

Early Historical background and foundation of the Koch Dynasty:

The vast region to the northeast of India between the foothill of the eastern Himalaya Mountain ranges and extreme North of Bengal, where the Koches established their kingdom in the beginning of the 16th century, under the leaderships of Biswa Singha nominally and king Naranarayan formally, is known in various names since the historical age. This is region also witnessed the mixing of different ethnic groups of various cultures, seen the ebb and flow of many dynasties and political evolution since the early historical age. In the present chapters a concise out line of the names of the region, physical features, political development and evolution of the region as well as racial identities of the Koches drawn upto 16th century. This would be helpful for the better understanding of the reign of king Naranarayan as well as various aspects of the contemporary history of the region.

Names of the region from Historical Perspectives:

The archaeological excavations, inscriptions, coins other literary sources like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, Puranas, Tantra Literatures, chronicles (*Buranjis*, *Rajoupakhyans* and *Vansavalis* etc.) have proved the early human activities, settlements of different ethnic groups, growth of civilizations and the rise and fall of many dynasties in the region. These sources including the Persian writings and the writings of European travelers have conferred different names to the region. That are 'Pragjyotisha', 'Kamarupa', and 'Lauhitya' up to 13th century and there after 'Kamata' or *Kamatapur*, 'Kamru' alias 'Chaulistan' and 'Couch' or 'Koch' or 'Kochbehar', in course of historical development. In some sources, even two or three above-mentioned names occurred simultaneously to denote a particular region or some times to denote two/three different sub-regions. Some modern scholars have named the region as 'Pragjyotish -Kamarupa' and 'Kamta-Koch (Behar)'¹. However, it is fact from all the evidences that all the names generally indicate the same region i.e. the Tista-Brahmaputra Valley of Northeast India in different sizes and shapes.

Therefore,

we have to proceed carefully to identify the names of the region and its changing pattern from ancient time.

Pragjyotish, Kamarupa and Lauhitya:

The earliest name of the region is *Pragjyotish* with its capital at *Pragjyotishpur*, occurred in the *Ramayana*^{1A}, the *Mahabharata*². Both the epics refer to *Naraka*, the mythological king of 'Pragjyotish' who had his capital at 'Pragjyotishpur'. Occasional references to 'Pragjyotish' 'Kamarupa' and others may be found in many *Puranas*³. In the early stage, the classical secular writings like *Raghuvamsam* of *Kalidas* (5th century AD)⁴, *Brihat-samhita* of *Barahamihir* (5th century AD)⁵, *Dasakumarcharita* of *Dandi* (6th century AD)⁶, *Harsha-charita* of *Banabhatta* (7th century AD)⁷, *Trikanda* of *Purushottama* (7th century AD.)⁸ *Kabyamimansha* of *Rajsekhar* (9th century AD)⁹ and *Abhidhanachintamani* of *Hemendra* (12th century AD)¹⁰, etc also named the region as *Pragjyotish* or *Pragjyotishpur* with other names like 'Kamarupa' and 'Lauhitya'. The '*Raghuvamsam*' of *Kalidas* refers to the two countries that are *Pragjyotish* and *Kamarupa* lying to the east of the *Lauhitra*¹¹ and the *Brihat-samhita* of *Barahamihir*, refers to three countries, that are 'Pragjyotish', 'Kamboja' and 'Lauhitra' in the region¹². However, the '*Harsha-charita*' of *Banabhatta* (7th century AD.) and the '*Trikanda*' of *Purushottama* (7th century AD.)¹³ mentions that 'Pragjyotish' and 'Kamarupa' are the two different names of the same place or region '*Abhidhanachintamani*' of *Hemendra*, a Jaina lexicographer (12th century AD) says, "the *Pragjyotish* are the *Kamarupa*"¹⁴. *Kavya Mimansa* of *Rajasekhara* (9th century AD) refers to *Pragjyotisha* as a country and *Kamarupa* as a mountain¹⁵. B. K. Barua, with reference from the *Kalika Purana*, a work 10th century AD, described "that immediately after *Naraka* of *Mithila* became king and was placed in charge of the goddess *Kamakhya*, the name of the land was changed from *Pragjyotish* to *Kamarupa*"¹⁶.

Some inscriptions also made references of *Pragjyotish* or *Pragjyotishpura*. *Balavarma's* (9th century AD) *Nowgong* grant refers to '*Pragjyotishpura*'¹⁷. *Indrapala's* (11th century AD) copper plate inscriptions also refer to '*Pragjyotish*' with the name of other places¹⁸. *Ratnapala* (11th century AD) in his *Bargaon* grant placed himself as "...the delight of *Kamarupa*" and "the ruler of *Pragjyotish*" (*Kamarupanandi* and *Pragjyotishadhipati*)¹⁹.

The first historical reference to *Kamarupa* occurred in the Allahabad *Prasasti* of imperial Gupta king *Samudragupta* of 4th century AD²⁰. The oldest of all inscriptions of *Kamarupa*'s rulers, *Bhaskaramarma*'s copper plate inscription (4th century AD), which issued from *Karnasuvarna*, also bears the name *Kamarupa* ²¹. There are many references to '*Kamarupa*' in the most of the literary sources, which have already been mentioned. Moreover, we have occasional references of '*Kamarupa*' in the *Kalika Purana* (10th century AD) ²², the *Siva Purana*²³, *Vayu Purana* ²⁴, and the *Yogini Tantra* (16th century AD) ²⁵. The secular writings of *Banabhatta*²⁶ (7th century AD), Chinese pilgrim *Hiuen Tsiang* ²⁷(7th century AD) and the Persian writer *Minhajuddin siraj*²⁸ and have referred to '*Kamarupa*' in various ways.

Therefore, from the above discussion it may be assumed that the earliest name of the region i.e. the *Tista- Brahmaputra* valley of north east India is *Pragjyotish* which continued up to 12th century AD , some times alone and some times with other names like *Kamarupa*²⁹, *Lauhitya*³⁰ and *Kamboja*³¹. The name '*Lauhitya*' might have given to the region as it is situated on the bank of the river *Lauhitya* (*Brahmaputra*) and that of the name '*Kamboja*' as this region was populated by the *Kirata* tribes (*Kombojas*)³². At early stage, *Kamarupa* was a small territory (*mandala*) within *Pragjyotish* (*Bhukti*) ³³. According to the *Abhidhanachintamani* of *Hemendra*, a *Jaina* lexicographer (12th century AD) *Kamarupa* is another name of *Pragjyotisa*³⁴. For this reason, we get some references with both the names that are *Pragjyotish* and *Kamarupa*, or some times more than two³⁵. Ultimately, *Kamarupa* comes in to prominence and denotes the whole of north-east India up to the *Sadiya* or the *Tista- Brahmaputra* valley of north east India. So it can safely be assumed that from 5th century AD onward up to 13th century, both the names *Pragjyotish* and *Kamarupa* were in use in side by side and modern scholars of ancient times , named the region as '*Pragjyotish – Kamarupa*' to avoid controversy³⁶.

About the origin of the name '*Pragjyotish*' or '*Pragjyotishpura*', there are different views. According to the *Ramayana* , in the pre-historic age , King *Amurtaraja* , elder brother of *Kusanabha*, grant father of *Bisvamitra* and son of *Kusa* founded the city *Pragjyotish* here (Here king *Amurtaraja* a great warrior, founded the city of *Pragjyotish* ³⁷ . In the *Kalika Purana*, a work of 10th century AD., we read "Formerly *Brahma* staying here created the stars ; so the city is called '*Pragjyotishpura*' a city

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equal to the city of *Indra*" (*Indrapuri*)³⁸ and there is a tradition that in olden times astronomy (*Jyotishsastra*) was studied here or the territory famous for astronomy (*Jyotishsastra*) . On this ground, Gait writes "Prag means former or eastern and jyotish a star, astrology, shining. *Pragjyotishpura* may be taken to mean the City of Eastern Astrology"³⁹. On the same ground, Khan Choudhuri Amanatulla Ahamed, writes "...পূৰ্বকালে দিনাজপুৰ অঞ্চলৰ 'জ্যোতিষদেশ' নাম ছিল, তাহার পূৰ্বদিকে অবস্থিত বালিয়া এই দেশ 'প্ৰাগ্ জ্যোতিষ' নামে অভিহিত হইত"⁴⁰. K. L. Barua accepts the etymological ground but reads it in different connotation. According to him, "It is significant that to the immediate east of the town of Gauhati there is a temple on the crest of a hill known as Citrachala, and this temple is dedicated to the *Navagrahas* or the nine planets. It is probable that this temple is the origin of the name *Pragjyotishpura*"⁴¹. According to Professor B. K. Kakati⁴², '*Pragjyotish*' seems to be connected with topographical features of the land, but not with any religious cult, and it originated from an *Austrian* word '*Pagar-juh(jo)-tic* (c=Ch), which means a extensively high hill region .

About the origin of the name '*Kamarupa*', the main source of information, the *Kalika Purana* gives different version informations. According to one version, '*Kamarupa*' is associated with *Kamadeva* (*Madan*), the god of love (sex). Kama was send by the gods to put an end to God Siva's mourning after the death of his consort and to awaken in him again the passion of creation. He was burnt to ashes by the angry glance of god Siva, but later recovered his original form (*rupa*), hence the name *Kamarupa*⁴³. According other version of the *Kalika Purana* "the name *Kamarupa* originated from the Goddess *Kamakhya*, as another name of the Goddess is *Kamarupa*"⁴⁴. It is also occurs in the other Chapter, the *Asuras Madhu* and *Danabha* were killed by Brahma, then He and *Bisnu* worshipped Goddess *Kali* to kill *Kesidaitya* in a place called *Pandunath* near *Pragjyotishpura*. This place came to be known as *Kamakhya* from the tradition that *Kama* organ (*joni*) of the Body of *Sati* having fallen here⁴⁵. B. K. Barua with reference from the *Kalika Purana* (without details) described "that immediately after *Naraka* of *Mithila* became king and was placed in charge of the goddess *Kamakhya*, the name of the land was changed from *Pragjyotish* to *Kamarupa*"⁴⁶. Therefore, it can be assumed that *Pragjyotish* and *Kamarupa* are closely related and named as *Pragjyotish – Kamarupa*.

It is very hard to identify the exact extent and boundary of *Pragjyotish-Kamarupa* with present sources of our information. The *Puranic* and *Tantra* literatures gave us wholesome idea about the extent and boundary of the *Pragjyotish - Kamarupa*, from which we can just project an approximate extent and boundary of it. The *Kalika Purana* records that *Kamarupa* is to the east of the river *Karatoya* and the west of the river *Lalita Kanta* (*Brahmaputra*?)⁴⁷. The *Yogini Tantra* says about the boundaries of the *Kamarupa* in the following ways:

uttarasyam kanjagirih karatoya tu pascime |
tirthasrestha diksunadi purvasyam mgirikanyake ||17 .
daksine brahmaputrasya laksayah sangamavadhi |
*Kamarupa iti khyatah sarvasastresu niscitah || 18*⁴⁸.

'the *Kanjagirih* , probably extended *Kunchanjinga* was in the north and the *Karatoya* river was in the western boundary of *Kamarupa* The *Diksu* (modern *Dikhu* river near *Sibsagar*) was the eastern limit and the confluence of the *Laksa* and the *Brahmaputra* was the southern limit of the *Kamarupa*'. The *Assam Buranji* composed by *Haliram Dhekiyal Fukkan* and translated in Bengali by *Sri Yatindra mohan Bhattachariya*⁴⁹ mentioned with the reference of *Haragouri Sambad* that *Kamrupa* (ancient *Assam*) covering the area in the east up to *Dikkarbashini* hill and on the west up to the *Karatoya* River had four pithas. Those are *Ratnapitha* –the *Karatoya* in the west up to the *Sankosh* in the east, *Kamapitha* –from the *Sankosh* in the west up to the *Rupak* river in the east; *Swarnapitha* up to the *Vairaba* river in the east and *Sumarpitha* – up to the *Dikkarbashini* hill. The Chinese pilgrim *Huien Tsiang*, who visited the court of *Bhaskaravarman* in 643 AD says the country was more than a myriad li or 1667 miles in circuit and it (*Kamarupa*) was situated more than 900 li or 150 miles east of *Pundravardhana*⁵⁰. In the *Tang -shu*, *Kamarupa* is described as being 1600 li to the west of Upper Burma beyond the black mountain⁵¹.

On the other hand, modern scholar likes *B. K. Barua*, with references from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* describes the extent and boundary of *Pragjyotish* as " North of it seemingly lay tracts called *Antargiri*, *Vahirgiri* and *Upagiri* (*Sabha*) which appear to be the lower slopes of the Himalayas and the Terai ; and it was close to the mountains , for *Bhagadatta* is called *Sailalaya* (*Stri*) . It bordered on the *Kiratas* and *cinas* for they formed his retinue (*Sabha*, *Udyoga*) and it is even said he dwelt at

the Eastern Ocean (*Udyoga*) ; these marshy regions can only be the alluvial tracts and islands near the mouths of the Ganges and the *Brahmaputra* as they existed anciently⁵². Gopinath Bardoloi, the son of the soil, in his autobiography, named '*Lokopriyo Gopinath Bardoloi—An architect of modern India*' , also describes with same sources of information that " from the description of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata it would appear that the country stretched as far as the sea in the south , and it was also a hilly country . It was built on a golden crested mountain, which was 64 Jojanas in extent, and stood abutted on the bottomless Varunalaya (sea). In the Mahabharata Bhagadutta, the king of Pragjyotish is called 'Sailalaya' (dwelling among the mountains) and it stated that his troops consisted of Kiratas, chinas and dwellers of seacoast. Therefore, it is quite clear that the mountains mentioned were Assam Ranges and the sea was the Bay of Bengal, which stretched up to this hill ranges. In the west, its boundary was Karatoya or Teesta, to the east as far as present Darrang district of Assam⁵³. He also describes, "Lower Bengal was not there in existence"⁵⁴.

Thus ancient *Pragjyotish -Kamarupa* included whole of the *Tista-Brahmaputra* valley i.e. present nine districts of lower Assam , Northern part of *Meghalaya* , Rangpur (old) district of Bangladesh and Koch Behar and Jalpaiguri (part) districts of west Bengal .

Kamta or Kamtapur Koch' or 'Kochbehar':

With the beginning of the 13th century, a series of new names came into existence to denoting the whole of the region or part of it. On the coins of *Goudeswar* Sikender Sah (15th century), the northeastern part of Bengal is the country of "*Kamru*" alias "*Chaulistan*" and on the *Hussain Shahi* coins; we find the names of two countries, i.e. "*Kamru*" and "*Kamata*"⁵⁵. The "*Kamru*" might be a corrupted form of *Kamarupa* in the Persian writings .The "*Chaulistan*" might be a combined form two Persian words i.e. *Chaul* (rice ?)+ *Stan* (place). It might be due to production of huge amount of rice in this region. The other name "*Kamata*", "was a corrupt pronunciation of *Kamada*, which was the sanskritised name by which the autochthonous mother goddess was known in the *Kalika Purana*, her other names being *Kama*, *Kamanga* *Kamakhya* etc"⁵⁶. So from the name of the goddess *Kamada*, this region is known as *Kamata* or *kamatapur* in the mid of the 15th century and the literary sources and historical records confirmed it⁵⁷. The goddess *Kamada* has a

derivative *Isvari* and the goddess is known as *Kamadesvari*, became in the popular tongue *Kamatesvari*, the supreme tutelary goddess of the *Kamata* or *Kamatapura* and following it, the kings took the title *Kamatesvara* and declared themselves as deputy of the goddess *Kamatesvari*, for the mother bestowed her temporal power on them⁵⁸. The *Kamatapura* was also the capital of the *Kamata* or *Kamatapur* kingdom. The extent and geographical boundary of the *Kamata* or *Kamatapur* kingdom might be demarcated as the *Karatoya* in the west, the river *Manas* in the east, the extended Himalayan foot hills in the north and *Ghoraghat* in the south with its capital at *kamatapura* situated on the bank of *Dharla* in present Koch Behar district of west Bengal⁵⁹.

Another name of the region is '*Couch*', '*Koch*', or '*Koch Behar*', which came into limelight in the beginning of the 16th century AD. There are many of opinions about the origin of the term '*Couch*' or '*Koch*'. In this connection it may be mentioned here that the spelling of the term is not same every where. In 1585, Ralph Fitch, an English merchant spell out it as '*Couch*'⁶⁰. The *Tarikhi-i-Ferista*, the *Akbarnama*, *Tozoki-i-jahangiri* and Stephen Cacella, a Portuguese traveler spell out it as '*Cocho*'. By ignoring spelling of the various terms, we should precede with the single term of the *Yogini Tantra* i.e. '*Koch Behar*' to identify the origin of the term. There are many of opinions about the origin of the term '*Koch*' or '*Koch Behar*'. Persian writer *Minhajuddin Siraj* in his book *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* mentioned that mainly three tribes, namely *Koch*, *Mech* and *Tharu*⁶¹, inhabited this region. So it may have originated from the *Koch* tribe. According to the *Padma Purana* and the *yogini Tantra*, it is the place, where *Mahadeva* dallied with a daughter of a *Koch* woman and *Kshatriyas* took shelter in the lap (*kol*) of a *Koch* woman on the bank of *Bagmati*⁶². The *yogini Tantra* also mentioned that the word '*Koch*' derived from the word '*Kuvacha*'. Therefore, it may be derived from the name of the *Koch* tribe.

According to S. K. Chatterji, "the word *Koc* (or rather *Komc*) comes from a middle-Indo-Aryan source *Kawoca* written *Kamoca* which can be properly Sanskritised as *kamboja*"⁶³ and he also says that "the *Kambojas* of Bengal are apparently the ancestors of the *Koch* people of north Bengal"⁶⁴.

According to another view, it originated from the of the '*Sankos*' river. In the *Biswakosa*, '*Sankos*' is considered synonymous with '*Koch*'; alternatively, the word has been adapted from the '*Kos*' portion of the river '*Sankos*'⁶⁵. Therefore, it is the

land of *Kos (Sankos)* river. About the origin of the word, 'Behar', there are two views. According to the '*Rajapakhyan*', the Koches wandered or played there⁶⁶. It was the abode or playing ground of the Koches and abode or playing ground means '*Biharkhetra*' i.e. *Behar*. According to another view, it originated from Buddhist monasteries, which is known as *Behar*. Therefore, it is possible that the term 'Koch' may have originated either from the Koch tribe or from the river '*Sankos*' and the term '*Behar*', either from '*Beharkhetra*' or *Buddhist Behar* (monastery).

The Koches rise to power at the beginning of 16th century and established the Koch dynasty, to which king *Naranarayan* belongs. The power and position of the Koch kingdom reached its climax during the reign of king *Naranarayan*. Details of his reign would be discussed in the succeeding chapters.

Geographical area of the Koch kingdom:

According to the *Yogini Tantra*, the Koch kingdom formally included ancient kingdom of *Kamarupa* extending from western part of the *Brahmaputra* valley up to the *Karatoya*^{66a}. According to *Khan Choudhary A. Ahamed*, the Geographical area of the Koch kingdom under king *Naranarayan*, covered the whole North-East India up to *Burma* border and North-Eastern part of *Bengal* up to *Tibet* border. On the south and the West, he extended hegemony up *Ghoraghat* and *Mithila* or *Tirhut* border respectively⁶⁷. *Srijukta H. N. Chaudhury* in the beginning of the 20th century following the view of *Gait*⁶⁸ observes that his conquest comprised "almost the whole of Northern *Bengal*, *Bhutan* and *Assam* as well as the modern States of *Kachar*, *Jaintia*, *Manipur* and *Tipperah*, extended up to the coast of the *Bay of Bengal*"⁶⁹. But it is exaggerated figure and it included the territories, where Koch expeditions were send, not the actual regions under the Koch kingdom. It is bordered by natural boundaries in the East by the *Barnadi* and the *Brahmaputra* River and in the west by the *Karatoya* River. In the North by *Bhutan Duars* i.e. present Indo- *Bhutan* border, as far as *Rangamati (Joygong)* of present *Jalpaiguri* district of *West Bengal* and the confluence of the *Brahmaputra* and the *Karatoya* in *Rangpur* districts of *Bangladesh* is considered as the southern border of the kingdom. In the present days political maps it included the whole *Brahmaputra* valley and its adjoining territories like sub-Himalayan *Bengal* i.e. *Kochbeher*, *Jalpaiguri*, and south Eastern part of *Darjeeling* districts of *West Bengal* and part of *Dinajpur* and *Rangpur* (present *Panchaghar*, *Thakurgaon*,

Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Khurigram and Rangpur Districts) districts of Bangladesh and Lower Assam's districts like *Kokrajhar, Boingaon, Dhubri, Goalpara, Barpeta, Nalbari, Kamrupa, Darrang* districts of Assam.

