

CHAPTER-VI
AGE OF MODERNITY

The Cooch Behar State had witnessed a tremendous transformation from a tradition-ridden transitional state of affair to a modernized State. Modernization affected the whole of the State life through the active initiative and enterprising attitude of the enlightened Maharaja Nripendra Narayan. After attaining majority Nripendra Narayan wanted to rebuild the total edifice of the State structure. His modern attitude to life and society did not leave any walk of life untouched.

It is to be noted that modernization is a continuous process of change - a change which affects almost all the aspects of state life. When different aspects or facets of state life experience a continuous process of change, a modern society automatically comes into being. If the agriculture

which is the pivot of a land-based economy is resettled and revenue administration is reformed, the modernity - moulding process of a society starts functioning. As a result, the whole of society, administration, land revenue, education and other areas of interaction start flourishing. In the following sections attempts have been made to analyse the nature and extent of modernity which the Cooch Behar State has experienced under Maharaja Nripendra Narayan's regime. Although, there are other factors which reveal the nature and extent of modernity, for the academic convenience of the researcher, the five areas such as society, economy, land revenue, administration, education have been taken to measure the degree of modernity during the period under study.

SECTION-I : SOCIETY

Essentially an agrarian society, having all its traditional characteristics, Cooch Behar State had experienced a massive transformation in the mode of production and its relation of production basically on the propriety over land. The class formation, structural differentiation and social mobilization had occurred basically as in a rural society whose economy was based on agriculture. The social transformation can not take place in the vacuum, it has to be carried

out through the institutionalised character of society where the ruler or the authority holder should have the absorbtive capacity. Fortunately enough with the help of the enlightened Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, this agricultural society had been experiencing a tremendous transformation in all the facets of social life. Any analysis of a society should be preceded by a chapter on the people, their character, heterogeneity, cultural foundation and above all the economy on which the entire edifice of the society depends.

✓ The Cooch Behar society was composed of heterogenous / people. It was mainly composed of the Rajbansis, Koch, Mech, Palis and some other small tribes.) There are rival theories among the socio-anthropologists and historians about the ethnological division of the people of Cooch Behar¹. (The society was composed mainly of the Hindus with the old Koch tradition. In the midst of rival theories concerning the ethno-logical affinities of the Kochs, W.W.Hunter finds out the facts admitting a little doubt, namely that "the people commonly known as Koch, Rajbansi and Pali are a very mixed race"². The diversification of the demographic character of the people symbolises the existence of different sub-nationalities with their distinctive characteristics of livelihood. Although, ethno-anthropologically speaking, these varied population represented Mongoloid, Dravidian, Aryan or Non-Aryan blood. As Hinduism had been the dominating religion³

of the State, the different ethnic sects had been conglomerated into one. The different censuses through years corroborate these tendency.

Table-I - A

| Year | 1372 | 1331 | 1391 | 1901 | 1911 | 1921 | 1931 |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Rajbansis | 111125 | 299458 | 352409 | 333299 | 333623 | 329253 | 313346 |
| Koch | - | - | - | - | 1317 | 1261 | 1230 |
| Tiyar | - | 54152 | 7 | 14 | 4 | - | - |

Table-I - B

Percentages of the Rajbansis to the Hindu Population

| Year | 1972 | 1331 | 1391 | 1911 | 1921 | 1931 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| % | 86 | 85 | 90 | 85 | 80 | 80 |

Source : Census - 1901, 1911, 1921, 1931 Compiled in Rajbansis of North Bengal, By Charu Chandra Sanyal, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1955, p.15-16.

The above tables reveal the predominance of the Rajbansis in the State of Cooch Behar⁴. But in the process of socio-cultural interaction it is presumed that the Raja's dynasty might have transplanted to Rajbansis from the Koch tribe. The number of people belonging to the Koch and the Tiyar tribe had been less significant. Hunter has been of opinion that the

resemblances among tribes existed in Cooch Behar in their religious, culture, style of living, language and other modes of social life⁵. This composite character of population provides an occasion for further analyses of the customs, culture, nature of the rural society and other aspects of the society.

✓ In the society of Cooch Behar the Brahmins formed an influential class and secured respectable positions in the social strata. Initially they were mostly of the Vaidic class, and were descendants of those who were from time to time brought into the country by the previous rulers from Oudh, Benares, Kanauj and Assam⁵. They were encouraged to remain in the country by the grant of Brahmutter lands and stipends. They settled in and near the metropolis, and were primarily engaged in the development of sanskritic⁷ culture and religious rituals although not differing much from the Brahmanas of lower Bengal in their religious and social customs, they could not intermarry and took food cooked by themselves only. Besides the above, there was a small number of Rarhi and Varendra Brahmanas, who were generally well-todo; in fact the first zaminder of the State belonged to this class⁸.

Though almost the majority population belonged to Hinduism, the Muslims who though minority were not neglected in the society. They formed the most efficient community in respect of cultivation⁹, and in the beginning of the present century some of them acquired the position of big Jotedars¹⁰. Some of

them had been honoured by the State and were given title and distinction and seats in the Darbar¹¹. This may be considered as an important development in the changing society. Even in the early nineteenth century the Muslims were not given important portfolios and position in the affairs of the State according to the tradition of the Cooch Behar society¹².

Among the principal social customs that prevailed and were practised by the people of Cooch Behar, polygamy was very common and many different forms of marriages were accepted by the society¹³. Intermarriage between Koch, Rajbansi, Mech, Rabha, Kachari and Ahom of Eastern India and with Rajput of Northern India was in force¹⁴. The people used to keep concubines and their sons were not outcaste in the society¹⁵. Polyandry was never in practice and this reflects the male hegemony over the womenhood, basically it was a patriarchal society.

As they were mostly Hindus, they were the worshipper of Hindu Gods and Goddesses. Though they were the believer of saktism and trantraism, the toleration towards the other sections such as vaisnavism was practised¹⁶. Thus, the peaceful co-existence of religion was practised. Because of the fact that all these religions did not have any goal of transforming the tradition-bound rural agricultural society. Thus, religious conflict was absent. The society had its in-built absorbtive capacity to adopt the different religions.

✓ The Cooch Behar society had been and still is based on agriculture. In such a society, as Cooch Behar experienced, the class formation and the structural orientation had been essentially the out come of the relationship of man and the land. During the period of Raja Harendra Narayan the condition of the villages was in total disarray; the villagers had no systematic tenancy right. These tenants were usually formed when a King or a chief occupied the land, his soldiers or his retinue took possession of as much land as they could grab. ✓ They brought labourers, cleared the forest and started cultivation. These people became jotedars or landlords¹⁷. The lands of such Jotedars were cultivated by adhiars or share croppers. But they had no title over the lands as barqadars and had no right over the land. They could be ejected at any moment¹⁸. It appears from the fact that in the villages there were two types of people (i) the big Jotedars or Deunia¹⁹ and (ii) the adhiars. Deunia was the most important person and settled all disputes till the establishment of the village Panchayat, by an Act in 1393²⁰. ✓

In the field of agriculture the reforms were important from the point of view of restructuring of the internal arrangements of the rural communities, creating new social and economic groups. ✓ The lands were controlled by the Jotedars who sublet their lands to undertenants²¹. As many as six grades/

of under tenures namely - Chukani, Darchukani, Paradar Chukani, Tasya Chukani, Tali Chukani and Tashya Tali Chukani, were recognized in the Cooch Behar agricultural society²². Of these only first two grades, Chukani and Darchukani could be created under the Tenancy Act of 1888, while those of the lower grades were in existence before 1888, the year in which for the first time legislation was introduced to restrict sub-infeudation²³. ✓ Thus, in the rural agricultural society we find a number of categories holding lands and in the closing year of the nineteenth century attempts had been made to formulate a regularised land holding system in the rural society.

Prior to the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan there existed many illegal tenants who held lands for a long time but had no legal rights over the lands. They formed almost one-twelfth of the total population of the country and 90% of the cultivator²⁴. ✓ Considering their contribution to the development of agriculture and prosperity of the country, the State administration viewed the matter with utmost gravity. To remedy their unsettled condition and improve their position in the society the State Council ordered that they should be given titles over the lands they possessed²⁵. The class that emerged out of this order came to be known as Krishi Proja and they were given hereditary rights over the lands²⁶. ✓ This step may be considered as one of the land marks in the improvement of the lot of the small farmer and greatly encouraged them in

developing agricultural production and saved this class from eviction by the big Jotedars from their lands. Under Maharaja Nripendra Narayan the decentralised land tenure system and establishing rights of the tillers had paved the way for a modernized State.

