
1936	Mohammedan Sporting	2-1	Calcutta F.C.
1937	Field Brigade	4-1	Police

1938	East Yorkshire	2-0	Mohammedan Sporting
1939	Police	2-1	Customs
1940	Aryan	4-1	Mohun Bagan
1941	Mohammedan Sporting	2-0	K.O.S.B.
1942	Mohammedan Sporting	1-0	East Bengal
1943	East Bengal	3-0	Police
1944	B.A.R.	2-0	East Bengal
1945	East Bengal	1-0	Mohun Bagan
1946	--	--	--
1947	Mohun Bagan	1-0	East Bengal

Informations of the above chart are derived from following sources

1. Bhattacharya, Rakhal (RB), 'Kolkata Football', Shibram Kumar (ed.), Prabhabati Prakashani, Kolkata, 2002
2. Amrita Bazar Patrika, Calcutta, July 7, 1905
3. The Indian Daily News, Calcutta, June, 1910
4. The Indian Daily News, Calcutta, March, 1920
5. The Statesman, Calcutta, March, 1923

Calcutta League First Division Results in Colonial Period

Years	Winners	Points	Runners Up	Points
1898	Glossators	24	Rangers	21
1899	Calcutta F.C.	21	King's Royal Rifles	20
1900	Royal Irish Rifles	26	Calcutta F.C.	23
1901	Royal Irish Rifles	28	Calcutta F.C.	18
1902	K.O.S.B.	26	93 Highlanders	25
1903	93 Highlanders	31	Calcutta F.C.	26

1904	King's Own Regiment	23	Calcutta F.C	21
1905	King's Own Regiment	24	Calcutta F.C	22
1906	H.L.I.	23	Calcutta F.C	22
1907	Calcutta F.C	23	H.L.I.	22
1908	Gordon Highlanders	28	H.L.I	21
1909	Gordon Highlanders	24	Dalhousie A.C.	19
1910	Dalhousie A.C. (Declared Winner on the Basis Of Goal Difference)	20	Customs	20
1911	70 C.R.G.A.	24	Dalhousie A.C.	22
1912	Black Watch	32	1 st Middlesex Regiment	26
1913	Black Watch	28	91 Highlanders	26
1914	91 Highlanders	29	R.F.A.	23
1915	10 th Middlesex	26	E.B.S.R.	18

	Regiment			
1916	Calcutta F.C.	22	Mohun Bagan	17
1917	Lincoln's Regiment	24	Calcutta F.C.	20
1918	Calcutta F.C	23	Lincoln's Regiment	20
1919	12 th Special Service	24	Somerset	23
1920	Calcutta F.C.	27	Mohun Bagan	25
1921	Dalhousie A.C.	26	Mohun Bagan	24
1922	Calcutta F.C.	27	Royal west Kent	20
1923	Calcutta F.C.	23	S.W.Borderers	19
1924	Camerons		S.W.Borderers	
1925	Calcutta F.C.	22	Mohun Bagan	21
1926	North Stafford (By Winning 3-1 Against Calcutta F.C. in a playoff North	26	Calcutta F.C.	26

	Stafford won the League Title)			
1927	North Stafford	32	Dalhousie A.C.	29
1928	Dalhousie A.C.	28	D.C.L.I.	25
1929	Dalhousie A.C.	26	D.C.L.I. & Mohun Bagan	23 (Both)
1930	--		--	
1931	Durham Light Infantry	30	Calcutta F.C.	22
1932	Durham Light Infantry	27	East Bengal	26
1933	Durham Light Infantry	26	East Bengal	25
1934	Mohammedan Sporting	27	Dalhousie A.C & Mohun Bagan	24 (Both)
1935	Mohammedan Sporting	30	East Bengal	29
1936	Mohammedan Sporting	36	Black Watch	34
1937	Mohammedan	34	East Bengal	28

	Sporting			
1938	Mohammedan Sporting (By defeating Customs 1-0 in a playoff Mohammedan Sporting won the League Title	30	Customs	30
1939	Mohun Bagan	39	Rangers	34
1940	Mohammedan Sporting	40	Mohun Bagan	37
1941	Mohammedan Sporting	43	East Bengal	40
1942	East Bengal	43	Mohammedan Sporting	40
1943	Mohun Bagan	39	East Bengal	37
1944	Mohun Bagan	40	Mohammedan Sporting	39
1945	East Bengal	39	Mohun Bagan	38

1946	East Bengal	43	Mohun Bagan	42
1947	--		--	

Informations of the above chart are derived from following sources

1. Bhattacharya, Rakhal (RB); '*Kolkata Football*', Shibram Kumar (ed.), Prabhabati Prakashani, Kolkata, 2002
2. Amrita Bazar Patrika, Calcutta, August, 1905
3. The Indian Daily News, July, 1920
4. Majumdar, Boria & Bandyopadhyay, Kausik; '*Goalless: Story of a Unique Footballing Nation*', Penguin/Viking, New Delhi, 2009

White Teams, Won the Trades Cup during Colonial Period

Years	Champion European (White)Teams
1889	Dalhousie Athletic Club
1890	The Buffs Regiment
1891	Second King's Liverpool Regiment

1892	First East Lancashire Regiment
1893	St. Xavier's College
1894	Medical College
1895	Medical College
1896	Shibpur Civil Engineering College
1897	A.E.R.C. (Jamalpur)
1898	A.E.R.C. (Jamalpur)
1899	Dalhousie Athletic Club
1901	Shibpur Civil Engineering College
1903	Medical College
1904	Medical College
1905	Shibpur Civil Engineering College
1909	Wanderers S.E.

1910	E.I. Railway (Asansol)
1915	Howrah Rovers
1916	Police A.C.
1917	Medical College
1919	Griar Sporting
1920	Medical College
1921	Telegraph Recreation
1922	Dalhousie Athletic Club 'B'
1923	Griar Sporting
1924	E.B. Railway
1925	Police A.C.
1928	Medical College

1929	Telegraph Institute
1930	St. Joseph College
1931	Customs 'B'
1932	Howrah Union
1933	Dalhousie Athletic Club 'B'
1934	Police A.C.
1935	Police A.C.
1936	Rangers
1937	Napier
1940	Robert Hudson
1941	Robert Hudson
1947	Dalhousie Athletic Club

Informations of the above chart are derived from following sources

1. Bhattacharya, Rakhal (RB); '*Kolkata Football*', Shibram Kumar (ed.), Prabhabati Prakashani, Kolkata, 2002
2. The Indian Daily News, Calcutta, July, 1920
3. The Statesman, Calcutta, August, 1923

Notes and References

1. Mitra, Soumen; 'In Search of an Identity: The History of Football in Colonial Calcutta', Das Gupta & Co. Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata, 2006, Pp. 9-11
2. Nandi, Moti; 'Calcutta Soccer' in 'Calcutta the Living City: The Present and Future', Vol. 2, Sukanta Chowdhury (ed.), Oxford University Press, Kolkata, 1990, p. 316
3. Mitra, Soumen; Op.cit, Pp. 110-111
4. Nandi, Moti; Op.cit, p. 316
5. Bhattacharya, Rakhal (RB); '*Kolkata Football*', Shibram Kumar (ed.), Prabhabati Prakashani, Kolkata, 2002, Pp. 67-70
6. Ibid, p. 67
7. Ibid, Pp. 68-110
8. Ibid, Pp. 90-100
9. Ibid, Pp. 70-85
10. Horne, John and Manzenreiter, Wolfram; 'An Introduction to the Sociology of Sports Mega Events' in 'Sports Mega Events: Social Scientific Analyses of a Global Phenomenon', John Horne and Wolfram Manzenreiter (ed.), Blackwell Publishing, Hong Kong, 2006, Pp. 1-5
11. Mitra, Soumen; Op.cit, p. 55
12. Calcutta F.C. won the IFA Shield in 1896, 1900, 1903-04, 1906, 1915, 1922-24 and the First Division of the Calcutta Football League in 1899, 1907, 1916, 1918, 1929, 1922-23, 1925 in both cases maximum number of times among all the white teams of

Calcutta Football during the colonial period and the statistics clearly showed that the team enjoyed their successes for a long span of time, upto the 1930s.

13. Bhattacharya, Rakhal (RB); Op.cit, Pp. 400-410
14. Ibid, Pp. 67-75, 400-425
15. Dalhousie Athletic Club won the IFA Shield in 1897, 1905 and the Calcutta Football League in 1910, 1921, 1928-29
16. Bhattacharya, Rakhal (RB); Op.cit, Pp. 400-410
17. In case of Trades Cup, Dalhousie Athletic Club won 4 times in 1889, 1922, 1933 and 1947 (though in 1922 and 1933 Dalhousie B team won the Trades Cup Title) while the Calcutta Football Club not even a single time won the tournament. (most of the time Calcutta F.C. did not compete in this tournament)
18. Rangers won the Trades Cup only once during the colonial period in 1936 and in 1898 in the very first edition of the first division of the Calcutta Football League Rangers finished as the Runner-Up while Hastings won the Trades Cup just for once in 1899.
19. Bhattacharya, Rakhal (RB); Op.cit, Pp. 67-68, 70
20. Mitra, Soumen; Op.cit, p. 318
21. Basu, Jaydeep; 'Stories from Indian Football', USB Publishers & Distributors Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2003, Pp. 1-2, 5, 18-28
22. Bhattacharya, Rakhal (RB); Op.cit, Pp. 68-69
23. Ibid, p. 69

Chapter Four

The ‘Native’ Football Clubs; New Football Competitions in Colonial Time

During the second half of 19th century as an inseparable part of the new emerging colonial culture certain new sporting activities were also introduced in Bengali society. From this period the physical sporting activities started to become popular among the native masses. To destroy the colonial myth of the physical weakness of Bengali people, the physical exercises and sporting activities became more regular in practice. One section of the Bengali society also tried to prove that they were equally competent with the Europeans in all sorts of physical challenges. Bengali entrepreneurs of aristocrat families also involved themselves in certain activities. Nabagopal Mitra and Priyanath Bose introduced modern circus in Bengali society. Nabagopal Mitra was one of the pioneering personalities of 19th century Bengal who gave importance to the revival of physical culture in order to get back the pride of the Bengali masses as a race. Thus through ‘Hindu Mela’ and other activities he repeatedly promoted the physical culture among the Bengali youths. He was also a staunch supporter of 19th century nationalism. Thus he organized the ‘National Circus’. He himself argued that through this circus he wanted to show the colonial masters that the Bengali masses were not at all an inferior race in respect to the

white Europeans. Thus in his circus most of the players were either Bengali or Non-Bengali Indians. But he never allowed any foreign player in his circus. But all the Europeans tricks and games were included and all used to be performed by the native performers. His 'National Circus' was ever modern circus on Indian soil that used to be run by Indian management and Indian players. His legacy was later carried on by Prof. Priyanath Bose. Against of the will of his family Priyanath Bose went to the circus business. He organized the 'Great Bengal Circus' by following the games and techniques of the 'Great Britain Circus'. Priyanath Bose gave prior importance to the physical performances like trapeze and gymnastics in his circus. In 1884 the performance of his circus pleased the then Viceroy Lord Duffrin in such a way that he was given the title of Professor by the Viceroy himself. Like Nabagopal Mitra, Priyanath Bose also had enormous belief over the native players and performers. Beside the male players like Badalchand and Motilal, female players like Sushila Sundari and her sister Miss Mrinmoyee also became famous as the great players and entertrainers of the 'Great Bengal Circus'. ⁽¹⁾ Colonel Suresh Biswas, the famous Bengali adventurer, was also a person of this period. He went to Brazil and there he joined the colonial army and due to his efficiency, courage and warring technics he rose to the post of Colonel in the colonial army of Brazil. All these events clearly indicate that the Eurocentric concept of the physical effeminacy of the Bengali masses was a completely vogue concept. ⁽²⁾ The adventurous Bengali novels like '*Chander Pahar*' of Bibhutibhushan

Bandyopadhyay and '*Jokher Dhan*' and '*Abar Jokher Dhan*' of Hemendra Kumar Roy are also set on the background of this particular time period. During this phase, the colonial sports like football, cricket and hockey were introduced to the Bengali society. These sports gave birth to a new sporting culture in Bengal. Along with the native sports these new sporting activities started to be popular during this time among the common masses. Though, at first, these colonial sports were generally limited within the Europeans and Anglo Indian communities but gradually the local people started to participate in these sports and with this their popularities started to increase massively. As a result of that competitive measures were introduced soon in these sporting activities. So, towards the end of the 19th century and in the beginning of the 20th century a completely new sporting platform was emerged in Bengal. These sporting activities played a great role behind the emergence and spread of nationalist zeal among the common masses. But in case of Bengal, gradually, the nationalist expressions became more connected with the game of football than any other sports. With the passage of time basically the game of football created a new emotional base among the native masses of Bengal and this thing not just only developed a new cultural phenomenon but also directly helped in the rise of an emotional nationalist feeling among the common masses of Bengal. ⁽³⁾

Achievements of the Native Football Teams

After 1857 in the post Great Revolt period besides the administrative changes the social and cultural transformation also appeared in Bengali society. With the influence of western ideology and education in new Bengali intelligentsia, the essence of western culture slowly started seeping down in the Bengali masses. The educated middle class Bengali masses started taking interest in football. In this regard the first patronage came from the native elite class. During the closing period of 19th century certain wealthy Bengali dynasties came forward and started to establish certain football clubs with different native identities. ⁽⁴⁾

In this regard, the pioneering role was played by Babu Nagendraprasad Sarbadhikari. He took great initiative in popularizing the game of football among the local masses. He founded the first Indian football club in 1884. It was the Wellington Football Club. It was rent by factions within just one year and some members left to form the Town Club in 1885. The same year Nagendraprasad got married into Shovabazar Raj family and at once his enthusiasm for football found new inspiration to set up the Shobhabazar Club. Along with Nagendraprasad Sarbadhikari, Kumar Jishnendrakrishna Deb from the aristocratic house of the Deb family of Shovabazar (Founded by Nabakrishna Deb. He was the Munshi of Persian language of Sir Robert Clive. Babu Nabakrishna Deb also introduced the famous '*Durga Puja*' of the Deb family in the year of 1757.), and the Maharaja of Coochbehar. ⁽⁵⁾ The football team of

Shovabazar made its first major outing against a European side in 1889, when the team was sided against the St. Xaviers College football team. This particular match was thoroughly watched by the Lt. Governor of Bengal. Irrespective of their hard fight Shovabazar lost the match by 0-3 scoreline. Norman Pritchard (In the Paris Summer Olympic of 1900 he won two silver medals in athletics) scored a brilliant hatrick in this match. But the native players of Shovabazar also showed certain admirable skills in this match. Later this particular team took the Indian challenge to the British side for the first time. In 1892 as the first Indian club Shobhabazar defeated the English team East Surrey with 2-1 scoreline. This event is regarded as the first major achievement by any of the native football teams in Calcutta Maidan. In 1915 the Shobhabazar Club also qualified for the second division of the Calcutta Football League. ⁽⁶⁾

Immediately after the establishment of the Shobhabazar Club in the same year the teacher of Kalighat High School, Manmatha Ganguly established the National Association as a football club in South Calcutta. It was basically a football club for the native youths. Manmatha Ganguly was another pioneering figure to promote the physical culture among the native youths. He played a very significant role to spread the popularity of the game of football among the native youths during the primary stage. National Association became a very prominent football team among the native teams towards the close of the 19th century and during the beginning of the 20th century. This particular team also

copied the British style of the game in the football field. It was first team which attained serial successes during the first decade of the 20th century. Among the native Indian football teams National Association won the Trades Cup maximum times during the colonial period. ⁽⁷⁾ The Club was established by one of the greatest protagonist of Indian football, Manmatha Ganguly, The Teacher of Kalighat Institution, started his aluminous effort to spread the interest of the game among youths and students. Another great enthusiast and one of the most significant protagonists of the colonial sports in Bengal was Dukhiram (Oomeshchandra) Majumdar. His legacy ultimately turned into the foundation of the Students Union Club in 1887-88 in North Calcutta. However, the club lasted for just one year but its dispute ultimately created two major clubs of contemporary native football- Mohun Bagan and Aryan, among which Majumdar founded the latter in 1890. ⁽⁸⁾ He was not just only the founder of the Aryan club but he was just everything for the club. He was the founder, the patron, the player (both in football and cricket), the coach (both football and cricket) and also the recruiter for the Aryan Club. He not just only played for the club in his golden playing days but also nurtured the young footballing and cricketing talents and also did everything for their future flourishment. He sacrificed a lot in his entire life for the development of the sporting culture among the common Bengalis. He also used the sports field to develop the communal harmony also. Once he recruited the great sporting talent Matiyur Rehman for Aryan. He brought him to his own house and provided everything

to him for his rise in the sporting arena of Calcutta football. When Bidhubhushan Mukherjee, a great opening batsman refused to play along with so called lower class player Phaguram and Palwankar Balu due to his higher caste Brahmin Identity he faced utter criticism from his mentor Dukhiram Majumdar. Dukhiram Majumdar had always given importance to the technical details of the sporting activities. He believed in physical strength and capacity and also emphasized on the idea of emotional nationalism that was connected with the sporting field during the colonial period. Thus he took his trainees to the wrestling *akhada* of Gobor (Jatindracharan) Guha and requested him to train his fellows in wrestling so that they would attend the physical strength to compete with the European footballers of the white clubs. But he always preferred to play with boots as he believed that this technical instinct is very much important for the better future of the Indian football. Due to his great efforts Aryan turned into a very prominent football club in Calcutta football during the first half of 20th century and also attained great successes in football field during the colonial period. Dukhiram Majumdar was also known to his students and followers as ‘Sir’. ⁽⁹⁾ To Amal Dutta he was the first and only one person of Calcutta Maidan who was unanimously known as ‘Sir’. ⁽¹⁰⁾