The Koch kingdom during the reign of Naranarayan extended approximately between 25° 58" and 26° 35" north latitude and 88° 40" and 90° 56" east longitude. At the division of the kingdom in 1581, the Sankosh River was fixed as the eastern boundary of the Koch kingdom and named as Koch Behar. From 1581 AD to 1773 AD, Koch Behar State had been a complete sovereign state and there after it became a princely state loyal to the English by an agreement between the English East India Company and Koch King Dharendra Narayan in 1773AD. At the time of India's partition and Independent, the size of the Koch kingdom again was reduced and in 1950, Koch Behar became a district of West Bengal by the merger Agreement Act of 1949 between India and Koch Behar.

Geographical features of the region:

The region is full of various geographical components like rivers, hill streams, mountain ranges, mountain passes (*duars*), hillocks, foothills, marshlands, fertile plain track with slopes (from east to west and north to south) and dense evergreen forest. This beautiful strip of land seems to be the very lap of nature and well secured against all outside influences. The climate is humid and tropical and annual rain falls varied from 127-655 cms. This region is considered as the easternmost continuation of the Indo-Gangetic trough⁷⁰ and is the land of the rivers *Louhitya (Brahmaputra)*, the *Trisrota (Tista)* and other rivers. R. K. Barman described the region as 'Tista-Brahmaputra valley, as the river *Brahmaputra* and its tributaries and the river *Tista (Trishrota)*, are the heart of the river system of the region which in many ways played a significant role in socio-economic, cultural and political development of the region since the beginning of the historical period⁷¹. Other rivers like the *Sankosh*, the *Karatoya*, the *Torsha*, the *Dharla*, the *Raidak*, and the *Bhairavi* and the tributaries of the *Brahmaputra* like the *Subansiri*, the *Bharali*, the *Manas*, the *Gadadhar*, the *Barnadi* etc. had made the river-net over the region, which also facilitated the communication, religions and cultural development. The *Kalika Purana* has highlighted the river system of the *Kamarupa* and important religious and trade centers on the riverbank, which are still existing⁷². All the rivers and small streams flow

either north to south or east to west, because the elevation or slope of land of the region also from east to west and north to south. On the north of the region, it is bordered by north-eastern frontier ranges or the eastern Himalaya mountain ranges, from where all the rivers except the *Brahmaputra* originated, followed towards south and south-west of the region due to a moderate slope towards south and south-west of the region. However, there were eighteen hill passes or *duars* around Bhutan, and that were the main trade routes to Bhutan from Bengal and Assam through this region⁷³.

Foothills and fertile plain tract of the region produce large amount of crops like rice, fruits, pulses of different kinds, tobacco, oil-seeds, cottons etc., for the livelihood of the people of the region since the historical period. The tropical evergreen forests or jungles were full with wild animals, reeds, bamboos, canes, timbers natural fruits and medicinal herbs etc, which had helped the development of the occupations like hunting, fishing, cattle rearing and elephant catching etc.

The region also the meeting ground of many ethnic groups from different parts of world. Many ethnic groups came here in different historical ages, inter-mingled themselves and formed a mixed ethnic identity of population of the region.

Political evolution and Historical outline of the region from the historic times to the 11th century AD:

The region had seen the ebb and flow of many dynasties from the historic times up to the 16th century AD. The mythological writings like the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Puranas* and the *Tantra* literatures, others writings and epigraphic sources have given illustrious description in it. To understand the political evolution of the region, it will be discussed under two main heads i.e. the mythological age that includes the Danava and Naraka dynasties and the early historical age that begins with the establishment of the *Varman* dynasty by *Pushya Varman* in the mid 4th century AD and continued upto 11th century.

The mythological age:

The main sources of information about the mythological age are only the Hindu religious literature, which includes the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Kalika* and

others *Puranas* and *Yogini Tantra* etc. It has no historical corroboration with other sources.

The Danava / Asura Dynasty:

According to the *Ramayana*, in the pre-historic age, King *Amurta Raja*, elder brother of *Kusanabha*, grant father of *Visvamitra* and son of *Kusa* founded the city *Pragiyotish* here and laid the foundation of the kingdom of *Pragiyotish* ⁷⁴. According to a deeply entrenched local tradition, the earliest rulers of *Pragiyotisha* belonged to the *Danava / Asura* dynasty, founded by *Mairong Raja*, Sanskritised as *Mahiranga Danava*, who was definitely was a non- Aryan *Kirata / tribal* king and had spread his influence over the entire land of *Pragiyotisha* ⁷⁵. This dynasty is important because the political account of *Pragiyotisha* begin with it. His successors were *Hatakasura*, *Sambarasura*, *Ratnasura* and *Ghatakasura* ⁷⁶. But we possess very little information about these *Danava / Asura* kings, except the information that the last king of the *Danava / Asura* dynasty, *Ghatakasura* was defeated and killed by a prince of *Videha* named *Naraka*, who founded the legendary *Naraka* Dynasty of *Pragiyotisha* ⁷⁷.

Naraka Dynasty:

The *Naraka* dynasty is a mythological dynasty of *Pragiyotisha* that has been sourced to mentions in the *Ramayana* ⁷⁸, the *Mahabharata* ⁷⁹, the *Kalika Purana* ⁸⁰, the *Yogini Tantra* ⁸¹ and local lore. It is facts from the texts, that *Naraka* was the founder the dynasty, and was a contemporary of *Banasura*, the tribal king of *Sonitpur* (right bank of the *Brahmaputra* of Upper Assam). His birth is ascribed to the union of *Vasumati* (Mother Earth) with *Vishnu* in his *Varaha* incarnation and is brought up by *Janaka*, the then king of North Behar ⁸². It is said that *Naraka* came by water to *Pragiyotisha* accompanied by his father *Vishnu*, conquered the country by killing the last *Danava / Asura* king *Ghatakasura*, became the king of *Pragiyotisha*, which is described to have been extended from the *Karatoya* in the west to the *Dikhu* river in the east and established his capital at *Pragiyotishapura* ⁸³. Being influenced by *Banasura*, *Naraka* tried to follow the tribal culture and became irreligious, for which his father *Vishnu* in person of *Krisna* had killed him and *Bhagadatta* was placed on the throne of *Pragiyotisha* ⁸⁴. According to the *Mahabharata*, *Bhagadatta* was a "warrior king" and "the mighty king of the *mlecches*", had participated in the battle of

"*Kurukshetra*" on the Kaurava side, taking with him a large contingent of China and Kirata troops and fought valiantly in *Kurukshetra*, to finally die a hero's death in the hands of *Bhima*, the second of the five⁸⁵. His son / brother *Vajradatta* succeeded *Bhagadatta*⁸⁶. The genealogy after *Vajradatta* is very much confusing and uncertain. According to a tradition, the successors of *Naraka* in direct line of descent were *Dharmapala*, *Karmapala*, *Prithivipala* and *Subaru*, who was the last and 19th rulers of the line⁸⁷. There are no indications when they might have ruled, but they are probably true rulers whose accounts greatly exaggerated. At the very least, the local lore and the incorporation in various texts indicate they were powerful rulers from the past. Though the traditional accounts do not give names of the all kings in chronological order yet they have fairly been placed as kings of mythological period and we have to accept the illustrious story of *Naraka* and *Bhagadatta* as historical facts⁸⁸.

Early historical period:

The Bhauma-Varman (Pushyavarman) Dynasty:

The earliest historical kingdom of *Kamarupa*, from which epigraphs have come down to us is the *Bhauma-Varman* dynasty, founded in the mid of the 4th century AD by *Pushyavarman*, a contemporary of the Gupta emperor *Samudragupta* (335-376AD). This dynasty is called *Bhauma* i.e. the son of *Bhumi*, the earth called the *Avanikula*⁸⁹. According to the *Nidhanpur* Copper Plate inscription and the *Doobi* copper plate of *Vaskarvarman*, *Pushyavarman*, the founder of the line had a lineal connection with *Naraka*⁹⁰ and he assumed the high sounding title like *Maharajadhiraja* which indicates his independent political power, position and status⁹¹. The *Nidhanpur* Copper Plate inscription also gives a genealogical list of the thirteen kings of the dynasty who ruled altogether 300 years (350-650AD) without indicating personal reign. In this situation, H. K. Barpujari⁹² generally assigned 24-year reign to each king of the 13 kings of the dynasty.

Among the which, *Mahendravarman / Surendravarman*, (c.470-494AD) sixth king of the dynasty, who had consolidated the kingdom and paved the way for future dominance of the dynasty. He was 'a great supporter of sacrificial performances'⁹³ and performed two 'horse-sacrifices'⁹⁴. However, most prominent king of the dynasty

and that of the *Pragjyotish-kamarupa* was Vaskarvarman, who as an ally of *Harshavardhan* of *Kanauj* ousted *Sasanka* from the throne of the *Gauda* (Bengal) and expended his kingdom up to the *Kusi* River on the west⁹⁵. He was also a lover of learning and propagator of the *Arya Dharma* in the *Pragjyotish-kamarupa*⁹⁶. *Bhaskarvarman* made himself the master of Eastern India pitched his victorious camp in the capital of his late rival *Sasanka* and thus increased power and prestige of the kingdom of *Kamarupa* to an extent never before. According to *Yuan Chwang*, the extension of the kingdom of *Bhaskarvarman*, besides *Pragjyotish-Kamarupa*, might have included also parts of south-west and northern Bengal and others adjoining territories⁹⁷. The *Yogini Tantra* also gives us same type of information, when it describes the extension of *Kamarupa* from the *Karatoya* in the west to *Sadiya* in the east⁹⁸.

The Salastambha family or Dynasty:

A tribal chief (*mlechhadhinath*) named *Salastambha* founded a new *mlechch* (tribal) kingdom in *Pragjyotish-Kamarupa* around the second half of the 7th century⁹⁹. The term *mlechch* denotes the tribal origin of the family of *Salastambha* but the subsequent kings of this family claimed that they were the successors of *Bhagadatta*, the mythical hero of *Pragjyotish*¹⁰⁰. According to the *Bargaon* copper plate grant of *Ratnapala*, records the total number of kings of the dynasty altogether "twice ten" i.e. 20. and the last king, the twenty-first of the dynasty was *Tyagasingha*, who went to heaven without leaving any of his race to succeed him. His subjects selected *Brahmapala*, the father of *Ratnapala*, to be their king because of his relation to the *Bhauma* race i.e. *Naraka's* family¹⁰¹. It does not mention the dates and genealogy of the kings of the dynasty. However, *B. K. Barua*, draw up a list of 14 kings of the dynasty, who altogether ruled about 330 years upto 990 AD¹⁰².

Salastambha was a powerful king of the dynasty as he is described as 'a king like tiger' in the copper plate grant of *Harjjara* (c. 820-835AD)¹⁰³ and on his succession owing to infamy of descent transferred the capital from *Pragjyotishpura* to *Haruppeswara*¹⁰⁴ on the bank of the *Brahmaputra*. *Harsa* (*Sri Harisa*) was another prominent king of the dynasty, who established his political control of *Kamarupa* over the extensive territories of eastern India and his daughter, was married to *Jayadeva II*.

the king of *Nepal*¹⁰⁵. Moreover, *Harjjara* (c. 820-835AD) and *Vanamala* (c. 835-860AD) were powerful kings of the dynasty, who had their control beyond the natural frontier of *Kamarupa* i.e. west of the *Karatoya* River. *Harjjara* assumed the grand epithet *Maharajadhiraja Paramesvara Paramabhattacharaka* in keeping with his unrivalled prowess. *Vanamala* granted lands to the Brahmins in the village *Avisura Vataka* near *Chandrapuri Vishaya* in the west of the *Trisrota (Tista)*¹⁰⁶. *Balavarman* (c.860-880AD) was the last powerful king of the dynasty and after him, in the last quarter of the 10th century, *Tyagasingha*, the last king of the dynasty, died without issue¹⁰⁷ and his subjects selected *Brahmapala*, the father of *Ratnapala* and founder of the *Brahmapala* or *Pala* dynasty of *Pragjyotish-Kamarupa*¹⁰⁸.

The Brahmapala Family or dynasty:

The kingdom of *Kamarupa* passed in to the hands of *Brahmapala*, the founder of the *Pala* family after the death of the last king of *Salastambha* dynasty towards the end of the 10th century. The *Bargaon* grant¹⁰⁹ of *Ratnapala* records that when *Tyagasingha*, the last king of *Salastambha* family departed from this world his subjects elected *Brahmapala* as their king in about 990AD¹¹⁰. In spite of disputes among the scholars, eight kings of the dynasty ruled about 130 years (990-1120AD)¹¹¹, among which *Ratnapala*, *Indrapala*, and *Dharmapala* were most prominent kings of the dynasty. *Ratnapala* (c.1010-1040AD) was the first powerful king of the dynasty, who took the imperial title '*Paramesvara Paramabhattacharaka Maharajadhiraja*', founded a fortified capital called *Durjaya* (the impregnable one) on the bank of the *Brahmaputra*, which "baffled and struck terror" into the heart of many kings¹¹². The next powerful king of the family was *Indrapala* (c.1040-1065AD), who is described in the *Gauhati Grant*¹¹³ as "the vanquisher of all his enemies and the performer of many sacrifices" and assumed the epithet of '*Paramesvara Paramabhattacharaka Maharajadhiraja*' like his grant father *Ratnapala*. The last powerful king of the family was *Dharmapala* (c. 1095-1120AD.), who established the prestige of the dynasty. He shifted the capital from *Pragjyotishpura* to *Kamarupanagara* situated near *Gauhati*¹¹⁴ and revived the old policy of territorial expansion of the family particularly in the western side. The last king of the dynasty and successor of *Dharmapala*¹¹⁵ apparently was *Jayapala*, mentioned

in the *Silimpur* stone inscription of the *Brahmana Prahasa*¹¹⁶, and whom *Tingyadeva*, a feudatory or ally of *Rama Pala*, the *Pala* king of *Gauda*¹¹⁷, was defeated.

It is not possible to identify the exact extent of the kingdom at its peak. However, some inscriptions through indirect light on the western boundary of the kingdom. *Indrapala* (c. 1040-1065AD), granted land to the Brahmins of *Savati* (*Sravasti*), which has been identified with at least a portion of *Pundravardhan*¹¹⁸. About this time, a *Mandalika* named *Isvaraghosh* was ruling at *Dhekkari*, and he is said to have granted lands after bathing in the *Jatola* River in the present *Jalpaiguri* and *Koch Behar* districts¹¹⁹. Again, the *Subhankara-Pataka* grant of *Dharmapala* records the donation of land to Brahmins in *Kanjiyabhitci* under the *Dijjina-visaya*¹²⁰. Therefore, it is probable that *Pala* family of *Kamarupa*, at its peak hours, included the northeastern Bengal also.

Political evolution and situation of the region from 12th to 15th centuries AD:

Political situation of the region became so chaotic after the decline of *Brahmapala* family or dynasty and especially from the first quarter of the 12th century that control over the region became almost impossible for a particular ruling family. We have scattered inscriptional references of many ruling families, some times one by one and some times simultaneously.

Tingyadeva supposed to have made feudatory king of the eastern country by *Ramapala* of *Gauda*. However, *Kumar Pala*, the king of *Gouda* could not maintain their control over the region for long time. For, shortly afterwards *Tingyadeva* revolted and the *Pala* king *Kumara Pala* (1120AD) on hearing this sent his minister *Vaidyadeva* against *Tingyadeva* to replace him and after defeating and killing him; *Vaidyadeva* occupied the throne *kamarupa* and became a vassal of the *Kumar Pala*¹²¹. However, he did not remain long as a feudatory of the *Palas* of Bengal, some time later, probably after the death *Kumar Pala* declared himself independent king of *Kamarupa* and assumed the imperial title of '*Maharajadhiraja Paramesvara Paramabhattaraka*', and thus he established a *Brahmana* dynasty in *Kamarupa*¹²². According to H. C. Roy, his brother *Budhadeva* was succeeded *Vaidyadeva*, but nothing is known about him¹²³. The Assam plates of one *Vallabhadeva*¹²⁴, dated in the *Saka* era 1107 (i.e., c. 1185-86AD.) refer the genealogy of a line of kings such as *Bhaskara*, *Rayarideva*

(Also known as *Trailoyasingha*) and *Vallabhadeva*. However, there is controversy among the scholars about the genealogy of the kings and their kingdoms. B. K. Barua following K. L. Barua, opines that “the kings mentioned in the said epigraph could not have been rulers of *Kamarupa* for the simple reason that there is no room for them between *Vaidyadeva* and 1185AD, the date of *Vallabhadeva*’s inscription”¹²⁵. P. N. Bhattacharyya holds that the line of *Vallabha* belonged to Eastern Bengal and they have nothing to do with Assam¹²⁶. He also thinks that *Vallabha* ruled over a small territory somewhere to the south-west of *Kamarupa* on the border of east Bengal¹²⁷. Even in the Assam Plates of *Vallabha* (1185 A.D.), he does not declare himself as a King of *Kamarupa*, nor does he name his capital. Therefore, there are reasons to believe that he was an independent ruler and his kingdom comprised of the *Kamarupa* and *Goalpara* districts modern Assam Valley and adjoining areas west Bengal and Bangladesh, not the whole area of the ancient *Pragjyotish -Kamarupa*. It has been considered as ‘western part of the ancient Kingdom of *Pragjyotish -Kamarupa*’. Thus in the early 13th century, political center of *Kamarupa* was shifted to *Kamatapur* i.e., the lower part of the *Brahmaputra* valley and a new chapter in the political history of the region. At the same time, the Ahoms, the *Kacharis* and the *Chutias*, started to rise in the eastern part of *Kamarupa* and had closely related with the political development of Lower Assam and northeastern Bengal.

Any way, according to the inscription *Vallabhadeva* was a powerful king, “who sportively overcame hostile princes, as if they were courtezans”¹²⁸, There are many versions about his successors. According to *Bhattasali*, the invasion of Muhammaddin Bakhtiyar Khilji in 1206AD to *Tibet* was annihilated in Assam either by *Vallabhadeva* or by his successor¹²⁹. However, he says nothing about the successor of *Vallabhadeva*. On the other hand, *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* informs us that during *Bakhtiyar*’s invasion one *Prithu* or *Barthu* was the king of *Kamarupa*, who had checked him¹³⁰. Under this situation, P.C. Choudhary and K. L. Barua identified *Prithu* or *Barthu* of *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* with the son and successor of *Vallabhadeva* and ‘*Visvasundaradeva*’ of the *Gachtal* inscription was the real name of *Prithu* or *Barthu*¹³¹. He is also known as ‘*Jalpesvara*’, for, according to the *Yogini Tantra*, *Siva* temple of *Jalpesvara* of *Jalpaiguri* constructed by him¹³².

So, it may be concluded that *Prithu* or *Barthu*, *Visvasundaradeva* and *Jalpesvara* (c1185-1228) were the same king, who was an important king of *Kamarupa* and build extensive fortifications in the present Jalpaiguri district of west Bengal and Rang pore district of Bangladesh¹³³. *Prithu* or *Barthu* alias *Jalpesvara* alias *Visvasundaradeva* defeated not only *Muhammaddin Bakhtiyar Khilji* in 1206AD but also Sultan *Gias-us-din* in 1226 AD and ultimately he was being defeated and killed by *Nasir-ud-din*, son of *Illutmish* in 1228AD¹³⁴. After *Prithu*, probably two of his successors ruled at *Kamarupa* before *Sandhya*, who might be a late successor of *Prithu* and removed the capital to *Kamtapur*.