The infusion of the outsiders along with the small portion of the local groups of Jotedars to the village economy of Cooch Behar had significantly changed the structure of the rural society. A notable feature which had been experienced in this juncture is that this new class of land-owners did not have connection with the land though they had become the landlords²⁷. Thus, a new structural relationship had been marked between landlords or Jotedars and the landless labourers. The societal relationship which was experienced had been marked with the ownership of land i.e. the land-labour relationship. Automatically the question arises : was the admission of this new economic class to the landed society significant ? Prof. Benoy Choudhury points out, "some historians tend to regard it mainly as a social phenomenon; the ruin of very many of the old landed families, the gradual erosion of their social role and influence, the contest for local power that ensued between them and the new comers, the different life style and cultural values of some outsiders, such as the urban rich, and the gradual breakdown of the patriarchal relationship between the traditional landed families and the rural society". He

further points out, "other historians emphasise the economic implications for the peasantry of the changing composition of the landed society. A certain redefinition of rent-relationships, it is argued, gradually resulted from this. This often happened, at least initially, where outsiders had replaced the old landed families"²⁸.

Interestingly enough, unlike of the other agricultural society, the dominance of casteism had been absent in the Cooch Behar State²⁹. In terms of caste or race arrangement something was absent to stratify a society. It should be pointed out that, under the leadership of Panchanan Thakur, an inhabitant of Cooch Behar, who emigrated to Rangpur (neighbouring British District), an area wide movement to place the Rajbansis on an honourable status in the society was started. By his intellectual manoeuvring, he was able to establish his claim of the Rajbansis to be qualified as Kshatriyas. In a general conference an appeal was made to the districts authorities of the British Government as well as to the Cooch Behar State to take it for granted that Rajbansis have the every authority to bear the sacred thread and to be enlisted in the official documents as Kshatriyas (Rajbansis) like the "Hindu Kshatriyas". This movement can be termed as sanskritization. Although this appeal was recognized by the British Government, the Maharaja of Cooch Behar in spite of being the member of the same community, was reluctant to recognize

Thakur Panchanan's claim³⁰. One noticeable thing had been the effort to admit the Rajbansi community to the Hindu traditions as well as to put-a-bar of taking other religious resorts. It is also clear that although there was no prevalent caste tensions, an active effort was made to place the indigenous inhabitants of Cooch Behar on a good socio-religious footing³¹.

But as in the other monarchical state system, nepotism, immunities and privileges were very much present in Cooch Behar society. Reference may be made of the Rajguns (member or relatives in the royal families) who were used to enjoying considerable rights and privileges both in respect of revenue exemption and in Judicial matters. They were considered the most privileged class and exempted from any criminal cases. But with the establishment of the equality before law during the rule of the enlightened Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, their position in the society diminished. By the notification of 12th June, 1897, the judicial privileges of this class was abolished. It is stated in the notification; "they should be tried by the Courts competent to try the offences"³². Thus, by abolishing a social discrimination Maharaja Nripendra Narayan set an example in bringing about proper administration of justice which is the bastion of a modernizing state.

Another noticeable dimension of the traditional agro-based economy has been the prevalence of the system of slavery of / + +

which Cooch Behar had been no exception. The system of slavery, as it had been generally presumed, is the out come of the various socio-economic factors. For Cooch Behar society slavery had been to the fore because of certain ostensible character of the society as well as its economy. Firstly, the system of slavery had been the result of land-man relationship. Secondly, slavery had been traditionally practised to uphold social custom and taboos. Thirdly, poverty resulted in the system of slavery. Fourthly, since this system of slavery became the medium of means of the production, the traders and the businessmen along with land lords had sought to keep the flag of slavery high.

The slave system was in practice for a pretty long time through different generations. Slavery had been found to be in existence during the time of Maharaja Nara Narayan in the sixteenth century³³. These slaves, were called Moorungee³⁴. This system continued in an unabated manner even during the rule of Raja Harendra Narayan. The Raja had in his possession about one thousand slaves employed in his residence³⁵. Thus, the slaves were created in a different manner. Sometimes they were given as a dowry, sometimes people sold themselves out of poverty, and even the parents sold their boys and girls at a considerable price³⁶. The selling of man as commodity was a part of trade and commerce of the country³⁷. Montgomery Martin

mentions "if a man incurs debt or fine heavier than he can pay, he becomes a slave or mortgages himself, unless his wife chooses to redeem him. The slave works for his master and receives food and raiment"³⁸. Turner also mention", if a raiyat, or peasant owes a sum of money and had not the ability to satisfy the creditors, he is compelled to give up his wife as a pledge, and possession of her is kept, until the debt is discharged. It sometimes happens, as the affairs, that the wife of a debtor is not redeemed for the space of one or two or three years; if during her residence and connection with the creditor, a family should have been the consequence, half of it is considered as the property of the person with whom she lived and half of her real husband"³⁹.

Noting all these vices in the inhuman system of slavery, an attempt was made by the British authority to abolish the system. Mention should be made that during the first half of the nineteenth century Bengal had experienced a tremendous reformative activities in the wakes of social life. The modern English education, the Young Bengal's move and the reforming role of the "Brahmo Samaj" have had their positive influence over the Cooch Behar State administration which was at this time virtually being run by the British Government of Bengal on behalf of the minor Raja Nripendra Narayan. To this effect the British Government proclaimed in 1864 "The existence of actual slavery in Kuch Behar forced itself upon

the attention of the Commissioner, and the matter was laid before the Governor General. On the 7th September, 1864, the abolition of slavery was formally proclaimed at a public Durbar; and a Regulation in the Bengali language, embodying the provisions of the Penal Code respecting kidnapping and abductions, was declared to be in force as regards all future seizures, sales, or detentions of person, male or female⁴⁰.

The Cooch Behar State not only abolished the slavery but also took measures to re-habilitate them in the State. It ultimately led to the formation of new class in the society called Jagirdars. These freed slaves were given lands for cultivation. One thing is to be noted here that this Jagirdari system was not the same as was practised in the pre-colonial India. Regarding the condition of the newly created member of the rural society Calica Das Dutta, the Dewan of Cooch Behar wrote, "the system must have been introduced when land did not possess much value, and when the personal liberty of the subjects was not much respected. Some years the Jagirdars were looked upon as slaves (golams). They could be imprisoned or made to suffer. Their number originally was 974. The land given to them was not clearly described in any book; the consequences was that they generally held much larger quantities than they were entitled to. As improvements began to be introduced into the State, and the liberty of the subjects was more and more respected, it was found that the

Jaqirdari system did not work satisfactorily. The jaqirdars were accustomed to work in the old way. They were lazy and irregular; their usefulness also decreased owing to the change in the nature of the work which had been done at Rajbari (Palace). In the course of the new settlement their number has therefore reduced to 367⁴¹.

The lands given to the Jaqirdars after 1364 were not saleable or transferable. The State was not bound to accept the service of the heir of a deceased Jaqirdar and substitute some one else on the lands they hold⁴². The service tenures were encumbered by the creation of under tenure some jaqirdars were resumed and settled jit right since Rakamcharcha settlement and the duties formerly discharged by slaves were later on being done by paid servants⁴³. Ultimately the system of slavery was abolished and a new class emerged out in conformity with the changing societal system under the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan.

Like the other traditions of the Hindu society, the Suttee (burning of women with the deceased husband) was practised in Cooch Behar, of which reference has been made in the preceding chapter. The system of Suttee was abolished in 1349 when Maharaja Narendra Narayan was a minor and the East India Company took active initiative in abolishing the traditional vice of the society. Mention should be made of that

soon after the death of Raja Dhairjendra Narayan his eleven ranees became Suttee⁴⁴. By the successful campaign of Raja Rammohan Roy, in the face of stiff opposition from the orthodox Hindus, the practice of Suttee was banned in the British Indian Empire. To enforce the same prohibitory order a constant correspondence was made between Raja of Cooch Behar and the British Government of India⁴⁵. At the time measures were taken to punish those persons who violated the orders of the State. It is needless to say that before enforcing the law the Raja acquainted with the copies of the by-watches of the Pundits who had advocated for the abolition of the system⁴⁶.

Although no document have been found of Suttee system after its official promulgation of abolition, mention should be made that along with the British Government, Maharaja Nripendra Narayan tried to liquidate all those vices of Suttee if any, along with other superstition ridden social vices.

As a result of the close contact of Cooch Behar with the Bengal society attempt had been made to ban early marriage and polygamy. The initiative in this respect was taken by Maharaja Nripendra Narayan himself. During this time usually the educated people took one wife at a time, Polygamy though not banned by the society was very rare⁴⁷. The marriage of Nripendra Narayan with Sunity Devi marked an epoch in the

social history of India⁴⁸. After the marriage the Maharaja himself broke away from the past and set an example against polygamy by declaring that he would not marry again⁴⁹.