The establishment of the other football clubs who cropped up in different localities accompanied all these significant events. Clubs like Kumartuli, Chandannagar Sporting, Chinsura Sporting, Kalighat Sporting, Jodabagan etc.

emerged to the scenario one by one. But the establishment of all these clubs also specified the socio-political and economic differences between the ruler and the ruled relevant also in the football ground. Neither these clubs were financially compatible with the local white teams nor were the players of these Indian teams equally equipped with all the necessary equipments of the game. This deficiency led to the rise of a new style in Indian football culture and that was the bare foot style. On the other hand, during the Swadeshi era (first decade of 20th century) due to the political effort the rejection of foreign especially English products became a significant form of protest. This system was also reflected in the football field by adopting the barefoot style by the Indian players. As the English players used the adequate football boots the Indian players chose the alternative path, which could have been regarded as the rejection of English method of playing the game to reflect a protest against the colonial domination. The barefoot style got so immense popularity within the Indians that it became a trademark sign of Indian style of football during the colonial period. This style was even also continued in the early half of the post-independence era. ⁽¹¹⁾

Among the native pioneers of the game Manmatha Ganguly and his National team attended continuous successes in the football field. It was the team which repeatedly won the prestigious Trades Cup. It was the only trophy at that time which was open for both the white and the native teams. Though the white civil

and military teams used to send their 'B' (reserve) teams for the Trades Cup but in respect of the quality of those European teams it was extremely creditable for any native side to own the trophy by defeating these white teams. In this regard National under Manmatha Ganguly was the first Indian football side in Bengal that took the challenge to a serious level. During the last decade of 19th century and first decade of 20th century National became the most successful native club. But similar to Dukhiram Majumdar, Manmatha Ganguly also did not like the bare foot style. He always preferred to wear the boots. Not just only because he wanted to follow the English style, but he was also aware of the scientific and physical necessity of the boots. He repeatedly told the young footballers to get habituated by playing with the boots. According to him without the boots it would be unequal challenge of the natives against the booted Europeans. In fact in the rainy fields it would be next to impossible to challenge the booted white players with bare foot. Later on his advice proved very much vital for the Indian football, especially in the post-independence era. During 1920s and 1930s Dukhiram Majumdar also continued the same technique in order to develop the Aryan Club which became one of the prominent native sides from 1920s. Not just only that Aryan also became a great centre for the flourishing of the young talents. Dukhiram Majumdar's own nephew Santosh (Chhone) Majumdar also attained mastery over the game by playing in Aryan for quite a long time.

(12) Dukhiram Majumdar also took significant role in the development and spread of the game of cricket. Talents like Bidhubhushan Mukherjee and Moni

Das were nourished by him in the cricket field. ⁽¹³⁾ But his great contributions in the sporting field remained in the football ground. Yet his appeal for playing with boots was often neglected by a great section of the native players. The financial condition of the players was responsible to a certain extent in this regard. But apart from that the Bengali players were reluctant in this regard for some other issues to. The bare foot style turned into 'Swadeshi Style' of the game of football. Especially during the anti-partition and swadeshi movement it became very much prominent. In fact the successes of Mohun Bagan attained during this time with bare foot football also inspired the native footballers to adopt the bare foot style. But it produced negative results in many occasions. ⁽¹⁴⁾ Like in the IFA Shield final of 1920 the aspiring Indian side Kumortuli lost against a European side in a rainy field mainly due to their appearance in the field with bare feet. Mohun Bagan also faced similar crises many times during the colonial period. But to counter the concept of colonial masculinity the native players mostly remained bare footed throughout the colonial period. In this regard the successes of Mohun Bagan became the most inspiring factor. ⁽¹⁵⁾

This structural deficiency made the native teams technically weaker than the white teams. But despite that by surprising and astonishing everyone these native clubs with the Bengali *Bhadralok* class ownership broke the monopoly of the local Europeans in practicing the game of football which definitely caused the glory of Indian pride. With the appearance of different competitive football

tournaments and also with the rise of political consciousness among the Indians the competitive measure was inflicted in the game of football and here at the primary level of competitive football these native teams showed challenging opposition to the technically superior European opponents. ⁽¹⁶⁾

The native club which first time made history in Indian football is Mohun Bagan. The club is established in 1889. But it attained serial successes during the first half of 20th century. It attained serial successes in the Trades Cup (1906, 1907 and 1908), Gladstone Cup (1905), Coochbehar Cup and Lakhibilas Cup. Then the club made history in 1911 by winning the IFA Shield. Mohun Bagan defeated all the white teams (St. Xaviers, Rangers, Rifle Brigade, 1st Middlesex Regiment and East Yorkshire Regiment) in the way of winning the historic IFA Shield on 29th July, 1911. This event inflicted nationalist zeal among the native masses. In fact it also directly paved the way for Hindu-Muslim unity in the national sphere. The event also indirectly boosted the anti-colonial political struggle. Later on in 1915 Mohun Bagan also qualified to play in the first division of the Calcutta Football League. Gradually the club transformed into a nationalist symbol. Thus the white lords took certain dishonest measures to stop Mohun Bagan from attaining further glory. But still the club made certain respectable results in various tournaments. Football legend like Gostha Pal became famous due to his tough tackles against the white players. Though he did not receive a single trophy throughout his career but still he became famous

due to his bare feet tough tackles in the football field especially against the European players. After Mohun Bagan only in 1920 Kumartuli reached to the final of the IFA Shield as the second Indian team but could not win the title. ⁽¹⁷⁾

The historic victory of Mohun Bagan in the IFA Shield of 1911 completely changed the scenario of Indian football. It provided immense confidence among the native masses and football became a nationalist expression for the native youths. In fact it inflicted certain spirit of communal and national unity among the native masses. Though the club authority repeatedly appealed to take it as a sporting victory but the masses spontaneously took it as an event of national pride. The tremendous hike of the event in press and media in both internal and international level made this win a historic event in the sporting history of India.

⁽¹⁸⁾ In one hand the Indian papers like ‘Amrita Bazar Patrika’ ⁽¹⁹⁾, ‘Basumati’ ⁽²⁰⁾, ‘Sanjeevani’ ⁽²¹⁾, and ‘The Bengalee’ ⁽²²⁾ etc. inflicted nationalist zeal with in the event and projected the Shield triumph of Mohun Bagan as an anti-colonial achievement by the native bare footed footballers. (Only Rev. Sudhir Chatterjee; Left-back of Mohun Bagan played with boots in his feet.). ⁽²³⁾

In its editorial on 31st July 1911 ‘Amrita Bazar Patrika’ wrote, “*The victory is no doubt ours and that in the line of physical culture where in the Bengalees at any rate were so long held to be lamentably deficient. We are therefore prepared to excuse the wild enthusiasm in which almost every Indian lost himself on that memorable Saturday evening. But if we are to be true to Hindu*

instinct and culture such triumphs should not at all be exploited for other ends than establishing the best of relations between the two races. These are divine events meant for facilitating the harmonious working of two great peoples by curbing to a certain extent the pride of the one and contributing to the growing self-consciousness of the other. The Indian, with his head raised erect by these incidents, will take his rightful place by the side of his ruler and give his best for the fulfillment of the work for which Providence has brought the two peoples together. ’’(24)

On the other hand the mouthpieces and supporters of the colonial government like ‘Englishman’ ⁽²⁵⁾, ‘Statesman’ ⁽²⁶⁾, ‘Indian Daily News’ ⁽²⁷⁾ etc. newspapers though congratulate the native side but they also argued that this success of Indian football only came due to the benevolent attitude of the colonial government towards the native masses. According to these newspapers the native footballers of Mohun Bagan only proved to be great learners to their white teachers.

In the words of ‘The Indian Daily News’, *“The apex of local football championship was reached on the Calcutta ground on Saturday, when once more the curtain was rung down on a denouncement in the last act of the shield drama of the Nineteenth season, which will be memorable on account of its record attendance both in and out of the enclosures which must necessarily have given a record collection of the gate money, with which the local charities*

are to be benefited. But the glorifying record of the victory of the Indian team in the shield final which has created quite a commotion in various Indian circles from lowest to the uppermost stratum of the society is the most noble and edifying performance of which the Indians may well be proud. The result was a victory for the Mohun Bagan team by two goals to one; a clean and open struggle replete with tricky and stirring runs, adroit moments and deft individual touches. That the better team had won on their merit, no sportsman will deny...

A look round the C.F.C. Ground and a cursory glance to the adjoining grounds where less enthusiastic supporters strolled the ramparts of the Fort, the trees in the Eden Gardens where human-bats were perched even on the topmost branches of the trees and roofs of carriages gave us the impression that the crowd numbered quite sixty thousand, an indisputably record attendance the like of which has never been known to Calcutta sport. Unlike the past, the crowd was very orderly, but the cheering was crescend when a goal was scored or a nice bit of good play by an Indian player was witnessed.

The howling and boisterous element, whose conduct and remarks were noticed in these columns to be objectionable, was conspicuous by its absence. Their behavior both during the progress of the match and after it was admirable. At 10 o'clock on Saturday there were quite ten thousand people on the ground and it grew to our estimated number about four or five hours.

To a Bengalee, this brilliant and epoch-making achievement of the Mohun Bagan Team is a National glory and rightly do they feel proud of their countrymen's performance, which will be recorded in the annals of the football history of Bengal, nay Indian in letters of gold. The progress of the Mohun Bagan team has been watched by Indian and every sporting European, who not carried away by bitter racial sentiments, have given an unqualified praise for their brilliant performance. From the young of ten summers to the old of eighty-winters in an Indian house-hold, there have been shown for the last few days an uncommon zeal, keen interest and a noble enthusiasm. People who had never seen a football kicked in their life and those whose antipathy to the great spectacular game has been long established and well-known have now come forward and joined the multitudinous crowd to greet Mohun Bagan team for heroic achievements. They have all along given expression to their appreciation in a marked and unmistakable way, and with the good wishes of the victorious career reaching and consummation 'devoutly to be wished for'. That a Bengalee team will ever annex the blue riband of local football, by beating the redoubtable, civil and military, combinations of established repute, could never be dreamt of by anybody before Saturday. But all the same it has been done and now a thing of the past. ”⁽²⁸⁾

‘The Englishman’ referred about this historic win on its edition of 31st July, 1911, “For the first time in nineteen years the shield has been won by an Indian

Team, and there is no sportsman who will not acknowledge that the victory was well deserved. On the day's form, the Mohun Bagan were distinctly the better team. For some reason or other, the East Yorks played a rather slow and ponderous game. Their performance was relieved from time to time with flashes of real brilliancy, but they seemed curiously unable to grasp the situation and they were obviously unacquainted with the fast and 'humble' play of a very clever combination. Against a team with a better knowledge of their methods, the Mohun Bagan would probably have had to play much better to win. Even as it was, they were opposed to a formidable combination and to defeat East Yorks by two goals to one is a performance that stamps the Mohun Bagan as a team to be reckoned with in the future. They won by superior play and by a greater determination than their opponents and showed that they learned the lesson that English players in India have taught them. ”⁽²⁹⁾

This argument of ‘The Englishman’ had been thoroughly refuted by the vernacular daily ‘Basumati’ and in this regard ‘Basumati’ and ‘The Englishman’ had engaged in a serious debate against each other. ⁽³⁰⁾ On the other hand the Muslim newspapers like ‘The Mussalmans’ ⁽³¹⁾, ‘The Muslim Chronicle’ ⁽³²⁾ etc. showed their generosity and their great enthusiasm towards the historic victory of their Hindu Brothers. In fact in the editorial of his newspaper ‘Comrade’ Mohammad Ali Jinnah also congratulated Mohun Bagan for their historic triumph in the football field.

The Comrade wrote, *“We heartily join the chorus of praise and jubilation over the splendid victory of Mohun Bagan. The Team did remarkably well right through the tournament and won the shield by sheer merit. This has been acknowledged by all who are competent to express views on the merits of the merits of the teams and we are glad to notice that nobody has tried to take away from the deserts of Mohun Bagan by suggesting that they owed anything to luck.”* (33)

‘The Mussalman’ also commented, *“The victory of Mohun Bagan, the indigenous team, in the above competition, held on Saturday last, over East Yorks, a British Regiment, has not only been the cause of universal jubilation in the country, but has demonstrated that Indians are second to none in all manly games.....The success of Mohun Bagan has turned over a new leaf in the history of manly sport in Calcutta. The remarkable skill, courage, and , in fact, all that constitutes a good game, and of which Mohun Bagan has given unmistakable proofs cannot fail to evoke the sincerest applause from all lovers of manly sports....*

It is worthy of note in this connection that although Mohun Bagan was a team composed of Bengalee Hindus, the jubilation in consequence of its success was not confined to any particular race or creed. It was a sense of universal joy, which pervaded the feelings of the Hindus, the Mohammedans and the Christians alike. The members of the Muslim Sporting Club were almost mad

and rolling on the ground with joyous excitement on the victory of their Hindu brethren.” ⁽³⁴⁾

So the victory of Mohun Bagan in the IFA Shield in 1911 turned the club into a national symbol and the bare foot style of football turned into an all Indian football style. ⁽³⁵⁾ The ‘Times of India (Bombay)’ also made detail report of this victory and proposed organization of a match between Mohun Bagan and the champion of local Harwood League of Bombay which they consider much inferior in quality than the Calcutta side.

“The remarkable success achieved by the Mohun Bagan Club in this season’s Indian Football Association Challenge Shield Competition must not be regarded as a mere flash in the pan. In Calcutta, for several years past, Indian Football players have been steadily improving, and every year has seen the formation of new clubs. Each school and college of note has its own team, and competitions and trophies have increased in an amazing degree. When the Indian Football Association was established about 15 years ago, Calcutta had but one competition, the Trades Cup. Then the present Shield was presented and the old trophy became the aim of junior teams. For some years it was won by European teams and then came along the Bengalees, who had meanwhile taken up the game with great earnest. The first of these to gain distinction was the National Sporting Association and for years this team was easily the best. True, they were rarely able to defeat European teams of standing, but they were really

the pioneers. The first surprise came when in the famous Minto-Fete tournament a few years ago, the Mohun Bagans, drawn against the Calcutta Football Club, won after a hard fight. Unfortunately they were unable to enjoy the fruits of their victory because having played some unqualified men they were put out. But that was the first great win placed to the credit of the Indians. The same won the Trades Cup in that year. Since then, the Bengalees have moved steadily forward, and as the history of the 1911 tournament indicates they have moved rapidly. A visit to Bombay from the champions of India and a match with winners of the Harwood League would give a much needed fillip to local football, whose quality is as yet a long way behind that of the Calcutta side.” (36)

‘The Singapore Free Press’ also made this event popular in the South-East Asian countries through its valuable report.