According to the *Guru Charita* of Ramacharana Thakur and others, the reigning king of the lower Assam in the mid of the 13th century is supposed to be have been *Sandhya* (C?-1260AD), who defeated *Malik Yujbek* in about 1256-57AD, and adorned the title '*Gaudeswar*'¹³⁵. King *Sandhya* then sifted his capital from *Kamarupa Nagara* to *Kamtapur*¹³⁶, situated in the present *Koch Behar* district, due to the fear of repeated Muslim invasion from Bengal and for the gradual advancement of the Ahoms from the east. Henceforth, the kings of the region (lower Assam) began to describe themselves as *Kamateswar* (lord of *Kamtapur*). *Singhadhwaj* (c.1300-1305AD), the last king of the line was killed by his *Kayastha* minister *Pratapdhwaj* (c.1305-1325 AD)¹³⁷. Thus, *Pratapdhwaja* established a new line in *Kamatapur* but for a short time.

As a king of *Kamatapur*, *Pratapdhwaj* (c.1305-1325 AD) ruled only for five years, he was the king who concluded peace treaty with the *Ahom* king by giving his daughter *Rajani* in marriage¹³⁸. At the death of *Pratapdhwaj* in 1325AD, his nephew *Dharmanarayan* (c.1325-1330) usurped the throne of and adopted both the titles '*Gaudeswar*' and '*Kamteswar*'¹³⁹. *Dharmanarayan* built a new city near *Dimla* in the *Rangpur* district of present Bangladesh, and transferred his seat of administration there¹⁴⁰, to avoid conflicts with *Durlabhnarayan* (c.1330-1350 AD), the son and successor of *Singhadhwaj*. On the other hand, *Durlabhnarayan* (c.1330-1350 AD), came to prominence and adopted both the title '*Gaudeswar*' and '*Kamteswar*'¹⁴¹. This led to the hostilities between *Dharmanarayan* and *Durlabhnarayan*. However, eventually a peace treaty has concluded between them. By which it seems to have decided that, from then *Dharmanarayan* would be the ruler of southern part (present

districts of Rangpur and Mymensing of Bangladesh) with the title 'Gaudeswar'. In the same way Durlabhnarayan would be the ruler of the northern part (the present Assam districts of Kamarupa and Goalpara, and the West Bengal districts Kochbehar and Jalpaiguri with the title Kamteswar¹⁴². On request of Durlabhnarayan, Dharmannarayan sent seven families of Brahmins and same number of Kayastha families to Kamatapur / Kamarupa¹⁴³. After the death of Durlabhnarayan, his son Indranarayan (c.1350-1365 AD), became the king of Kamatapur¹⁴⁴, who faced twofold political pressure from two opposite direction i.e. eastern side the Ahom and from south-western side Bengal Sultans. It seems that ultimately, Indranarayan's throne might have been usurper by one Arimatta alias Gajanka and in this, another new line of kings came to the throne of Kamatapur¹⁴⁵.

Therefore, it is clear from the above discussion that from the beginning of the 12th century, many lines of rulers became the kings of the lower Assam i.e. Kamatapur and our sources are some how confusing.

Arimatta line:

Thus in the middle of the 14th century, Arimatta alias Gajanka (1365-1485), founded his line of kingdom who was descendant of Dharmannarayan's line. According to K.L. Barua, Arimatta's another name was Gajanka and he usurped the throne of Indranarayan who ruled at Kamatapur. He succeeded by Sukaranka (1385-1400), Sutaranka (1400-1415), and Mriganka (1415-1440) respectively¹⁴⁶. According to the Kamarupa Buranji, the territorial size of the kingdom of Arimatta extended from the Karatoya in the West to Sadiya on the east with a fort at Baidyagarh¹⁴⁷. It seems to be an exaggerated one, and actual extent of the kingdom of Arimatta included present Jalpaiguri, Koch Behar and northern part of Rangpur districts (now in Bangladesh), adjoining territories of Lower Assam nominally was within his kingdom but this region became the domain of the Bhuyans¹⁴⁸.

The Khen / Khan Dynasty:

According to K. L. Barua¹⁴⁹, the last king of the line, Mriganka died without any issue (1415-1440 A.D). In this situation, with the help of Bhuyans a new dynasty,

known as *Khen* or *khan* came to the throne of *Kamatapur* under the leadership of *Niladhvaja* (c.1440-1460 AD), in the second quarter of the 15th century¹⁵⁰. The *Khen* dynasty ruled from their capital in *Kamatapur* (*Gosanimari*) now in Koch Behar District and they took the title *Kamteswar* or *Kanteswar*.

Identity of the dynasty:

They were probably local non-Aryan chieftains that rose to power in the mid of 15th century. K. L. Barua, named the dynasty of *Niladhvaja* as 'Khan Dynasty' considering them as *Kayastha*, for *khan* was a surname of the *Kayastha Bhuyans* in western Assam i.e. Lower Assam¹⁵¹. However, relying on local tradition, most of the scholars named the dynasty as '*Khen* dynasty'. B. Hamilton and E.A. Gait stressed on the low caste origin of the *Khenas*. B. Hamilton, who visited the ruins of *Kamatapura* in 1807-9, had recorded a local tradition about the foundation of the kingdom by *Khenas* in the following ways:

"According to tradition, there was a Brahman whose name is unknown; but who had a servant that tended his cattle, no one knows where. According to some, this servant was an infidel, (*Osur*) most probably from the mountain of Tripura, but concerning this, different persons are not exactly agreed, and some allege, that it was his mother who was of the impure race, and that she bore her a son while in the service of the Brahmin. Many complaints were made against this fellow; and his master one day was desired to view him asleep, while his cattle were permitted to destroy the crops of his neighbours. The Brahmin was advancing with a determination to bestow the merited punishment, when he observed the lines on the naked feet of his servant, and immediately, by his profound skill in the most noble science of '*Samudrik Jyotish*', knew that the sleeper would become a prince. On this discovery, the Brahmin paid him all due respect, rendered unnecessary for him to perform any low office, and showed him still more kindness by disclosing the certainty of his future greatness; for the servant in return, promised that when he becomes a prince, the Brahmin should be his chief minister (*Patro*). Accordingly sometimes afterwards, it is not known how, became a king"¹⁵².

Another ballad named *Gosani Mangal* composed by Radhakrishna Das Bairagi during the reign of Koch King Harendra Narayan (1783-1839) also records the humble origin of the *Khenas*. It records "the story of *Kantanath*, son of a poor couple *Bhaktiswar* and *Angana* of *Jambari* village near *Gosanimari*, who was a servant of a Brahmin of the village. Being bestowed by Goddess *Gosani*, he became the king of *Kamata*, which had been facing a period of anarchy and he assumed the title *Kamteswar* or *Kanteswar*¹⁵³. Khan Choudhury A.A. had recorded the similarities in the myths of origin of the *Khenas* and the *Kachari* King, *Nirvay Narayan*¹⁵⁴. On the other hand, with reference from the *'Kamteswar Kulakarika*, of *Srutidhar Rupnarayan* (16th century), he connected the origin of *Kamteswar* with *Rajbanshis*¹⁵⁵.

However, these types of legendary accounts are not sufficient to describe the origin of the *Khenas* and their kingdom. The *Rajbanshi* or *Kayastha* identity of the *Khenas* was attached to them in the later period to purify their inferior social rank and with state formation they able to gain respectable position in the society. This is proved by the opinions of W.W. Hunter, H. H. Risely and others. W.W. Hunter recorded the *Khenas* as the only tribe of *Kamarupa - Kamata* from whom the Brahmin takes water¹⁵⁶. In the same way, H. H. Risely wrote in 1891 "their social rank is respectable, and the Brahmin, *Kayasthas* and *Baidyas* take water, fruit and sweet-meats from their hands¹⁵⁷. Therefore, S. N. Bhattacharyya rightly opines, "to what race the new rulers (*Khenas*) belonged is not known but they were rapidly Hinduised and assumed Hindu names and worshiped Hindu gods and goddesses"¹⁵⁸. In later days, they were segmented into different professional castes like *Mahendri*, *Teli*, *Barai*, *Saloya* and *Patiyar* and they were superior in status than the *Rajbanshis*¹⁵⁹.

The Rulers of Khen dynasty of Kamata or Kamatapur:

Niladhvaj (c.1440-60), the founder of the *khen* dynasty is described as an upstart by most of the scholars¹⁶⁰. However, succeeding happenings did not match with the view. Although he started his career in a political turmoil of the region but his virtue, dignity and leadership made him the master of *Kamata* in about 1440A.D. He assumed the *Kamteswar* and constructed the big fortified capital named *Kamatapur*, situated in present district of Koch Behar. The city was 'a gigantic work of human art and be speak great power and wealth of the prince or princes who conceived such an

idea of a capital¹⁶¹. Therefore, it seems that he was able to utilize the pre-Kamata state machineries to construct such as a gigantic city like *Kamatapur*, which would not be possible for an 'upstart'. This fortification helped him to make a well-defined defense against multi directional enemies i.e. sultan of Bengal, the *Ahom*, *Kacher*, *Bhutan* etc.

His son and successor, *Chakradhvaj* (c.1460-80), who initiated the policy of territorial expansion in the west bank of the river *Karatoya* and might have be the king who had encountered *Ismail Gazi*, the general of Sultan *Ruknuddin Barbak* (1459-74) of Bengal. The *Risalat-us-Shuhada*, a Persian account of 17th century, has recorded the conflict of *Ismail Gazi* with *Kamata* kingdom in 1474 and illustrated that he initially defeated by the *Kamata* king, but by a magical means he eventually was able to defeat the *Kamata* king¹⁶².

On *Chakradhvaj*'s death, his son *Nilambar* (1480-98) succeeded him. He appears to have been a powerful king and his kingdom extended from the *Karatoya* in the west to the *Barnadi* in the east. He constructed mainly two roads; one from *Kamatapur* to *Ghoraghat* through *Rangpur*, which was strategically very important for the defense of his kingdom¹⁶³, another one from his capital *Kamatapur* to north direction was extended up to *Girimul* through *Kumari Kote* and *Muralabus*, which brought the north frontier of the kingdom directly connected with his capital. He fortified his capital and constructed a series of forts including main fort at *Ghoraghat* in the *Rangpur* region¹⁶⁴ to defend the future attacks from Bengal. Thus, in the last decade of the 15th century the *Kamata* kingdom became a strong political power in the region under the kingship of *Nilambar*.

Invasion by Alauddin Hussein Shah:

However, *Nilambar* could not continue his reign for long time, for *Alauddin Hussain Shah* (c1493-1519) defeated him in about 1498A.D. The strong political hold of *Nilambar* was a challenge for the Sultans of Bengal, for which conflicts between *Alauddin Hussein Shah* (c1493-1519) and *Nilambar* were, became inevitable. Nevertheless, there are two versions about the direct conflicts between them. According to the version of the *Riyazu-s-Salatin*, it was the political ambition of

Hussein Shah, for which after the conquest of Orissa he invaded *Kamarupa* and *Kamata*¹⁶⁵ to recover the lost territories of Bengal, to stop the aggression of the *Kamata* king and finally to fulfill his ambition of conquest¹⁶⁶. But according to tradition, Hussein Shah was instigated by Sachipatra, the Brahmin minister of *Nilambar* whose son was brutally murdered by the king for having an illicit love affair with queen *Banamala*¹⁶⁷. Under this situation, Hussein Shah invaded the *Kamata* kingdom with 24,000 infantry, cavalry and a war flotilla¹⁶⁸. After a long siege of the *Kamatapur* fort and a treacherous win, Hussein Shah finally destroyed the impregnable fort in 1498 A.D. and annexed the region up to *Hajo*, thereby regaining much of the land Bengal had lost earlier to *Kamatapur*, *Nilambar* escaped and fled towards the hills and there after nothing is not known about him. Hussein Shah subdued the local chieftains, probably *Bhuyans* of the region and established military control over the region. The independent *Kamata* kingdom practically disappeared.

Then Hussein shah returned to Bengal leaving his son, *Danial* with a strong force as viceroy of the conquered country and issued coins in his name as "Conqueror of *Kamru Kamata*". However, Hussein shah's invasion ultimately proved to be a failure, for within few days the *Bhuyans* of the region combined against the common enemy and attacked *Danial's* garrison, probably defeated and killed him about 1503A.D.¹⁶⁹. The local *Bhuyans* established their individual supremacy over several small territories of the whole region. In this situation, *Bisu / Biswa Singha*, son of tribal chief *Hariya Mandal* and the father of *Naranarayan*, by organizing his fellow tribes, subdued all the *Bhuyans* and established the *Koch* kingdom on the ruins of the *Kamata* kingdom in the beginning of the 16th century.

His illustrious son *Naranarayan* succeeded *Biswa Singha*. He established the *Koch* sovereignty almost in the whole northeast and made him the prime mover not only in history of northeast but also in the history of contemporary Bengal. During his reign, socio-cultural advancements like *Aryanization* process of his fellowmen, *Sanskritization* of the languages, cultures, and religions of his fellow tribes and organization of administrations etc., reached its climax. Thus, the history of the *Koches* entered into a brilliant chapter of military glory and socio-cultural, religious,

economic, language and literary advancements, which are our main subject of present study.

Ancestors of king Naranarayan:

The source materials on the ancestors of King Naranarayan are in many ways Controversial, confusing, contradictory and fragmentary. Before going deep, we can discuss the matter under two sub-heads: A) ancestors up to *Koch / Mech Hariya Mandal* the father of Biswa Singha and B) the period of Biswa Singha and King *Naranarayan*, the period of their ascendancy and state formation of the dynasty.

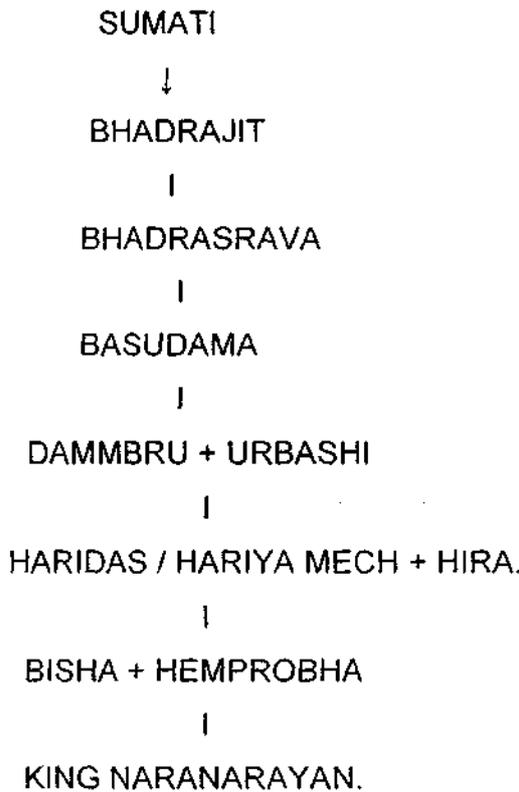
Information about the ancestors of King Naranarayan up to Hariya Mandal are confusing and definite information are very much limited and in many context controversial and *myth*-based. It is mention almost in all this *Buranjies* and *Vansavalies* of Assam and Kochbehar that *Hariya Mandal*, the grand father of King Naranarayan was selected *Mech / Koch* chief of 12 *Mech* families of the village Chikanagram in the *Khuntaghat Pargana* in the modern Goalpara¹⁷⁰. He was married to *Hira* and *Jira*, two daughters of the Koch Chief of *Hajo*. The names of the 12 *Mech* families are mentioned in '*Darrang Raj Vansavali*' as follows: *Panbar, Vedela, Gaubar, Phedphedo, Barihana, Kathia, Baihagu, Megha, Yuddhabar, Garakata, Jagai, and Dokhoda*¹⁷¹. However, the ancestors of *Hariya Mandal* are almost lost in obscurity. Some *Buranjies* and *Rajvansavalies* had thrown glimpses of indirect light on the ancestors of *Hariya Mandal* and the modern historians tried to make a genealogy of the dynasty. On the other hand, some scholars belief that it is impossible and improper to establish the genealogy before *Hariya Mandal's* father *Dammburu*. For the genealogy, which we can make from these fragmented information are imaginary and innovated by later writers to glorify the ancestors of the dynasty which, in every case was done by the court poets of the dynasty. It was actually glorified myth. It is fact that the ancestors of *Dammburu* were almost in primitive stage and illiterate .They were of humble origin and are just like some tribal communities of the 20th century. Surendra Nath Sen beautifully describe the ancestors of Naranarayan:

কোচবিহারের রাজবংশের উৎপত্তির কোন বিশ্বাস যোগ্য বিবরণ পাওয়া যায় না -----
হিমালয়ের সানুদেশে নিবিড় অরণ্যে যে অনার্য কোচ মেচ তরুন-তরুনীরা বাস করিত,

তাহাদের ইতিহাস কেহই লিখিয়া রাখে নাই; উত্তরকালে যখন তাহাদের বীর পুত্রেরা এক বিশাল রাজ্য খন্ডের অধিপতি হইয়াছিল তখন ব্রাহ্মণ ঐতিহাসিকরা তাহাদের যে বংশ বিবরণ রচনা করিয়াছিলেন তাহাতে স্বাভাবতই অসঙ্গতার ঙ্গটি-কল্পনার সাহায্যে সংশোধন করিবার চেষ্টা করা হইয়াছিল।¹⁷²

However, this is a supposition and scholars cannot stop here .They always trying to find out the root of the fact. They are trying to write history from Mythological and imaginary descriptions with the help of logical justifications. Therefore, the history of the ancestors of *Dammburu* is almost supposition and not rigidly established .There would be scope for further consideration.

With references from the *Darrang Raj Vansavali*, Amanattulla A. Choudhary¹⁷³ mentioned a geneology of the dynasty from *Sahasrarajjun* and his son .The geneology mentioned by him is as follows:



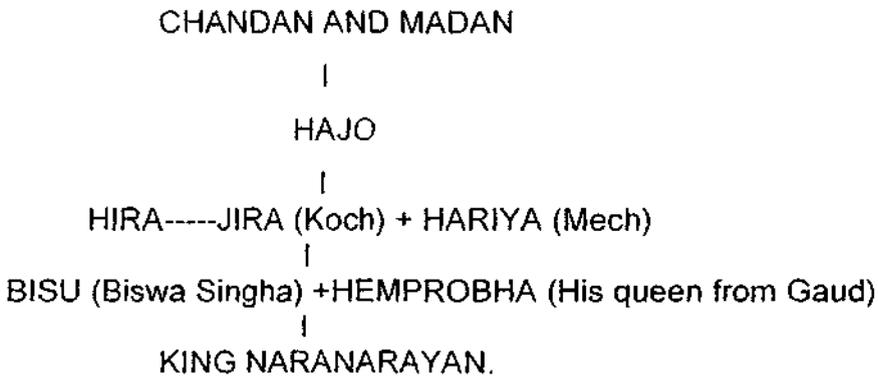
The geneology as given by Amanattulla A. Choudhury in his book, and almost same geneology also mentioned by P.K. Bhattacharya (edited) book "*The Kingdom of*

Kamata-Kochbehar: Its Historical Perspective"¹⁷⁴. It is obviously clear from the geneology of the above-mentioned book that it has been taken from *Choudhary's* book. However, the later book also taken a further step earlier from *Sumati* and mentioned as "A certain *Kshatriya* of *Haihaya* dynasty". However, it is surprising to note that *Choudhary* has made reference of the '*Darrang Rajvansavali* as his source of information of the geneology and the later book has also made a quite a beautiful geneology of the dynasty without mentioning the source of his information. It is impossible to make such a geneology from the information of the *Darrang Rajvansavali* and others *Buranjies*. The *Darrang Rajvansavali* described the ancestors of *Biswa Singha*: 'King *Sahasrarjuna* of the *Chandra* dynasty, a legendary figure, once went out for a hunting excursion and spent the night in the *asrama* (hermitage) of *Jamadagni*, father of *Parasurama*. The hermit had received the king with lavish entertainments with the help of a magic cow—*Kamadhenu*, *Sahasrarjuna*, struck by the extraordinary power of the cow. Forcibly took it away. At that time, *Parasuram* was not in the hermitage. No sooner, he learnt it than he killed *Sahasrarjuna* and recovered the cow. The event did not end here. Taking advantage of *Parasurama's* absence from home, the sons of *Sahasrarjuna*, one day killed *Jamadagni* and lifted the cow again. This had so highly enraged *Parasurama* that he took a vow to clear the earth of the *Kshatriyas*, and started slaying them from one end of the earth to the other. As a result, the *Kshatriyas* became extinct. However, only twelve princes could manage their escape from the wrath of *Parasuram* by keeping themselves hidden in the *Chikana* hill. In order to conceal their identity, they married *Mech* maidens and remained in the guise of *Mech*. Of these twelve *Meches*¹⁷⁵, *Hariya Mech (Mandal)* was the chief, who had two wives –*Hira* and *Jira*, and due course *Hira* gave birth to *Bisu (Biswa Singha)*, the father of King *Naranarayan*. However, the *DRV* gives a mythological story that *Bisu* was not the son of *Hariya Mech (Mandal)* but the son of God *Siva*. It states that God *Siva*, in guise of *Hariya Mech (Mandal)* had sexual intercourse with *Hira*, and in due course she gave birth to *Bisa*, and other wife of *Hariya Mech (Mandal)*, *Jira* gave birth to *Sisu*¹⁷⁶. *Bisu* after becoming king took the name *Biswa Singha* and *Sisu* after becoming *Raikot* took the name *Sisya Singha*.