Purdah system was not prevalent in the society among the common people. But it was strictly practised by the members of the royal family. Sunity Devi's contribution to eradicate the system was worthy to note. She wrote; "Raja's wives are not allowed to go out of doors. It may be my weakness or my strength, but I have altered my position in this respect a little, I do see people if urged"⁵⁰. (It should be mentioned here that although Maharaja Nripendra Narayan was progressive in his ideas, he never let the ladies of the royal family come too freely. Though westernised he disliked women smoking and drinking⁵¹. Another important matter towards the breaking of the purdah system was the visit of Sunity Devi to London in 1897⁵².

Another noticeable feature in the process of class formation in the State of Cooch Behar has been the impact of English education on people. The English educated people formed a new class and came to be known as middle class which had been recognized by Maharaja Nripendra Narayan breaking the past tradition cherished by his predecessors.) The Maharaja handed over to the new class, power and prestige⁵³. / A revolutionary change in the attitude of the Maharaja in giving

power and prestige to this new educated class, by depriving the men having royal blood, has been presumed to be a step to popularise the administration with a view to bringing about efficiency and effectiveness⁵⁴. This rising middle class with increasing power and prestige had become an active instrument in gearing up the process of modernization.

The patronage of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan of the educated middle class had developed a trend in the minds of the people to form organizations or guilds or united bodies to express their views and sentiments in social, political and other matters of public interest. The modernized philosophy of Maharaja continued and the latter rulers followed his path. The demands to form organization was finally accepted in 1923, but they were asked to obtain recognition from the State prior to forming such organization⁵⁵. The right to form organization by the influential persons of the villages i.e. the Jotedars grew into an organized pressure group designed not only to safeguard their rights over the lands but also to influence the policy of the government in respect of matters relating to their interests⁵⁶. The views of these new elites on some different issues were patiently and cautiously heard of⁵⁷.

With the bringing of sustained agricultural growth during the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, trade and

commerce started developing and as a magnetic re-action the people from British Indian districts had come to start their business⁵⁸. / Along with emergence of this new Bania-class as, the money lenders both in urban and rural areas had started / functioning as private money lenders with a motive to gain / maximum profit⁵⁹. / Maharaja Nripendra Narayan through his State Law put certain limitation and restriction on this new emerging economic class⁶⁰.

With the development of this agrarian society functional diversification was noticed. Other than land source of income, trade, commerce and other tertiary activities had been the major source of income of the people. Thus, a society having socio-economic diversification started coming out from its old nature of production. (This new relationship of production along with the modern English education brought significant changes in the culture, habits, styles and fashions. The women of the villages had started wearing sari after leaving their old garments known as Phota⁵¹.

The social stratification which was earlier based on land-man relationship, under Maharaja Nripendra Narayan's reign was based upon occupation. Thus, during his reign the Cooch Behar society had witnessed a mobility in the elite transformation process.

As it has already been mentioned, Maharaja Nripendra

Narayan was a staunch supporter of Brahmoism. As a legacy of his religion, the principle of secularism was being maintained.

The impact of extra-societal environment on the culture of Cooch Behar society as well as a take off society with a mode to in achieving industrialization had resulted in a massive change in the societal institution building process. The agro-industrial society with its development in other aspects of economy gave birth to new urban settlements⁶².

Thus, a minimum degree of urbanization was found in the offing during the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan. As a result of the changes in the societal institutions the traditional joint families, concentrated on land, had started breaking down. Being attracted by the new opportunities of life found available in the capital and its surroundings, the joint families after being disorganised and in a nucleus form settled themselves in the towns of Cooch Behar and their periphery.

Thus, a transformed society under the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan set the ball running towards achieving the character of a modernized polity. The other facets of modernization which took place on this modernized societal canvas would be dealt with in the chapter following.

SECTION-II : ECONOMY

A primordial society, usually has an agriculture based economy and this was the case with Cooch Behar. Since land was the only source of income, the economic characteristics emanated from the agriculture. As it has been seen that even prior to the reign of Harendra Narayan, the lands were fertile and the life-styles of the people for their sustenance were much too simple. The people of the neighbouring areas were also attracted by the fertile land of Cooch Behar and immigrated to the State. This may be corroborated from the report of the Revenue Surveyer, James Renell, in 1731 "as a result of the exaction of the collections of revenue in 1765, about 30,000 families of Rungpur migrated to Cooch Behar, the neighbouring country"⁶³. Again according to Samuel Turner; "indeed the extreme poverty and wretchedness of these people will forcibly appear, when we recollect how little is necessary for the sustenance of a peasant in this region. The value of this can seldom amount to more than one penny per day, even allowing him to make his meal of two pounds of boiled rice, with a due proportion of salt, oil, fish and chilli"⁶⁴.

In spite of the natural fertility of the land of Cooch Behar, no systematic and organised effort was made until the reign of Raja Harendra Narayan, for land settlement and development. As has been stated in the preceding chapter, during

the reign of Raja Narendra Narayan, John Pemberton took an active initiative to settle the land development system but he was opposed by the influential persons of the State and his efforts went in vain⁶⁵.

(In fact the land development system was organised by the active support of the British Government during the period of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan and specially when he was a minor. A general survey and settlement of the State was made in 1864 to organise the total land system of Cooch Behar⁶⁶. The Khasra measurement of land and demarcation of Jotes and Taluks were made in certain portion of the State. In the remaining portions of the State the Revenue Survey was made in 1863-70⁶⁷. In 1870-75 there was a General Survey of the rest of the State in connection with the first Revenue Settlement better known as "Khasra Settlement". The "Patit Charcha Settlement" of 1884-86 was taken in hand. Interestingly enough the decision to undertake the settlement was taken not by the Maharaja Nripendra Narayan but it was the decision of the State Council, which was established by Maharaja Nripendra Narayan⁶⁸. All these settlements placed the land revenue system in a stable condition. (The system of land revenue has been discussed in detail in the section following).

✓ After the organization and development of land, what was necessitated had been to bring about a new system of farming

under the direct sponsorship of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan. The old system of agricultural production had been started reforming. Though the agriculture is the main source of revenue, the cultivators previously did not know the procedures to increase production in the cultivation. But the growth of education and knowledge coming in from the neighbouring enlightened Bengal and also the immigration of some jotedars⁶⁹ in the State, the system of cultivation also changed the traditional character. Almost every cultivator had cattle of his own, used cowdung litter as manure for the cultivation of tobacco, sugarcane, jute, mustardseed, wheat and barley. Oil cakes were also used as manures. The positive impact of which could be discerned in the subsequent years for some selected cash crops (see Appendix-C). To import Western education in the agricultural sector an endeavour was made by Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, and Sri Ashutosh Dutta had been sent to America by the State to learn methods of cultivation⁷⁰.

The cause of the development of the economic system was not only the system of collection but there were other factors which contributed to it. Firstly, the extension of cultivation since the "Rakam Charcha Re-Settlement" (1986-91) had been due mostly to the reclamation of waste lands and jungles specially in northern part of the State; Secondly, to the silting up of the old bed of rivers and streams and the upheavals of the beds of marshes or beels during the earthquake

of 1897; Thirdly the extension of lands under cultivation helped in the growth of production and also of the revenue⁷¹.

With the development of the economy, diversifications of functions and the differentiation of secondary and tertiary sectors along with the primary agricultural sectors resulted in various occupational classes. The functional diversification has been said to be a facet of modernization which began during the period of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan. During his reign several occupational classes such as 88.7% were supported by agriculture; 15,444 or 2.5 percentage by industries; 26,311 or 4.4% by commerce; 5,630 or 1% by professions and 19,608 or 3.3% by other occupations⁷². ✓

To boost the economy communication is an important factor and usually has a predominant role in the modernization of a country. As for the State, the road communication was not satisfactory and became even impassable for wheeled traffic in rainy season.) The roads connecting the capital with the Sub-divisional head quarters fared no better when the monsoon set in right earnest⁷³. The unsatisfactory condition of roads caused great hardship of the agriculturists because they were put to great difficulties to find a ready market for their produce. (The two decades prior to Maharaja Nripendra Narayan had inaugurated a progressive policy in the matter of communication but still the State was far from adequately equipped

with means of communication. During the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan programmes were taken for the development of communication and it was hoped that there would be a regular system of roads through out the State. The Cooch Behar town census of 1872-73 showed that there was only 12 miles of metalled road in the capital⁷⁴. At the year 1898-99 there was 5 miles metalled road outside the town and 376½ miles of unmetalled road, and 187 village road in the State⁷⁵. These roads connected the State with capital (Cooch Behar) and opened the backward part of the country.