“Never in the annals of Indian football has there been such a crowd as gathered this afternoon to watch the final in the match of the Indian Football Association Challenge Shield between the East Yorks and Mohun Bagan. At the modest computation it is believed that the crowd numbered 1, 00,000.” (37)

During the first half of 20th century in the North Calcutta region Jodabagan Football Club became very popular. The club also attained certain successes in the competitions like Trades Cup and Coochbehar Cup. The club mainly represented the identity of the aristocrat families of North Calcutta. In the year

of 1920 along with Mohun Bagan; Jodabagan also reached the final of Coochbehar Cup but finally lost the match with 0-2 scoreline. The club authority blamed two players Nasha Sen and Sailesh Basu for this defeat. Both of them were of East Bengal origin. The vice-president of the club Suresh Chowdhury took this incident as a general insult of the people of East Bengal origin. He resigned from his post and united all the influential persons of East Bengal origin who used to live in Calcutta due to various purposes. Finally they all together established a new football club on August 1, 1920 and named the club East Bengal. After some initial hick-ups and hurdles East Bengal ultimately turned into a major football club of Calcutta Maidan. From the 5 a side tournament of Hercules Cup the team gradually became one of the most successful sides of Calcutta football during the colonial period. ⁽³⁸⁾ During the decade of 1940s East Bengal attained serial successes and thus became an equal contender for all the first class tournaments along with Mohun Bagan and Mohammedan Sporting. ⁽³⁹⁾

Another native club which became a prominent part of Indian football culture during the colonial period was Mohammedan Sporting Club. The religious Islamic identity was present within the club since its foundation. A group of educated Muslim youths of Calcutta formed a football club named 'Jubilee Club' in 1887 to introduce the new order of physical culture among the Muslim community of Calcutta. But within one and half year the club faced serious

economic crisis. Later it reappeared with the new name -The Crescent Club. This club also failed to survive but again re-established as the Hamidia Club. Finally in 1891 with the influence of Mohammad Ismail and Abdul Bari the club survived with the new name of Mohammedan Sporting Club. Though the club finally emerged in 1891 but throughout the major part of the colonial period the club had to struggle hard both against the European as well as other local clubs. But from 1930s sudden advancement inflicted within the clubs performances in the field of football mainly due to the appearance of the great visionary Mr. A.K. Aziz. The entire 1930s and 1940s brought the 'Golden Era' for Mohammedan Sporting in the football field. The club registered its name in the history of Indian football by not only just winning the prestigious first division Calcutta Football League in 1934 as the first Indian football team but also by winning it five consecutive times from 1934 to 1938. Apart from that the club also won the IFA Shield (1936), Rovers Cup (1940), De Mont Morenci Cup (1939) and also Durand Cup (1940) during this period. Virtually the great serial successes of Mohammedan Sporting marked the end of the European supremacy from Indian football. ⁽⁴⁰⁾ Though the club did not have any scope in communal politics but still the successes of the club in the football field very much affected the Muslim unity of the country and the club's successes in the decade of 1940s very much inspired the Muslim pride which indirectly boosted the separatist politics of Muslim League during this crucial stage of Indian politics. ⁽⁴¹⁾

Among the other native clubs Kumortuli, Aryan and Shovabazar Club attended certain creditable achievements during the colonial period. But these clubs failed to register any prestigious championship title against their name throughout the colonial period. Towards the end of the colonial period Aryan became one of the prominent football clubs of Calcutta Maidan. It attained certain successes such as winning the IFA Shield in 1940 etc. Following the guidelines of Dukhiram Majumdar his nephew Santosh (Chhone) Majumdar turned Aryan into a formidable force in Calcutta Football. It also gained the support of a considerable section of the inhabitants of North Calcutta. Even after the independence and partition Aryan continued their good form and players like Santosh Debgupta, Sanat Seth and Ranjit Bose emerged to the scenario of Calcutta football in 1950s by playing for Aryan in their early footballing days. (Santosh Debgupta played for Aryan throughout his carrier and he was the only one footballer of Calcutta Maidan ever who played with spectacles in his eyes.)

⁽⁴²⁾ Yet these native sides also produced considerable number of quality footballers who definitely enhance the status of Indian football during the colonial era. Habul Sarkar and Tulsi babu were among thsesse players who expressed the fearlessness and tremendous physicality within the game to counter the colonial myth of physical weakness and inferiority of the native Bengali footballers. ⁽⁴³⁾

During 1940s due to the outbreak of the Second World War the British regiments became busy with the war situation. At the same time internal revolutions also made the situation worse for the colonial government. So the British regimental teams withdrew themselves from Calcutta football. Taking the advantage of this situation the local teams took over the control of Calcutta football. They set the platform for the rise of a new kind of competitive rivalry in the football field on the verge of independence. Apart from Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting local clubs like Aryan and Kumortuli also attained certain successes during this period. Especially Aryan club delivered certain regularity in its performances and became a tough challenger to the major clubs during this period. ⁽⁴⁴⁾ Almost 20% population of North Calcutta became the supporters of Aryan during this time. So before the independence the local clubs set a completely new kind of rivalry in Calcutta football. ⁽⁴⁵⁾

Counter to the Concept of Colonial Masculinity

Throughout the colonial period in the history of India the concept of colonial masculinity was a very serious issue. The white colonial lords (except few generous gentlemen) in general used to consider the native masses very much inferior to them in quality. In fact the Evangelical concept of 'Whiteman's Burden' made them to think them superior to the native masses in all aspects.

Most of them believed that the European or the occidental civilization was superior to the orient. Thus it developed the masculine status of occident where the oriental civilization became feminine or inferior to them. ⁽⁴⁶⁾ The oriental nationalism started to counter this concept of colonial masculinity in various fields. In this respect the sporting activities were also not any exceptions.

Like the other colonial sports in the field of football the white lords also created space for enough discrimination. In the initial stage the native teams were completely prohibited to participate in the prestigious tournaments of Calcutta football like IFA Shield and First Division of the Calcutta Football League. Only the Trades Cup was an open tournament for the both native and white football teams. But in this tournament also the white teams (both civil and military) used to send their second teams or youth teams to this tournament. National was first team to qualify for the IFA Shield. But the myth of superiority of the English teams in football field was first time greatly challenged by Mohun Bagan in 1911 through their historic IFA Shield win. Thus the bare foot style of football also became a counter-phenomenon against the colonial masculinity of booted football of the white teams. ⁽⁴⁷⁾ Throughout 1920s with the rise of '*joubanbad*' in Bengali culture the native youths started to counter the colonial myth of occidental masculinity in various fields. In literature the poets-novelists-dramatists of new generation like Kazi Nazrul Islam, Manish Ghatak, Buddhadeb Basu, Premendra Mitra and others started to

counter the colonial myth through their writings, ⁽⁴⁸⁾ whereas in football field Gostho Pal-Tulsi Babu-Hafiz Rashid and others started to counter the colonial myth through their footballing skills. Gradually the up gradation of the native football teams started to break the concept of colonial masculinity. With the great triumph of Mohammedan Sporting in 1930s with the supremacy of the white teams on Calcutta football the concept of colonial masculinity had also faced its burial in Indian soil. ⁽⁴⁹⁾ Thus the sporting triumphs especially the footballing success of the native teams played significant role to counter the Evangelical concept of colonial masculinity.

Beginning of Live Football Commentary in Radio

With the development of the native football teams and with the spread of the popularity of the game of football among the native masses also certain new aspects were introduced for the further development and popularity of the game in Calcutta. In this regard in 1930 the IFA introduced radio commentary of live football matches. In this regard the pioneering role was played by Bartimeyer. Initially the radio commentaries were all in English. But most of the native masses were not accustomed with this. Therefore in 1934 for the first time live match commentary had been introduced in Bengali by two legendary radio personalities- Birendra Krishna Bhadra and Raichand Boral. This live commentary had been given in a league match between the Calcutta Football

Club and Mohun Bagan. Though the initiative did not gained its desired success and the Bengali match commentary had been stopped until 1950 but still this event is significant in the history of Calcutta football as it marked the official beginning of a new sporting culture in Bengal. ⁽⁵⁰⁾

Notable Achievements of the Native Clubs in the Leading Football Championships of Calcutta Maidan during Colonial Period

Name of the Championships	Years	Name of the Native Clubs	Status in the Championship
Calcutta Football League First Division	1916	Mohun Bagan	Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1920	Mohun Bagan	Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1921	Mohun Bagan	Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1925	Mohun Bagan	Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1932	East Bengal	Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1933	East Bengal	Runner Up
Calcutta Football League	1934	Mohammedan Sporting	Winner

First Division			
Calcutta Football League First Division	1935	Mohammedan Sporting East Bengal	Winner Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1936	Mohammedan Sporting	Winner
Calcutta Football League First Division	1937	Mohammedan Sporting East Bengal	Winner Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1938	Mohammedan Sporting	Winner
Calcutta Football League First Division	1939	Mohun Bagan	Winner
Calcutta Football League First Division	1940	Mohammedan Sporting Mohun Bagan	Winner Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1941	Mohammedan Sporting Mohun Bagan	Winner Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1942	East Bengal	Winner

		Mohammedan Sporting	Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1943	Mohun Bagan East Bengal	Winner Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1944	Mohun Bagan Mohammedan Sporting	Winner Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1945	East Bengal Mohun Bagan	Winner Runner Up
Calcutta Football League First Division	1946	East Bengal Mohun Bagan	Winner Runner Up
IFA Shield	1911	Mohun Bagan	Winner
IFA Shield	1920	Kumortuli	Runner Up
IFA Shield	1923	Mohun Bagan	Runner Up
IFA Shield	1936	Mohammedan Sporting	Winner

IFA Shield	1938	Mohammedan Sporting	Runner Up
IFA Shield	1940	Aryan	Winner
		Mohun Bagan	Runner Up
IFA Shield	1941	Mohammedan Sporting	Winner
IFA Shield	1942	Mohammedan Sporting	Winner
		East Bengal	Runner Up
IFA Shield	1943	East Bengal	Winner
IFA Shield	1944	East Bengal	Runner Up
IFA Shield	1945	East Bengal	Winner
		Mohun Bagan	Runner Up
IFA Shield	1947	Mohun Bagan	Winner
		East Bengal	Runner Up

Trades Cup	1900	National Association	Winner
Trades Cup	1902	National Association	Winner
Trades Cup	1906	Mohun Bagan	Winner
Trades Cup	1907	Mohun Bagan	Winner
Trades Cup	1908	Mohun Bagan	Winner
Trades Cup	1911	Chandan Nagar Sporting	Winner
Trades Cup	1912	National Association	Winner
Trades Cup	1913	Aryan	Winner
Trades Cup	1914	Kumortuli	Winner
Trades Cup	1918	Jodabagan	Winner
Trades Cup	1938	Mohun Bagan	Winner
Trades Cup	1939	Mohun Bagan	Winner
Trades Cup	1942	Mahalaxmi Sporting	Winner

Trades Cup	1943	Mohun Bagan	Winner
Trades Cup	1944	Mohun Bagan	Winner
Trades Cup	1945	Mohun Bagan	Winner

Informations of the above chart are derived from following sources

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Notable Achievements of Native Calcutta Clubs Outside of Calcutta during Colonial Period

Year	Name of the Tournament	Place	Winner	Runner Up
1940	Durand Cup	New Delhi	Mohammedan Sporting	
1923	Rovers Cup	Bombay		Mohun Bagan
1940	Rovers Cup	Bombay	Mohammedan Sporting	

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Chapter Five

Effects of Partition; Transformation of Football Clubs in Post Independence Period (1950s & 1960s)

Beginning of the Transformation

During 1920s due to the rise of '*jaubanbad*' nationalist zeal tremendously emerged among the native youths. This thing had also reflected within the football field especially among the attitude of the spectators. Initially the supporters of the native clubs used to show their unrest against the white teams who no doubt superior in strength than their native counterparts. But with the transformation of the political scenario in India during 1930s the football culture of Calcutta Maidan had changed to certain order. In 1925 tremendous crowd unrest had taken place in the matches between Mohun Bagan and Dalhousie A.C. and Customs and Kumortuli etc. In most of these cases the bias attitudes of the white referees were highly responsible. But during 1930s the white teams started to lose their previous domination in Calcutta football and the native teams started to engage in deep rivalry against each other where the religious and regional identity of the clubs played the key role. The growing influence of the narrow communal politics reflected within the football field through the emerging rivalries between the native teams. This thing introduced tremendous

spectator violence in Calcutta football. ⁽¹⁾ In fact in 1937 during a league encounter between East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting where the red & gold brigade was leading in score line the football hooligans not even hesitate to kill a thirteen year old boy who used to be the supporter of the leading side. ⁽²⁾ During 1940s this kind of incidents became more regular in Calcutta football. In many cases the violent crowd started to outburst their anger against the referees. The renowned and efficient referees like N. Sengupta, Phani Roy and Gilson were harassed and humiliated by the hooligan crowds repeatedly during this phase. Especially the Mohammedan Sporting matches became extremely threatening due to repeated incidents of violent mob unrest. Though the elite ‘*Ashrafs*’ were in governing body of the club but most of the supporters of the club belonged from the lower strata of ‘*Atrafs*’ and they made the football ground as the field to express their utter frustrations. In fact the Pakistan movement of 1940s had deep impact over the attitudes of the supporters of the Mohammedan Sporting. The speeches of Hussain Surhawardy, Sheikh Nazimuddin and Nooruddin had profound impact in this regard. In 1946 when the direct action movement had been announced by Jinnah at that time along with communal riots and political violence the football arena of Calcutta also experienced tremendous outrage of crowd unrest. ⁽³⁾

Apart from this the transformation procedure regarding the Sporting Culture of Bengal started from 1930s. Once, the physical culture instigated nationalist

spirit within the common masses. But during late 1930s Chief Administrative Officer of Bengal Major C.G. Brenan used the physical culture in order to counter extremist, violent and so called militant nationalist activities. He never took any harsh or oppressive steps against the students or youths of Bengal. Instead in his various reports he repeatedly urged for the spread of cultural programmes, physical activities like organization of sporting events, football and cricket matches in schools, colleges and social and sporting clubs and also favoured the library culture and supported the formation of the study societies and educational groups in order to keep the youth away from the nationalist politics. In particular he had encouraged the stage performance of the dramatic development of Rabindranath Tagore's famous novel '*Char Adhyay*' and also equally promoted the '*Bratachari*' culture and the game of football among the students and youths. ⁽⁴⁾

Major Brenon's Note on Terrorism in Bengal, "*The average terrorist perhaps reaches the IX Class at school.....*

Bratachari and Boy Scouts come under both (a) and (b) and lectures etc.

Steps have already been taken to popularize Bratachari Movement and other concerned sporting activities." ⁽⁵⁾

Brenon's Note on Youth Movement narrates, "*It has been suggested that with every Union Board there should be a youth union, fostered with official*

patronage, with committees through sub-divisions and districts to the province. 'His Excellency the Governor might grace the organization by being its President'. There should be in each youth union a scout movement, games, a library, organization of social services, Bratachari dances, instruction in sanitation and hygiene, study circles and debating clubs. The teaching of weaving and a series of lectures. Such an organization could be fostered by collectors, Sub-divisional officers, Circle officers and presidents of Union Boards. Each local committee, however, should contain some members elected by boys themselves. As organization of this kind, when properly handled, is likely to keep away youths from evil influence of terrorists." (6)

To a certain extent his mission became successful. In addition to this due to the political turmoil of that particular period the football culture as a part of the physical culture had attained a great transformation during this phase. The effect of this transformation can be also seen over the events of Calcutta Football. The club identity started to gain upper hand over the emotional nationalist spirit. The direct effect of this event can be observed in 1939 when due to a dispute against the IFA and Mohun Bagan, clubs like East Bengal, Mohammedan Sporting, Kumortuli and many others withdrew their membership from the IFA and along with certain other clubs they had formed the Bengal Football Association (BFA), which started its own league with 46 local clubs. Though finally in 1941 the issue was dissolved and all the protestant clubs returned back to IFA but this

event clearly showed that all the native clubs started to become cautious about their own local, regional and religious identities in the sporting field. This thing became more prominent during the post-independence period, mainly due to the event of the partition of the country.

In this crucial situation in 1947 the independence of India has taken place along with the partition of the country. This event gave birth to two Independent Countries- India and Pakistan. But the communal riot did not come to an end with this, rather it took more destructive form during the migration of large number of masses on the either sides of the fences of the two new born countries. Later this situation was followed by the tremendous crisis of refugee settlement especially in West Bengal. All these political turmoil's had deep impact over the socio-cultural sphere and the football field was not an exception to this. ⁽⁷⁾

Independence and Partition

In 1947 along with the blessings, independent India also faced the curse of partition. The country was divided into two different sovereign countries- India and Pakistan. The after effect of this event was dangerous and it affected the socio-cultural atmosphere of the post-independence period. Though the entire nation was affected with the disastrous effects of partition, the two states of Punjab and Bengal were mostly affected. These two states were divided directly and each part of both the states was having the entity of two new born nations. The pre-independence communal riots caused huge numbers of human casualties and the refugee crisis in the post-partition period caused enormous casualties of human lives and properties and in this regard the eastern part of the Bengali province faced more disastrous effects than the western part. ⁽⁸⁾

The partition produced destructive results especially for the Hindu and Shikh masses of Eastern Bengal and Western Punjab. They were uprooted from their birthplace and thus crossed the border as the refugees to get resettlement at the Indian soil. With the independence a huge section of masses of these two regions became unwanted in their own lands. They struggled very hard to reach the Indian soil. Similarly the minority of West Bengal and East Punjab also went to Pakistan. Because of the political error of the leaders, the lives of a huge section of the common masses became miserable. Most of the common masses did not accept the partition from their heart but ultimately they became puppets

of the hands of the political leaders. The tragedy of partition not only affected the socio-political life of the peoples but also affected the psychological and cultural aspects of daily life. From the short stories of Sadat Hossain Manto to the movies of Ritwik Ghatak this agony and pain of human life can be felt. The settlements of the refugees became the major problem for the central and state governments (especially Punjab and West Bengal) immediately after the independence. Gradually the settlements were founded on the basis of mutual property transfers in the western part of India. ⁽⁹⁾

The partition of the sub-continent into India and Pakistan on the basis of a religious divide is a classic example of the process of massacre of humanity. It left millions of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims on the 'wrong side of the fence' and led to an exodus unparalleled in the history of the sub-continent. This thing made huge turn over of the political scenario which had also affected the social and cultural spheres of the new born country of India. Between August and December 1947, 15 million people crossed the western borders between India and Pakistan in both directions and roughly in equal numbers the matter was the same. Huge numbers of Hindus crossed the eastern border of India and entered in the states of West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. In the eastern border the situation was not so easy. The problem between West Bengal and East Pakistan became much more intense, Hindus (especially a large section of the lower caste Bengali Hindus) initially stayed in East Pakistan. But from the winter of 1948

gradually the communal riots were breaking out in Pakistan. So from that time many Hindus started to migrate to West Bengal. In 1949 Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal himself mentioned about the presence of 16 lakh refugees in West Bengal. Six lakhs men died, almost 1 crore 40 lakhs peoples lost their households and nearly 1 lakh women were kidnapped between 1949 and 1952. From the 1950s this refugee problem took a very dangerous shape in West Bengal. In this condition Pakistan has only recently been systematically studied, and there has been, as yet, no attempt to construct an analytical overview of this diaspora and its consequences.⁽¹⁰⁾

Just before the partition, the political unrest of communal feeling had completely broken down peace and unity of Bengal. Long time friends and neighbours became enemy of each other due to their religious differences. The narrow communal interests ultimately destroyed the social morality. Atin Bandyopadhyay's novel '*Nilkantha Pakhir Khoje*' (1971) clearly showed this scenario of the transformation of human relationship from the context of partition.⁽¹¹⁾ Prafulla Roy's novel '*Keyapatar Nouka*' (1969) also deals with the transformation of Hindu-Muslim relationship before and after the partition. A huge number of people were forced to be refugees as they were virtually driven out from their homeland.⁽¹²⁾ After losing all their prestige and properties a great number of Hindu refugees came to West Bengal with a hope that the people of this new place would provide certain cordial favour and sympathy for

them as they belonged to the same religion. But they faced completely different attitude from their Indian brothers and their lives became miserable. Due to the socio-economic factors the masses of West Bengal became hostile towards these refugees as they treated the Bangals as unwanted disturbances.