The mythological story about the establishment of the dynasty of *Naranarayan*, dose not gave us any Geneology of the dynasty but only the names of his ancestors. It is also interesting that *P. K. Bhattacharya* mentioned the earliest ancestors of the

line as “a certain *Kshatriya* of the *Haihara* dynasty”, which responded to the opinion of the distinguished persons of modern *Rajvansi* community of their *Kshatriya* racial identity of the *Mech / Koch* or *Rajvansis*.

On the other hand, an M. S. chronicle collected by Buchanon Hamilton, without indicating any source, gives us a different mythological story about the origin of *Bisu*, the father of King *Naranarayan*¹⁷⁷. Two brothers, *Chandan* and *Madan*, had established a short government at *Maralabas*, a place 30 miles north from *Kamatapur*¹⁷⁸. They had ruled for eight years, and soon a rude tribe especially the *Koches* “who had a number of chiefs, at first independent, but who gradually united under the authority of one of themselves named *Hajo*”¹⁷⁹, occupied *Rangpur* and *Kamrupa*. He had two daughters, *Hira* and *Jira*, of whom *Hira* was married to *Hariya*, a member of an “impure tribe” called *Mech* and of them *Bisu* was born who succeeded to the “whole power of his grand father”¹⁸⁰. From this story, geneology of the ancestors of King *Naranarayan* can be made in the following way:



From the above two stories it seems to us that the story of *DRV* might be more acceptable, for most of the *Vansavalies* and the *Buranjies* admit the view and the predecessors of the community and royal family also demanded the same .

Racial Identity of the Koches / Rajvansis:

The greatest Koch King *Naranarayan*’s racial identity still remains unsettled. Although during his period, the dynasty was almost *Sanskritised* or *Hinduised*, but ethnic roots of his ancestors still remained a matter of great interest. The Scholarly Historians, Physiologists and Ethnologists are trying to highlight the matter. Very

recently, a group of distinguished person's of the Koch community is trying to establish their Aryan identity¹⁸¹ and they have given their opinions in favor of their *Kshatriya* identity.

The opinions of different *Scholarly Historians, Anthropologists, Physiologists, Ethnologists and Distinguished* persons of Koch community should be justified with proper references and logical justifications. We add the word 'logical justification with proper references, because information regarding the racial identity of Koch community are limited in several ways. Lack of primary sources, except a few archaeological sources like coins, there is hardly any primary information. Scarcity of written information and available written information are in almost every case either controversial or exaggerated.

Almost all opinions and conclusions regarding the racial identity given by scholars are mainly trying to proceed to give four types of racial identity of the Koches. They are as following:

1. **Mongoloid identity of the Koches:**
2. **Dravidian identity of the Koches:**
3. **Aryan identity of the Koches:**
4. **Dravido-Mongoloid origin of the Koches:**

Mongoloid identity of the Koches:

The group of scholars who had given their opinion in favour of Mongoloid identity of the Koches emphasize on the distinct physical types and complexion. *A. Grierson*¹⁸² has mentioned mainly three distinct physical types – the first type, the primitive long-headed Mongoloids who are found in sub Himalayan areas of Nepal and mostly in Assam; comparatively less primitive and more advanced. Second type, short-headed Mongoloid found mostly in Burma, and spread from Burma through Arakan into Chittagong. The third group of the Mongoloid people is known as Tibeto-Mongoloid. Because of Tibeto –Mongoloids are the linguistically characterized Tibetans and they arrived in India through Himalayan region and spread from Bhutan and Sikkim to Ladak. *Tibeto-Mongoloid* are tall and have comparative lighter complexion .It seems to be the most highly developed class of Mongoloid people in India. The ancestor of Naranarayan belongs to the Tibeto -Mongoloid class. Hodgson opined that the Koches of Kochbehar are “distinctly marked type of the Mongoloid

family"¹⁸³. Waddel supported the view given by Hodgson and says that these "are distinctly Mongoloid"¹⁸⁴. Gait has given opinion that the *Koches* are allied with the *Boros* and *Dhimal* ¹⁸⁵. Some modern scholars had given their argument in favour of the Mongoloid origins of the *Koches* on the ground that the names *Kamboja*, *Kouch* or *Koch* and *Kubacha* are identical and the *Kombojas* or *Koches* who came from Tibet and are Mongoloid in origin .On this ground D. C. Sircar opines that the *Kombojas* were the ancestors of the *Koches*¹⁸⁶

Suniti Kumar Chatterji .had given his opinion that "Nothing much is definitely known about the *Koches* of North Bengal prior to the 16th century : they may be described as *Western Bodos* ,an extension of the great *Bodo* race of Assam and East Bengal which at one time occupied the entire Assam valley from *Sadiya* right up to North Bengal..... ¹⁸⁷. R. P. Chanda also suggests that *Kombajas* mean only the *Koches* of the period ¹⁸⁸.

The Mongoloid tribes from Western China speaking forms of Sino-Tibetan speech appear to have been pushing South and West from their original homeland from Pre-historic times, but certain large-scale movements of which we have faint inklings seem to have begun in the early part of the first millennium B.C. Linguistically the Sino-Tibetan Languages of the present day have been classified into two groups or branches: (1) Tibeto- Burman and (2) Siamese-Chinese¹⁸⁹. Following traditional views about the *Kirata* country Gopal Chandra Praharaj in his Oriya Lexicon places in Northern India; and Jnanendra Mohan Das in his Bengali Dictionary (2nd edition, Cal-1938.) identifies with the Eastern Himalayan tracts, including Sikkim Bhutan Manipur and other adjacent tracts, which are exactly the lands of Mongoloid settlement in India ¹⁹⁰.

According to Indologists, in Sanskrit the term *Kirata* indicates 'the wild non- Aryan tribes living in the mountains, particularly the Himalayas and in the north – Eastern areas of India, who were Mongoloid in origin'. These *Kiratas* were connected with the *Chinas* or the *Chinese*, the *Bhotas* or the *Tibetans* other Mongoloid people. They were distinguished from the wild or primitive tribes of Austric origin, who were being known specifically as *Nisadas*, *Sabaras*, *Pulindas*, *Bhillas* and *Kallas*. Sylvain Levi¹⁹¹ proposes the Mongoloid racial affinity of the *Kiratas*. He first took up the question and he also quoted passages from the *Mahabharata* and other texts indicating the opinion

of the ancient Hindu writers about the appearances and ways and connections of this people, all of which enable us to conclude that they were a Mongoloid people¹⁹².

From the evidences of the *Tabaqat-i- Nasir*¹⁹³, it became clear that the *Koches*, *Meches* and *Tharus* of pronounced Turkee or Mongoloid features and a distinct Sino-Tibetan speech populated North Bengal early in the 13th century. The Eastern *Bodos* (*Chuitas* and *Kacharies*) and Western *Bodos* (the *Koches* of *Hajo* and *Kamata* and the *Koches* of *Kochbehar*) disputed the possession of the Brahmaputra valley with *Ahoms*; and Western *Bodos* asserted themselves against decadent *Palas* and *Senas* and resisted the *Mahammedans* during 1250 -1500 A.D.

D. Neog¹⁹⁴ has given a Non Aryan people's tree of Assam. According to him, there are three main branches of Non-Aryans people – the Negrito, the Austric and the Mongoloid. The third branch, the Mongoloid people of Assam consist of Tibeto-Burma and Tai-Chinese. The Tibeto-Burmas were also classified into Tibeto-Himalayas, North Assam, and Assam-Burma. The last section Assam-Burmas included *Bodos*, *Nagas* and *Kukichinas*; the *Rajbansis* that the *Koches* included in the *Bodo* section with *Garo*, *Lalung*, *Rabha*, *Chuita*, *Kachari*, *Dimasu* and *Mikir*. Post-colonial anthropologists like B. M. Das and S. Sengupta also recognized the *Koches* as Mongoloid origin¹⁹⁵.

All the scholars, who have given their opinion in favour of Mongoloid origin of *Koches* try to cement the opinion with references mainly from ethnological point of view. They proceed to reach conclusion with references from ancient time with the help of modern criticism of some scholars. E. A. Gait, the colonial historian specifically expressed that "there seems to no doubt that the true *Koches* were a Mongoloid race, very closely allied to the *Meches* and *Garos*"¹⁹⁶. D. C. Sircar and Suniti Kumar Chatterji have also identified the *Koches* with *Kambojas* of as of Mongoloid origin¹⁹⁷.

Dravidian Identity of the Koches:

Scholars like Risley, Oldham, Dalton, and N. N. Vasu put their opinions and arguments in favour of Dravidian identity of the *Koches*. According to Risley¹⁹⁸ "the *Koches*, unquestionably "Non-Aryan and Non-Hindu", and were "a large Dravidian Tribes of North- Eastern and Eastern Bengal". In this connection he also admitted that "there are grounds for suspecting some admixture of Mongoloid blood, ---But on the whole Dravidian characteristics predominate among them"²⁹⁹. N .N. Vasu tried to

establish his view of the Dravidian identity of the *Koches* from earliest references from the *Mahabharata* and the *Tantras*. He argues that *Pani* –Koches were the ancestor of the *Koches* of modern period and the *Panis* were a branch of the ancient Sumarian race²⁰⁰. According to *Yogini Tantra*, the whole of North Assam was once known as *Saumara* (Saumara is a country bounded on the east by the river *Svarna* or *Sonkosh* and on the west by the *Karatoya*, on the south by the *Manda* or *Garo* and *Khasiya* hills and on the North by the hill known as *Vihagachala*)²⁰¹. *Assam Burunji* composed by Haliram Dhekiyal Fukkan and translated in Bengali by Sri Yatindra Mohan Bhattachariya²⁰² mentioned with the reference of *Haragouri Sanbad* that Kamrupa (ancient Assam) covering the area in the east up to *Dikkarbashini* hill and on the west up to the *Karatoya* River had four *pithas*. That is *Ratnapitha* – *Karatoya* in the west up to *Sankosh* in the east, *Kamapitha* – from the *Sankosh* in the west, up to the *Rupak* River in the east; *Swarnapitha* up to the *Vairaba* River in the east and *Sumarpitha* – up to the *Dikkarbashini* hill. This *Sumar* pitha is also subdivided into nine pithas²⁰³. According to the *Assam Buranji*, the *Saumara pitha* extends from the river *Bhairavi* or *Bharali* to the river *Dikrai*²⁰⁴. It is clear from Vasu's description that the whole of Northeastern Assam was given the designation of *Saumarapitha*; meaning the seat of *Saumarian* influence and authority. Vasu opines on the ground of this theory, that "the *Sumarians* were of Dravidian stock, and we also shall have no objection to accepting the *Koches*, descendant of the *Pani*, as being of Dravidian origin"²⁰⁵. If this *Saumarian* influence and authority considered as the direct connection with *Saumarian* race, then we have to admit the ancient Phoenicians as the ancestor of the *Koches*. A study of the physiological and mental constitutions of the pure Koch of Western Assam and North Bengal will however corroborate this classification, on the contrary it will prove that they really come of the Dravidian stock"²⁰⁶.

Oldham given same type of opinion and described the *Koches*, as "the most conspicuously Dravidian race of Bengal"²⁰⁷. Colonel Dalton ascribed the *Koches* "were all very dark and displayed the thick protuberant lips and maxillaries of Negro"²⁰⁸ and he considered them as belonging to the Dravidian stock. In his own words "in short, I consider, they belong to the Dravidian stock and are probably a branch of the great Bhuyan family". To support his view, he ascribed the physical traits of the *Koches*, forwards the opinion of a medical officer, a resident of Kochbehar by a letter from H. Beveridge Esq, Deputy Commissioner of Kochbehar. Here is the

description in his own words the *Koches* are "Face flat ,giving rather an appearance of square ness; eyes black and oblique , hair black and straight , in some curling ; nose flat and short ; cheek bones prominent ; beard and whisker rather deficient" "color of skin in most instances black ; side of head rather flattened ;forehead retreating"²⁰⁹. Dalton also argues with references from Mr. Hodgson's copious vocabularies of the dialects used by the *Bodos* and *Dhimals* and asserts that 'it is all Bengali Hindi or Assamese, and does not contain a word or a grammatical construction that would affiliate it with any of the North Eastern tribes'. Latham, in his 'Ethnology of India' has given a list of fifteen words as Koch from Hodgson's Copious vocabulary , among which three of these Assamese, two are Bengali ,and the rest ten are common in both the languages. Among these words, he points out that 'the first word on Lothams's list is remarkable. For 'man' he gives '*befa-choa*' "I (Colonel Dalton) never heard this expression in Assam or Bengal, but it is very common in *Chota Nagpur*, '*beta—choa*' a boy; '*beti -choa*', a girl; and it is used by the Oriya and by the Gonds"²¹⁰. The *Oriyas* and the *Gonds* are not mongoloid but Negroate or Dravidians. He tried to differentiate the *Koches* (*Rajvansis*) from other Lohitic tribes as "the *Rajbangsi* are all very dark; and as their cognates, the *Kacharies*, *Mech*, *Garos*, are yellow or light brown, and their Northern, Eastern and Western neighbours are as fair or fairer, it must be from contact with the people of the south that they got their black skins"²¹¹. He also has given a reference of Mr. G. Campbell and said, "Mr. G. Campbell would decidedly place the *Koch* amongst his *Negritos* and I think we must allow that color and physical characteristic clearly separate them from the *Bodo group*"²¹². C. C. Sanyal²¹³, described *Rajvansis* (*Koches*) as "the original nucleus of *Rajvansi* was certainly Dravidian". However, two points of Latham, are confusing; for the terms '*beta—choa*' a boy; '*beti -choa*', a girl are still commonly spoken in Jalpaiguri and Koch Behar districts, among the *Rajvansis* and they are fair to dark in skin colour.

Two great supporters of the Dravidian origin of the *Koches*, N. N. Vasu and Colonel Dalton are not able to come to a single point about the view. Vasu asserts the *Pani-Koch* and the *Koches* as same; the *Pani-Koch* comparatively primitive form and only the '*Koch*' comparatively recent form .In his own words "we may assert that the *Pani-Koch*, the *Palia* and the *Koch* of succeeding ages are no other than the *Pani-Kuvachas* of *Puranic* age"²¹⁴. On the other hand, Dalton did not agree with the view of this point, and he said, "they have been hitherto treated as the primitive type of the

Koch nation; but we have no evidence of the fact except the name.I think, mistake to regard them as the primitive type of the people called Koch, They probably took the name of *Pani-Koch*, when the real Koch were dominant to conciliate the ruling power”²¹⁵.

N. N. Vasu asserts, “according to some modern western ethnologists the *Koch*, the *Mech*, the *Kachari*, the *Rabhas* and the *Dhimals* are all one and the same people having sprung from one common stock. We do, however regard the Koch, the Mech, the Kachari and the Dhimal as quite different”²¹⁶. Dalton also expressed same view about the point and mentioned differences as “the Rajbanshi (Koch) are all very dark; and as their cognates, the Kacharis, the Mechs and the Garos are yellow or light brown”. He also mentioned some differences regarding marriage, inheritance, burials and sacrifices²¹⁷.

Aryan Identity of the Koches:

A group of distinguished persons of the Koch- *Rajvansi* community like Thakur Panchanan Burma²¹⁸, Hemanta Kumar Roy Burma²¹⁹, Upendra nath Barman²²⁰, and others tried to establish their Aryan origin. They tried to give their opinions in favour of Aryan origin with references from the contradictory and confusing writings of Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Dinesh Chandra Sircar, R. P. Chandra, Nihar Ranjan Ray and from inscriptions, linguistics and from the use of Sanskrit words in the language of the Koches. Hemanta Kumar Ray Burma has given references from the writing of Dr. N.R. Ray's “*Bangalir Itihas*”²²¹, ‘During 10th century A.D., a *Kamboja* dynasty had been ruling over *Gaud* for some times’. The *Bangarh* inscription in the District of *Dinajpur* (now in Bangladesh) also mention a “*Kambajanbyj Gourapati*” and the *Irda* Copper plate also mention the “*Kambojanbyaj Gourapati*”. To identify this *Kombaja* king of Gaur, scholars like R.P. Chanda. S.K. Chatterjee, N.R. Ray, have given their opinions from different angles. S. K. Chatterjee, in his book named, “*Jati Samskriti O Sahitya*” mentioned ;

“খৃষ্টীয় নবম শতকের পূর্বে কম্বোজ নামক একটি জাতি উত্তরবঙ্গে রাজ্য স্থাপন করিয়াছিলেন। আমি অনুমান করিয়া ছিলাম যে এই ‘কম্বোজ’ শব্দটি কোচ বা কোঁচ শব্দের একটি প্রাচীন রূপের সংস্কৃতিকরণ মাত্র –কোঁচ বা কম্বোজগন ভোট-চীন জাতীরই একটি শাখা

।किञ्च अन्य मत अनुसारै एइ कश्चोज गन उत्तर-पश्चिम भारतेर पाञ्जाब सीमांतैर कश्चोज जातीरइ एकटि शाखा । पश्चिमेर एइ कश्चोज गन आर्य ओ आर्य-भाषी- जातीते भोटि चीन श्रेणीर नहे” 222 .

Information obtained from Inscriptions and Copper plates are generally accepted authentic. “*Kambojayaj Gaurpati*” of Bangarh inscription is a *Sanskrita* terms and we do not find any relations with Mongoloid terms .The word “Koch” and “*Kamboja*” are synonymous and so Ray Burma has come to the conclusion that the *Koches* /*Kombojas* are Aryan speaker and are Aryan 223 .

Ray Burma also given argument from the linguistic point of view .according to him the *Koch/Rajvansi* language is closely related with *Sanskrita* and it originated from *Sanskrita* language. To support his arguments, he mentioned in his book “*Koch Beharer Itihas*”224 , a comparative list of *Sanskrita* words and *Koch/Rajvansi* which depict the picture of close relationship between the *Koch / Rajvansi* language and *Sanskrita* language225 .

Thakur Panchanan Burma has also given his arguments in favour of Aryan origin of the *Koches*. He himself was a *Sanskrita* scholar, going through the Hindu scriptures; he concluded that *Koch/ Rajvansi*'s were *Kshatriya* of Aryan social system and they had been fallen out from *Sanskrita* social system due to the cause of an upheaval and became “*Bratya Kshatriya*”. To establish his opinion on a cemented base, he consults with the scholars of *Kashi* , *Mathura* , *Brindaban* , , *Nabadwip* and *Kamrupa* , who have given their opinion in favour of ‘*Bratya Kshatriya*’ ,which originally belong to *Sanskrita* caste system226 .