Before the opening of the railway nearly the whole of both inward and outward traffic used to be carried on by country boats⁷⁶. This was due to that fact that most of the big rivers of the State were navigable throughout the year. (In 1893 the opening of the Northern Bengal State Railway⁷⁷ had considerably diversified the traffic from the rivers and had almost monopolised the exports of jute, tobacco, mustardseed, mustard-oil-cake. The development of communication can be gauged from the fact that during the time of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan the value of the produce was doubled. This benefited not only the cultivators but also the State had made a very great progress in developing its economy.) It opened up the country a great deal for the purpose of trade and commerce and served to increase the value of the produce⁷⁸. With the opening of

the roads and the railways it is but natural to expect that both of them were gradually expanding.

The railways are infact the first tangible step towards modernization. The establishment of the railways not only changed the pattern of economy, at the same time it played the most important role in the cultural development and social mobilisation. The Cooch Behar State appeared in the railway map in the year 1893⁷⁹. Since then it played the most significant role not only in the cause of modernization but also for the earnings of State revenue⁸⁰. The State railway led to the augmentation of its commercial and agricultural resources and facilitated the growth of trade and commerce. It created a variety of new openings for employment, and set into motion a degree of mobility between the State and the neighbouring British provinces. The following list of statement (Table II) shows the result of the working of the Cooch Behar State Railways in the following years :

Table No-II

| Year | Gross working | Working | Net earnings |
|---------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1900 | Rs. 94,792 | Rs. 43,190 | Rs. 51,602 |
| 1901 | Rs. 1,27,596 | Rs. 52,929 | Rs. 74,667 |
| 1910-11 | Rs. 2,17,388 | Rs. 1,09,532 | Rs. 1,07,856 |
| 1921-22 | Rs. 3,06,142 | Rs. 1,40,825 | Rs. 1,65,317 |
| 1928-29 | Rs. 5,63,677 | Rs. 2,58,594 | Rs. 3,05,083 |

Source : Annual Administration Reports of Cooch Behar;
A Sketch History of Cooch Behar (Manuscript) p.22.

The above table shows that the State Railway has become a regular source of major earnings and also contributed to the increase of royal treasury.

This sustained growth under the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan in all facets of economy was very much significant. The State exchequer was increased as a result of all round economic growth. It is evident from the tables (III-VI) given below. The decadal variation of the receipt and expenditure pattern with a stable rate of growth can be observed. Statements showing the budget of receipts and disbursements of the Cooch Behar State for the years :

Table No-III

Budget

1880-81, 31st March

| Expenditure | Regular Estimate 1880-81 Rs. | Account for 1880-81 Rs. | Differences Income Rs. | Decrease Rs. |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Household expenses and maintenance of Raja and Family | 2,84,965 | 2,82,575 | - | 2,390 |
| 2. Land Revenue | 1,18,852 | 1,15,901 | - | 2,951 |
| 3. Education, Science and Arts | 63,000 | 61,813 | - | 1,187 |
| 4. Law and justice | 58,326 | 54,129 | - | 4,197 |
| 5. Administration | 54,758 | 53,322 | - | 1,436 |
| 6. Jail | 21,598 | 19,892 | - | 1,706 |

/Contd...

Table III contd...

| | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|---|----------|
| 7. Police | 49,465 | 48,270 | - | 1,195 |
| 8. Military | 18,683 | 17,475 | - | 1,188 |
| 9. Pensions and other Charitable allow- ance | 27,977 | 25,863 | - | 2,114 |
| 10. Miscellaneous | 1,03,841 | 84,173 | - | 19,668 |
| 11. Debttar | 38,316 | 34,642 | - | 3,674 |
| 12. Medical | 25,220 | 23,701 | - | 1,519 |
| 13. Registration | 2,832 | 2,531 | - | 301 |
| 14. Excise | 7,888 | 7,687 | - | 201 |
| 15. Printing and Stamp Charges | 16,774 | 16,632 | - | 142 |
| Total | 8,92,495 | 8,48,626 | - | 43,869 |
| 16. Public works | 4,50,000 | 3,36,899 | - | 1,13,101 |
| Total Expenditure | 13,42,495 | 11,85,525 | - | 1,56,970 |
| Surplus | 19,355 | 1,09,841 | - | - |

Upto 31st March 1880-81

| Revenue | Regular | Account | Incr | Decrease |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|-------|----------|
| Rs. | Rs. | for | -ease | Rs. |
| | | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. |
| I. Land Revenue | 9,35,200 | 8,60,342 | - | 74,858 |
| II. Stamp | 1,15,000 | 1,17,507 | 2,507 | - |
| III. Interest on invested capital | 83,000 | 77,404 | - | 5,596 |

Contd...

Table III contd...

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| IV. | Miscellaneous | 53,450 | 64,173 | 10,723 | - |
| V. | Debutter | 87,100 | 84,183 | - | 2,917 |
| VI. | Excise | 57,000 | 59,226 | 2,226 | - |
| VII. | Law and Justice | 8,800 | 8,913 | 113 | - |
| VIII. | Jail | 9,000 | 7,338 | - | 1,662 |
| IX. | Registration | 4,600 | 4,044 | - | 556 |
| X. | Education, Science and Arts | 1,800 | 1,930 | 130 | - |
| XI. | Public works | 6,900 | 10,306 | 3,406 | - |
| Total Revenue | | 13,61,850 | 12,95,366 | | 66,484 |

Source : Annual Administration Report on Cooch Behar for the year 1880-81, Appendix-p. IX.

Table No-IV

1892-93

| Year 1892-93 | Revised Estimate | Account for 1892-93 | Increase |
|--------------|------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Budget | Rs. 19,17,736 | Rs. 20,69,701 | |
| | Deficit | | |
| | Rs. 1,31,000 | - | Rs. 1,51,965 |
| Grand Total | Rs. 20,48,736 | Rs. 20,69,701 | Rs. 20,965 |

/Contd...

Table IV contd...

| Year 1892-93 | Estimate | Account for the year | Increase |
|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Expenditure | Rs. 20,48,736 | Rs. 18,82,444 | - |
| Surplus | - | Rs. 1,87,257 | Rs. 1,87,257 |
| Grand Total | Rs. 20,48,736 | Rs. 20,69,701 | Rs. 20,965 (Surplus) |

Source : Annual Administration Report for the year 1892-93,
C.B.S. Press, p.iii.

Table No-V

1901-92

| | Revised Estimates for 1901- 02 | Accounts for 1901-02 | Difference Between Actual and Revised Estimate | |
|---------------|---|----------------------------|--|-----------------|
| | Rs. | Rs. | Increase Rs. | Decrease Rs. |
| Total Revenue | 22,89,147 | 23,09,831 | 20,684 | - |
| Deficit | 20,968 | - | - | 20,968 |
| Grand Total | 23,10,115 | 23,09,831 | - | 284 |

Source : (Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar for
the year 1901-02, p.15)

Table No-VI

Statement showing the Revenue and Expenditure of the Cooch Behar 1910-1911 31st March

| Revenue | Revised Estimates for 1910-11 Rs. | Account for 1910-11 Rs. | Difference | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | Increase Rs. | Decrease Rs. |
| I. General Revenue | | | | |
| a. Land Revenue | 12,94,040 | 13,07,933 | 13,893 | - |
| b. Stamps | 2,00,700 | 2,14,951 | 14,251 | - |
| c. Excise | 1,57,595 | 1,60,773 | 3,178 | - |
| d. Interest of Loans and Investment | 42,500 | 44,337 | 1,837 | - |
| e. Sundries | 10,000 | 10,812 | 812 | - |
| II. Law and Justice | | | | |
| a. Civil and Session Court | 500 | 962 | 462 | - |
| b. Registration | 16,100 | 16,639 | 539 | - |
| III. Miscellaneous | | | | |
| a. Criminal Justice | 6,300 | 8,717 | 2,417 | - |
| b. Jail | 17,560 | 18,885 | 1,325 | - |
| c. Education, Science and Arts | 14,544 | 15,376 | 832 | - |
| d. Public works | 9,500 | 5,556 | - | 3,944 |
| e. Sundries | 8,448 | 11,539 | 3,091 | - |

/Contd...

Table VI contd...

| | | | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| IV. | Debutter | 1,11,583 | 1,13,799 | 2,216 | - |
| V. | His Highness the Maharaja Estate | | | | |
| | a. Darjeeling Estate | 62,998 | 62,998 | - | - |
| | b. Chaklajat Estate | 4,54,281 | 4,45,864 | - | 8,417 |
| | c. Panga Estate | 34,607 | 37,702 | 3,095 | - |
| VI. | Cooch Behar State Railway | 2,00,000 | 2,17,388 | 17,388 | - |
| | Total | 26,41,256 | 26,94,231 | 52,975 | |
| | Deficit | 2,98,088 | 2,21,765 | | 76,323 |
| | Grand Total | 29,39,344 | 29,15,996 | | 23,348 |

| Expenditure | Revised Estimates for 1910-11 Rs. | Account for 1910-11 Rs. | Difference | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | Increase Rs. | Decrease Rs. |
| I. His Highness Privy Purse | 6,35,035 | 6,35,035 | - | - |
| II. Allowance to His Highness children and Relative | 4,03,079 | 4,05,575 | 2,496 | |
| III. Administration | | | | |
| a. Control | 61,689 | 55,298 | | 6,391 |
| b. General | 4,88,575 | 4,74,204 | - | 14,371 |

/contd...