The flow of refugees from East Pakistan to West Bengal continued till 1971. The problem of the resettlement of the refugees of East Pakistan was much more complex. In Western India the Hindu and Sikh refugees were easily re-established in places like Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi on the properties of the Muslims, who went to Pakistan. The linguistic similarities were helping factor in this regard. But the language problem further made the re-establishment procedure of the Hindu refugees of East Pakistan more complex as they did not want to settle in anywhere excepting West Bengal, Tripura and Assam. Most of these refugees were peasants and farmers and now they were forced to work as labours in the local industries. So due to the partition and refugee crisis the social condition became very much complex in West Bengal. In the next two decades after partition, a lesser number of about a million and a half Muslims left West Bengal, Bihar, Tripura and Assam to go to East Bengal. Despite the staggering scale of migrations, their impact on the successor states of India and of partition. But the Hindu community of Eastern Bengal was neither homogeneous nor evenly distributed throughout the area. Mainly the density of Hindu population was

high in the southern part of East Bengal in the districts of Khulna, Jessore, Northern Barishal, Southern Faridpur etc. and also in Dacca (Dhaka) and Bikrampur. Few of this population were highly educated higher caste Hindus who used to be the patrons of the other Hindu communities of East Bengal. They also had quite good settlement on the other side of the fence. So to avoid further complexities these people first migrated or rather emigrated from their original homeland. But the majority of the lower caste Hindus-the Namasudras, Pods, Kaivartas and other scheduled castes first tried to stay in their own place but later when the communal tensions became worse and also their daily life became hampered due to lack of patrons they began to migrate to the new born state of West Bengal in India. These people did not have any kind of set up in West Bengal. Thus they came to the scenario purely as fortune seekers and caused further crisis to refugee settlement. Along with them the higher caste but financially poor refugees were also there. Many of them just escaped to West Bengal on the threats of their lives and religion. Though mainly these people tried to get resettlement in several places of West Bengal, Assam and Tripura, most of them had first choice of resettlement in the southern part of West Bengal especially in the city of Calcutta, because to restart their lives they needed new opportunities and that could be available in plenty in the city of Calcutta. So due to that reason most of them had chosen very hard life in the slums of Calcutta to get a better future for the next generation. ⁽¹³⁾

Here the biggest problem appeared. The original inhabitants of the city did not like this attempt. After the independence the common masses of the city thought to take the advantages of the socio-economic and political opportunities only for themselves. But the arrival of the refugees brought new equations in this socio-economic scenario. Thus the inhabitants of Calcutta started to maintain distances from the refugee masses and built up a superficial barrier of traditionalism and aristocracy. ⁽¹⁴⁾

Rise of New Footballing Rivalry

Since the colonial period football played a very significant role in the political and cultural field of Bengali society. Thus in the post-independence phase the social aftereffects of partition were directly reflected in the football field. The footballing structure in Calcutta started to change from 1940s onwards, but a completely new phase of footballing rivalry in Calcutta emerged during 1950s. In one hand after the independence Mohun Bagan lost its nationalist identity of colonial period and gradually started to transform into the aristocratic symbol of the original inhabitants of the city. On the other hand Mohammedan Sporting though still remaining within the concept of separate Muslim identity, due to the partition, it lost a huge section of its supporters. Even the club also lost its appeal over the all Indian Muslim communities throughout India and became more Calcutta oriented, while certain liberal attitudes emerged in the club

administration due to the secular identity of the new born country. In addition to that, Mohammedan Sporting also lost its huge fan followers on the other side of the border, as in Eastern Pakistan the Muslim identity in football field with the same ideals was reflected through the clubs like Dacca Mohammedan Sporting and Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting. In fact majority of the North Indian Urdu speaking elite Muslim community went to Pakistan after the partition. These people were the chief patrons of the Mohammedan Sporting Club. Thus Mohammedan Sporting lost huge financial resources. Except this, from the mid 1950s Mohammedan Sporting started to recruit the non-Muslim players in the team. This event also affected the Muslim pride, attached with the club. So, gradual degradations came in the performances of the club in the post-partition period. But the most significant footballing development had been taking place in the East Bengal Club. East Bengal started to rise in prominence from early 1940s, but in the post independence period it got a super boost in its progress inside and outside the football field. The effect of partition also worked as catalyst behind the rapid progress of the club. The huge number of refugees in the city discovered direct link of heart and soul with the identity of East Bengal Club. In addition to this clubs like Kumortuli, Kalighat, etc. transferred to minor identity. On the other hand National, Jodabagan etc. clubs failed to survive in the post independence period. In their places certain office oriented football teams came in promonence. Teams like Bengal Nagpur Railways, Eastern Railways, and Calcutta Police etc. received respectable positions in the Calcutta

football. In addition to these clubs throughout the 1950s and 1960s Aryan and Rajasthan remained tough competitors to the other major clubs of Calcutta football. Both these clubs had their own popular support. Aryan had the support of a considerable section of the North Calcuttans where as Rajasthan had the support of the Marwari families who used to reside in Calcutta due to their business affairs. These two teams also enrolled certain great players in their line-ups during this period. The famous forward of Indian National Football Team Sringarapally Raman (Scored the first ever Olympic Goal for Indian in 1948 London Olympic in the 1-2 outing for Indian against France) played for the Rajasthan club mostly in his career. On the other hand great players like Ranjit Bose, Robin (Nanta) Guha, Santosh Debgupta, Sanat Seth and many others played for Aryan during this period. They not just only spoiled the parties of the three major teams of Calcutta football on different occasions but also in certain cases they turned out to be champions. The other minor teams often used to deliver tough challenges to the major teams like Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting. With this evolution of Indian football new social identities also started to develop in the city life. ⁽¹⁵⁾

Due to their successes in the colonial period, (especially the Historic IFA Shield win in 1911) immediately after the independence Mohun Bagan received a very high and prestigious position in Indian football. But East Bengal had to struggle a lot. Due to the partition problem and refugee crisis East Bengal gained a huge

number of emotional supporters. During this phase due to the efficient management of J.C. Guha East Bengal Club attained some great successes. Players like Ahmed Khan, P.B.A. Saleh, Padmottam Venkatesh, Dhanraj and Apparao (Five Pandavas of East Bengal) were the key factors behind the great successes of the club during the early 1950s. Calcutta League, IFA Shield, DCM Trophy, Rovers Cup, and Durand Cup etc. all the major Domestic titles were won by East Bengal between 1949 and 1953. Even East Bengal also earned some international respect during this period. All over the entire 1950s East Bengal kept its dominance over the Indian football. Mohun Bagan has been proven as the toughest challenger to East Bengal in respect of achievements. During the 1960s due to the appearance of players like Chuni (Subimal) Goswami, Jarnail Singh, Kempiah, Arumoy Nigam and some other greats Mohun Bagan turned out to be the best team in the domestic circuit of Indian football. Mohun Bagan registered victories in almost all the major Indian football tournaments. But in this decade East Bengal remained very close to Mohun Bagan in respect of performances. The Ghoti-Bangal social clash also reflected in the football field through the Mohun Bagan-East Bengal rivalry. ⁽¹⁶⁾ On the other hand Mohammedan Sporting lost its golden run of 1930s and 1940s but somehow managed to get hold on the third place in Calcutta football by winning the Calcutta Football League (first division) in 1954 and 1956. During the 1960s the club went through several reformations and even gave up its rigid Islamic identity to some extent. By winning the first division Calcutta

Football League in 1967 Mohammedan managed its status of a major club in Calcutta football. Thus a triangular or tripartite rivalry developed between these three major teams in Calcutta football during the 1960s. ⁽¹⁷⁾

The other football clubs of Calcutta symbolized the minor identities. Clubs like Shovabazar, Aryan and Kumortuli etc. were among the most important Indian clubs of the colonial period but in post independence era, especially during the second half of 1960s they certainly lost their previous status. Due to the polarization of Bengali masses by mainly centering the three major clubs Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting; these minor clubs lost their popular support and turned into rather unimportant teams of Calcutta football. Many of them even slipped to the second or third division. Some clubs like Aryan, B.N.R., Kumortuli and Rajasthan etc. earned the status of giant killers as in many occasions surprisingly they clinched victory against Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting but those were certain exceptional results. Generally these minor clubs used to play defensive football against the major teams. Except the three major teams, in the history of the first division Calcutta Football League, only in 1958 under the coaching of T.Bagha Som and Captaincy of Pradip Kumar Banerjee, Eastern Railway won the League Title. ⁽¹⁸⁾ Clubs like Aryan, Kumortuli, B.N.R., Bhatri Sangha and Rajasthan became very much weak during the late 1960s. They were certainly out of the championship race. The financial and sporting conditions of these

clubs were highly diminished from this period and they also lost their previous prestigious positions in Calcutta football. The authorities of these clubs were well aware of the situation. So these minor clubs started to play negative football only to clinch points from the major clubs to survive in the League table and also to save their prestige. Basically the upcoming talents were recruited in these clubs and the footballers had the target to show their individual talent in the football field with the jersey of these minor clubs only to move to the major clubs in the very next season. Thus these minor clubs gradually turned into very effective nurseries for the flourishing of local talents. Yet to stay in the football scenario of Calcutta Maidan often these clubs used to take certain unauthentic stances and the point shuffling corruption became a serious problem in the Calcutta League matches. This thing very much reduced the competitive measure of the Calcutta Football. The rivalry for winning the league championship thus started to become restricted within the three major teams of Calcutta Maidan- Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting. Though the minor clubs did not attain more successes in post-independence Calcutta football but surely these clubs were turned into the effective nursery for the flourishing of the new talents. ⁽¹⁹⁾ Therefore a new football culture started to develop in Calcutta during the second half of 20th century.

Development of New Coaching Techniques in Calcutta Football

Throughout the colonial period the Indian football remained in amateur level. Though in 1930s after certain clashes between the provincial football associations finally the AIFF (All India Football Federation) was formed in 1937 but it failed to produce any kind of international limelight on Indian football. ⁽²⁰⁾ In fact even after the independence the AIFF was directed by the traditional attitudes and it lost two great opportunities to send the national football team of India to the FIFA World Cup (At that time known as Jules Rimet Cup) in 1950 and 1962. ⁽²¹⁾ The AIFF took no initiative to implement any kind of professional attitude to the Indian football. Thus in the Olympics of 1948 when the Indian Football Team for the first time got its first ever major international exposure, the team faced failure only due to certain technical backdrops. Balaidas Chatterjee, the Manager of that team was also a person of the old school. But in 1951 in the very first edition of Asian Games, Indian Football Team won the Gold Medal under the captainship of the Maestro Sailen Manna by defeating Iran in the final by the solo goal scored by Mewalal. In the very next day in its match report 'Ananda Bazar Patrika' commented that this victory of India again proved the supremacy of Bengal in Indian football as nine of the playing eleven players belonged from the Calcutta clubs. As the Indian players continued to play with barefoot, it caused havoc disaster in the Summer Olympic of Helsinki in 1952 when a talented Indian side faced 1-10 defeat

against Yugoslavia. ⁽²²⁾ In the international scenario along with the beginning of the professional World Cup (In the initial stage known as the Jules Rimet Cup) in 1930 new techniques of the game started to develop. Great international coaches like Hugo Meisl (Austria), Jimmy Hogan (England/Austria), Vittorio Pozzo (Italy), and Herbert Chapman (England) started to develop new technical formations in the football field to revolutionize the game to the next level. But during 1940s due to the outbreak of the Second World War like the other sporting activities heavy disasters had also taken place in the football field. But again from 1950s with the restoration of the world peace again the sporting arenas and fields started to get flourished with certain new developments and football was not an exception to this. During 1950s many of the leading football playing countries of the world started to develop certain new techniques in their game and the role of professional coaches became very much important both in club and international level. Coaches like Gusztav Sebes (Hungary), Sepp Herberger (West Germany), Vicente Feola (Brazil), and Sir Bobby Robson (England) had introduced certain new techniques and strategic formations in the game of football. ⁽²³⁾ On the contrary, apart from other infrastructural backwardness the strategic coaching was also highly neglected in Indian football. ⁽²⁴⁾ National Coaches of India like Syed Abdul Rahim of Hyderabad and Tejesh (Bagha) Shome of Calcutta introduced some fresh techniques in the physical exercises for the football players but still both were very much stucked to the basics of old school. It is true that Tejesh (Bagha) Shome was the only

coach of any minor team of Calcutta football (Eastern Railway) who had successfully won the First Division Calcutta Football League (1958) and S.A. Rahim was the most successful among the National Coaches of India (won the Asian Games Gold Medal in football in Jakarta Asian Games 1962) but still they did not produce any features of the new age coaching techniques at that time. ⁽²⁵⁾

Mainly the new technical and strategic concepts of football were introduced to Calcutta football as well as to the Indian football by Amal Dutta and Sushil Bhattacharya. Especially Amal Dutta played the most significant role in this regard. He was the first Indian Professional football coach who received coaching degree from England and completed his training under Mr. Littlewood and Walter Winterbottom (The famous English football coach who at that time was also the coach of the National Football Team of England) during late 1950s. His efforts as a coach and his experimental strategic techniques provided new life to the football culture of Calcutta. The introduction of new-strategic equations in the game of football transformed the character of the game in Calcutta Maidan. As Amal Dutta was an urdent follower of the world football thus he not just only upgraded his coaching skills but also introduced certain new technical details in the footballing arena of Bengal. He was key person behind the introduction of 4-2-4 system in India. The concept of overlapping back had been successfully used by him during his tenure as the coach of

Mohun Bagan in 1969. By using this technique he made Bhavani Roy (the then Right Back of Mohun Bagan) as the star player of Calcutta Maidan. Mohun Bagan also attained great successes in that particular session. ⁽²⁶⁾ Club rivalry of Calcutta football experienced the beginning of a new era where the role of the coach became much more vital. It also brought new developments to the Calcutta as well as Indian football during 1960s. Through these transformations the football culture of Calcutta attained a new height towards the beginning of 1970s.