Mr. Ray Burma has also proceeded from another point of view. According to him, most of the river's names in North Bengal Lower Assam are in *Sanskrita* or *Sanskrita*-based 227 . Surprisingly, our religious scripture like the *Mahabharata* and some the *Purans* also refer to the *Sanskrita* name of some rivers. He quote the following names of rivers; the *Mahananda*, the *Tista (Trisota)*, the *Dharla*, the *Gadadhar*, the *Gangadhar*, the *Sankosh (Swarnakosh)*, and the *Brahmaputra / Lauthitya*. It is also interesting to mention here that the name of the river *Brahmaputra* is different in Tibet, which area is populated mostly by Mongoloid people .He questioned if the *Koch/Rajvansis* are Mongoloid ,we do not find the ground of changing the name of the river *Sungpou* (in Tibet) to *Brahmaputra* in North-East India . He argues that this land

had been populated by Koch/Rajbanshis of Aryan fold and so the names of rivers in *Sanskrita* all over region. P.K. Bhattacharya also indirectly accepted the Aryan origin theory of the ancestors of Naranarayan, when he described earliest ancestor of the king as "A certain Kshatriya of Haihaya dynasty"²²⁸.

Dravidio-Mongoloid racial identity of the Koches:

The scholars of the above mentioned three groups seems to orthodox and bias, and they tried to establish their opinions from a single point of view. They utilized the source materials in such systematic single-minded way to highlight only their own viewpoint by ignoring logical justification and whole situation. For which another group of scholars forward their opinion with moderate mental intension and they identify the ancestors of king Naranarayan as a 'Mixed Dravidic-Mongoloid racial affinity. This view also indirectly supported by some scholars, who belonged to the groups of Dravidian and Mongoloid racial affinity of *the Koches*, but their opinions in indirect way and had never given sufficient emphasis about it. Risley described them to be of "Mongoloid Dravidian origin with the Dravidian element preponderant in them"²²⁹. On the other hand, D. Nath described them as "the Koches are of Mongoloid origin having close affinities with other *Bodo tribes* like the *Meches*, the *Rabhas*, the *Dhimals*, the *Hajongs* and the *Garos*. But in course of time, and in some limited areas, they inter-married with the Dravidians and gave birth to a mixed Mongolo -Dravidian race, but having preponderant Mongoloid characters"²³⁰. Here it is interesting that Risley and D. Nath are completely different in their viewpoints; Risley opines "Dravidian element preponderant" and on the other hand, D. Nath opines, "having preponderant Mongoloid characters". S. L. Baruah tried to solve these two divergent views. In his own words, "this divergence of views seems to have arisen from the confusion caused by the use of the term '*Rajvamsi*', which originally referred to an entirely distinct community of Dravidian affinities but was afterwards adopted by the Koches to the west of the Manash (Manas) river presumably after their conversion to Hinduism. Following the Koches, other tribal converts also subsequently called themselves *Rajvamsis*. So long as the Koch kings ruled, there was considerable intermingling of the two races, (the Dravidian *Rajvamsis* and Mongoloid *Koches*) in the territory under their domination. Thus, Dravidian blood poured into the Mongoloid Koches. However, there seems to be no doubt that 'true Koches' were a Mongoloid tribe, which is

evident from the fact that in Jalpaiguri, Kochbehar and Goalpara, the persons now known as *Rajvamsi* "are either pure Koches, who though dark, have a distinctly Mongoloid physiognomy, or else a mixed breed, in which the Mongoloid elements usually preponderates". Inclusion of the Hindu tribal converts in the social fold of the Koches had increased their numerical strength"²³¹.

S. L. Baruh actually mentioned in his opinion that the *Rajvansis* and the *Koches* were different origin— the *Rajvansis* were originally Dravidian and the *Koches* were pure Mongoloid. However, most of the historians considered the '*Rajvansis* and the *Koches* are same – the term '*Rajvansi*' is comparatively new denomination and the term '*Koch*' comparatively old denomination"²³². Because, the Persian writings, foreign accounts, dynastic epigraphs even the DRV (late 18th century) do not refer to the term '*Rajvansi*' and it first occur in the census of 1872, where there are listed as '*Rajvansi*'²³³. Therefore, the whole question of *Rajvansi* and *Koch* arose with the census and gazetteer writings of the colonial rulers, who in their writings / reports differentiate between the *Koches* and the *Rajvansis*. The opinion of C. C. Sanyal, that the term '*Rajvansi*' added to the *Koches* (a part) after their *Hinduisation*²³⁴, have no ground, for, the term '*Rajbanshi*' applied to the *Koches* toward the end of the 19th century"²³⁵. S. L. Baruh's opinions, "*Rajvansis* originally Dravidian", might be questioned from another point of view; he did not elaborately point out that on which ground he described '*Rajvansis*' as Dravidian. Moreover, he pointed out "Pure *Koches*" but no pure race existed in the 16th century.

The term '*Rajvansi*' literally means "descendants of royal family". In the context of Indian history we get two words with prefix '*Raj*'- one is '*Rajput*'—sons of king and other is '*Rajvansi*'-descendant of royal family. The *Rajput*' of western India considered as *Kshatriya* of Aryan fold, so it is probably conforming to consider '*Rajvansis*' belongs to same stock. However, it seems to us that '*Rajvansis*' of eastern India is a later denomination and it came into existence toward the end of the 19th century there is no distinction among the *Koches*, the *Rajvansis* and the *Paliyas* , who "are really the three names of the same thing"²³⁶.

Scholars of the four groups have tried to establish their arguments from various sources of information and even from a single source, but their explanation and angle of discussions were multi-dimensional, which led to the rise of different opinions. To

find out the racial identity of the ancestors of king Naranarayan we should proceed carefully to investigate and to analyze, the entire sources of information.

Observation:

The racial identity of the ancestor of king Naranarayan is confusing due to the emphasis on the physical structure of the people by scholars and anthropologists. If we go through the all opinions and consider the opinions of the scholars, it become crystal clear to us that it is due to the their single pointed description and pre conceived mental state . The racial identity of Indian people as classified by B.S. Guha are a) The Negrito, b) the Proto-Australoid, c) the Mongoloid, consisting the Palaeo-Mongoloid and the Tibeto-Mongoloids, d) the Alpinoid (of Indian context), and e) the Nordic (Aryan speaker)²³⁷ . Among these races, only Mongoloid people came to India from Eastern side and predominantly inhabited in the Himalayan foothills and they have a close affiliation to the people of Burma, Tibbet and China. Nordic that is Aryan came from central Asia through the North-western border of India. Historian like Maxmullar had given the opinion and most of the historians supported his view that the term 'Aryan' do not denote racial group, but it denotes a language group, which included seven Indo-European languages like Persian, German Greek and sole Indian language *Sanskrita*²³⁸ . Aryan language in India that is *Sanskrita* is the mother of many other Indian languages. It is generally believed that *Sanskrita* speakers are superior to other languages groups. *Sanskrita* speaking people spread their habitation all over the North India and in a way North India became *sanskritised* or *Aryanised*. The eastern side of the river *Sadanira* considered beyond the Aryan culture during the 5th or 6th century B. C. *The Aryanization* that is the acceptance of *Sanskrita* language and culture in the northeastern India is later denomination and it is cleared from scholar's opinion that *Aryanization* is the process of the acceptance *Sanskrita* culture and language but not the Aryan arrival in the area. The process of state formation from clan-based socio-political fragments *Hinduisation* (Aryanization) continued simultaneously in pre-colonial Northeast India²³⁹ . S. K. Chatterji has rightly described the situation of the Koches "With the Hinduisation of the Koches, and the rise in power of their chiefs, *Kshatriya* origin was, as was natural, found out or suggested for them"²⁴⁰ . He also described them as "Indo-Mongoloid" or "mixed Austric-Dravidian-Mongoloid"²⁴¹ . So the racial identity of the Koches is now not beyond the scope of re-

examination. Physiognomically Mongoloid features predominant, by colour of skin, Dravidian features dominant and culturally, Koches have close affinities with Aryan speakers; nowadays they are a mixed breed of many races.

Name of the dynasty of King Naranarayan:

It is almost established that the Kingdom of Naranarayan called 'Koch dynasty' and even the rulers of the dynasty demand themselves belong to Koch dynasty. But main sources of information regarding *Naranarayan*, the *Buranjies*, the *Vansavalies* and the *Rajopakhyan* etc. are gave us same kind of information²⁴². The *Darrang Raj Vansavali* (henceforth DRV) described Hariya Mandal, (grandfather of Naranarayan) 'as *Mech* chief of 12 *Mech* families²⁴³. The '*Assam Buranji*' of HaraKanta Barua described *Hariya mandal* as 'Kachari'²⁴⁴. The '*Deodhai Assam Buranji*', although mentioned the title of the chapter as "Story of the origin of the *Koches*", but when he mentioned 12 *Mech* families of *Chikanagram*, he ultimately described as *Mech* of which *Hariya Mandal* belonged²⁴⁵. The *Deodhai Assam Buranji*, on the other hand, the '*Assam Buranji*' of Gunaviram Barua and the '*Kamrupa Buranji*' described *Hariya Mandal* as Koch²⁴⁶. Modern scholars are also not single minded about the question and most of them by-pass the question describing as "Koch or *Mech*"²⁴⁷. Scholars like K. L. Barua, D. Nath, Khan Choudhary Amanattulla Ahmed and Durgadas Majumdar²⁴⁸ assumed them 'Koch'. On the other hand, N. N. Vasu definitely described them as '*Mech*'²⁴⁹. P.K. Bhattacharya described the dynasty of Naranarayan as 'Kamta-Koch' dynasty²⁵⁰.

This type of contradictory opinion of scholars gave us scope for re-investigation of the question elaborately. Persian writer Minhajuddin Siraj in his book '*Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*' described that this area was peopled by mainly three tribes, namely *Koch*, *Mach*, and *Tharu*²⁵¹. However, there were not much socio-cultural differences among them and social status was almost same. This proves by the information given DRV that Biswa Singha had advised his sons not to marry daughters of other caste except Koch, the *Mech* and the *Kachari*²⁵². Under this situation, these could be explained from two angles:—

(A) They are actually Koch or *Kuvaca* of mythology, having disguised themselves through fear of *Parasurama*, living among the *Meches* and became known

as Mech. But in the 15th and 16th century, when they gained political power they disclosed the real identity as Koch.

(B) In the primitive stage, they followed the matrilineal tradition of succession of the Meches but after the formation of state and with their *Hinduization*, patriliney was established in the royal family of the *Koches*. From Biswa Singha the dynasty has been counted as 'Koch' dynasty. Biswa Singha, after consolidating his power shifted his capital to Kamtapur²⁵³. The capital of the formal the *Khen* kingdom and assumed the title of 'Kamteswar' and some scholars tried to describe the kingdom as the 'Kamta-Koch' kingdom²⁵⁴.

Contemporary political situation:

Political conditions of Delhi and Bengal proper on the eve 16th century:

Political picture of Northern India, Bengal proper and as well as in North-East India including the core area of study in the last quarter of 15th and almost whole of 16th centuries was multi dimensional. In Northern India Lodi's were the central power at Delhi, the first *Lodi Sultan Bahlul Lodi* (1451-89) marked the era of conflict between the crown and the nobility. His son and successor *Sultan Sikander Lodi* (1489- 1517), could not solve the problem. During the reign of next and last Lodi Sultan *Ibrahim Lodi* (1517-1526), crown –nobility conflict reached its worst situation and as a result, *Daut Khan* (Governor of Punjab) and his partisans invited *Babur*, who defeated *Ibrahim Lodi* in the 1st battle of *Panipath* in 1526 and laid foundation the Mughal rule in India.

After the 1st battle of Panipath, *Babur*, in spite of initial success against *Rajputas* in the battle of *Khanua* (March 7, 1527), and in the battle of *Ghagra* (May 6, 1529) against *Mahamud Lodi* (younger brother of *Ibrahim Lodi*), could not consolidate his power due to his sudden death (26th dec, 1530). His son *Humayun* could not control the situation, and as a result he was defeated by *Sher Shah*, in the battles of *Chausha* (June 26, 1539) and *Kaunaj* (May 17, 1540) and 2nd Afghan empire had been founded and *Humayun* forced to retreat from India. *Sher Shah* (1540-45) was the most efficient ruler of his age but his successors were worthless. In this situation, *Humayun* came back to India with his worthy son *Akbar*, who defeated the last Afghan (*Sher Shah's*

line) ruler *Mahamud Adil Shah* and his Hindu commander *Himu* in the 2nd battle of *Panipath* (5th Nov. 1556) and Mughal rule was re-established in India.

In Bengal, *Habsi Alauddin Hussein Shah* established independent *Hussein Shahi* dynasty by assassinating his master and last *Iliyas Shahi* ruler *Shumsuddin Muzaffar Shah* in about 1593-4 AD. Delhi Sultan *Sikander Shah* of Delhi advanced upto Bihar put *Dariya Khan* as Governor of Bihar and armies of *Hussein Shah* and *Sikander Shah* faced each other for some time. Ultimately, a treaty was signed between the two and both agreed not to attack each other's kingdom. *Hussein Shah* recognized *Sikander's* authority over Bihar, *Tirhut*, and others territories of his west. By safe guarding western frontier of his kingdom, *Hussein Shah* conquered *Kamtapur* in about 1498 A.D, but he forced to retreat from *Kamtapur* due to internal problems in Bengal proper, leaving his son *Daniyal* at *Kamtapur*, who was killed²⁵⁵. His successor and other son *Nauru Shah* (1519-32) again attacked *Kamtapur* in about 1532 A.D. The Afghan chiefs of UP and Bihar retreated from North India after the 1st battle of *Panipath* (1526), and tried to take shelter in Eastern India, as a result *Babur* also advanced up to the bank of *Ghaghgar* in 1529. However, in this situation, *Nasrat Shah* offered terms, promised not to give shelter to fugitive Afghans chiefs, and handed over conquered-region to *Babur*. Thus he cleverly protected his independence by his diplomacy. After the death of *Babur*, *Nasrat Shah* tried to recover his lost regions in Bihar. This move was likely to bring the invasion of *Humayun* on Bengal. *Nasrat Shah* warded off this danger by making an alliance with *Bahadur Shah* of *Gujrat* and by this alliance, *Nasrat Shah* protected the independence of Bengal again.

On the death of *Nasrat Shah*, his son *Allauddin Firoj Shah* ascended his father's throne (1532). His uncle *Ghiyasuddin Mamud Shah*, Who ascended the throne of Bengal in 1533-1538, killed him. During his reign, the ruler of Bihar, *Sher Shah Sur* invaded Bengal and in the battle of *Surajghar* he defeated *Mamud Shah* and captured *Teliaghar* of Bengal first, then *Gaud*, the capital of Bengal. *Mamud Shah* fled from Bengal and prayed to *Humayun*, for help against *Sher Shah Sur*. To help *Mamud Shah*, *Humayun* sent an expedition to Bihar and Bengal against *Sher Shah Sur* but he was defeated in the battles of *Chousa* and *Kaunaj*. As a result, *Sher Shah* dethroned *Humayun* from the throne of Delhi declared himself the sole ruler of Delhi as well as whole India and 2nd Afghan rule was established. *Sher Shah* became Sultan of India,

but the epicenter of political power remained Bengal and Bihar. He sent *Khijir Khan* to Bengal as his subordinate ruler of Bengal; within few days, he married the daughter of last Independence ruler of Bengal *Mamud Shah* and declared himself as the independent ruler of Bengal. *Sher Shah* himself made an expedition to Bengal, made *Khijir Khan* Captive, and placed *Kaji Fajilat* as his regent of the throne.

After the death of *Sher Shah*, his son *Islam Shah* came to the throne of Delhi and Bengal remained as a *Subah* of Delhi. At the death of *Islam Shah*, his nephew *Adil Shah* Came to the throne but his Hindu Commander *Himu* became the power behind throne.

During the reign of *Adil Shah*, Bengal *Subedar Mahamad Khan* declared himself the independent ruler of Bengal then after annexing *Jaunpur*, he advanced toward *Agra* when in the hand of *Himu* he was killed at the battle of *chakra* in 1555 A.D. and established *Shahbaz Khan* as *Subedar* of Bengal. However, *Khijir Khan*, the son of *Mahamad Shah*, who declared himself the independent ruler with the name '*Giyasuddin Bahadur Shah*, over threw *Shahbaz Khan*. In the meanwhile, *Akbar*, in the 2nd battle of *Panipath* (1556) defeated *Himu*, captured *Delhi* and *Adil Shah* tried to hide himself in Eastern India. But he was killed by *Giyasuddin Bahadur Shah* of Bengal in the battle of *Surujghar* and *Sur* dynasty came to an end. Then victories *Gayasuddin* advanced toward *Jumper* and faced Mughul commander *Khan –Jahan*. Who defeated him and as a result, he came back to Bengal, where he ruled as an independent ruler up to 1560 A.D. After his death, his brother *Giyasuddin II* ruled Bengal up to 1563 A.D. In the year 1564 A.D. *Taj Khan*, an Afghan of *Karrani* dynasty ascended throne of Bengal and established the *Karrani* dynasty.

After the death *Taj Khan* in 1565 A.D., his brother *Sulaiman Karrari* ascended the throne of Bengal and ruled up to 1572 A.D. He was intelligent and a great diplomatic ruler, who verbally accepted the *Akbar's* authority but practically he was almost an independent ruler of Bengal, who extended the boundary of Bengal by war and diplomacy. However, his successors *Bayajid* and *Daud* were worthless sons of great father. *Daud* declined his father's verbal authority of the *Mughul* and attacked the *Zamania* fort (Near *Gazipur*, UP) of the *Mughul*. As a result, *Akbar* first sent *Munim Khan* against *Daud* and then he himself joined the army and ultimately *Daud* was defeated and killed at the battle *Rajmahal* in August 12, 1576 A.D, Bengal became a part the *Mughal Empire*²⁵⁶.

However, the victory Rajmahal could not established Mughul rule on Bengal in strong basis and it took another 20 years to complete the process. A numbers of local Jaminders (Hindu, Muslim both) thought themselves independent and were ready to fight against the *Mughul* for that. In the history of Bengal, they are known as *Baro-Bhuyan*. Among them *Isha Khan* of Dhaka-Maymansing and *Keder Roy* of *Bikrampur* were Prominent. In about 1580A.D *Baro-Bhuyan* s of Bengal organized a revolt against the *Mughal* and Afghan leaders like *Kattu Khan*, *Isha Khan* and *Sulaiman* joined hands with them ²⁵⁷. To Suppress this rebellion, Akbar sent *Hussain Quli Beg* (1576-1578), known as *Khan- I-Ajam*, as the *Subeder* of Bengal in 1580 A.D, who in spite of his best attempt could not suppress the Afghan leaders. So replacing *Khan-I-Ajam*, Akbar sent *Raja Man Singh* as *Subedar* of Bengal in 1594 A.D., who completed the *Mughal* authority in Bengal on a permanent basis²⁵⁸.

From above discussion, it became clear that political condition of Delhi and Bengal during the period was in a great turmoil. In Delhi *Mughal* - Afghan tussle continued op to rise of *Akbar* in 1556 A.D. In Bengal although , the *Mughals* –Afghans were engaged in internecine warfare to capture the throne of Bengal but multidimensional conflict continued among the Afghans themselves and with local chiefs also existed there . The rulers of *Hussain Shahi* and *Karrani* dynasty were independent. It is the low of history that when centrifugal forces became prominent and central authority became weak, that made headway and a number of independent kingdoms propped up on its ruins. The Bengal rulers when felt themselves well protected on Western frontier, a number of expeditions were sent towards northeastern India²⁵⁹.