Table VI contd.,..

| | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| c. Revenue | 2,10,953 | 2,09,776 | | 1,177 |
| d. Law and Justice | 62,979 | 62,536 | | 443 |
| e. Miscellaneous | 92,053 | 89,714 | - | 2,339 |
| IV. Debuttar | 62,025 | 60,412 | - | 1,613 |
| V. His Highness the Maharajas Estate | | | | |
| a. Darjeeling | 22,983 | 22,983 | - | - |
| b. Chaklajat Estate | 2,85,342 | 2,84,608 | - | 734 |
| c. Panga | 37,540 | 35,884 | - | 1,646 |
| VI. State Ceremonial Department | 1,99,791 | 1,85,404 | - | 14,387 |
| VII. Cooch Behar State Railway | 92,000 | 1,09,532 | 17,532 | - |
| VIII. Reserve Fund | 50,000 | 50,000 | - | - |
| IX. Miscellaneous | 45,280 | 45,015 | 165 | - |
| Total | 27,49,324 | 27,25,976 | - | 23,348 |
| Railway Conversion | 1,15,020 | 1,15,020 | - | - |
| Resellment Fund | 75,000 | 75,000 | - | - |
| Grand Total | 29,39,344 | 29,15,996 | - | 23,348 |

Source : Annual Administration Report on Cooch Behar for the year 1910-11, (Appendix)p.I.

The budgets corroborate the fact that the systematic system in collection and expenditure ultimately proved the developing tendency of the state economy.

One of the Major Sources of revenue which accelerated the total revenue receipts of the State came from exportation, mounting high owing to the increase of communication facilities especially the railways.

The period under study (1863-1911) the State experienced not only the export of rice from Cooch Behar but also tobacco, jute, mustardseed etc. The following table would reveal the total amount of export of certain important items and their respective export value.

Table No-VII

| Amounts | Mounds (40 m.) | Extent of export value |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Tobacco | 4,00,000 | Rs. 20,00,000 |
| Jute | 3,00,000 | Rs. 12,00,000 |
| Mustard seed | 25,000 | Rs. 1,00,000 |
| Total | 7,25,000 | Rs. 33,00,000 |

Source : Choudhury Harendra Narayan, The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlement, Cooch Behar, 1903, p.194. (It is noted that the source contains no specific year).

It has been revealed that the increasing amount of export has been the surplus of consumption and it is not the compulsion of the economy to export the above items to import certain necessary items in return.

The rural agricultural economy of Cooch Behar had experienced an emergence of a new economic class who were known as money lenders. These money lenders played a significant role as economic institution of the rural agricultural society. Although their motive was to achieve maximum amount of profit, in absence of any strong state economic support base, the money lenders role in building the agricultural economy has significant⁸¹. Thus, during the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan the money lenders as economic institutions took an active role in building the rural agricultural economy. It should be mentioned that in spite of the feeling of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan in order to make a strong economic base by expanding the State's financial support to the peasants, during his reign it was not possible to materialise his motive. It was finally implemented in 1930. The co-operative financing society was established for the financial assistance to the peasants⁸².

The money lenders usually lend money to the distressed peasants. There were three types of money lending system in the State. Firstly, general loan, the rate of which was very

high, i.e., about 37.50 percent, provided to the peasants against the guarantee of land, to be mortgaged to the money lender; Secondly, Muli of value loans provided to the peasants, could be repaid by crops within a stipulated period, failing which the debtors would have to pay high rate of cultivated goods at per present market price; thirdly, Bhutali loans, by which the debtor would have to work without any wage in the lands of the money lender, the debtors had to pay heavy amount of interest⁸³. Naturally these system of money lending caused immense hardship. Under the direct patronage of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan the State government took a firm step by enacting laws to protect the interest of the peasants. According to the provision, the money lenders could not derive an amount more than the limit as laid down by the law. More over the court would not entertain any case of money-lending where interest exceeds the actual amount loaned⁸⁴.

In the nineteenth century, these oriental countries which are mostly colonial in character, scientific and the technological development was a dream. Moreover the soil and the financial condition of the State was not conducive to the establishment of industries. But in spite of the unfavourable condition the attempt to develop small scale industry as a part of modernization appeared in the minds of the State administration. In 1869 the Artisan School was established to

import technical education to the people and they were encouraged to join this institution by the grants of monthly stipend stipends⁸⁵. Attempts were also made to acquire modern technological knowledge and accordingly scholarship was introduced for students. One of such scholarship holder, Kumar Amindra Narayan, was sent to Japan to learn pencil making and candle making. Another scholar Ansaruddin Ahamed was sent to Leeds (England) to learn leather technology⁸⁶. These measures, in developing small scale industries, were also a part of modernizing and augmenting the economic growth of the State. These technological development in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, though they were successful in a limited sense, was noteworthy and possible due to the westernised ruler Nripendra Narayan.

A developing economy is exclusively characterised by the nature of the coinage system as the medium of exchange. The traditional system of transaction in this region was carried in Narayani Coin. It was the regular Currency that prevailed in Bhutan, Assam and the neighbouring areas⁸⁷. The Narayani Coin is a base silver coin 1/3 of Sicca rupee⁸⁸. After the Treaty of 1773, the British tried, to stop the right to minting the coin and to implement the Company's coins as a regular tender of business in Cooch Behar economy. But as mentioned before the attempt of the East India Company could not be successful as a result of the strenuous opposition offered by Raja

Harendra Narayan and during his rule the State's tribute was paid to the Company in the Narayani Coin.

After the death of Raja Harendra Narayan, the Company gradually introduced their own coin in Cooch Behar as legal tender. In the year 1845, the Company's Government in its letter addressed to the Governor General's Agent in the North East Frontier States, asked for the discontinuation of the Narayani Coin⁸⁹. In spite of the discontinuation of the Narayani Coin, the State's rulers enjoyed the right of minting though in a limited sense at the time of the accession of a new Maharaja for ceremonial purposes. Incidentally it can be mentioned that when Nripendra Narayan was raised to the throne, 1001 Silver coins and 100 gold coins were struck⁹⁰. With the growth of trade and commerce and increasing British influence in the State economy, the Company's coinage was accepted as legal tender of business. The economic interaction with the neighbouring areas were also made easy because of the universal acceptance of Company's coinage.

As a result of all round economic growth during the period of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan specially in the field of agriculture, trade and commerce, communication and medium agro-based industries, the people of the neighbouring provinces of British Bengal and Assam had started immigrating. The amount of immigration during the year may be cited in the following table.

Table No-VIII

| Year | 1891 | 1901 | 1911 | 1921 |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Actual Population | 5,78,868 | 5,56,974 | 5,92,952 | 5,92,489 |
| Immigration | 14,557 | 18,788 | 24,688 | 22,792 |
| Emigration | 1,590 | 1,272 | 3,500 | 1,000 |
| Natural Population | 5,65,901 | 5,49,458 | 5,71,764 | 5,70,697 |
| Percentage of Population | - | -2.9 | +4.1 | -0.2 |

Source : (The Census Report, Cooch Behar, A.Mitra, 1951, p.XXXVI). ✓

The analyses thus revealed the fact that when Maharaja Nripendra Narayan took up the reins of the State, his developmental attitude contributed largely towards the stable economic growth of the country which made room for dictums of modernization.

The exodus of extra-population and the all round mobility of the economic system resulted in an automatic process of urbanization. The administrative, commercial, business and trade centres grew up. The people of the surrounding areas had started settling in and around the centres which gave birth to urban centres⁹¹. All these urban areas became the centre of trade and commerce. The Sub-divisions were again split up into number of bandars or markets. These places also became

permanent farms of the merchants where business transaction could be made. Besides these urban areas there were 142 hats or village markets which were held twice a week for carrying on internal trade. The hats were leased out by auction to the highest bidder for a fixed period⁹². For the business transaction these places became important centres and at the same time fetched annually a large income of the State.

Thus, a stable economy although semifeudal and semi capitalistic in character was brought into being by Maharaja Nripendra Narayan. The common feature of most of the agricultural economy of the States of India had been the poverty and usual occurrence of famine. Interestingly enough during the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan there was no famine⁹³.

SECTION-III : LAND REVENUE

The land revenue has been regarded as an instrument of vast social changes in the structure of rural society. It is closely connected with land tenure and the condition of agriculture. The history of land largely depends on the interaction between men and environment, and the environment is related to the topography of the land. As such, the knowledge about the topography always plays an important role in shaping the history of the land. So it is said "the quest for said knowledge led to the introduction of land survey, which has

always been related to the needs of the periods⁹⁴. The realisation prompted the government to introduce definite revenue policy as one of the important facets of modernization.