IFA Shield Finals in 1950s and 1960s (1950-1969)

Years	Winners	Scores	Runners Up
1950	East Bengal	3-0	SSCB
1951	East Bengal	0-0, Replay 2-0	Mohun Bagan
1952	Mohun Bagan (Due to Number of Goals in entire tournament)	0-0, Replay 2-2 (Abandoned)	Rajasthan Club
1953	Indian Cultural League (Due to High Court	0-0, Replay 0-0, 2 nd Replay 1-	East Bengal

	Decision)	1	
1954	Mohun Bagan	1-0	Hyderabad Sporting
1955	Rajasthan Club	1-0	Aryan Football Club
1956	Mohun Bagan	4-0	Aryan Football Club
1957	Mohammedan Sporting	3-0	Railways Sports Club
1958	East Bengal	1-1, Replay 1-0	Mohun Bagan
1959 (Abandoned)	--	--	--
1960	Mohun Bagan	1-0	Indian Navy
1961	East Bengal & Mohun Bagan (Joint Winners)	0-0	
1962	Mohun Bagan	3-1	Hyderabad XI
1963	Bengal Nagpur Railway	1-0	Mohammedan Sporting
1964	Mohun Bagan (Winner Declared by IFA)	1-1 (Final Abandoned)	East Bengal

1965	East Bengal	1-0	Mohun Bagan
1966	East Bengal	1-0	Bengal Nagpur Railway
1967	East Bengal & Mohun Bagan (Joint Winners)	Final Abandoned	
1968 (Abandoned)	--	--	--
1969	Mohun Bagan	3-1	East Bengal

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22. Basu, Jaydeep; 'Stories from Indian Football', UBSPD Publishers, New Delhi, 2003, Pp. 40-51
23. **Gusztav Sebes** was the most celebrated football coach of Europe in 1950s. Under his coaching Hungary won the Olympic Gold in football in 1952 in Helsinki. **Sepp Herberger** was the famous coach of West Germany under whose coaching by upsetting the 'Mighty Maggers' (Hungary) the West Germany football team won the

Jules Rimet Cup (World Cup) for the first time in 1954. Fritz Walter was the captain of that German Team. **Vicente Feola** was the coach of Brazil National Football Team of 1958. Irrespective of all negative comments he provided chances to the two young stars Edson Arrantes du Nasimento (**Pele**) and Manuel Francisco dos Santos (**Garrincha**) to play in the World Cup of 1958. Both of them later made history in the game of football. **Sir Bobby Robson** was the famous British coach who introduced new-defensive formation in English football during 1950s.

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Chapter Six

1970s, the Golden Era of Calcutta Football: Doubts and Debates

The decade of 1970s is the most significant phase of Calcutta Football. This is also the period of political confusions and social frustrations. During this period the after effect of Bangladesh War, return of refugee crisis and rise of communist politics left a deep effect on football field. In one hand during this decade Calcutta football attained the most successful days and started to dominate the entire Indian football but on the other hand violence and hooliganism in the football field projected a dangerous threat to the Calcutta football. Though generally the sports journalist and football experts used to address this decade as the golden era of Calcutta football but certain events of crowd unrest and cultural frustration also developed certain doubts among the scholars in this regard.

In 1971 mainly on the issue of linguistic difference, Eastern Pakistan demanded independence from Pakistan but it was denied by the Pak administration. Therefore a freedom movement was organized under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in East Pakistan. When the Pakistani army came to the eastern front to crush the movement, the Indian government supported the cause of East

Pakistan's demand. Therefore Mrs. Indira Gandhi's government involved the country in a war against Pakistan to seek freedom for Bangladesh. But due to the war again huge numbers of Hindu masses of East Pakistan were forced to leave their homeland and thus they came to West Bengal as the refugees. This event caused the re-emergence of refugee crisis in Calcutta. A warring situation along with refugee problem again brought social disorder in West Bengal and its direct effect was reflected on the Calcutta football. ⁽¹⁾

The Golden Era

The Bengal football attained its best developing phase during 1970s. During the unstable socio-political and economic phase of tension and frustration the Bengali masses fully dedicated their souls to the game of football. The re-appearance of refugee crisis again boosted the Bangal identity and a group of crazy supporters appeared to the football field cheering for their favourite East Bengal club. This emotional attachment of the supporters also affected the clubs performances in the football field and East Bengal turned into the most successful football team during this decade, not just only in Calcutta football but also in the national level tournaments. Mohun Bagan and Mohammedan Sporting remained very close to East Bengal while two of the minor clubs-Aryan and Tollygunj Agragami attained certain respectable positions in Calcutta football. Along with these clubs office

teams like B.N.R. and Eastern Railways also became the effective nurseries for the flourishing of budding football talents of Bengal. The national level tournaments like Airlines Cup, Bordolui Trophy, and Federation Cup etc. were completely dominated by the Calcutta clubs during this decade. Even from the remote places of Bengal great footballers were starting to emerge. Besides the home talents like Prasun Banerjee, Shyamal Benerjee, Bhaskar Ganguly, Subrata Bhattacharya, Shibaji Banerjee, Parimal Dey, Subhash Bhowmik, Bidesh Basu and many more, the great players of the other states like Syed Naimuddin, Mohammad Habib, Akbar, Shyam Thapa and others glorified the Calcutta football with the brilliant skills of the game. Calcutta football became the major centre of Indian football and the city got the title of the 'Mecca of Indian football'. The average income of the footballers from the game increased sufficiently. Moreover the job opportunities also increased for the first division players. The financial condition of the Calcutta players definitely developed to a certain extent. Moti Nandi in his novel '*Stopper*' portrayed this real scenario of Calcutta football quite effectively. Even most of the players of the Indian National Football Team were selected from the Calcutta clubs. Thus Calcutta football attained an unparallel development and here the Calcutta teams and players faced conflict with the football players who used to play in other states. ⁽²⁾ The golden days also experienced certain glorious events of Calcutta football. The year 1977 is a very significant year in the History of West

Bengal, especially in Calcutta football. In this year the football fans of the city experienced the magic of the footballing skills of the King of football. The Football King Pele (Edison 'Edson' Arantes do Nascimento) of Brazil came to Calcutta to play a friendly exhibition match for the New York club Cosmos against the Calcutta giant Mohun Bagan. At that time Pele already retired from the international football but continued his domestic football career in Cosmos. The match ended with 2-2 scoreline and the football Emperor himself experienced the craze of football culture in Calcutta. This event further increased the popularity of the game among the local masses. ⁽³⁾ During this decade football became an inspiration, a part of life of the common Bengali masses and therefore to the supporters their favourite clubs became everything, even a cause to die for. On 30th September, 1975 after Mohun Bagan's 0-5 loss against the arch rival East Bengal, a dedicated Mohun Bagan supporter named Umakanta Paloudhi could not face the humiliation of his favourite club and thus committed suicide. In his suicide note he wrote that in his next life he wanted to be a good footballer of Mohun Bagan to return back the 5 goals debt to East Bengal. This kind of sentiment show that even the club identity went beyond than the value of life. Similarly an East Bengal supporter of 1970s popularly known as *Baghada* (in the football ground) never missed a single match of his favourite team. His attendance was inevitable. He never failed, not even on the dead body of his own son. He came to the ground to

cheer for his favourite team East Bengal even on the day of his son's death. So during the 1970s football craze became everything to the football fans. All these events expressed the craze of football culture during the decade of 1970s which indicated the rise of a glorious period in the Bengali physical culture. ⁽⁴⁾

Even the financial condition of the football players of Calcutta Maidan became far better than that of the financial status of the footballers of the other states.

“কিন্তু শুধু ইন্দার সিং নন, এই কলকাতার নানা আসরে নানা মুখে কলকাতার ফুটবলারদের বিরুদ্ধে প্রতিদিন যে পরিমাণে অভিযোগের কামান দাগা হয় তাতেও ইন্দারের বক্তব্যের ছায়া দেখা যায়। কখনও কখনও তাম্বিল্য, কখনও হা-হতাশের ভঙ্গিতে তিনটি কথাই ঘুরে ফিরে বলা হয়। এক, কলকাতার ফুটবলারদের ব্যবহার অতি জঘন্য। দুই, এরা অটেল টাকা পায়-যদিও সামান্যতম যোগ্যতাও নেই। এবং তিন, এই কাণ্ডে বাঘেরাই বিদেশের মাটিতে গন্ডায় গন্ডায় গোল খেয়ে দেশের নাম ডোবায়”।

(“ But not only Inder Singh, in the various places of Calcutta many of the locals used to criticise the footballers of Calcutta clubs in such a way that one can observe the reflections of the arguments of Inder Singh. Through different frustrated comments mainly three points are argued repeatedly. Firstly, the behaviour of the footballers of Calcutta are intolerable. Secondly, they used to earn huge amount of money despite their lack of quality. And thirdly, these paper made

tigers used to destroy the prestige of the country by receiving huge numbers of goals in foreign soil.”- Translation: Mine)⁽⁵⁾

The jealousy of the footballers of other states developed severe criticism marks of Calcutta football. But surprisingly the local media also became over critical comments about the players of the different clubs of Calcutta Maidan. As a result of that many of the footballers from other states successfully established themselves as the professional footballers of footballing scenario of Calcutta. But the middle class Bengali masses did not choose the same path. They favoured the white collar jobs and due to this attitude irrespective of certain opportunities the Bengali players could not become completely professional like their counterparts from other states.⁽⁶⁾

The decade of 1970s is very much crucial and critical. In one hand the liberation war of Bangladesh re-introduced the refugee crisis whereas the development of extreme leftist ideology also drove the young generation towards the violent platform of political struggle. On the other hand the dominative measures of West Bengal State Government under chief minister Siddhartha Shankar Roy developed anti-state violent measures among a great section of the masses. So tremendous frustrations, tensions and enormous violence had darkened the socio-political and cultural history of this particular phrase.⁽⁷⁾ The football ground was also not an exception of this situation. As the financial insecurity rose the young generation of

Bengali masses attached their identity more with the football clubs of Calcutta Maidan. The successes and failures of the football clubs became the outcome of the social-identity of the masses. Thus frustration and violence grab the environment of Calcutta football. In 1970 in the Bangkok Asian Games Indian Football Team till now for the last time secured successful result by winning the Bronze Medal. After that the Indian Football Team failed to get any major success in international football. The Bengali masses also lost their interest in the activities of the National team and became more concerned with the club culture. The achievements of their favourite football clubs became the chief concern of the football fanatics of Calcutta Maidan. So a counter nationalism had developed with the football culture of 1970s Calcutta Maidan. Throughout the 1970s this phenomenon had dominated the football culture of Calcutta. In one hand it tremendously increased the popularity of the game but also inflicted violent attitude within the spectators of this great game. ⁽⁸⁾

The Doubts and Debates

The decade of 1970s witnessed several positive measures in Calcutta football culture but certain negative aspects were also there. The growing popularity and craze of football culture soon turned into violent hooliganism which brought a serious threat to the footballing tradition of the city. The refugee crisis of post Bangladesh war scenario again brought communal tensions among the common masses. The social identity reflected in the football field through the club identities. Thus the derby between East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting turned out to be the clashes between Hindu Bangal and Muslim identity. The derby matches started to organize in a much tensed atmosphere. Bearing the flags of the clubs to the field became a regular phenomenon. More aggressiveness came in the attitudes of the supporters. On the ground of attaining achievements Mohun Bagan and East Bengal became the arch enemies of each other and the aggression of the supporters inflicted violent measures in this rivalry. The political instability and internal tensions also brought certain negative aspects to the Maidan culture. ⁽⁹⁾

In this background the rise of non-footballer administrators in football clubs further worsened the scenario. The influential personalities of the club authorities tried to interfere in the freedom of the players and coaches by giving completely awkward and unwanted comments and suggestions. Most of them did not have any sporting knowledge but still they just wanted to show off their own political and social

influences on the footballers. This increased the tensions and pressures among the football players. Many times they received humiliations. Thus they acted frustratedly in the football field which used to spread tensions among the spectators and finally turned into the events of crowd unrests.⁽¹⁰⁾

With the growth of the excitement of the game new crisis emerged in the football culture which attacked the social basis of the tradition of Bengali physical culture. The rise of hooligan attitudes affected the essence of the game very much. Basically this section of supporters came from the young unemployed section of the society. The then state government of Chief Minister Siddhartha Shankar Roy faced certain typical problems and one of the most serious issues of them was the question of unemployment. Lack of government initiative made a large section of the youths workless. They also did not have any kind of socio-political awareness. According to Ashok Dasgupta, the then sports editor of the Bengali daily '*Aajkal*', that these boys wasted their lives on false anger and frustration. They were totally frustrated with their lifestyle and could do nothing. Thus they discovered a place to express their anger and frustration and it was the football ground. They submerged their identity along with their club identity and tried to replace the failures in their personal life with the successes of their favourite club in the football field. Thus they responded aggressively and even celebrated their joy at the cost of any other's sorrow. They did not hesitate to beat the supporters of rival club or the footballers

of the minor clubs or even the referees of the match. Therefore they themselves became a serious threat to the football culture of Calcutta. ⁽¹¹⁾ The role of the crowd in transforming the culture of football became vital. The clubs were dominated by elite leadership but the game lost its elitism. On 30th September, 1975 in the final of IFA Shield, Mohun Bagan received heaviest 0-5 defeat against arch rival East Bengal. Mohun Bagan supporters burst into anger and vehemently attacked the footballers and Coach Arun Ghosh. Even the footballers like goalkeeper Bhaskar Ganguly and central defender Subrata Bhattacharya were engaged in internal quarrel. Many of the Mohun Bagan footballers had to escape from the field in order to save their lives from their own supporters. Even Subrata Bhattacharya and Prasun Banerjee escaped in a place, near Babughat. Later they were rescued by Sailen Manna with the help of Calcutta Police. At the end of the day the Bagan supporters showed their destructive anger at the Aryan tent where the Mohun Bagan players had to stay on emergency basis. The same kind of attitude was often delivered by the supporters of other two Calcutta Giants. The club authorities, therefore, gave enough importance in team constructing at the beginning of the season for better results in the tournaments. This thing made the players transfer very very important. In one hand the club authorities tried to clinch better players from other clubs and on the other they had to keep their own effective players of previous season in their side. Thus the offering amount became

crucial. But it was never limited to that level only. Anti-social activities gradually became regular events in the transfer season. Kidnapping of the footballers, forcing them to play for the particular club, making allegation against the rival club of illegally transferring their footballers, police cases etc. gradually became regular events. Especially during 1970s these activities destroyed the peaceful atmosphere of Calcutta Maidan. No doubt these events also provoked the supporters and thus the tension of the derby matches increased to its extreme level which also played effective role behind the frequent events of crowd violence. ⁽¹²⁾

Towards the end of the 1970s temporary lower ebb appeared in the sporting popularity of West Bengal. This phenomenon also affected the popularity of football. The political unrest and economic instability brought social changes that affected the popularity of the game among the middle class Bengali society. The appearance of left government in 1977 transferred the focus of Bengali youths from the sports field to the arena of politics. From this time temporary declining phase can be witnessed in Bengal football. Thus it is not perfect to describe the decade of 1970s as the 'Golden Era' of Calcutta football. ⁽¹³⁾

It was also true that throughout the entire 1970s the Bengal football attained such progress that the best achievements were attained by the Calcutta teams during this time. According to Mr. Manindranath Patra besides the major clubs the minor football clubs of Calcutta Maidan also played active roles behind the upliftment of

the skills and quality of the game. Though it is also true that the political background affected the sporting culture very much during this phase but the period is also very much significant for the spontaneous rise of football culture among the common masses. It is also a significant cause behind the ultimate development and supremacy of the Bengal football in all over Indian scenario during this time. ⁽¹⁴⁾ Even in Santosh Trophy, Bengal established total dominance by winning the trophy most of times in 1970s. The craze of football in Calcutta did not decline at all. Certain events of 1980s clearly proved the fact.