Political conditions of north-East India at the eve 16th century:

Many dynasties had been ruling over the whole of North-East India, among them the Ahoms were in a prominent position and this dynasty of *Tai-Shans* founded in about 1228 A. D. by *Sukapha* (1228-68), who left his ancestral place *Maulung* (Upper Burma) with few a followers²⁶⁰ and at first settled in *Khamjang*. After that, he established the *Ahom* political hegemony over a large area of *Habung* on the north bank of the *Brahmaputra* and on the south as far *Dikhau-mukh* and *Simaluguri*²⁶¹. Succeeding rulers of the dynasty up to *Supimpha* (1493-97 A.D.) more or less cemented and expanded their authority at the costs of others indigenous tribes. But

with the accession of next king *Suhungmung Dihingia Raja* (1497-1539 A.D.) a glorious chapter of the Ahom history had started. A number of internal and external events characterize his reign²⁶². The king took a policy of aggressive conquest and consolidation of his power and position. He annexed the *Chutiya* kingdom by defeating king *Dhirnarayan* in 1523A.D. as a result the *Ahom* kingdom now extended from *Brahma Kund* in the east to the river *Subansirin* the west on the north bank of the *Brahmaputra*²⁶³. He pushed the *Kacharis* beyond the *Kalang* and extended the *Ahoms* rule over the entire *Dhansiri* valley and major part of the present district of *Nowgong*²⁶⁴. He also subjugated a number of *Bhuyans* on both banks of the *Brahmaputra* and appointed them to very petty offices as *tamulis* in charge of betel-nut preparations²⁶⁵. The Sultans *Nurshrat Shah* (1519-32) and *Firoz Shah* (1532-33) of Bengal, under the generalship of *Turbek*, attacked the *Ahom* kingdom during his reign in 1527, 1531 and 1532 but finally routed out by *Suhummung*²⁶⁶. *Suhummung's* reign also witnessed the emergence of the dynasty of King *Naranarayan* by his father *Biswa Singha*, who maintained friendship with the *Ahoms* until his last days.

Suhummung was killed by his son and successor *Suklenmung Gadgaya Raja* (1539-52), who consolidated his father conquests. During his reign, hostilities with the *Koch* king *Naranarayan* were the prime mover of political picture of north-east India. His son *Sukhampha* (1552-1603) succeeded him, during whose reign the *Ahoms* suffered fatal defeat in the hand of the *Koch* king *Naranarayan*. It is clear from above discussion, entire north-east during the period the *Ahoms* were in a dominant position before the *Koch* ascendancy.

Political condition of the core area of the kingdom at its beginning:

Political condition of Lower Assam and Northeastern part of Bengal at the ascendancy of *Koch* dynasty was chaotic with the beginning fourteenth century. The *Khen* dynasty was (which has been discussed earlier) ruling over the region with its capital at *Kamatapur* which was situated four miles south-east of the present town of *Koch Behar*, generally²⁶⁷, but real political power were exercised by high officials of dynasty and by many independent *Bhuyans* of the locality. The *Khen* rule of *Kamatapur* was overthrown by the hand of *Hussain Shah* of Bengal in about 1498A.D, and who established *Sultani* rule over *Kamatapur* under the Governorship of his son *Danial /Nasurat Shah*. The *Bhuyans* also lost their long enjoyed power, prestige and

independence and as a result, there was a political vacuum in the area. However, the *Sultani* rule was short lived, because on the one hand the *Bhuyans* could not accept the rule of *Gaud* for a long time and they were waiting for good time to overthrow it and to regain their lost political power and prestige. On the other hand, The *Gaud* ruler received no support from the people of *Kamtapur-Kamrupa*, as he had already alienated their sympathy by his miss- rule oppression²⁶⁸, and help from Bengal proper due to political turmoil there. In this situation, the *Bhuyans* took the leading role to overthrow the rule of *Gaud* and whole area came under the control of the independent *Bhuyans*, who were jealous of one another and began to quarrel among themselves to increase one's power by defeating others of the locality²⁶⁹. *Biswa Singha*, the father of King *Naranarayan* by utilizing this situation established his power in about 1515 A.D.

The Bhuyans of the area and Biswa Singha 1515-1540AD:

The *Bhuyan* system of Assam and lower Assam had originated after disintegration of ancient *Kamarupa* kingdom and they began exercising their independent powers from thirteen century up to early 16th century AD²⁷⁰. The terms '*Bhuya*', or '*Bhuiya*' or '*Bhuyan*' means a property owner, which is synonymous with Persian equivalent *Zaminder* and *Sanskrita Bhumika*²⁷¹. They do not belong to any particular caste and religion and do not have any ethnic affinity²⁷². It is not clear from the evidences that when exactly the *Bhuyan* system originated.

Opinions differ about the origin of *Bhuyan* system in Assam²⁷³. According to one version, it originated in Assam and it is an indigenous institution of Mediaeval Assam. According to other version, *Bhuyan* system originated out side of Assam. M. Neog, without mentioning his sources of information, gave a mythological genealogy of the indigenous origin of the *Bhuyan* institution in Assam including bar (senior/big) *Baro* (twelve) *Bhuyans* and Saru (Junior/Small) *Baro* (twelve) *Bhuyans*²⁷⁴. The *Guru Charit* informed us of the institution of *Bara Bhuyans* of Assam originated from the establishment of the seven *Kayastha* families by *Kamesvara Durlabhanarayan* c-1330-1350 A.D. following his treaty with *Gaudesvara Dharmanarayan* and subsequently joined by other five *Kayastha* families from *Gauda* so that the total number of *Bhuyans* increased to twelve or *Baro*²⁷⁵. However, it is a tradition and the total number should not be twelve or *Baro* and the DRV mentioned the existence of large number of *Bhuyans* in the north bank of the *Brahmaputra* in the 16th century²⁷⁶.

There are also classification of the *Bhuyans* due to their power, position and prosperity and they assumed titles like *Raja*, *Samajpati*, *Bara Bhuyan* and *Saru Bhuyan*²⁷⁷. Without going into the controversy, it can safely be assumed that the *Bhuyans* of Assam included both indigenous and migrant *Bhuyans* and some of the them were very powerful and played vital role in the contemporary political affairs²⁷⁸. Although, they collectively overthrew the rule of the successor of *Hussain shah* from *Kamatapur*, the *Bhuyans* were engaged in mutual conflicts among themselves.

Biswa Singha, the son and successor of *Hariya Mandal* had to fight against a large number of both, the indigenous and the emigrant *Bhuyans* to establish himself. *Hariya Mandal*, the headmen of 12 *Mech/ Koch* families and the father of *Biswa Singha* had made an unsuccessful attempt to subdue the *Bhuyans* and was defeated by the *Bhuyan* of *Phulguri*, who made him a captive and forced him to purchase his liberty by agreeing to pay tribute²⁷⁹. At this time, 16 years old great boxer and expert warrior *Biswa Singha* was highly incensed to hear his father's defeat and humiliation, organized the strength of his fellow tribes, stopped the payment of tribute to the *Bhuyan* of *Phulguri*, and attacked him, but he was also defeated and forced to retreat. From this attack, he learnt a lesson that a direct war is not favourable to his power and position; he took two separate policies i.e. a) the tricks and guerrilla war tactics at the early stage and b) the policy of open challenge, at an advance stage, to achieve his objectives, which showed the political awareness of him.

Biswa Singha, at the early stage took the policy of the tricks and guerrilla war tactics at the beginning to accomplish his objectives. It was the result of his realization of the real situation, that the power of the others *Bhuyans* was superior and his power was not sufficient for a direct challenge. By following this policy, he defeated the *Bhuyan* of *Phulguri*. According to tradition, during *Biswa Singh's* war with *Phulguri Bhuyan* at the early stage, he was defeated and forced to take shelter in the forest. After three days in the forest, without food, *Biswa Singha* took shelter in the house of a *Mechni* and eating rice there followed her advice²⁸⁰. *N. N. Vasu* described the incident in this way "In the month of *Chaitra*, the *Bhuyan* of *Phulguri* disbanded his troops. One day in the month of *Vaisakha*, at dead of night, *Bisu* alone entered the capital of the *Bhuyan* asking his men to wait outside. The *Bhuyan* was fast asleep. *Bisu* stole into his bedroom and cut off his head with one blow of his sword. Then he gave his signal and his men at once fell to looting the house. In this way he got vast wealth and

became master of that place"²⁸¹. With this success, *Biswa Singha* gained considerable amount of power over the locality and became a very powerful *Mandaleswara*.

After this incident, *Biswa Singha* started to follow the policy of open challenge i.e. the direct policy of aggression and aggrandizement towards others *Bhuyans* and conquered small territories like *Ugari, Lukibakai, Pantan, Bako, Bholagaon, Bijni, Beltola, Moirapur, Rani, Bangaon, Karaibari, Atiabari, Kamtabari, Balarampur, Pandu, Jhargaon, Dighla, Khuntaghat, Karnapura, Behar, Rausia, Dhakur, Chhaigaon Baranagar*²⁸². (It is difficult to locate accurately all these small areas). All these above-mentioned names denote name of places and we do not know the names of the rulers. On the other hand, the sources supplied us some names of the *Bhuyans*, whose territories were not clearly mentioned. He subjugated *Bhuyans* like *Bara* (twelve/big) *Bhuyans* and *Saru Bhuyans* (small in size). N. N. Vasu has given a list of the names of *Bara* that is 12 *Bhuyans* and their seats as 1. *Chandivara, the Siromani Bhuyan of Bardowa*, 2. *Haripala alias Vishnukanta Bhuyan of Dighalpura / Balidia*; 3. *Sripati alias Jayapala Bhuyan of Badanagar*; 4. *Sridhar Bhuyan of Bheragram*; 5. *Srihari alias Sripati Sarasvati of Lengamaguri at first and then at Ghilaghari of Sarukhetri Pargana*; 6. *Sadananda Bhuyan of Kaunajpur near Kamata*; 7. *Chidananda alias Chirapati of Jhargaon at first and then at Baligaon*; 8. *Sripati Datta*, 9. *Gadadhar Bhuyan of Sukekuchi*; 10. *Buda khan of Karnapura and Kakati family of Barpeta*; 11. *Lohabara of Khatabari near Kamatapur* and 12. *Chanuguri of Kanakpur*²⁸³. Some scholars also described the term '*Bara Bhuyans*' as big *Bhuyans* (in Bengali and Assamees languages *Bara* means 12 i.e. twelve). *Ouguri Bhuyan, Daivajna Chuti Bhuyan, Kusum Bhuyan, Dighal Bhuyan, Kalia Bhuyan, Bhuyan of Jhargaon, Kabilash Bhuyan the Bhuyan of Karnapur, Bejini* in order of succession and finally *Pratap Roy Bhuyan of Pandunath*²⁸⁴. The *Vansavali* also states that he had a hard fight with the *Bhuyan of Karnapur* and in course of the encounter a large amount of arms and ammunitions including horses, camels and elephants had been lost to him²⁸⁵. Then he worshipped the Goddess *Mechini* and according to her advice attacked the *Karnapur Bhuyan* on the *Bihu*, when the followers of the *Bhuyan* left for homes²⁸⁶, and *Pratap Roy Bhuyan of Pandunath*, who was his ally left with his kinsmen to the Ahom²⁸⁷. As a result, *Biswa Singha* easily defeated and killed the *Bhuyan of Karnapur* and able to gain the territories, arms and ammunitions²⁸⁸. Successors of *Sadananda Bhuyan of Kaunajpur near Kamta, Kalikanta* and

Satananda was also attacked by Biswa Singha and forced them to flee to Bengal, of whom *Kalikanta* could not come back and *Satananda* returned to Assam married *Kanakpriya*, the sister *Damodar Ata*²⁸⁹. One powerful Narain Buinia (*Bhuyan*), seeing this type of incident, sent a messenger to Biswa Singha with an warning to meet him (the *Bhuyan*) in person without delay, but he himself was defeated and killed by Biswa Singha. The *Bhuyans*, who could overthrow the rule of Gauda from Kamtapur, had met with crushing defeat at the hands of this new warrior of humble origin²⁹⁰.

Thus, by organizing the tribes of the area, following the tricks, guerrilla war tactics and the policy of open challenge and by subjugating all the *Bhuyans* of the lower *Brahmaputra* valley, Biswa Singha declared himself king of the region. It is said that Biswa Singha came to power in about 1515AD, took 12 years to subjugate all the neighbouring *Bhuyans* and after which, he declared himself king in about 1527AD²⁹¹. The Brahmins and *Daivagans* performed the rituals of his coronation ceremony and the Koch, Mech, Kachari and other tribal people actively supported the kingship of Biswa Singha²⁹².

When Biswa Singha consolidated his power on the lower *Brahmaputra* valley by subjugating all the *Bhuyans* of the area, the *Ahoms* under the kingship of *Suhungmung Dihingia Raja* (1497-1539AD.) were in a dominant position in the upper *Brahmaputra* valley and were trying to expand their territory towards western border. The territorial expansion of Biswa Singha towards the east and that of the Ahom king *Suhungmung Dihingia Raja* towards the west was sure to lead to a direct confrontation of the two powers. On the other hand, sultans of Bengal sent a number of expeditions to expand their sway in the region²⁹³. However, meanwhile, the Sultans of Bengal launched their expeditions to the Ahom kingdom through the kingdom of Biswa Singha who saw direct hostilities between these two powers on more than one occasion, between the years 1527-32 AD. But Biswa Singha diplomatically remained silent thinking the infancy of his kingdom and the Sultans of Bengal also did not take him seriously and set their main target to the Ahom²⁹⁴. As a result, in 1532-33 AD, when Nurshat Shah's general *Turbak* invaded Ahom crossing his territory, he remained inactive²⁹⁵. Although the invaders gained initial successes, but ultimately they were finally completely defeated by the Ahom commander *Chankham*, who also pursued them as far as the Karatoya, the western boundary of Biswa Singha's kingdom, and obtained five eastern Parganas from the *Padshah* of Bengal²⁹⁶. On his back to Assam,

Chankham is said to have attacked Biswa Singha, who had been neutral during the war. Considering the situation, Biswa Singha made his submission by offering presents, and acknowledging Ahom's over lordship²⁹⁷. In recognition of his submission, Chankham gave Biswa Singha all the Parganas acquired from the Padshah of Gaud, which were adjacent to the western boundary of Biswa Singha's kingdom but far away from that of the Ahom. Biswa Singha agreed to pay annual tributes to the Ahom king and he along with his brother Sisya Singha came to the Ahom court, and received assurance of all kinds and protection against any foreign invasion²⁹⁸. According to the DRV, some time later, Biswa Singha, however, dishonoured his commitment and proceeded to invade the Ahom kingdom, reached as far as the *Singri* hill; but owing to the shortage of food supply and difficulties of transport, he had to retreat²⁹⁹. Contradictorily, Assam *Buranji* described this incident as the friendly visit of 1537 A D³⁰⁰. In spite of being an ambitious king, Biswa Singha did not dare shake off the Ahom vassalage, because of the frequent invasions from Bengal rulers and his defeat and humiliation at the hands of the powerful Ahom king Suhungmung. But he could not accept this from his heart and always thinking about the slur. Therefore, Biswa Singha at his deathbed asked his sons to take appropriate steps to revoke the Ahom vassalage³⁰¹.

Bhutan, the sub Himalayan *Tarai* region from the *Teesta* in the west to the river Panchnoi in the east ruled by the Bhutia tribe was also attacked and defeated by Biswa Singha and forced its ruler to pay tribute³⁰². But Assam *Buranji* of *Gunabhiram Barua* does not mention any war between Biswa Singha and Bhutan, only a peace treaty was concluded, according to which Bhutan acknowledge Biswa Singha's over lordship and agree to pay tribute³⁰³. Biswa Singha's contemporary Sultans of Bengal were Nurshrat Shah (1519-32 AD), Firoz Shah (1532-1533AD), Mahmud Shah (1533-38 AD), sent several expeditions crossing territory of Biswa Singha, who remained silent, and after the defeat of the Sultans of Bengal at the hands of the Ahom general Chankham, he accepted Ahom Supremacy. The Sultans of Bengal considered Biswa Singha as a vassal of the Ahom, any attack on Biswa Singha would be an attack on the Ahom, and they were not ready for any conflict with the Ahoms considering the internal troublesome situation of Bengal³⁰⁴.

Thus, Biswa Singha had the skill, intelligence and diplomatic power and capability, which enabled him to establish a semi-independent kingdom³⁰⁵. By the

policy of tricks, guerrilla war tactics and aggressive warfare transformed the small chiefdom of his father into a territorially defined kingdom and laid the foundation for his successors on well-cemented ground. He started his career as a tribal chief, by establishing his capital at Chikana, the ruins of which are still in existed about sixty north of present Dhubri town in Goalpara district of Assam, between the rivers *Saralbhanga* and *Champavati*³⁰⁶. After subjugation of the *Bhuyans* and territorial expansion of his kingdom *Biswa Singha* shifted the power center from the *Chikana* to *Hingulabas*³⁰⁷, a village in the plains of Western *Duars* on temporary basis³⁰⁸ and finally transferred it to *Kamtapur* (*Kantapur*)³⁰⁹, later known as Koch Behar four miles to the south-east of the present town of Koch Behar³¹⁰.

Biswa Singha inherited a small area, "bounded in the west by the *Sankosh*, on the north by *Dhabalagiri* (*Himalayas*), on the south by *Lohitya* (*Brahmaputra*)"³¹¹. He extended its borders to the *Karatoya* in the west, the *Baranadi* on the north bank of *Brahmaputra* in the east, the *Bhutan* frontier in the north and *Bengal* frontier in *Rangpur* (now in *Bangladesh*) in the south³¹². His dominion comprised the lower *Himalaya* region, the whole of the present districts of *Kamrupa*, *Goalpara*, part of *Nowgong* of *Assam*, *Koch Behar* and *Jalpaiguri* (part) districts of present west *Bengal* and *Rangpur* district (except *Ghoraghat*) of *Bangladesh*.

The *DRV* inform us that *Biswa Singha* had eighteen wives from different countries like *Nepal*, *Gaur*, *Kashmir*, *Kamrupa*, *Mithila* and *Kashi*; he had also eighteen sons, born of his eighteen wives³¹³. Among whom *Naranarayan* was selected as his successor and king, and *Sukladhvaja* (*Chilarai*) selected as the general of the king by a draw³¹⁴. With the accession of *Naranarayan* on the throne started a glorious chapter of the *Koch* hegemony all over the whole of *North-East India*, not only in the field politics but also in the fields every spare of life.

Notes and References:

1. P.K. Bhattacharyya, named his book as '*The kingdom of Kamta-Kochbehar in historical perspective*', and other have given same view.
- 1A. *The Ramayana, Kishkindhyakanda*, Ch. XIII.
2. *The Mahabharata, Udyogparva*. Ch., 48.

3. The *Markandeya Purana* (58.13; 57.44; 66.8, see Pargiter's 'The *Markandeya Purana*, pp. 331, 357, 411 and 481). The *Bayu Purana* (77.95), the *Brahmanda Purana* (Ch.27), the *Skanda Purana* (*Kumarika khanda*, Ch. 59), the *Garuda Purana* (81.16a) ch.59). For the *Harivansa Purana*, the *Brahma Purana*, the *Matsya Purana* see Khan Choudhuri A. A, '*Kochbeharer Itihas*', reprint, Calcutta, 1990, p.1.
4. *Raghuvamsam* of Kalidas, Ch. IV, vs. 81-84, refers to the two countries that are Pragjyotish and Kamrupa lying to the east of the *Lauhitra*.
5. The *Brihat-sanhita* of Barahamihir, (Grahabhakti Section, XVI-I.
6. *Dasakumarcharita* of Dandi, III. cited in I. Sarkar's " *Aspects of Historical geography of Pragjyotisa-Kamarupa*", Calcutta , 1992, p. 35.
7. *Harsha-charita* of Banabhatta, Cited in Phani Deka , '*The great Indian corridor*' , Mittal, Delhi, 2007, pp.34-41 also in Khan Chaudhuri Amanatulla Ahamed, '*Kochbeharer Itihas*' : reprint, Calcutta , 1990 , p. 1 .
8. '*Trikanda*' of Purushottama, cited in Phani Deka, op. cit., pp. 34 - 41.
9. '*Abhidhanachintamani*' of Hemendra, Cited in Phani Deka, op. cit. pp. 34 -41.
10. '*Kavyamimamsa*' of Rajsekhar , Ch. 17 , Ibid.
11. The '*Raghuvamsam*', Ch. IV, vs.81-84, cited in Phani Deka, op. cit. pp. 34-41.
12. '*Brihat-sanhita*' of Barahamihir, op. cit., Section, XVI-I.
13. Phani Deka, op. cit. pp. 34-41. : He mentioned with the references from the '*Harsha-charita*' of Banabhatta (7th century AD.), the '*Trikanda*' of Purushottama, (7th century AD.) p. 93 that "... the country Pragjyotish to be same with Kamarupa.
14. *Abhidhanachintamani*, p. 381; cited in Phani Deka, Ibid and B. K. Barua, '*A cultural History of Assam*', third Edition, Delhi, p. 13.
15. '*Kavya Mimamsa*' of Rajasekhara, p. 93. cited in B. K. Barua Ibid.,
16. B. K. Barua, '*A cultural History of Assam*', third Edition, Delhi, p.13.
17. Balavarma's Nowgong grant (line 33), Vide M. M. Sharma: *Inscriptions of Ancient Assam*, Gauhati, 1978. p.159.
18. Indrapala's Gauhati and Guwakuchi grants (lines 35 and 34 respectively), Vide M. M. Sharma, Ibid, pp. 153 and 197.
19. Ratnapala's Bargaon grant (line 52) , Ibid., p. 159 .
20. J. F. Fleet; '*Corpus Inscriptiourum Indicarum*', Vol. III, P. 1f (line 21).

