Burdwan is an anglicised version of the Sanskrit Vardhamana and the corresponding Bardhaman in Bengali. The origin of this name dates back to sixth century BC and is ascribed to the twenty-fourth Jain Tirthankar, or Vardhamanswami, who spent some time in Astikagrama, according to the the Jain Kalpasutra. This place has been renamed as Vardhamana in his honour. A second view holds the literal meaning of the name, a prosperous and growing centre, to argue that this place represented a frontier colony of the progress of aryанизation through the upper Ganga valley. However, the Aryans failed to proceed further east. So, the name was retained. Archeological evidences suggest that this region, forming a major part of Radh Bengal, could be traced even back to 4000-2000 BC. Burdwan is a place of mixed culture. The deuls (temples of rekha type) found here are quite reminiscent of Buddhist architecture. The various mosques and tombs remind us of Muslim culture. The old temples bear signs of Hinduism, mostly belonging to the Sakta and Vaishnava community. The famous Sufi Pir Baharam's tomb is here. The controversy on Kankaleswari Kali of whether it originally belonged to the Jains or Tantriks indicates again the town's multifaceted heritage. Indeed, Burdwan had witnessed, experienced and withstood quite a few historical thunderstorms in the past, mainly due to the Mughal, Pathan and Maratha intruders. The town of Bardhaman was visited at one time or another by many a notable of the Delhi Empire from Raja Todarmal to Daud Karnani, from Sher Afgan and Kutub-ud-din to Ajimuswan or the rebel Sheh Jahan. The celebrated tombs of Sher Afgan and Kutub-ud-din lying side by side in this township relate to a classic love-story of Mihr-ul-Nissa and Jehangir that made Sher Afgan, the first husband of the great lady, a dead third person. The lady, who once lived here, later ruled India as Jehangir's wife for quite sometime, but with a new name Noor Jahan (Light of the World) commensurate with her beauty and culture. Burdwan's present panoramic view and modernisation owe mainly to the Raj family. The Burdwan Raj started with Sangam Rai, a Khattri Kapur of Kotti in Lahore, who established the Burdwan House. The year 1657 recorded this Raj first. Among the descendents, Mahtab Chand Bahadur and later Bijoy Chand Mahtab struggled their best to make this region culturally, economically and ecologically healthier. Sadhaka Kamalakanta as composer of devotional songs and Kashiram Das as a poet and translator of the great Mahabharata were possibly the best products of such an endeavour. The society at large also continued to gain the fruits. We find, among others, the great rebellious poet Kazi Nazrul Islam and Kala-azar-famed U. N. Brahmachari as the relatively recent illustrious sons of this soil. The town became an important center of North-Indian classical music as well.