The footballing affairs of Calcutta as well as Indian football throughout the 1970s were very much dubious in character. In one hand Calcutta football established its complete dominance over Indian Football. Not just only in the matters of massive successes of the Calcutta clubs in all Indian tournaments but also in respect of financial security. The best football players of all over India tried to register their names in three major football clubs of Calcutta. Apart from playing money the influential authorities of the major football clubs of Calcutta could also provide opportunity to the footballers to get respected jobs in order to secure their family lives. Thus the football players of other states became offended and jealous over the prosperity of the footballers of Calcutta football. Ex-national player Inder Singh who never played in Calcutta and always played for JCT Mills Punjab had expressed this kind of feeling once in public. ⁽¹⁵⁾ Thus in many of the National

Level domestic tournaments the Club teams of Calcutta had faced tremendous hostile attitudes from the local crowds of that particular region where the tournament had organized. Even against the foreign teams the Calcutta clubs often faced hostile behavior from the Indian spectators of different state. Such an incident had happened in the Bordoloi Trophy final in Assam in 1978. ⁽¹⁶⁾

During the 1970s the football clubs of Calcutta Maidan especially East Bengal, Mohun Bagan and Mohammedan Sporting had made several great successes in domestic football. Among them East Bengal was definitely the forerunner. In 1970 East Bengal won the IFA Shield by defeating the powerful Pass Club of Iran. Parimal Dey's solitary goal in the match had decided the match winner for the Red & Golds. ⁽¹⁷⁾ In 1973 East Bengal again defeated one of the best club team of Asian football Piong Young with 3-1 scoreline to regain the IFA Shield. Mohun Bagan and Mohammedan Sporting had also produced certain great results against the foreign clubs throughout the 1970s. The technically developed coachings of Amal Dutta and P.K. Bannerjee had provided best results for the Calcutta clubs. But the National Football team started to lose its success and abilities from this particular time. Despite the presence of talented footballers and efficient coaches (like P.K. Bannerjee and G.M.H. Basha) the Indian team failed to produce any remarkable result in the major international football tournaments throughout the 1970s (Except the Bronze Medal in Asian Games football in Bangkok 1970 and

the championship title win of Pesta Sukan Cup in Indonesia in 1971). The lack of infrastructure produced by the AIFF caused heavy hamper in this regard. The players were also mainly attracted towards the club football due to the financial perspective and even some of them also lost interest to wear the National colours.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Whereas in the financially depressed countries of Latin America like in Brazil and Argentina despite their financial drawbacks they had developed significant infrastructure in footballing development. In most of the Latin American countries including Brazil and Argentina despite their financial crisis and poverty games and sports (especially football) got enormous emphasis from the government. In the countries like Brazil and Argentina even from the decade of 1950s professional attitude had been inflicted. Thus they set up their infrastructure in this regard in complete professional way. For a considerable section of the masses of these countries the game of football used to be treated as an earning opportunity of bread and butter. ⁽¹⁹⁾ But in India that kind of attitude was missing in 1970s. Still a negligible minority of other states somehow embraced professional attitude towards the game of football and many of the footballers of this kind of background even got their earnings from the game by playing for Calcutta clubs. Players like Syed Naeemuddin (Hyderabad), Mohammad Habib (Hyderabad), Akbar (Hyderabad), and Shyam Thappa (Dehradun) are worth mentioning in this regard. They inflicted certain professional attitude in this regard. But the son of the

soils did not get inspired with this attitude. The middle class Bengali families who used to be the greatest admirers of football culture did not accept the game of football in a professional way. Thus the amateurish attitude prohibited the scenario of Bengali football culture of Calcutta Maidan to attain such notable progress which could make difference in the future course of the game in India. ⁽²⁰⁾ In fact the Asian countries like Japan, China, Indonesia, Myanmar, Iran and both Koreas had taken significant steps in this regard. But the AIFF did not produce any kind of progressive measures during this stage and it also drove the Indian football to the back seat in international arena. ⁽²¹⁾ The major clubs of Calcutta football were also remained only conscious about the results of football matches but never tried to do any positive measure for the upliftment of young talents. On the contrary the non-footballer officials of the clubs had made certain damages in the careers of various young footballers by their own selfish acts. Such events were mentioned in the novels of Moti Nandi like '*Striker*' ⁽²²⁾ and '*Stopper*'. ⁽²³⁾ The minor clubs and office clubs of Calcutta Maidan like BNR, ER, Rajasthan, Kalighat, Kumortuli etc. mainly became the primary grounds for the young talents to show their capacity and then to make their way towards the three major clubs of Calcutta football. Though these minor clubs had produced great numbers of young talent but their negative attitude in football field reduced the competitive measure of the Calcutta football. ⁽²⁴⁾ In addition to this the growing chances of crowd unrest and spectator

violence also created massive tension and panic in the football field of Calcutta throughout the 1970s. Its most dangerous outbreak had happened during a Mohun-East Derby on the fatal day of August 16, 1980. ⁽²⁵⁾ Yet the Bengali middle class never ever tried to accept any kind of professional attitude with sports in general and football in particular. The Bengali middle class '*Bhadrolok*'s have never regarded sports as an indispensable physical culture associated with status or profession. With few negligible exceptions, and that too found in other places, Bengal had continued to prefer white collar jobs or even clerical employment rather than sporting professions. This thing created serious obstacles in front of the footballing development in Bengal. Not just only the parents but the IFA authorities had also showed such kind of negligence. Therefore irrespective of repeated proposal from FIFA throughout the 1970s the duration of the domestic football matches in Calcutta Maidan remained of 70 minutes. This thing later became a serious issue behind the gradual set back of Indian football in 1980s. Due to lack of infrastructure the domestic football matches in Calcutta football could not become of 90 minutes and due to this unprofessional attitude from all sections overall the football culture of Bengal suffered to a great extent in the following decade.

Champions in Leading Domestic Football Tournaments in 1970s

Year	Durand Cup	Rovers Cup	DCM Trophy	Bordoloi Trophy	Federation Cup	IFA Shield	Calcutta Football League (1st Div.)	Sait Nagjee Trophy
1970	East Bengal	Mohun Bagan	Taj Club (Iran)	Mohammedan Sporting		East Bengal	East Bengal	Border Security Force*
1971	Border Security Force*	Mohun Bagan	Taj Club (Iran)	Assam Police*		Mohammedan Sporting	East Bengal	Mohammedan Sporting
1972	East Bengal	Mohun Bagan	Youngmen F.C. (North Korea)	East Bengal		East Bengal	East Bengal	Rajasthan Armed Constabulary*
1973	Border Security Force*	East Bengal	East Bengal	East Bengal		East Bengal	East Bengal	Tata Sports*
1974	Mohun Bagan	Dempo S.C.*	East Bengal	Mohun Bagan		East Bengal	East Bengal	Indian XI*
1975	Border Security Force*	East Bengal	Hanyang University (South Korea)	Mohun Bagan		East Bengal	East Bengal	Rajasthan Police
1976	Border Security Force* & JCT Mills F.C.* (Joint Winners)	Mohun Bagan	Hanyang University (South Korea) & Punjab Police*	Mohun Bagan		Mohun Bagan	Mohun Bagan	JCT Mills F.C.*
1977	Mohun Bagan	Mohun Bagan	Spartak United Club (USSR)	Mohun Bagan	ITI Bangalore*	Mohun Bagan	East Bengal	MRC*
1978	East Bengal	Dempo S.C.*	Volga Kalinin (USSR)	East Bengal	Mohun Bagan & East Bengal (Joint Winners)	Mohun Bagan	Mohun Bagan	Mohun Bagan
1979	Mohun Bagan	Dempo S.C.*	Border Security Force* & CNBS (Joint Winners)	Bangkok Port Authority (Thailand)	Border Security Force*	Mohun Bagan	Mohun Bagan	JCT Mills F.C.*

*- Non Calcutta Indian Club & Office based Football Teams

1. Boder Security Force (BSF)-New Delhi
2. Dempo Sports Club-Panjim, Goa
3. Jagjit Cotton & Textile Mills Football Club (JCT) - Ludhiana, Punjab
4. Punjab Police- Punjab
5. Assam Police- Assam
6. ITI- Indian Telecom Industries- Bangalore (Present Bengaluru), Karnataka
7. Rajasthan Armed Constabulary (RAC) - Bikaner, Rajasthan
8. MRC- Wellington, Tamil Nadu
9. Tata Sports- Jamshedpur, Bihar (Presently in Jharkhand)
10. Indian XI- New Delhi

Informations of the above chart are derived from following sources

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Santosh Trophy Finals (1970s)

Years	Winners	Final Scores	Runner-Ups
1969-70	Bengal	6-1	Services
1970-71	Punjab	1-1; 3-1	Mysore
1971-72	Bengal	4-1	Railways
1972-73	Bengal	4-1	Tamil Nadu
1973-74	Karnataka	3-2	Railways
1974-75	Punjab	6-0	Bengal
1975-76	Bengal	0-0; 3-1	Karnataka
1976-77	Bengal	1-0	Maharashtra
1977-78	Bengal	1-1; 3-1	Punjab
1978-79	Bengal	1-0	Goa

1979-80	Bengal	1-0	Punjab

Informations of the above chart are derived from following sources

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Chapter Seven

Effects and Consequences of the Massacre of August 16, 1980; Temporary Decline and Attempt of Revival of Calcutta Football

August 16, 1980-was the darkest day of Calcutta football. On this fatal day Calcutta experienced the deaths of sixteen football fans at the Ranji Stadium due to the mismanagement and inefficient efforts of West Bengal Government's Ministry of Sports, Calcutta Police and of course due to the over excitement of the football fanatics in the field. On that day during the Mohun Bagan-East Bengal derby of Calcutta League at the Eden Gardens (Ranji Stadium) there was tremendous crowd unrest. Sixteen football lovers died as a consequence of this. During the match on the twelfth minute of the second half two players of the either sides Bidesh Basu of Mohun Bagan and Dilip Palit of East Bengal were engaged in internal conflict with each other on the field. Referee Sudhin Chatterjee showed red cards to both of them but in the meantime the tension spread out in the gallery terribly and it resulted in a terrific crowd unrest which took the sixteen lives and caused huge numbers of injuries. As the police officers were busy in watching the game they had no idea to stop the massacre. Thus the disaster had taken place. ⁽¹⁾

This event clearly showed the excessive fanatical craze of the game which could even molest the humanity. The criminals who were responsible for this massacre never hesitated even to throw down the supporters of the other club from the balcony of the Ranji Stadium. The supporters who were minority in number were killed by the majority side. ⁽²⁾

“ শনিবার ইডেন উদ্যানে ইস্টবেঙ্গল-মোহনবাগানের লীগের খেলার ঠেলাঠেলি, ধাক্কাধাক্কি ভিড়ের চাপে কম করেও তেরজন দর্শক মারা যান। আহত হন প্রচুর। তাঁদের মধ্যে আশঙ্কাজনক অবস্থায় বিভিন্ন হাসপাতালে চারজনকে ভরতি করা হয়। মাঠের মধ্যে সেচ্ছাসেবী কর্মীরা অন্তত তিন শ’ জনের প্রাথমিক চিকিৎসা করেন। বিভিন্ন হাসপাতালেও অন্যদের প্রাথমিক চিকিৎসা করা হয়। খেলা শেষ হয় সোয়া পাঁচটায়। রাত আটটায় খবরঃ তখনও হাসপাতালে আহতরা যাচ্ছেন।

বিরতির ১২ মিনিট পরে দুই খেলোয়াড়কে রেফারি লাল কার্ড দেখালে প্রথমে ক্লাব হাউসের ডান দিকের স্ট্যান্ডের দর্শকদের মধ্যে উত্তেজনা দেখা দেয়। ক্লাব হাউসের উলটো দিকের গ্যালারিতেও বেশ উত্তেজনা। শুরু হয় দর্শকদের হুড়োহুড়ি, ধাক্কাধাক্কি, ছুটোছুটি। তাঁরা প্রাণ বাঁচাতে কেউ ছোটেন স্কোর বোর্ডের দিকে, কেউ বা আকাশবাণীর দিকে। তখন ভিড়ের চাপে লুটিয়ে পড়েন শয়ে শয়ে। অনেকে তাঁদের উপর দিয়েই মাড়িয়ে চলে যান। আহতের মিছিলে ইডেনের সবুজ ঘাস জায়গায় জায়গায় লাল হয়ে ওঠে।

মাঠ ভরতি পুলিশ। গ্যালারিতে যখন এই তাণ্ডব চলতে থাকে, তখন পুলিশ খেলা দেখতে ব্যস্ত”।

(“ Saturday during the East Bengal-Mohun Bagan derby match of the League at least thirteen people were killed by stampade. Many more became injured. Among them four were admitted to the hospital in very serious condition. The volunteers treated almost three hundred spectators with first aid. The injured spectators were also given first aid treatments in different hospitals also. The match ended in 5.15 pm. But according to the news of 8 pm the injured spectators were still coming to the hospitals.

The crowd unrest took violent form first at the gallery towards Clubhouse after 12 minutes of the half time when the referee showed red cards to one player each from both sides. The violence immedialtely spreads to the opposite side gallery of Clubhouse. Due to the panic and violence stampede began among the spectators. To save their lives many of them ran towards scoreboard, some other ran towards Akashbani. In this mess hundreds of them fell down on ground. The others reluctantly ran over them. Due to the blood of the injured spectators the green grasses of den Gardens turned red in certain areas.

The Stadium was surrounded by Police. But when this mess was happening the Police officers were busy in watching the match”-Translation: Mine) ⁽³⁾

The administrative inefficiency was also a very significant cause behind this tragedy. But without giving any serious attention in this perspective Jatin Chakraborty, the then Minister of Sports of West Bengal Government very lucidly blamed the game of football as the ‘killing element’ and thus he proposed to bring an end to the footballing culture of the city and the state also. This attitude also provided heavy blow to the Bengali football culture. ⁽⁴⁾

The negligence in the infra-structure was also a serious cause behind the tragedy as the arrangement of the Eden Gardens was adequate for a cricket match but it was not enough fit for a highly sensitive football encounter like the Calcutta derby between any two of the three major clubs of Calcutta Maidan. ⁽⁵⁾

“প্রয়াত পঞ্চজ গুপ্তর নেতৃত্বে বাংলার ক্রিকেট নিয়ামকরা রনজি স্টেডিয়ামের পরিকল্পনা করেছিলেন ক্রিকেট দর্শকদের জন্য। প্রথমত ক্রিকেটের দর্শকরা অপেক্ষাকৃত শান্ত এবং সচেতন। দ্বিতীয়ত যে সব ক্রিকেট ম্যাচে ভিড় হয়, অর্থাৎ টেস্ট ম্যাচে, গ্যালারিতে থাকেন একটি দেশেরই সমর্থকেরা। সুতরাং সঙ্ঘর্ষের কোনও সম্ভাবনা নেই। রনজি স্টেডিয়ামে গেট অত্যন্ত সঙ্কীর্ণ। সঙ্ঘর্ষ হলে পালাবার পথ নেই। মোহনবাগান-ইস্টবেঙ্গলের খেলাকে ঘিরে যে পাগলামি সম্প্রতি স্পষ্ট, তারপরেও রনজি স্টেডিয়ামের আট-দশ হাজার টিকিট বিক্রি বন্ধ রাখা হল না কেন?”

(“Under the leadership of Late Pankaj Gupta the cricket officials of Bengal planned about the construction of the Ranji Stadium mainly for the cricket spectators of Bengal. Firstly, the cricket spectators are more tolerate and cautious in character. Secondly the cricket matches which mainly attracted the spectators are mainly the test matches, where only the supporters of one particular side use to present in the gallery. So there is no possibility of crowd unrest and violent fight against each other. The exit gate of the Ranji Stadium is also very narrow. So in case of emergency it is impossible for the crowd to get pass through that exit gate. Despite observing the crazy and hooliganism shown by the East Bengal and Mohun Bagan supporters in recent past why the extra eight to ten thousand tickets of the derby have not been stopped from selling?”- Translation: Mine) ⁽⁶⁾

Surprisingly without making any detail investigation of this event the state government, the police, a section of the media and even some authoritative persons from both the clubs directly blamed the game of football for this massacre. This thing developed a panic within the middle class Bengali masses about the game of football. ⁽⁷⁾

The tragic event of August 16, 1980 was definitely a threatening one to Bengali society that exposed their attitude in the football ground. The time had come to change the attitudes. The excessive tension and excitement and also the fanatical craze regarding the game ultimately brought this result. The attitude

must be changed. It brought a terrific panic among the Bengali masses about the football culture. The 16 victims of this event were Himangshu Sekhar Das, Uttam Chhaule, Kartik Maiti, Sameer Das, Alok Das, Sanat Basu, Biswajit Kar, Naveen Naskar, Kartik Maji, Dhananjay Das, Prasanta Kumar Dutta, Shyamal Biswas, Ashim Chatterjee, Rabin Adak, Madan Mohan Bagli and Kalyan Samanta. They were the football martyrs and their death taught the biggest lesson to the Mohun Bagan-East Bengal supporters. It reflected the most dangerous and pathetic result of the rivalry. ⁽⁸⁾ The players were even panic stricken with this event. Moti Nandi in his novel 'Ferari' presented this terrified situation in a very realistic way. He expressed both the mentality of the footballers as well as of the hooligans in his novel. The novel also reflected the condition of the families who lost their precious family members in this sporting feud. ⁽⁹⁾

The event created panic among the Bengali families. The Bengali masses started to move away from the football field. A sudden decline appeared in the football culture of Calcutta. To most of the Bengali middle class families football became a very risky and life-threatening game. Even a good number of people started to consider watching the derby matches in the stadium a bit risky. Thus a considerable section of the society left their usual habit to attend the matches in the stadium. Mr. Debnath Majumder, a Mohun Bagan supporter and football admirer is a witness of this particular event. According to him the situation was

full of tensions even before the beginning of the match on that fatal day due to certain attitude of the football hooligans. The clash between Bidesh Bose of Mohun Bagan and Dilip Palit of East Bengal after the 12 minutes of the restart of the match in the second half only accelerated the tension within the spectators which later spread as a panic and caused the disastrous massacre in the stadium.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Some others left the stadium in order to protest against the tragic event of August 16, 1980. The atmosphere of the football stadium in Calcutta became much more pacifier but still the Bengali masses started to move away from football and this gave a huge blow to the football culture of Bengal as the young generation started to show lack of interest in the game from 1980s. ⁽¹¹⁾

The Phase of Decline

In addition to the massacre of August 16, 1980, some other events also played significant roles behind the temporary decline of the football culture in Calcutta. The telecast of international football matches on television also played a vital role in influencing the football culture of the city. In this regard the year 1982 marked special importance. In this year, through Doordarshan, the Asian Games and the World Cup football matches were telecasted directly. With this the common peoples watched the world class football matches and identified the differences between the domestic football of India and the international standard of football. More importantly the telecast of the football World Cup of 1982

clearly showed the difference of the standard between the best footballing nations of the world and the Indian football. To the Bengali masses it became clear that no match had the same standard with the best international level. Thus the young generation became very much attracted by the foreign football and the craze for Calcutta football started to decline. The young generation became attracted towards the glamour of world football and that slowed down the craze for the domestic football of the Calcutta Maidan as well as their interest in the allover scenario of Indian football. ⁽¹²⁾

In the mean time India won the Cricket World Cup in 1983. The proud moment, when the Captain of the World Cup winning Indian Cricket Team, Mr. Kapil Dev held the World Cup trophy for the first time on the balcony of Lords then a new history was made in Indian Sports. India achieved the prestigious World Champion title in the game of cricket. This event very much influenced the future course of Indian sports. The entire attention of the country went towards the game of cricket. Calcutta also experienced certain cricket craze from this time and with it the common masses became more disconnected with the game of football. Thus the craze of football started to decline from this period even in Calcutta. ⁽¹³⁾ Apart from this the sports journalism also gave prime importance to the cricket matches. The rise of sponsorship in cricket also provided certain favourable atmosphere for the growth of cricketing culture during the late 1980s. ⁽¹⁴⁾ On the other hand the family planning programme introduced by

Sanjay Gandhi in mid 1980s created decentralized and divided family culture. It also affected the age old tradition of joint family. As the number of children in each isolated families of the educated middle class started to reduce in one or two in number thus the parents became always more affectionate and conscious about the future of their children. In this scenario when cricket started to develop with new career options then the parents very much moved towards cricketing culture to provide better career options to their children in the sporting field.⁽¹⁵⁾ Thus a gradual decline in football culture can be observed in the middle class Bengali families during the mid 1980s.