To proceed towards the land settlement, was also necessary in order to ascertain the collection and embody in convenient forms of statistics of vital, agricultural and economic, facts. This would help the government and its officials to acquire adequate knowledge of actual conditions of the country, its population and its resources.

Land survey, with its true scientific connotations had started in the State as a historical necessity immediately after the conclusion of the treaty of 1773⁹⁵. In the following paragraphs attempts have been made to explain the nature of the traditional farming system in the State, to delineate the changes brought into operation in the successive settlements and to ascertain how far it safeguarded the interests of the peasants.

Insofar as the land farming of the State is concerned the traditional system of holding mainly consisted of three heads (I) Mal, (II) Debuttar, (III) Khanaqi. The first was available for State revenue; the second was dedicated for the maintenance of the worship of the deities and the third was set apart for the maintenance of Maharaja's household⁹⁶.

The settlements used to be made annually without measurement of the land. Traditionally, assessment was made under fixed rates although three different rates of Rs. 20 per bigha for the first kind of land; Rs. 15 per bigha for the second kind of land and Rs. 10 per bigha for the third kind appear to have been in existence⁹⁷.

(The Raja was the owner of all the lands of the State and he divided the land among the persons called Jotedar. The jotedars were liable to collect the revenue of their respective jotes and remit the same to the State. The collection of revenue was made through some officials known as Sezwais⁹⁸. The lands were cultivated by the peasants but no pattah was issued to them although they were the main source of revenue. Practically they had no right over the land and were subjected to easy eviction⁹⁹.

The revenues collected from the ryots were called Asal (original rent) and abowabs¹⁰⁰. Besides these regular forms of revenues the ryots had to pay to the "Sezwais" certain extra charges called Mafussal Khurcha which were not inserted in the public accounts¹⁰¹. These extra collections amounted to about one fifth of the whole State revenue.

Thus, the traditional form of land revenue administration reveals some inherent defects; (I) the lands were not properly measured and assessed; (II) the "jotes" were mostly in the hands

of the influential persons of the palace or officials of the State and peasants had no right over the lands they cultivate; (III) the peasants were over-burdened with a number of unusual revenue collections. Moreover, the mal-administrative system of land revenue and oppression of the revenue collectors in the process of collection caused immense hardship to the cultivators and led to their sorry plight, and at the same time the State treasury suffered badly owing to the absence of regular auditing¹⁰³.

Such was the state of affairs of the land revenue system and condition of the peasants till the new arrangement was introduced by the East India Company. The treaty of 1773 envisaged a provision of tribute of half of the revenue of the State. This share of the Company was fixed at Rs. 67,700 per annum in perpetuity in 1780¹⁰⁴ and settled on the basis of hastobund made by the Sezvals, but no measurement of land and new assessment was made by the Company.

The deplorable state of affairs in the revenue system of the State provided to the East India Company an opportunity to interfere directly into the revenue administration of the State and in 1790 the first step was taken to re-organise the revenue matters¹⁰⁵.

The change in the traditional system of revenue had been brought into operation during the period of minority of Raja

Harendra Narayan. Henry Douglas, the first appointed Resident/Commissioner, initiated a new policy in settling the revenue system known as Ijaradari system¹⁰⁶. By this new system the cultivated lands of the State had been farmed out at first for one year to the highest bidder and later on the tenure of farming out of the lands was increased to five years by Richard Ahmutty¹⁰⁷. He (Douglas) also proposed some definite measures. These were (I) measurement of land; (II) issuing of Pattahs to the actual cultivators; (III) abolition of irregular collection from the ryots such as selami, Nuzzar¹⁰⁸. The measures, thus, under taken during the period of minority of Raja Harendra Narayan marked a breach with the past and ushered in a new era.

Raja Harendra Narayan after attaining majority took up the reins of administration in his own hands and tried to re-establish all the previous system¹⁰⁹ of collection of land revenue but the ijaradari system continued upto 1872.) ✓

The new revenue policy sponsored by the East India Company's Agent, though it marked a remarkable change of the traditional form and continued for a long period, had some defects. These were as follows : (I) this system led to the ✓ formation of a large number of absentee joteders who had little connection with the lands; (II) most of the jotes were controlled by the members of the royal family and the influential amlas of the State and consequently fostered the extensive

sub-infeudation; (III) the rate of rents was not defined clearly and subsequently the ryots suffered from heavy extortion and rackrenting; (IV) the jotes were not geographically defined by systematic survey and periodical settlement¹¹⁰.

With a view to remove the abuses and difficulties which then attended the Ijaradari system, Colonel Haughton, the British Commissioner during the minority period of Nripendra Narayan, proposed¹¹¹ and carried out a survey of the State under Mr. O'Donell, Deputy Superintendent of Revenue Survey, who was deputed by the Government for the purpose¹¹².

It was the first revenue survey of the State ever attempted and was known as "Khasra Settlement" (1870-1875). This settlement had done away with the old sub-division of mauzas and Zilas and introduced modern ones of Taluks and Paraganas¹¹³. Thus, the old form of fiscal units were abolished and gave way to new ones. The State was divided into six paraganas namely Mekhliganj, Mathabhanga, Lalbazar, Dinjata, Cooch Behar and Tufanganj and 1,202 Taluks¹¹⁴.

The motive behind the reform introduced by Houghton, in the revenue system was not only to ensure and increase the land revenue collection but also he desired to form an opulent middle class. His intention can be substantiated from the reports in which he refers: "here there are none of that middle class who should form the bone and sinews of the

country. It appears to me that every effort should be made to improve this state of things, and to produce a class of Talukdars having an interest in the country"¹¹⁵.

Under an order of the Bengal Government the Ijaradari system was abolished in 1872¹¹⁶. The land recovered from rent free, iqgir lands and andaran jotas or lands held by the ladies of the palace, were distributed to cultivators or jotedars, by auction, for 12 years¹¹⁷. Though no official right was given to the jotedars, their right of succession, transfer and division over the lands was acknowledged by the State¹¹⁸.

The revenue settlement of 1870-75 brought about changes in the structure of the rural society. In the first place it checked the absentee jotedar; secondly, village jotedars became the proprietors of lands; thirdly, the system of under tenures had been acknowledged and right of these intermediaries (Chukanidars) was recognised by the State¹¹⁹. These changes may be considered the most significant development in the rural agricultural society.

As for the rate of rents, the new system reduced the previous amount and it was made 8 (eight) annas per bigha on an average¹²⁰. The other extra cesses, payable by the cultivators, such as Nuzzar, Selami, Maffussal, Khurcha were done away with¹²¹.

This land revenue system (khas collection) saved the people from heavy extortion and their rights over the lands were

recognised. Moreover, a systematic method of maintaining a regular register was introduced. It included collection of revenue; total number of jotes and jotedars¹²². Thus, for the first time modern methods in respect of land revenue were adopted in the State.

The settlement was made directly with the jotedars as a result of which it yielded a considerable number of increase in the collection of land revenue. From the report of the Government of Bengal it is learnt that while in 1864-65 the total collection of land revenue was Rs. 3,43,738 and within ten years the collection had risen to Rs. 5,29,317.¹²³ The total amount of land revenue was fixed at Rs. 9,16,188 in 1876-77¹²⁴. The lands, so long concealed by the ladies of the palace and amlas and the rent free or mokarary lands, were incorporated within the revenue paying lands and distributed among the actual cultivators¹²⁵.

The new "Khas collection" system continued upto 1886, but a few more changes were introduced in 1884-85 with the change of the constitution after the installation of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan in 1883. The management of revenue was handed over to the Dewan of the State and Revenue Department was made independent¹²⁶.

During this time an attempt had been made to incorporate fallow lands within a jote and a separate assessment was made.

The result of which was that the area of cultivated land increased and also the revenue. The settlement was known as ✓ "Patit Charcha Settlement" of 1834-36. The land revenue income rose upto 9,63,630 in 1833-34. The "Patit Charcha Settlement" resulted an increase of Rs. 66,000 of revenue¹²⁷.

In 1836, further step taken with the completion of the period of first settlement. The resettlement of land was undertaken, known as "Rakam Charcha Settlement". The resettlement was made for 30 years. The new settlement had been undertaken with some objectives. These were; (I) to prepare the detailed classification of land; (II) to protect the interests of ryots; (III) to settle the problem of sub-infeudation; (IV) to fix the rate of rent¹²⁸. The resettlement was completed by the end of 1893-99 and the increases in income obtained to the State amounted to Rs. 2,77,462¹²⁹.