21. Khan Choudhuri A. A., op. cit., 1990 , p. 2 .
22. The *Kalika Purana*, Ch. LXXVIII,
23. The *Siva Purana*, Ch. XXXXVIII.
24. The *Vayu Purana*, Ch. XXXX.
25. The *Yogini Tantra*, (ed) S. S. Saraswati, Calcutta, B. S. 1385, Part II, Ch. XI, 21, ff.
26. 'Harshacharita' of Banabhatta, (Cowell), Ch., VIII. pp. 217-17.
27. Hiuen Tsiang's 'Si-u-ki' , in T. Watters ' on yuan Chwan's travels in India ' , vol. II London, 1905 , pp. 126 &186.
28. Minhaj-uddin Siraj, '*Tabaqat-I-Nasiri*', trans in English by Major H. G. Raverty, vol-1, Reprint 1970 .pp. 550-595.
29. '*Raghuvansam*' of Kalidas, op. cit. refers to the two countries that are Pragjyotish and Kamrupa lying to the east of the *Lauhitra*.
30. '*Brihat-samhita*' of Barahamihir, op. cit., refers to the three countries that are Pragjyotish and Kamboja and Lauhitra.
31. '*Brihat-samhita*' of Barahamihir, op. cit.
32. R. P. Chanda, Suniti Kumar Chatterji and others suggested that Kambajas mean only the Koches of the period. (R. P. Chanda cited in H. C .Ray, '*Dynastic History of Northern India*', Cal-1931, vol-1, pp.308-9; Suniti Kumar Chatterji, '*Kirata-Jana-Kriti*', the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, reprinted in April 1998, page. 112 .Henceforth SKC-KJK.); Minhaj - uddin Siraj, described that region was inhabited by Koch (Kambojas / Kiratas) and others.
33. The Kamauly grant of Baidyadeva, records the gift of two villages, situated in Kamarupa mandala, which was in the Badavisaya within the Bhukti of *Pragjyotish* (Epigraphic India, II, p. 353). Therefore, it might be assumed that the extent of *Pragjyotish* was much greater than Kamarupa, which at its early stage was a small territory (mandala). (Bhukti = Province, Visaya= District, Mandala = Subdivision).
34. *Abhidhanachintamani*, p. 381; cited in Phani Deka, Ibid and see B. K. Barua, '*A cultural History of Assam*' 3rd Edition, Delhi, p.13.
35. '*Brihat-samhita*' of Barahamihir, (Grahabhakti Section, XVI-I, refers to the three countries that are *Pragjyotish* and Kamboja and *Lauhitra* and '*Raghuvansam*' of Kalidas refers to the two countries that are *Pragjyotish* and Kamarupa lying to the east of the *Lauhitra*. Even Ratnapala (11th century AD) in his Bargaon grant placed himself as "...the delight of Kamrupa" and "the ruler of *Pragjyotish*"

(Kamarupanandi and Pragjyotishadhipati). It might mean the son of Kamarupa (small territory) and the king of *Pragjyotisha* (larger territory).

36. I Sarkar has named his book as "Aspects of Historical geography of *Pragjyotisa-Kamarupa*", Calcutta, 1992. N. N. Vasu, '*The social history of Kamrupa*'. (3Vol.s) Northern Book Centre, reprint, New Delhi, reprint 1983, B. K. Barua, op. cit., and others also given same views.
37. *The Ramayana*, Adiparva, Chap. 32.
38. *The Kalika Purana*, Part., 39, verse. 126.
39. E.A. Gait, '*A history of Assam*', (Revised), Calcutta, 1963, p.15.
40. Khan Chaudhuri Amanatulla Ahamed op. cit., p. 4.
41. K. L. Barua, '*Early History of Kamarupa: From the earliest times to the end of sixteenth century*', Shilong, 1933, p.13.
42. B. K. Kakati, '*The Mother Goddess Kamakhya*', 1948, p.6.
43. '*The kalika Purana*', Ch., 51, vs. 55-76.
44. *The kalika Purana*, Ch., 64, vv. 73.
45. *The kalika Purana*, Ch., 62, verses, 74, 77 and 103. Also see the *Yogoni Tantra*, first half, pt. XV, verses 48&49.
46. B. K. Barua, op. cit. p.13.
47. *The kalika Purana*, Ch., 38, vv. 122-23.
48. *The Yogini Tantra*, (ed) S. S. Saraswati, Calcutta , B. S. 1385, Part II , Ch. XI, 17-18
49. '*Assam Buranji*', by Haliram Dhekiya Phukan, Bengali (tr.) by J. M. Bhattacharyya, Published by Mokshada Pustakalaya, Gauhati, 1369, pp. 25-33.
50. Watters, op. cit. p. 187.
51. Ibid.
52. B. K. Barua, op. cit. p. 11. However, he did not clearly mention the actual references.
53. Gopinath Bardoloi, '*Lokopriyo Gopinath Bardoloi—An architect of modern India*', Gyan Publishing House, Delhi, 1992. pp. 13-14.
54. Ibid.
55. Cited in Khan Chaudhuri Amanatulla Ahamed, op. cit., p. 2.

56. Sibsankar Mukherjee, article 'The *Kamadesvara – ritual sovereign of northeastern India*', in P. K. Bhattacharyya (ed), 'The Kingdom of Kamata-Koch-Bihar', The university of North Bengal, 2000, pp. 74-81.
57. See Lekharu Upendranath's compiled (in Assamese), 'the *Katha Guru Charita*', Gauhati, pp. 9-10; Radhakrishna Das Bairagi, '*Gosani Mangal*', published by Brajachandra Majumder, Calcutta , 1306 B. S., also edited by Nripendranath Pal , 2nd ed. Calcutta, 1399 B.S.
58. Sibsankar Mukherjee, op. cit. pp. 74-81.
59. Ibid.
60. J. H. Ryley, (ed), *Ralph Fitch, English's Pioneer to India, Burma, etc.*, London, 1899, cited in Khan Chaudhuri Amanatulla Ahamed , op. cit. p. 2 .
61. Minhaj-uddin Siraj, '*Tabaqat-I-Nasiri*', (tr.) H.G. Raveřty, vol.-I, reprint, New Delhi, 1970, p. 560.
62. The *Yogini Tantra*, op. cit. vs. 40-55 & the *Fadma Purana*, (*Sristi Khanda*), Ch. XXXXXVII.
63. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, '*Kirata-Jana-Krti*', the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, Reprint in April 1998, p.113.
64. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, '*Origin and development of Bengali language*' , Calcutta, 1926, p.339, reprinted in April 1998, p.113.
65. Cited in Khan Chaudhuri Amanatulla Ahamed , op. cit. p. 4 .
66. Ibid.
- 66a. The *Yogini Tantra*, (ed) S. S. Saraswati, Calcutta, B. S. 1385, Part II, Ch. XI.
67. Khan Chaudhuri A. Ahamed, op. cit. p. 123.
68. Gait, op. cit. pp. 58-59.
69. H. N. Choudhary, '*The Cooch Behar State and Its Land Revenue of Settlement, Cooch Behar*, 1903, p. 232.
70. '*Assam: An outline , Souvenir, 21st International Geographical Congress*' , Gauhati University , 1968, p. 15 cited in I. Sarkar's "*Aspects of Historical geography of Pragjyotisa-Kamarupa*" , Calcutta , 1992, p. 04 .
71. R. K. Barman, '*From Tribalism to State*', Delhi, 2007.
72. Achaya Panchanan Tarkaratna, (ed), the *Kalika Puranam*, Calcutta, 1384BS. Ch.77-80, pp. 784-837.

73. R. K. Barman, op. cit. p. 34. He also mentioned that there are total 18 duars between Bhutan and India. Dalimkote (DurlingJung), Zumirkote, Chamurchi, luku duar, Buxa, Bhulka, Bara, Guman, Ripu, Cherang (sildi), and Bagh are the duars between Bengal and Bhutan. Buri Gumang, Kalling, Ghur Kalla duar, Banksa, Chapaguri, Chapakhamar and Bijni are the duars between Bhutan and Assam.
74. The *Ramayana*, *Adiparva*, Chap. 32, cited in B. K. Barua, op. cit. p. 11.
75. K. L. Barua, op. cit. pp.25-29.
76. Ibid.
77. The *Kalika Purana*, Ch. 38, vs.,110-113, p-319.
78. The *Ramayana*, *Kishkindhya Kanda*, Ch., XXXXII.
79. The *Mahabharata*, *Udyogoparva*, Ch., 48, vs. 80-85 and vv. 44-45.
80. The *Kalika Purana*, Chs. 38, 39 and 40.
81. The *Yogini Tantra*, Part I, Palala XII.
82. The *Kalika Purana*, Ch. 38.
83. Ibid; also see Gait op. cit. p.13 and B. K. Barua, op. cit. p.18.
84. The *Kalika Purana*, Ch. 38, vs. 108-125.
85. The *Mahabharata*, *Udyogoparva*, Ch. 26, vs. 15-16; B. K. Barua, op. cit. p.18; K. L. Barua, op. cit. p. 34. and I. Sarkar, op. cit. p. 13.
86. In the one hand, according to the Doobi grant (vs. 4-5), Nidhanpur grant of Bhaskaravarman (Vs. 6) and Gauhati grant of Indrapala (vs.8) Vajradatta is described as the son of Bhagadatta, on the other hand, in the Tezpur grant of Banamala (vs.6), Nowgong grant of Balavarman (vs.8) and others described his as the bother of Bhagadatta. Also, see K. L. Barua: op. cit. p. 23. And I. Sarkar, op. cit., p. 36fn.
87. '*Kamarupa Buranji*', p. 3; Gait op. cit. p. 17; K. L. Barua : op. cit. p. 23.
88. Gait op. cit. pp. 10-21; R. K. Barman, op. cit. p. 56.
89. The Bargaon grant (line 12) and Saratbari grant of Ratnapala (line 51), Vide M. M. Sharma, op. cit. pp. 152-73 and 210-224.
90. The Nidhanpur Copper Plate inscription vides P. N. Bhattachayya, op. cit. pp. 1-6.
91. Gait, op. cit. p. 23.
92. H. K. Barpujari, '*A comprehensive History of Assam*', (ed), 1990.
93. The *Nidhanpur Copper Plate inscription*, op. cit., v.12.

94. Doobi copper Plate, vide M. M. Sharma, op. cit. p. 33. But D. C. did not accept this view. (IHQ, vol. XXI., pp.143-45.) .
95. The Nidhanpur Copper Plate inscription was issued from the *Jaya-skandhavara* 9victorious camp at Karnasuvarna, the then capital of Gauda, in present Mursidabad district of west Bengal, and Vaskarvarman donated land near the Kusi River. So it may be assumed that these regions were within his kingdom.(see B. K. Barua , op. cit. p.21.
96. *The Nidhanpur Copper Plate inscription*, (line 34-44.).
97. Watters, op. cit. p. 185.
98. *The Yogini Tantra*, (ed) S. S. Saraswati, Calcutta, B. S. 1385, Part II, Ch. XI, 17-18.
99. K. L. Barua, op. cit. p .100.
100. The Nepal inscription of Jaydeva, describes that Sri Harsha Varma deva was a descendant from *Bhagadatta* or *Bhagadatta raj Kulaja*, Cited in R. K. Barman op. cit. p. 57.
101. Cited in B. K. Barua, op. cit., p. 33.
102. B. K. Barua, op. cit. p. 35.
103. Gait, op. cit. p. 31.
104. The Nowgong copper plate grant of Balavarman, v.14: also see B. K. Barua, op. cit. p. 36.
105. R. K. Barman, op. cit. p. 57.
106. P. N. Bhattacharyya, op. cit. p. 70.
107. Ibid, pp. 89-108.
108. B. K. Barua, op. cit. p.34.
109. *The Bargaon Grant of Ratnapala*, v.,10.
110. There are different opinions about the exact date of accession of Brahmapala. H. C. Ray, *The dynastic history of Northern India*, Part I, p. 247, places him about 1000AD; K.L. Barua, op. cit. p.95 places him about 985AD ; I. sarkar , op. cit. p. 26. Placed him in about 990 AD.
111. I. sarkar, op. cit., pp. 26-29.
112. B. K. Barua, op. cit. p. 37; R. K. Barman, op. cit. p. 58.
113. Gauhati Grant, v., 19, *JASB*, LXVI, I, pp. 120f.
114. Gait, op. cit. p. 141.

115. D. Sarma, introduction, op. cit., pp. 36-37.
116. Cited in B. K. Barua, op., cit. p. 39.
117. Gait, op. cit. p. 141; Sarma. M. M. (ed), '*Inscriptions of Ancient Assam*', Gauhati University, 1978, pp.263-65.
118. P. N. Bhattacharyya, op. cit., pp-130-45, K.L. Barua, *JARS*, pp.112-15.
119. P. C. Choudhury, op. cit., p.217. According to Kalika Purana, (Ch. 77, Vs. 8-9) that the river Jatola flows through Kamarupa, and the river at present passes through the districts of Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar. Therefore, it is probable that this region was within the Kamarupa kingdom during the reign of Indrapala, and Isvaraghosh most probably was a feudatory of Indrapala. (N. N. Vasu op. cit., Vol., I, pp.200f; R. C. Majumder, '*Struggle for Empire*', Vol., V, pp. 42-45.).
120. M. M. Sharma, op. cit., p.244, lines-31-32; and in the Nowgong grant of Balavarmana III (M. M. Sharma, op. cit., p.249) there is a reference of Dijjina-visaya, which is described to be in the 'Daksinakula' the southern bank of the Brahmaputra. Most probably the *Dijjina-visayas* mentioned in the both the inscriptions identical. P. C. Choudhury takes it to be identical with modern Dinajpur of north Bengal and a part of present Bangladesh.
121. The Kamuli grant of Vaidyadeva , Edited by Arthur Venis, E.I., II, pp.347-58; also see R. C. Majumdar, op. cit. p. 322 and B. K. Barua, op. cit. p.40.
122. B. K. Barua, op. cit. p.40.
123. H. C. Roy, '*Dynastic History of Northern India*', Vol., I, p.258.
124. The inscription consists of five copper plates. First edited by Hultzsch, in the '*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlan-dischen Gessellschaft*', Vol. XL, p. 42; re-edited by F. Keilhorn, *EP. Ind*, Vol. V, pp.181-88.
125. B. K. Barua, op. cit. p. 40; K.L. Barua, *I.H.Q.*, pp. 197-98.
126. P. N. Bhattacharyya, *I.H.Q.*, III, 1927, pp. 837.
127. P. N. Bhattacharyya, *Kamarupa Sasanavali, Bhumika*, pp. 42-43.
128. *Vallabhadeva's* inscription, V.10. Ibid.
129. Bhattasali, '*New Lights on the History of Assam*', *I.H.Q.*, IX, pp. 50-62.
130. '*Tabaqat-i-Nasin*', pp. 628-29; K.L. Barua, *EHK*, pp .198.
131. P. C. Choudhury, op. cit., p. 276; K.L. Barua, *EHK*, pp.149f.
132. Kamarupa Buranji, p.98.

133. E. G. Glazier, 'Report on District of Rung pore', Calcutta, Bengal Secretariat Press, 1873, p. 8. Ruins of his forts excavated in Jalpaiguri and Rangpur (Bangladesh) districts and locally known as 'Prithu Rajar Gharh'.
134. Wolseley Haig, 'Cambridge History of India', vol. pp. 50-54.
135. Ramacharana Thakur, 'the Guru Charita, vs. 78-82, p.150; also see K.L. Barua, EHK, (1966), p.130, and N. N. Acharyya, op. cit. p.150.
136. K.L. Barua, op. cit. p.163; N. N. Acharyya, op. cit. p.150.
137. K.L. Barua, op. cit. p.163; also see Dr.Sailen Debnath, 'Essays on Cultural History of North Bengal', & 'The Dooars in Historical Transition' (web books).
138. K.L. Barua, op. cit. p .166.
139. *The Guru Charita*, Ch.1, vs.78, p.14; the *Katha Guru Charita*, p-6; K.L. Barua, op. cit., p .162.
140. K.L. Barua, op. cit. pp .163-4: The transfer of capital is referred to in the *Guru Charita* as being due to the curse of Goddess Kamakhya (*Guru Charita*, Ch.1, vv.74-80, pp .14-5.)
141. *The Guru Charita*, Ch.1, vs.78, p.14; the *Katha Guru Charita*, p. 6; K.L. Barua, op. cit., p .162.
142. K.L. Barua, op. cit., p .164.
143. *The Guru Charita*, Ch., vv.19-85, p.11; the *katha Guru Charita*, p.7.
144. N. N. Acharyya, op. cit., p.162.
145. K.L. Barua, op. cit., p .170.
146. K. L. Barua, op. cit. P.170. Haliram Duekiya Phukan mentions that Arimatta and Gajanka were two successive king, not the other name of *Arimatta*. He also did not mention the name of *Sutaranka*. *Assam Buranji* (Four Vols.), Edited by J. M. Bhattacharyya, Gauhati, Mokshada Pustakalaya, 1369BS, p. 12;
147. *Kamarupa Buranji*, pp. 2-4.
148. K.L. Barua, op. cit. p.177.
149. K.L. Barua, op. cit. pp.170-78.
150. Ibid.
151. Ibid.
152. Francis Buchanan: *General view of the history of Kama The rupa*, reprinted in S. K. Bhuyan (ed) *Kamarupa Buranji*, 2nd edition, Appendix, c, Gauhati, DHAS, 1958, pp. 120-121.

153. Radhakrishna Das Bairagi, '*Gosani Mangal*', Published by Brajachandra Majumdar, (Calcutta 1306 B.S.), second edition edited by Nripendra Nath Pal, (Calcutta, Anima Prakashani, 1399 B. S.).
154. Khan Chaudhuri A.A. op. cit., p. 38. He mentioned that it was possible that while the tribe was passing through *Kachar*, it met the *Kacharies* and brought the *Kachari* myth in *Kamatapur*.
155. Khan Chaudhuri A.A. op. cit., p. 39.
156. W.W. Hunter, '*Statistical Account of Bengal*', Vol. X, reprint ed., Delhi, 1984, p.344.
157. H. H. Risely, '*Tribes and castes of Bengal*', Vol., I, reprint ed., Calcutta, (Firma KLM), 1981, p. 489.
158. S. N. Bhattacharyya, op. cit. 65.
159. H. N. Chaudhuri, '*Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlement*, Cooch Behar, (Cooch Behar State Press), 1903, p. 128.
160. Ibid, p. 221, Gait op. cit., p. 44; N. N. Acharyya, op. cit., p.172; K.L. Barua, op. cit. pp. 173-4.
161. H. N. Choudhury: op. cit. p. 81.
162. Pir Muhammad Shattari, '*Risalat-us-Shuhada*', English translated by G. H. Damant: *Notes on Shah Ismail with a Sketch of the Contents of a Persian Ms. entitled Risalat-us-Shuhada*, J.A.S.B., and XLIII. III, 1874, pp .216-239.
163. Khan Chaudhuri A., A. op. cit. p. 43-44.
164. N. N. Acharyya, op. cit., p -173; E. G.Glazier: op. cit. The other forts were at Hatibanda, Olipur, Chhayaghar, Manthan Kote and Fatehpur (for details see, H. N. Choudhury: op. cit. p. 222 and Khan Choudhury A.A. op. cit. p. 44.
165. Salim, Ghulam Hussain, '*Riyazu-s-Salatin*', Eng. Trans. by Abdus salam, reprint ed., Delhi, Idarah-i-Adabiyat, 1975, p. 132.
166. J. N. Sarkar, '*History of Bengal, Muslim period*', 1200-1757, Patna, Janaki Prakashan, 1973, p. 146.
167. Radhakrishna Das Bairagi: op. cit., Francis Buchanan: op. cit. pp. 120-121; Gait: op. cit., p. 44; H. N. Chaudhuri: op. cit. p. 224.
168. '*Riyazu-s-Salatin*', p- 132; J. N. Sarkar, op. cit. p. 46.
169. K.L. Barua, op. cit. p .176.
170. *Gandharbbanarayan Vansavali*: p. 30.