The Attempts of Revival

During this period certain attempts were made for the revival of Calcutta football. The AIFF (All India Football Federation) introduced the Nehru Gold Cup Football tournament in 1982. It is an inviting international tournament. The first ever Nehru Gold Cup was held in Calcutta. But the poor performance of the Indian National Team in this tournament from the very first edition reversed the purpose of the tournament. Later it was followed by the introduction of Nehru International Club Gold Cup in 1991. The comparative better performance of Mohammedan Sporting somehow saved the Indian pride.⁽¹⁶⁾ But the feeling of internal rivalry never declined in Calcutta football. On the contrary the footballing rivalry took a national outlook due to the rise of national level

domestic tournaments. Gradually the football clubs of other states especially the clubs of Goa, Maharashtra and Kerala also became equally competent to the Calcutta clubs. So the rivalry even took a bigger shape. Therefore, to remain in the competition, the clubs started to introduce the foreign players. Especially a considerable number of African players enlisted their names in Indian club football. This thing further transformed the character of football rivalry in Calcutta. The coming of foreign players in Indian club football was not a new phenomenon. During 1950s Pakistani players Masud Fakri and Basir came to play in Calcutta but from 1980s it's became a usual phenomenon. In the beginning of the decade Iranian footballers like Jamshid Nasri and Majid Baskar mesmerized the football fans of Calcutta with their footballing skills. During the second half of 1980s the huge flow of African players changed the outlook of Calcutta football. African footballers like Chima Okorie, Emeka Ezuego, Christopher, Chibuzor and others became the prime attraction of the domestic football of Calcutta. Due to their physical advantage very soon they took the control of the Calcutta football and the teams became more dependent on them. In the beginning of 1990s Emeka Ezuego and Chima Okorie became the star attractions of Calcutta football. In 1991 Emeka single handedly took Mohammedan to the semi-final of the Nehru International Club Gold Cup. On the other hand Chima Okorie continued his enchanted performances throughout the decade of 1990s. Due to the efforts of these African footballers power and speed entered in Indian football with certain new outlook. ⁽¹⁷⁾ Apart from East

Bengal and Mohun Bagan other Calcutta teams like Mohammedan, Aryan and Tollygunj Agragami also achieved certain successes in domestic football. Mohammedan Sporting won the Federation Cup back to back in 1983 and 1984. In 1983 Aryan Club became IFA Shield champion. So the football culture of Calcutta transformed to a new phase during the decade of 1990s. To Mr. Sambhu Ghosh the transformations which had taken place in the late 1980s have far reaching consequences on the future course of Calcutta football. This event broke the traditional style of Calcutta football. ⁽¹⁸⁾ Calcutta football entered into a new age with the combination of indigenous and foreign football. Thus from this time the course of Calcutta football as well Indian football began to transform towards a completely new direction. Yet despite all these positive measures a new kind of hooliganism had developed in the football culture of Calcutta Maidan. It was the use of muscle power to abduct the players in demand to forcefully make them sign to the particular club during the phase of player transfer. Especially the three major clubs East Bengal, Mohun Bagan and Mohammedan Sporting club officials were often involved this kind of unwanted actions. Some of the anti-socials even got shelter and were hired by the clubs to make this kind of forceful signing. Moti Nandi had described these affairs in his novel '*Dal Badaler Aagee*'. ⁽¹⁹⁾ In the news reports and articles of Ashok Dasgupta ⁽²⁰⁾ and Short stories of Shantipriya Bandyopadhyay ⁽²¹⁾ the descriptions of these types of events were made very clearly. This thing further corrupted the atmosphere of Calcutta football. Otherwise an overall revival

attempt can be clearly observed in the football culture of Bengal during late 1980s and early 1990s.

Federation Cup Finals (1980-1990)

Year	Winner	Score in Final	Runner Up
1980-81	Mohun Bagan & East Bengal (Joint Winners)	1-1	
1981-82	Mohun Bagan	2-0	Mohammedan Sporting
1982-83	Mohun Bagan	1-0	Mafatlal Mills (Bombay)
1983-84	Mohammedan Sporting	0-0, Replay 2-0	Mohun Bagan
1984-85	Mohammedan Sporting	1-0	East Bengal
1985	East Bengal	1-0	Mohun Bagan

1986-87	Mohun Bagan	0-0 (a.e.t.), 5-4 (pen.)	East Bengal
1987-88	Mohun Bagan	2-0	Salgaocar S.C.(Goa)
1988-89	Salgaocar S.C.(Goa)	1-0	Border Security Force (New Delhi)
1989-90	Salgaocar S.C.(Goa)	2-1 (a.e.t.)	Mohammedan Sporting
1990	Kerala Police (Kerala)	2-1	Salgaocar S.C.(Goa)

Informations of the above chart are derived from following sources

1. www.goal.com
2. www.the-aiff.com
3. www.rssf.com
4. www.indianfootball.de

5. Saha, Rupak; '*Anupreronay Dau Dau Korchhe Mohun Bagan*', Madras, Ananda Bazar Patrika, Calcutta, May 6, 1981

Indian Football Team in Nehru Gold Cup 1982

(Hosted in Calcutta & All the Matches were played in Eden Gardens Stadium)

Date of Match	Match Between	Score Line	Goal Scorer for India	Points for India from the Match
16.02.1982	India Vs. China PR	IND-1 PRC-1	Mihir Bose	1
18.02.1982	India Vs. South Korea	IND-2 KOR-2	Prashanta Banerjee & Manas Bhattacharya	1
21.02.1982	India Vs Italy Olympic	IND-0 ITA-1	--	0
25.02.1982	India Vs. Uruguay	IND-1 URU-3	Manas Bhattacharya	0
27.02.1982	India Vs. Yugoslavia B	IND-2 YUG-1	Manoranjan Bhattacharya &	2

			Manas Bhattacharya	
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India finished fifth in group stage with 4 points in 5 matches- 1 win, 2 draws and 2 loses.

Final

03.03.1982- **Uruguay Vs China PR**- Final Score- **URU-2, PRC-0**

Uruguay became the Champion in the inaugural edition of the Nehru Gold Cup.

Informations of the above chart are derived from following sources

1. www.goal.com
2. www.indianfootball.de
3. www.thehardtackle.com
4. www.indiatoday.indiatoday.in

Indian Football Team in Nehru Gold Cup 1984

(Hosted in Calcutta & All the Matches were played in Salt Lake Stadium)

Date of Match	Match Between	Score line	Goal Scorer for India	Points for India from the Match
11.01.1984	India Vs. Poland	IND-1 POL-2	Biswajit Bhattacharya	0
14.01.1984	India Vs. Argentina	IND-0 ARG-1	--	0
19.01.1984	India Vs. Vasas Budapest S.C. (Hungary)	IND-0 VSC-1	--	0
22.01.1984	India Vs. Romania U 21	IND-0 ROMU21-0	--	1
25.01.1984	India Vs China PR	IND-0 PRC-3	--	0

Despite showing certain Great Spirit of the game India ended at the bottom of the group league table only with a single point with one draw and four defeats. Biswajit Bhattacharya was the only goal scorer in the championship for India and he scored his only goal in this tournament in the opening match against Poland. Finally Poland became the champion of this edition of the Nehru Gold Cup

Final

27.01.1984- **Poland Vs China PR**-Final Score- **POL-1 PRC-0**

Informations of the above chart are derived from following sources

1. www.rssf.com
2. www.goal.com
3. www.indianfootball.de
4. www.the-aiff.com
5. www.kolkatafootball.com
6. www.thehardtackle.com

India in Nehru Gold Cup 1988

Hosted in Siliguri, West Bengal

Date of Match	Match Between	Score Line	Goal Scorers for India	Points for India from the Match
19.01.1988	India Vs. China B	IND-0 PRC B-2	--	0
22.01.1988	India Vs. Hungary	IND-1 HUN-4	Tarun Dey (Pen.)	0
25.01.1988	India Vs. Bulgaria	IND-0 BUL-3	--	0
28.01.1988	India Vs. Poland	IND-1 POL-1	Vijay Kumar	1
31.01.1988	India Vs. USSR	IND-0 USSR-2	--	0

India finished at the bottom of the Group League Table with just 1 point (1 draw and 4 defeats)

Final

04.02.1988- **USSR vs. Poland**- Final Score- **USSR-2, POL-0**

Champion-USSR

Informations of the above chart are derived from following sources

1. www.rssf.com
2. www.goal.com
3. www.indianfootball.de
4. www.the-aiff.com
5. www.goldentimes.org

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1. Dasgupta, Ashok; 'Sata Dhikkar', 'Khelar Kagaj', George Telegraph/AKG Group, September 1, 1980
2. Ibid
3. Stuff Reporter 'Reshareshir Kadarjarup: 16 August, 1980: Kolkatar Notun Ghatak: Abasheshe Khelar Mathei Mrityu: Nihata 13, Ahata Shata Shata: Bodo Khelar Mormantik Fal', Ananda Bazar Patrika, Calcutta, August 17, 1980
4. Ibid
5. Stuff Reporter 'Haspatale Tartaja Sab Jubaker Lash', Ananda Bazar Patrika, Calcutta, August 17, 1980
6. Dasgupta, Ashok; 'Sata Dhikkar', 'Khelar Kagaj', George Telegraph/AKG Group, September 1, 1980
7. Ibid
8. Stuff Reporter; 'Haspatale Tartaja Sab Yubaker Lash', 'Ananda Bazar Patrika', August 17, 1980
9. Nandi, Moti; 'Ferari', Ananda Publishers, Kolkata, 1990, Pp. 9-25
10. As told by Mr. Debnath Majumder, Football enthusiast and Mohun Bagan Supporter on 29th July, 2015.
11. Dasgupta, Ashok; Op.cit
12. Majumder, Boria & Bandyapadhyay, Kausik; 'Goalless: The Story of a Unique Footballing Nation', Penguin/Viking, New Delhi, 2006, Pp. 152-153
13. www.cricketchieve.com

14. Chatterjee, Amitava; 'Commercialization of Cricket in 20th Century: Colonial & Post Colonial India', Dr. Pradip Chattopadhyay (ed.), History, Vol. IX, 2007, The University of Burdwan, Pp. 93-94
15. Dasgupta, Ashok; '*Tuklur Raag*', Khela, Aajkaal, April 30, 1987
16. 'Indian National Football Team at the Nehru Gold Cup', www.indiafootball.de
17. Nath, Nirmal; 'History of Indian Football', Readers Service, Kolkata, 2011, Pp. 403-425
18. Told by Mr. Sambhu Ghosh (Assistant Teacher, Physical Education, Kantalia High School and also an ex- National level Athlete) in a conversation on 12th September, 2013
19. Nandi, Moti; '*Dal Badaler Agee*', Ananda Publishers, Kolkata, 1992
20. Dasgupta, Ashok; '*Boka*', Aajkaal, January 8, 1988
21. Bandyopadhyay, Shantipriya; '*Parajay*', Deb Sahitya Kutir, Kolkata, 1990

Conclusion

The history of the football culture of Calcutta is a very much significant subject in respect of the modern socio-cultural history of India. The footballing history of the city not just only reflects the history of physical culture but also clearly deals with the transformation of the socio-cultural condition of Bengal from the colonial period to the post-independence period. The football history of the city also reflects the social perspective in detail.

During the colonial period as a part of new colonial culture the game of football introduced in Calcutta. Gradually the native masses became closely associated with the game and invented their own style to play the game of the colonial masters. Thus the Indianization of the game had taken place. The local masses adopted the game with their own style. Gradually the game gave a new fighting spirit to the native people against the white lords. The successes and achievements of the local teams like Mohun Bagan, Mohammedan Sporting, Shobhabazar, National and others boosted new nationalist and anti-colonial zeal among the local masses. The game also linked up the social events with the political ideas. Therefore the game

of football became the most popular sporting activity in Bengal during the colonial period. ⁽¹⁾

The effects of Independence and partition of the country directly reflected on the football field. Due to the independence of the country the European teams completely abolished from the Calcutta Maidan and the rivalry between the local teams entered into a new level. In addition to that, the effects of partition and refugee crisis also led to the transformation of the identities for the Calcutta clubs. In the post partition period Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting turned out to be the three major clubs of Calcutta football. These three clubs represented the three different identities-Aristocrat Hindu Bengali (Original residents of Western Part of Bengal) '*Ghoti*' (Mohun Bagan), '*Bangal*' identity of Bengali Hindus from East Bengal origin (East Bengal) and Muslim identity (Mohammedan Sporting). The other clubs of Calcutta football reflected the minor identities as they left far behind in competition than these three major clubs. ⁽²⁾

During the colonial era initially football was nothing but an alien colonial sport of the white lords, but gradually it turned out to be a sport which helped in the rise of nationalist zeal among the native masses. The bare foot football; the unique footballing style of the native players promoted the concept of swadeshi ideology during the early half of 20th century. Football turned out to be a very popular sport and physical activity among the Bengali masses. After the historic IFA Shield win

of Mohun Bagan in 1911 football became a mark of anti-colonial inspiration for the native people. The individual success of the players like Gostho Pal, Umapati Kumar, Balaidas Chatterjee and others in the football field had also been treated as the success of the subdued colonized masses of India. The success of Mohammed Sporting in the 1930s inspired the Muslim communal identity but it is also fact that the successive triumphs of Mohammedan Sporting throughout the 1930s ultimately brought an end to the supremacy of the white football teams on Calcutta Maidan. But a serious transformation of football culture in Calcutta Maidan can be traced in the post independence period. The native clubs had developed their own identities and the partition of the country had also brought certain changes in this regard. The regional and religious identities regarding the club football had developed new followers and supporters' culture in Calcutta Maidan. During the 1970s the Calcutta football culture attained the most popular era. The football fanaticism developed among the common masses. Even in some cases the hooliganism started to transform into criminal activities that also brought heavy casualties in the football field. Despite this the middle class Bengali families never tried to instigate any professional measure in their footballing culture and always favoured the white collar jobs over sporting activities. It was only expected that the boys who were not so good in their academic career only could pursue sports especially football in order to get certain job in their adulthood. The thing only started to change from

the mid of 1990s when certain semi-professionalism entered in Indian as well as Calcutta football. ⁽³⁾

Without the mention of the approach of sports journalism in the regard the research thesis will be incomplete. The sports journalists of different time frame have described the essence of the culture of Calcutta football with different but in very much realistic approach. Initially during the early 20th century the primary development of sports journalism had done by Indian Daily News. This particular paper started to print the pre-match discussions and post-match analysis of the important football matches of Calcutta Maidan in order to increase the popularity of the game. In case of Historic IFA Shield final of 1911 the paper had also made such kind of attempts which created tremendous public attention. ⁽⁴⁾

Among the Indian journalists Ganen Mullick of Amrita Bazar Patrika had made the first attempt to make effective sports journalism and his efforts through the match reports and analysis of the matches of IFA Challenge Shield, 1911 created enormous public attention towards the sporting field. ⁽⁵⁾ The *Betar Jagat* had taken certain unique steps to popularize the Calcutta football culture during 1930s. But it was after the independence during the decades of 1950s and 1960s the voice and unique style of Ajay Basu had opened a new era of sports journalism through the medium of Radio. ⁽⁶⁾

Mukul (Pradyot) Dutta, who had joined Ananda Bazar Patrika in 1940s, revolutionized the sports journalism through his concept of providing statistical analysis and records in his articles. During his long career of 50 years he had played significant role to bring the modern approach in sports journalism. The football culture of Calcutta also got significant place in his writings. ⁽⁷⁾

Moti Nandi, Dhiman Dutta (son of Mokul Dutta), Ashok Dasgupta and Shantipriya Bandyopadhyay introduced certain new phenomenon in sports journalism during 1970s and continued these perspectives during the following decades. Moti Nandi through the column '*Math Maidan*' in '*Ananda Bazar Patrika*' had given new importance to the sporting culture. His articles, novels and short stories related to sporting culture of Calcutta developed new angles of sporting arena in front of the readers. ⁽⁸⁾ Through his great novels like '*Striker*', '*Stopper*', '*Ferrari*' and '*Dal Badaler Agee*' the inner sides of Calcutta football had been exposed with a realistic approach. ⁽⁹⁾ On the other hand Ashok Dasgupta has effectively introduced protestant sports journalism in vernacular language. ⁽¹⁰⁾

From late 1970s and onwards this legacy of sports journalism in Calcutta Maidan has been effectively carried on by the eminent sports journalists like Rupak Saha⁽¹¹⁾, Debasis Dutta ⁽¹²⁾ , Nirmal Nath ⁽¹³⁾, Manas Chakraborty ⁽¹⁴⁾ and other eminent sports journalists. Their hard work and efficient journalist skills not just only exposed different angles of sporting cultures of Calcutta but also created great

sporting awareness among the masses, off which the football culture of Calcutta Maidan has gained immense importance.