The old rate of rents that existed in the State were considerably lowered at the first settlement. By the "Rakam Charcha Settlement" this rate was slightly increased in view ✓ of the rise of price of the produced goods¹³⁰. The table no. IX given below corroborates the contention :

Table No. IX

Rate of Revenue Per Bigha

| Before the first settlement of 1870-72 | | | | | | | | | | First Settlement of 1870-72 | | |
|---|------------|-----|----|-------------|-----|----|--------------|-----|----|-----------------------------|------|-----|
| Old rates | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Class of Land | Schedule-I | | | Schedule-II | | | Schedule-III | | | Class of Land | Rate | |
| | Rs. | An. | P. | Rs. | An. | P. | Rs. | An. | P. | | Rs. | An. |
| 1. Betelnut | 6 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 1. Betelnut | 2 | 8 |
| 2. Jotedar homestead | 3 | 12 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 2. Homestead | 2 | 8 |
| 3. Undertanents homestead | 3 | 0 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 14 | 5 | 3. Garden | 2 | 8 |
| 4. Garden | 3 | 12 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 4. Bamboo | 1 | 2 |
| 5. Bamboo | 1 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 12 | 2 | 5. Cultivated land | 0 | 8 |
| 6. Awal (1st class cultivated land) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 12 | 2 | | - | | 6. Thatching | 0 | 8 |
| 7. Doem (2nd class cultivated land) | 0 | 14 | 4 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 7 | 7. Patit (Fallow) | 0 | 1 |
| 8. Soem (3rd class cultivated land) | 0 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 6 | 1 | | | |
| 9. Chaharam (4th class cultivated land) | 0 | 9 | 8 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 7 | | | |
| 10. Thatching grass | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 9 | 1 | | | |
| 11. Laik Patit (culturable fallow) | 0 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 5 | | | |

/contd...

Table IX contd...

| Class of land | Settlement of 1889 | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----|----|----------------------------|-----|----|-----------------------------|-----|----|
| | Rate in 1st class Taluk | | | Rate in Second class Taluk | | | Rate in the 3rd class Taluk | | |
| | Rs. | An. | P. | Rs. | An. | P. | Rs. | An. | P. |
| 1. Betel land | 4 | 0 | | 4 | 0 | | 4 | 0 | |
| 2. Homestead | 3 | 0 | | 3 | 0 | | 3 | 0 | |
| 3. Garden | 3 | 0 | | 3 | 0 | | 3 | 0 | |
| 4. Bamboo | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 2 | |
| 5. Tobacco 1st class | 1 | 8 | | 1 | 8 | | 1 | 8 | |
| 6. " 2nd class | 1 | 4 | | 1 | 4 | | 1 | 4 | |
| 7. Tobacco 3rd class | 1 | 0 | | 1 | 0 | | 1 | 0 | |
| 8. Awal | 1 | 0 | | 0 | 14 | | 0 | 13 | |
| 9. Deam | 0 | 12 | | 0 | 11 | | 0 | 10 | |
| 10. Soem | 0 | 9 | | 0 | 8 | | 0 | 7 | |
| 11. Chaharam | 0 | 7 | | 0 | 6 | | 0 | 5 | |
| 12. Jala (Fishery) | 0 | 8 | | 0 | 8 | | 0 | 8 | |
| 13. Thatching grass | 0 | 7 | | 0 | 6 | | 0 | 5 | |
| 14. Laik Patit | 0 | 2 | | 0 | 2 | | 0 | 2 | |
| 15. Nalaik Patit | 0 | 1 | | 0 | 1 | | 0 | 1 | |
| -- (Uncultivated fallow) | | | | | | | | | |

Source : Final Report of the Survey and Settlement Operations - 1913-1927
K.C.Ganguli, p.12.

The most important step taken in the "Rakan Charcha Settlement" was the measure to stop growing subinfeudation. There were six grades of under tenures (Chukani, Darchukani, Daradarchukani, Tasya Chukani, Tali Chukani, Tasya Tali Chukani) existed in the rural structure of society¹³¹. The resettlement recognised only first two grades of under-tenures¹³². This measure was undertaken to safeguard the ryots of lower strata from increases in the burden of taxation arising out of the growing number of intermediaries. The jotedari profit was raised to 35%. The revenue and the total profit of the under-tenures was fixed at 25% whatever of such undertenants might be¹³³. ++

The system of sale or transfer of lands was also changed. The traditional systems of verbal contract viz. Istafas or Ikras or laqani were prohibited and a new regulation provided that no verbal contract or transfer would be valid unless it got registered¹³⁴.

All these measures, undertaken by the Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, sought to safe guard the interest of the tenants. ++ But in spite of the efforts the traditional system of six grades of intermediaries continued. Even the verbal contract, prohibited by the State, was practised by the tenants. Hence it may be viewed that the provisions though good in theory, failed to produce the desired results¹³⁵.

The Krishiprojas, who formed a large number of cultivators, got the favour of the State authority. Special steps were taken to protect their rights over the lands they possessed and Pattahs were issued against their names in the successive settlements¹³⁶.

One of the remarkable achievements of the Rakam Charcha Settlement was the proper assessment of both rent free and Mokarari Estates. The tenants and undertenants of these estates were assessed under the rules applicable to other tenants and under tenures and copies of final records of rights were distributed among all of them. At the same time the whole areas of revenue free and revenue-paying lands were measured and clearly defined in the register which ultimately helped the State to a proper collection and assessment of revenue. Incidentally, it can be mentioned that at the Rakam Charcha settlement the total revenue-free land was found to be 66,952 bighas¹³⁷. Thus, the resettlement of land revenue was accompanied by a settlement of fair and equitable rents for all tenants in the revenue-free and mokarari estates and for all grades of under tenants of the State.

The Jagirdars, of whom mention had been made earlier, were granted lands to settle them in the society. The Rakam Charcha Settlement recognised their rights over the jotes but they were not given right to sale or inherit the lands¹³⁸.

✓ One of the interesting features of the land revenue reforms in the State was that the tenants had to pay no cesses corresponding to the road and public cesses of Bengal. Only the Mokararidar or the gross rental payable to all Lakherajdar exceeds Rs. 40 had to pay communication improvement cesses at a rate not exceeding half annas in the rupee under the Cooch Behar Act of 1893. ✓ The incidence of revenue was not higher than that for similar temporary settled tenures in the neighbouring districts of Bengal¹³⁹.

The period under study also witnessed measures for safeguarding the rights of the adhiars. The adhiars cultivated lands on the condition that they got half of the produce of the crop¹⁴⁰. Adhiars generally lived upon the landlord's premises, or on lands in their Khas possession and paid no rent for the same. In Cooch Behar the adhiars were generally regarded as labourers. They were not considered to have any right or title but were liable to be ejected at the will of their employer¹⁴¹.

To improve the condition of the adhiars and to safeguard their right over the land, significant steps had been taken in the first settlement. Accordingly it was ordered that any adhiar who cultivates the same lands with his own cattle for consecutive twelve years would acquire a right of occupancy in respect of such land¹⁴².

In 1910 this occupancy right was made heritable but not otherwise transferable¹⁴³. It is to be noted that no record

of rights of the adhiars were prepared. This provision of recording the names of the adhiars was made in the later resettlement¹⁴⁴. Thus, all these steps, though limited in nature, may be considered both benevolent and at the same time modern method of land reform.

It would not be out of order to admit the fact that the errors in the records were corrected in the "Revisional Settlements" of 1913-1927 and the system of Khatian (Record of rights) in place of Terije was introduced, which is the practice of modern method of land reform system. But one of the unchanged traditional vices in the land revenue system of the State was the collection of abowabs, an illegal cess realised by the Jotedar's agent under the denomination of Tahuri¹⁴⁵.

During the period under study the land revenue system of the State was changed thoroughly (in different settlement operations) by adopting modern methods and knowledge. The revenues were fixed on the basis of regular settlement and were periodically revised in different operations in which the Bengal provisional rules followed¹⁴⁶.

The result of these settlement operations increased the efficiency of the State Revenue Department and a good system of collection of land revenue (followed.) (The collection of land revenue ^{which was} sometimes raised upto 95.5%⁺⁺¹⁴⁷. The provision had also been made to allow relief to the peasants in case of any ravage

by any natural calamity in accordance with the exigencies of the situation¹⁴⁸.