হাৰিয়াক আনি সবে মন্ডল পাতিলা ।

সেই দিন ধৰি তৈতে অধিকাৰী ভৈলা ॥

Quoted in Khan Chaudhuri Amanatulla Ahamed's, '*Kochbeharer Itihas*', reprint, Calcutta, 1990, p. 82.

171. N. C. Sharma (ed.), '*Darrang Raj Vansavali*', Pathshala, Goahati and Calcutta. 1973, p. 9, Verse. 51. (Hence forth DRV)
172. S.N. Sen, '*Prachin Patra Sankalan*', (in Bengali), Calcutta University, 1942, p. 6.
173. Khan Chaudhuri Amanatulla Ahamed, op. cit, p.80.
174. P. K. Bhattacharya (edited), '*The Kingdom of Kamata- Kochbehar in Historical Perspective*', Ratna Prakashan and NBU, p.100.
175. DRV, vv. 27-50.
176. DRV, vv. 59-74; S. K. Bhuyan (Ed), *Kamrupa Burunji*, Gauhati, 1958, p.10
177. Kamrupa Burunji, Appendix C, p.126f.
178. Kamrupa Burunji, p.127.
179. Ibid,
180. Ibid,
181. Thakur Panchanan, Hemanta Kumar Roy Burma and others.
182. *Linguistic Survey of India* Vol 2, Introduction -1927, pp. 40f.
183. B. H. Hodgson, '*Essay on the Koch, Bodo, and Dhimal Tribes*', Calcutta 1874 p-
184. L. A. Waddel, "*Tribes of Brahmaputra Valley*" Reprint, 1975, Delhi, p. 48.
185. E. A. Gait: '*A history of Assam*' (Revised), Calcutta, 1963, p. 47; reprint, 2004.
186. D. C. Sircar; Introduction to '*Gauda Rajamala*' by R. P. Chanda -1975.
187. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, *Kirata-Jana-Krti*, The Asiatic Society, Calcutta, Reprinted in April 1998, page-112 .Henceforth SKC-KJK.
188. Quoted in H. C .Ray's '*Dynastic History of Northern India, Cal-1931, vol-1, pp. 308-9*).
189. SKC-KJK, p. 22.
190. Quoted in SKC-KJK, p. 21.
191. In his work on Nepal, vol. II, Paris 1905, pp. 75ff.
192. Vol., II, Cuttact, 1932, quoted in SKC-KJK. pp. 26.

193. Minhaj -uddin Siraj, *Tabaqat-I-Nasiri*, trans in English by Major H. G. Raverty, vol-1, reprint 1970. pp. 550-595.
194. D. Neog, 'New light on history of Assmiya literature', Dispur, Assam, 1962, p.31.
195. B. M. Das: *Some aspects of physical Anthropology of the Tribes of Northeast India* ,in Sebastian Karotempel and Depali Danda (ed.): *The Tribes of North East India* , Calcutta , Firma KLM, 1984 , p. 39-57 .and also in S. Sengupta: *Physical anthropology of the Koch Population*, New Delhi , Mittal , 1993, p. 4 .
196. E.A. Gait: *A History of Assam*, 3rd ed, revised by B.K. Barua and H. V. S. Murthy, Calcutta, 1963, p. 4.
197. SKC: KJK, p. 111.
198. H. H. Risley: *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, Calcutta, pp. 491-92.
199. Ibid.
200. N. Vasu: 'The social history of Kamrupa', Delhi, Reprint 1990, vol. I, p .52.
201. 'Yogini Tantra' trans. and edited by Swami Swarveswarananda Swaraswati, Nababharat Publishers, Calcutta, 1385 BS, pt., 1,Ch.13,vs.,47-67, pp. 128-130. Calcutta, Naba bharata Publishers,
202. Assam *Burunji* of Haliram Dhekiyal Fukkan, Bengali translation by Sri Yatindra Mohan Bhattacharyya, Published by Mokshada Pustakalaya, Gauhati, 1369 BS.
203. These are 1. Ajaya of Dikkara. Here is installed and worshipped Goddess Dikkaravasini. 2. Nilapitha, the presiding deity of Goddess Kamesvari representing the generative organ of Sakti. 3. The holy seat of Parijata. 4. Kausheyapura, 5. Amarakantaka, 6. Aranya, 7. Asvina, and others.
204. Haldiram Dhekiya Fukkun, .op. cit., Pp.1-4.
- 205 N.N. Vasu, op. cit. p. 55.
206. Ibid, p.55.
207. cf. Risley, op. cit., p. 491.
208. E.T. Dalton: *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, Reprint, Calcutta, 1960, p. 90 and *Tribal History of Eastern India*, Reprint, Delhi, 1973, p. 89.
209. Ibid, p. 92.
210. Ibid.
211. Ibid.
212. Ibid.

213. C. C. Sanyal: '*Rajbanshis of North Bengal*, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1965, p.12.
214. N. N. Vasu, op. cit., p.47.
215. Dalton, op., cit., p . 92.
216. N. N. Vasu, op. cit., p. 96 .
217. Dalton, op. cit. p. 93.
218. First M. A., B. L. of Rajvansi community, Social Reformer and Forerunner of Rajbansi Kshatriya Movements.
219. M. A., B. L, Follower of Thakur Panhuman Burma, and writer of many books including '*Cooch Beharer Itihas*' (in Bengali).
220. Writer of many books including '*Thakur Panchanan Burmer Jibancharit*', '*Rajbansi Kshatriya Jatir Itihas*' (both in Bengali)and others .
221. N. R. Roy, '*Bangalir Itihas*', (adi parba) Calcutta, 2nd edition, 1402 B. S., p. 54.
222. S. K. Chatterji: '*Jati Samskriti O Sahitya*', Calcutta, p.18.
223. Hemanta Kumar Roy, Burma: op., cit. p 11.
224. Ibid, pp.15-30.

225. Some examples from Ray Burma's list

<u>Koch/ Raibansi Language</u>	<u>Sanskrit</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
আইজ	অদ্য	আজ ।
আঙ্গিনা	অঙ্গন(আঙ্গিনা)	উঠান।
কান	কর্ন (কাণ)	কান ।
রাক্ষন	রক্ষন	রান্না করা ।
কাকই	কঙ্কোতিকা (কাকই)	চিরুণী ।
গোনা	গন ধাতু, গনয়তি	গননা করা ।
কূয়া	কূপ (কূয়া)	কূয়া ।
ভালুক	ভল্লুক	ভালুক ।
ভাদোর	ভাদ্র (ভাদদর)	ভাদ্র ।
ভাতিজি	ভ্রাতৃ+ঝি	ভাইয়ের মেয়ে ।
মোর	মম (মো+র)	আমার ।
দাহ	দহ ধাতু, দহতি	পোড়ানো ।
পিয়াস	পিপাসা, পিয়াসা,পিপাসা	পিপাসা ।
কুড়াল	কুঠার	কুড়াল ।
র্দপন	র্দপন	আয়না ।
পালায়	পরা+অয়তে=পলায়তে	পলায়ন করা ।

226. Ibid, p.14, (Edited) book ‘
227. Ibid, p.14.
228. P. K. Bhattacharya: *'The Kingdom of Kamata-Kochbehar in Historical Perspective*, (edited) NBU., p.107.
229. H. H. Risley: op. cit. pp. 491-92.
230. D. Nath: *'History of the Koch kingdom 1515-1615'*, Mittal, Delhi, 1989, p. 4.
231. S. L. Baruah: *'A comprehensive history of Assam'*, Munsimam and Manoharlal New Delhi, 1985, p. 203.
232. E. T. Dalton, *'Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, reprint, Calcutta, 1960, p. 90; H. Beverley, *Census report of Bengal (1872)*, Vol. I, p. 130; W. W. Hunter, *'A Statiscal account of Bengal; SKC-KJK, pp. 60-66*; D. Nath, op. cit. p. 6 and many others.
233. D. Nath, op. cit. p.5; Rajatubhra Mukhopadhyay, *Contradiction and change in Social Identity of the Rajvansis*, in *Journal of Indian Anthropol.society*,1999,34 , pp. 133-138. He mentioned that the Koches changed their identity and for that matter asked for different names in different Census: from Koch to *Rajvansi* (1872), *Rajvansi* to *Bratya Kshatriya* (1891), *Bratya Kshatriya* to *Kshatriya-Rajvansi* (1911,1921)and *Kshatriya- Rajvansi* to only *Kshatriya* (1931) .
234. C. C. Sanyal, *'Rajvansis of North Bengal*, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1965, p. 13.
235. D. Nath, op. cit. p. 6.
236. F.O. Bell, *'The final report on the Survey and settlement operation in Dinajpur'*,1934 – 40; p. 11ff.
237. B. S. Guha, *'Racial Elements in the Population*, No. 22 in *'Oxford Pamphlets on Indian Affairs'*, 1944, p.8. Cited in SKC-KJK, p. 6.
238. F. Maxmuller, a German philologist and Orientalist, published separately as well as 18 Volumes collected works includes *'A History of Ancient Sanskrita Literature'*.
239. Girin Phukun and N. L. Dutta (ed): *politics of Identity and Nation Building in North-East India*, new Delhi, 1997, p. 02.

240. SKC-KJK: op. cit. p.118.
241. SKC-KJK: op. cit., pp. 37-40 and 112-113. He used the term" Indo-Mongoloid" to discuss the Indianised Mongoloid.
242. The *Buranjies*, the *Vansavalies* and the *Rajopakhyan* had been written from 17th to 19th centuries under royal patronage.
243. DRV: op. cit. verse-52, p. 9.
244. S. K. Bhuyan: (ed) '*Assam Burunji* of HaraKanta Barua' verse-70, p. 26.
245. S. K. Bhuyan (ed), '*Deidhai Assam Buranj'i*', p.173.
246. *Assam Burunji'* of Gunaviram Barua , p. 39 , and S. K. Bhuyan ,(ed), *Kamrupa Burunji*, Gauhati , 1972 , p. 5 .
247. Gait, M. Neog and S. L. Barua described it as Koch or Mech.
248. K. L. Barua, '*Early History of Kamarupa*', p.189; D. Nath; op. cit., title of the book,Khan Chaudhuri Amanattulla Ahmed, op. cit., through out the book and Durgadas Majumdar; Koch Bihar: W. B. District Gazetteers, Calcutta, 1977, p. 30.
249. N. N. Vasu; op. cit, vol. ii, p. 35. He described the chapter II as 'Downfall of the Baro-Bhuyans and the rise of the Mech power'.
250. P. K. Bhattacharya, (edited); op. cit. Introduction.
251. Minhaj-uddin Siraj: '*Tabaqat-I-Nasiri*' (tr) H.G. Raverty, voll-I, Reprint, New Delhi , 1970, p. 560 .
252. DRV: op., cit. vv. 277, p. 56.
- মোর বাক্য শূন্য সাৰধান নকৰিবঁ কেএৰঁ অন্য কাণ
মোৰ বংশে কন্যা নানিব অন্য জাতিৰ ।
ভাল ভাল ৰূপ গুন চাই যথাত সুন্দৰ কন্যা পাই
আনিবাহঁ কন্যা কোঁচ মেচ কছাৰীৰ ॥ ২৭৭
253. DRV, vv. 207-8), p.42,
254. P. K. Bhattacharya, op., cit, Introduction.
255. S. L. Barua, '*A Comprehensive History of Assam*', Munsimam and Manoharlal New Delhi ,1985, pp. 180-81.
256. J. N. Sarkar, op., cit., p. 188; J. L. Mehta, *Advanced Study in the history of India*, Vol. II, (1526-1707), Sterling publishers Pvt. Ltd. Delhi, 1984, p. 249.
257. *Akbarnamah*, III, p. 349

- 258 . D. Nath, op. cit. p. 91.
259. S. N. Bhattacharyya, 'A History of Mughal North East Frontier Policy', Calcutta, 1929, pp. 99f; 1st reprint, Spectrum publication, Gauhati, 1998.
260. M. Neog p. 58.
261. Ibid. p.58
262. Ibid, p.59.
263. D. Nath, op. cit. p. 19.
264. Ibid., p.19.
265. M Neog p. 56, quoted from H. K. Barua Assam Burunji, arts. 64f.
266. J. N. Sarkar, op. cit. pp. 157-165; K. L. Barua, op. cit. pp.160 -172.
267. The Assam Buranji of Gunaviram Barua, p. 46.
268. N.N. Vasu op. cit. p. 33.
269. K. L. Barua, 'Early History of Kamarupa', p.189.
270. D. Nath, op. cit. p.20
271. M. Neog, p. 48.
272. S.L. Barua, op. cit. p.194.
273. N.N. Vasu, op. Cit. p. 244.
274. M .Neog op. cit. records: "*Pratapura* was king of *Ratnapura* in the *Ratnapitha*. His son, Mayamatta or Mayamatta, succeeded him. Divided his kingdom between his two sons - Arimatta and Nagamatta. The western portion was assigned to Arimatta, whose minister, Samudra, build a new capital at Biswanath, while Nagamatta ruled the eastern country from the old town of Ratnapura. Nagamatta died two years later, and Arimatta killed Mayamatta inadvertently during a hunting expedition. The penitent Arimatta placed Samudra in charge of the eastern kingdom and Samudra's son, Manohara, at Biswanath. Samudra died soon after this, and Manohara followed his path to the grave, leaving behind him only a daughter, Laksmi. Laksmi devoutly worshipped Durga, and by dint of a love, charm, taught by the goddess, attained the love of the sun god. She had two sons Santanu and Sumanta (Samanta or Syamanta). They received from their father a scripture called *Kalpataru*, written on copper (therefore called Dhatutamraksari), with mantras of different gods.The former had twelve sons, who were called Bar (senior) Bara Bhuyans. The twelve son of Sumanta came to be known as Saru (Junior) Bara Bhuyans", pp. 52-53.

275. H.N. Dattabaruah, (ed), the *Gurucharit* by Ramcharan Thakur , Gauhati, 529 *Sankarabda* (1978), vv. 83-95, and U. C. Lekharu, (ed), *Katha Guru Charit* , Nalbari, 1952, p. 12 . Also see the K. L. Barua, *Early History of Kamarupa* p.86, for the names of the 12 Bhuyans families.
276. DRV, op. cit. vv, 89-97 and 118-122.
277. *Riyazu-s-saladin*, p.132; mentioned some powerful *Bhuyans* like Rupnarain, Malkunwar, Gasa Lakhan and others calling them as Rajas and M. Neog says about the other terms , op. cit. pp.49-52.
278. The *Raut-Kuchi Grant* of Purushottam Das records that he was a very powerful Bhuyan, it also records that a thousand sword men always marched before Basudeva, Purushottam's grandfather who was also the right hand-man of the Ling. D. Nath, op. cit. p. 21
279. N. N. Vasu, op. cit. p. 38.
280. *Samudranarayan Vansavali*, p. 10-11); '*KamrupaVansavali*', p.19-20, quoted in '*Kochbeharer Itihas*', Khan Chaudhuri Amanatulla Ahamed, Eng Trans by H. Nag p.99, Print, Siliguri, 2005, p.99.
281. N. N. Vasu, op. cit. p. 39.
282. Khan Chaudhuri Amanatulla Ahamed, op. cit. p.99.
283. N.N. Vasu, op. cit. p. 8-23.
284. DRV vv..90-120.
285. Ibid, vv. 93-95.
286. Ibid, v. 118.
287. Ibid, vv. 121-122.
288. J. P. Wade, '*An account of Assam*' (Ed, B. Sarma, North Lakhipur, 1927, p-186ff.
289. N.N. Vasu, op. cit. p. 20.
290. D. Nath, op. cit. p. 6.
291. S.L. Barua, op. cit. p. 204.
292. DRV, vv.125-31.

293. D. Nath, op., cit. p. 32.
294. Ibid, p. 35.
295. It is not possible to invade Ahom without crossing the kingdom of Biswa Singha, as his kingdom was in between the Ahom kingdom and Gaur, and there are no evidences of war between Biswa Singha and Turbak. So it is better to think that he was fully inactive.
296. S. K. Bhuyan (Ed), '*Deidhai Assam Buranji*', p.107, and *Assam Buranji* (Ed), S. K. Bhuyan, DHAS, 1960, p. 20).
297. S. K. Bhuyan (ed), *Deidhai Assam Buranji*, p. 107.
298. S. K. Bhuyan (ed), *Deidhai Assam Buranji*, p-107, and *Assam Buranji* (ed) S. K. Bhuyan, DHAS, 1960, p. 77.
299. DRV, vv. 317 and 323.
300. *Assam Buranji* (ed) S. K. Bhuyan, DHAS, 1960, p.77.
301. DRV, v. 318, '*Assam Buranji*' or '*Sri Sri Svarganarayandev Maharajar Janma Charitra*', (ed) S.K. Bhuyan , DHAS, Gauhati, 1945; 2nd ed, DHAS, Gauhati, 1960 .
302. Ms. *Rajoupakhyana* (transcripts.).
303. '*Assam Burunji*' of Gunabhram Barua, p. 42 ; Ms. *Rajoupakhyana* (transcripts.).
304. S.N. Bhattacharya- '*A History of Mughal North- east Frontier Policy*, p.74 .
305. In spite of several tries, he could not deny the Ahom Supremacy. Therefore, Biswa Singha at his deathbed asked his sons to remove the slur of having remained a vassal to the Ahoms. DRV, v. 318. *Assam Burunji* or '*Sri Sri Svarganarayandev Maharajar Janma Charitra*', (ed) S.K.Bhuyan, DHAS, Gauhati, 1945; 2nd edn, DHAS, Gauhati, 1960.
306. '*A History of Cooch Behar*, English version of '*Kochbeharer Itihas*' by Khan Chaudhuri Amanatulla Ahamed (tr.) S.C. Ghoshal, pp.113f.).
307. *Rajoupakhyana*, (transcripts.). p. 16.
308. Hingulabas has been identified with the present Mahakal Guri village, which is situated in Alipurduar Sub-division of Jalpaiguri District.
309. DRV, v. 207, and '*Assam Burunji*' of Gunaviram Barua, p.4o.
310. Khan Choudury, p.114, the final transfer took place after Biswa Singha's campaign against the Ahom kingdom in 1537 A.D.

- 5 . --,, ----- Purnakanti -----Maidan (Madan).
- 6 . -- ,, -----Hemkanti -----Ramchandra .
- 7 . -- ,, -----Rati -----Surasingha .
- 8 . Kashmir -----Tilottama -----Mansingha.
- 9 . Kashi -----Chandra ----- Mecha .
- 10 . -- ,, ----- Chandranana ----- Brisaketu .
- 11 . -- ,, ----- Jaya ----- Ramnarayan .
- 12 . -- ,, ----- Bijaya ----- Ananta .
- 13 . -- ,, ----- Jayanti ----- Deepsingha .
- 14 .Sonitpur----- Lalita ----- Hemadhar .
- 15 -- ,, ----- Labhanyavati ----- Meghnarayan .
- 16 ., ,, ----- Padmamala ----- Jagat .
- 17 . Mithila ----- Satarupa ----- Rupchand .
- 18 . -- ,, ----- Kanchanmalini ----- Surya .

314. DRV, vv., 251-264.

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