As the sports journalists deal mainly with the technical details and general chronological progress of the game with the analysis of the technical side of the game the sport historians try to connect the socio-cultural and eco-political perspectives of the game along with its chronological progress. In this regard the names of Soumen Mitra ⁽¹⁵⁾, Boria Mazumdar ⁽¹⁶⁾, Kausik Bandyopadhyay ⁽¹⁷⁾, Amitava Chatterjee ⁽¹⁸⁾ and Subhransu Roy ⁽¹⁹⁾ are especially mentionable. Irrespective of their great contribution regarding the field of sports history the question regarding the character of the transformation of football culture in Calcutta in between the colonial and post colonial era along with the problem of the negligence of the Bengali middle class to accept the professional side of the game has never been dealt in detail. So I have made this to matters as the main issues to be analyzed in detail in my doctoral thesis.

During 1970s the Calcutta football attended its best developments. Several socio-economic opportunities were associated with the game. This particular decade also witnessed the rise of galaxy of football legends in Calcutta Maidan. In this decade the Calcutta clubs also became the best teams in the national level tournaments also. Thus the decade of 1970s witnessed the dominance of Calcutta teams in national level tournaments also. Besides all these certain negative aspects also

entered in Calcutta football. These things accelerated the future decline of the Calcutta football. The violent crowd unrest in football stadium along with hooligan attitudes of the spectators created several troubles for the football culture of the city. The next decade started with the disastrous massacre of August 16, 1980. This particular event took the lives of sixteen football fans and made many of the spectators crucially injured. Thus a kind of fear and panic became associated with the football culture which played an effected role behind the temporary decline of the game. In addition to this the Bengali middle class Bhadroloks have never regarded sports as an indispensable physical culture associated with status or profession. With few negligible exceptions, and that too found in other places, Bengal had continued to prefer white collar jobs or even clerical employment to sports. As a result of it, physical culture in Bengal did not flourish to extent among the Bengali Bhadrlok community who are somehow financially resourceful. Thus the backward section of the society concentrated in the sporting culture to get better earning. Football culture of Bengal is also not an exception of this. Like the Latin American and African countries in Bengal also most of the footballing talents emerged from the unprivileged section of the society. But the infrastructural deficiency has also created certain disasters for the growth of the sporting culture in Bengal. ⁽²⁰⁾

This thing has also created several problems for the football oriented sporting culture of Bengal during the period of 1990s. As a semi-professional attitude started to develop in Indian football during this time but the football culture of Calcutta Maidan could not make adequate transformation in this regard. It is also fact that the introduction of professional attitude in Indian football for the first time had been thought of by a Bengali football administrator. Pradyut Dutta the then Honourable Secretary of the IFA had written a letter in this regard to the office of FIFA and sent that with veteran sports journalist and football expert Mr. G.C. Das. But as the AIFF showed certain negligence in developing the necessary infrastructure during that period the IFA could not take any further initiative in this regard. In 1996 with the introduction of the National Football League a semi-professional attitude has been inflicted within Indian football. During that phase the Calcutta Football and the football clubs of Calcutta were facing a very serious crisis in football scenario regarding the financial problems. While the footballers of the other states started to become professional in the sporting career (especially the footballers of Goa, Punjab, Kerala and North-Eastern States) a considerable section of the Bengali footballers still remained in their amateurist attitude. The Bengali middle class families still preferred the white collar jobs, whereas the resourceful parents became more motivated by the cricketing success of Sourav Ganguly and preferred cricket over football as the desirable sport for their children.

In 1997 when the United Breweries (UB) Group became the sponsor of both East Bengal and Mohun Bagan then many experts thought that it would rather ended the footballing rivalry between Mohun Bagan and East Bengal and thus would also ended the main essence of the Calcutta football. But the domestic football session of 1997 rather changed the scenario. Especially the historic Diamond Match (Federation Cup Semi-final Derby in Yuva-Bharati Krirangan on 13th July, 1997) showed the total enthusiasm of the Bengali masses towards the game of football as almost 11 lakh 31 thousand people were present at the stadium to enjoy the match. After this due to financial sponsorships the financial problems of the major clubs of Calcutta started to get solve and the scenario became much more suitable for the development of professional attitude regarding domestic football in Calcutta Maidan. With the turn of the century and beginning of the new millennium certain new developments had been introduced in Bengali football culture and the professional attitude got more exposures in these days. But the Bengali middle-class amateur attitudes still somehow existed in the Bengali football culture. As a result of that the footballers of the other states used to get upper hand over the Bengali footballers in many cases. In spite of the presence of certain football talents the Bengali football culture fails to flourish in the national scenario in comparison to the footballers of the states like Goa, Manipur, and Mizoram etc. ⁽²¹⁾

Therefore several serious measures were taken by the IFA, AIFF and the major football clubs of Calcutta for the revival of the football culture in the city. As a part of this revival programme, considerable number of African players rose in importance in the domestic level club football. It inflicted certain new features in Calcutta football. It definitely played effective role behind the revival of footballing culture in the city, but during this time some other states like Goa, Kerala, Punjab and Maharashtra also made specific progresses in the game of football to deliver tough challenges to the supremacy of Bengal in the football field. Thus the national level competitions became much tougher for the football clubs of Bengal. Amidst the complex and confusing medley of regional and club interests that engulfed Indian football in the 1980s, signs of change were apparent. Bengal's supremacy in both the inter-provincial Santosh Trophy as well as major national-level club tournaments was under serious challenge. The decline of Mohammedan Sporting in the 1990s further worsens the situation for the footballing pride of the city clubs. The coming of 1990s thus brought certain new aspects in Indian football. ⁽²²⁾ So the rolling of the ball in the football field effectively reflected various modes of the social transformation of the history of Bengal.

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Illustrations



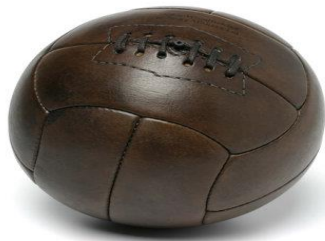
Nagendraprasad Sarbadhikari



Oomesh (Dukhiram) Majumdar



Football in 1890s



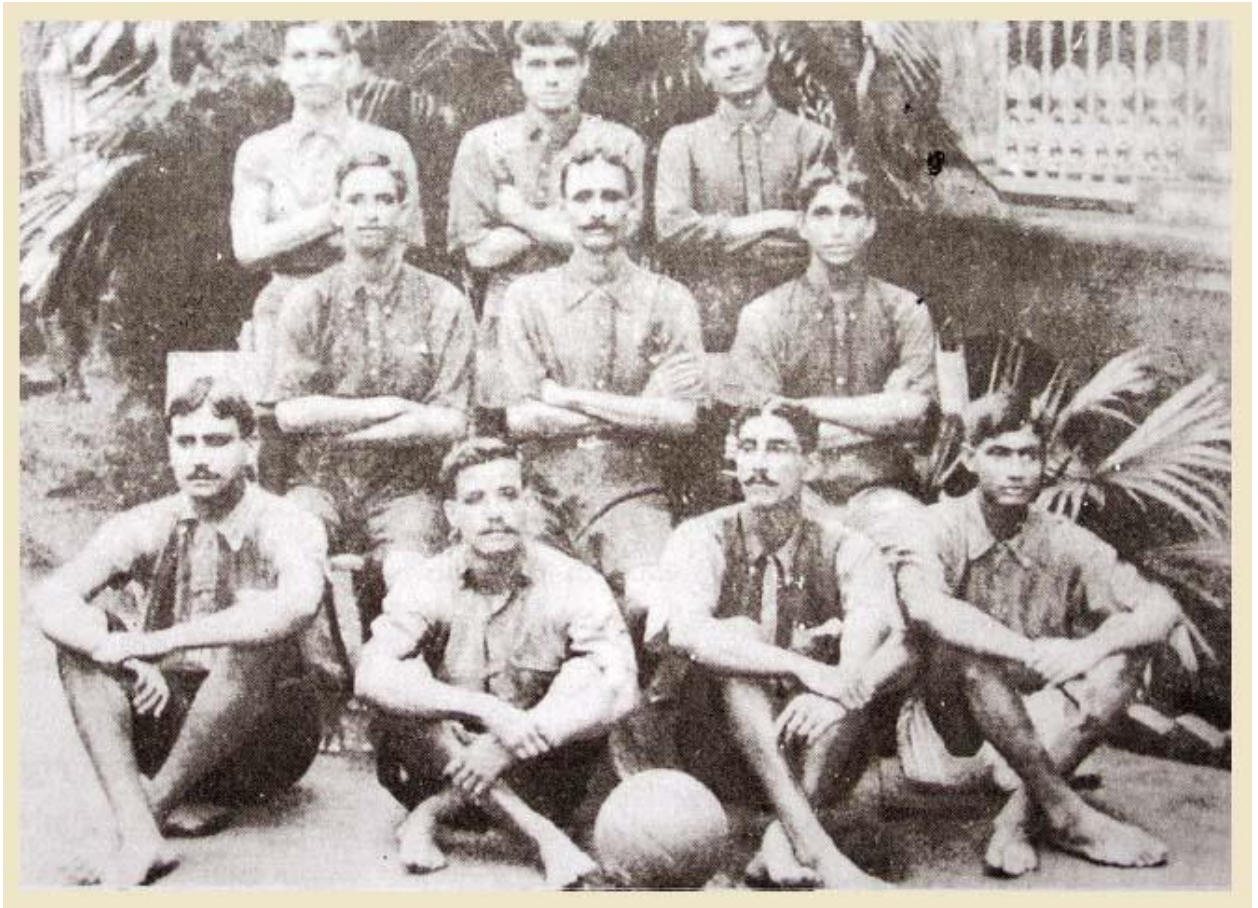
Football in 1930s



Football in 1950s



Football in 1980s



1908 Trades Cup Champion Mohun Bagan Team



1911, Historic IFA Shield Champion Mohun Bagan Team



Subadar Major Sailen Bose and Shibdas Bhaduri with the Historic IFA Shield, 1911



Shibdas Bhaduri



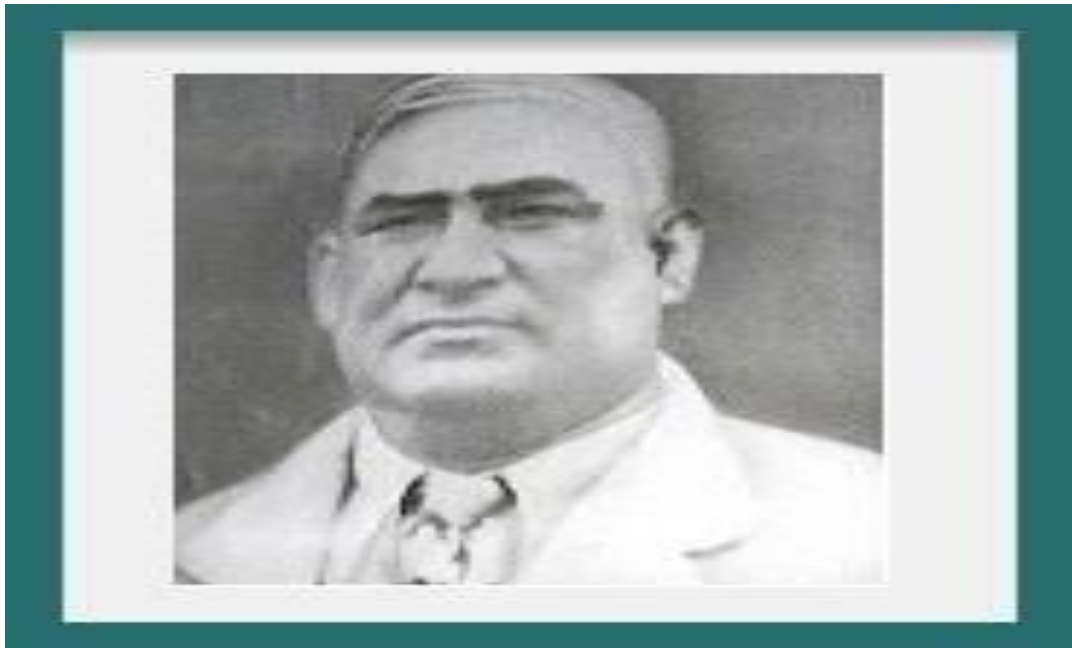
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Mohun bagan Team in 1939



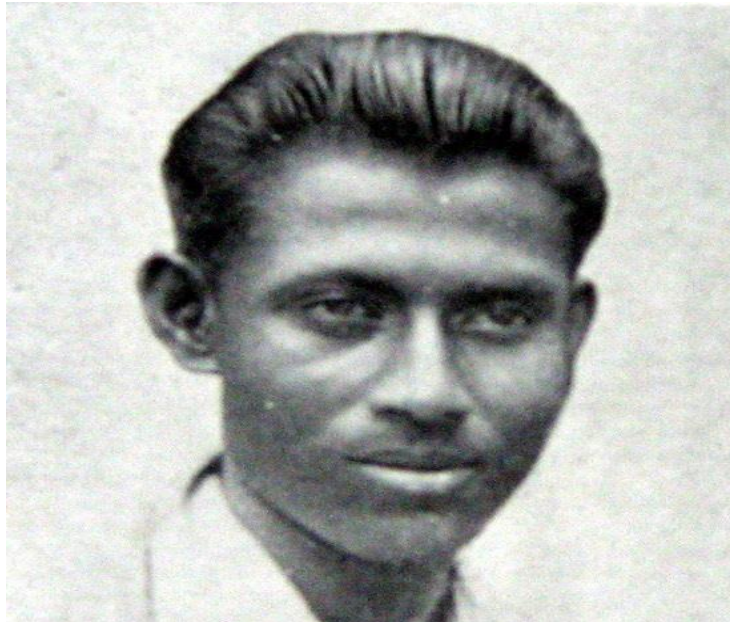
Md. Salim of Mohammedan Sporting in Celtic Colours in Scotish League in 1937



Balaidas Chatterjee



Umapati Kumar



Sailen Manna (Young) (The Gold Medal Winning Captain in 1951 Asian Games Football, Delhi)



Dr. Talembaran Aao (First Captain of Indian National Football Team After Independence, in 1948 London Olympics)



Subimal (Chuni) Goswami



Pradip Kumar Bannerjee in Eastern Railway Colours



Ahmed Khan



Sailen Manna



Sahu Mewalal



Tulsidas Balaram



Calcutta Football in 1950s



Indian Football Team with Manager Balaidas Chatterjee



Syed A. Rahim (The Coach)



Amal Dutta, the First Professional Football Coach of Calcutta Maidan



Coach P.K. Bannerjee with footballer Shyam Thapa



East Bengal Players shaking hands with Yusuf Khan (Dilip Kumar, Actor)
before the start of the Rovers Cup Final



Mohun Bagan in 1977



East Bengal, most successful side in domestic football throughout 1970s



The 'King of Football' in Calcutta Maidan (1977)

Pele (Edson Arrantes do Nascimento) in Cosmos (New York) jersey in action
against Mohun Bagan



Masood Fakri, the Pakistani Footballer who played for East Bengal in 1950s



Iranian international Majid Baskar along with another Iranian player Jamsheed Nasiri were the star players for East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting in late 1970s and early 1980s



The Beginning of semi-professionalism appeared in football field of Calcutta during late 1980s and early 1990s with the introduction of sponsorships



‘Bar Pujo’, a special cultural phenomenon of Calcutta Football

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