Thus, under the lasting rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, the land revenue of the State was placed on a sound footing. After 1773 when Cooch Behar came into contact with the East India Company, Mr. Purling ascertained the total revenue of the State as Rs. 199,120.50 Narayani Rupees equivalent to Rs. 1,33,000 in British currency in India. This showed the poor revenue condition of the country and as mentioned above the ryots suffered badly owing to mal-administration. But from the period of minority of Nripendra Narayan, under the supervision of the British Commissioner, the land revenue system gradually developed and towards the closing years of the reign of Nripendra Narayan the land revenue was made stable. ⁺ ⁺ This can be substantiated from the lists of revenue fixed in the different settlements. The data available may be put as under :

Table No. X

| Period | Total Revenue |
|---|---------------|
| 1. On the eve of the First Settlement (1870-72) | Rs. 3,64,140 |
| 2. On the First Settlement (1870-86) | Rs. 9,35,641 |
| 3. On the eve of the Rakam Charcha Resettlement 1889. | Rs. 9,59,830 |
| 4. Rakam Charcha Resettlement 1889 | Rs. 12,41,060 |
| 5. On the eve of the Resettlement operations 1912-13 | Rs. 12,62,154 |

The above table reveals the increasing rate of land revenue of the State. This corroborates the fact that modernized principles were entertained by the ruler in the field of land revenue.

Thus, the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan marked a remarkable breach with the past and the traditional farming system gave passage to the modern revenue administration. The result of the farming system not only helped in increasing the State economy but at the sametime proved beneficial to the peasants of the State.

SECTION-IV : ADMINISTRATION

In this section the researcher's intention is to depict the nature, extent and level of administration as well as the administration of justice which existed during the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan and to contrast it with the system of administration which he had inherited soon after his coming to the throne. Any analysis of the administration as an off-shoot to modernity centers around certain basic questions; (i) how the development administration came to the fore instead of the pattern-maintenance nature of administration ? (ii) was the administration meant for safe-guarding the interest of monarchic institution or for the public ? (iii) was the administration participatory in character ? (iv) was it democratic in character or had it been decentralised in form ?

Our study in the following paragraphs would be an attempt to answer the questions raised above.

The tradition bound society under Raja Harendra Narayan (of which mention has been made beforehand) had not been able to make any improvement in the administrative system of Cooch Behar. Even when, the Raja was a minor, the Company's intention, to infuse new trends and tactics could not develop the administrative system. During the period, the Company took initiative in the administrative affairs of the State as per recommendation of the Commission of Mercer and Chauvet¹⁴⁹. When Raja Harendra Narayan was a minor, the administrative affairs were managed by the Ranees of the palace, along with the assistance of some influential persons. The affairs of the State were in a disorderly condition as a result of internal squabbles, personal jealousy of the important persons of the State and above all the administrative inefficiencies. The Commissioner Mercer and Chauvet in their report proposed Company's interference to re-establish administrative order throughout the country¹⁵⁰.

As per recommendation of the Commission, in 1789, for conducting the smooth administration, during the minority of Raja Harendra Narayan, Henry Douglas was appointed as Resident Commissioner as mentioned before. He applied himself mainly to regularising the Revenue Administration. He was succeeded by Charles Andrews (1791), Mr. Smith (1795), and Richard Ahmuty (1797). It is thus, evident from the fact that during the long

period of minority of Raja Harendra Narayan the administration and the relation with the Company's Government was exercised by the British officers and a status-quo was maintained in the administrative system which basically upheld the monarchic interest and the interest of the Company. In 1901, at the coming of age of Raja Harendra Narayan, the Commissioner was removed and the administration was left in his hands. For sometime, under the tyrannical rule of the young Raja the administrative system did not get the form of development-administration system¹⁵¹. Without being invited by the Raja, but for upholding the Company's interest, the East India Company wanted to bring changes in revenue and police administration. Accordingly, Francis Pierard was sent by the Governor General to Raja Harendra Narayan's Court but Pierard failed to procure Raja's assent and that gentleman was withdrawn. Without being disappointed the Company sent John French with the same motive but the Company's effort again turned in vain¹⁵². Not even the powerful Governor General Wellesly tried to impose any reform in the local administration thenceforward¹⁵³.

The nature of administration that existed during the rule of Raja Harendra Narayan may be summarised. The duties connected with the administration had all along been performed by native officers since 1801 and after the removal of the Company's Commissioner many of the old abuses crept into the Government of the Country¹⁵⁴. In dealing with the affairs of the State, the

Raja was the sole fountain of authority of administration with a Sabha or Council to assist him. In the Sabha, some influential persons were incorporated as members, who were entrusted with the duty of Judicial matters such as Fouzdari and Revenue cases¹⁵⁵.

The administration of Cooch Behar remained a grave concern to the Company's Government. While introducing new reforms in 1809, Earl Minto I, the Governor General also showed interest in bringing about changes in the police and the revenue administration of Cooch Behar State. It was resolved in the meeting of the Revenue Department of 7th August, 1813, that the Government was determined upon exercising a thorough and efficient interference in the internal affairs of Cooch Behar with a view to eradicate the evils of the tradition bound State of administration¹⁵⁶. But Raja Harendra Narayan with his feudal outlook was unwilling to reform the administration or to part his authority with any body. The pressure on the Raja continued by the successive Governor Generals. The East India Company's Government revived the post of Resident Commissioner of Cooch Behar and Mr. Norman Macleod was appointed for the post. His mission to modernize and reform the Cooch Behar administration failed on the ground that Harendra Narayan was not in any position to accept the Company's policies in reforming the administrative system¹⁵⁷. Consequently in February 1816, the Company resolved to recall their former orders and to relinquish the attempt to

administer the affairs through the direct agency of a Government servant¹⁵⁸. There was no cohesion or real administration from top to bottom. This can be substantiated from the fact that "every officer did what was right in his eyes and acknowledged no authority but of the Raja and his subordination even to him was in most cases only lip service"¹⁵⁹. Thus, anarchy prevailed in every sphere of administration.

The Cooch Behar administration under Raja Harendra Narayan could not get the new lights because of (i) Raja's reluctance to accept any change and to share his supreme power; (ii) the administrative officers of the time represented the definite elite class who were unaware of the development administration; (iii) the British interest to modify administration had been concentrated on upholding their own interest. But it was largely due to the activities of the Raja that Cooch Behar had been a feudatory State, uncontrolled in its internal affairs and having an administrative system independent of foreign (British) interference¹⁶⁰.

After the death of Raja Harendra Narayan the period is marked by two rulers, Shibendra Narayan and Narendra Narayan. During the period of Shibendra Narayan one of the most significant changes made at the citadel of administration had been the establishment of the Rajsabha. It was constituted with the Dewans (One from Cooch Behar State and another from Chaklajat

Estate which had been a part of Company's administrated Bengal)¹⁶¹. The meetings of the Rajsabha used to be presided over by the Maharaja and assisted by the Dewans. The Rajsabha was considered ^{as} the Supreme Court in all the criminal matters¹⁶². Thus, it is clear that during the rule of Raja Shibendra Narayan the sharing of administration was made to a minimum extent.

After the death of Raja Shibendra Narayan, Narendra Narayan was still a minor. During this minority, the Company took the greatest opportunity to inject major changes in the administrative system of Cooch Behar. The Company tried to educate Narendra Narayan with the modern line of thought. Mention should be made that not only the Company influenced the administrative system of Cooch Behar but also some immigrated influential Bengali intellectuals directly participated in the affairs of Cooch Behar Administration¹⁶³. Although a minimum degree of change was made in the administrative sphere especially the establishment of the Thanas (Police Station) and decentralised Judicial system, the Cooch Behar administrative system under Maharaja Narendra Narayan experienced the feudal nature of administration because of the resistance of inefficient personalities of the Royal family¹⁶⁴. One noticeable point towards establishment of the modernized administration had been the creation of "Desh Hitaishini Sabha" under the sponsorship of Maharaja Narendra Narayan which comprised the people of different

sections of the community¹⁶⁵. From the composition of the "Sabha" it is revealed that the Maharaja had chosen the members of the different communities especially from the rising elitist class. Thus, the participatory nature of administration made little progress during the reign of Maharaja Narendra Narayan.

The land mark in the administrative system witnessed during the period of Maharaja Narendra Narayan had been the invitation of the British assistance¹⁶⁶ by the Maharaja to rebuild and re-organise the total administrative edifice of the Cooch Behar State which had been suffering from the enigma of feudal crises. The British were ready to avail themselves of the opportunity and without wasting any time they started infusing the modern administration with all its positive characteristics in the administration of Cooch Behar which gained ground in the period of Nripendra Narayan especially when he was a minor after the death of Maharaja Narendra Narayan.

During the long period of minority of Nripendra Narayan, the entire administration of Cooch Behar was under the management of the British Commissioners¹⁶⁷. Colonel Houghton, the Governor General's Agent of North Eastern Frontier, was appointed Commissioner, in the charge of administration. The Commissioner was vested with full powers of the rulers of the State except with regard to certain specific points namely grants of lands, gratuities and confirmation of capital sentences. These powers were reserved by the Government¹⁶⁸. He brought to the

State development and prosperity. The modernization of administration began to take place in spite of the stiff opposition from the local elites. In his attempts he was ably assisted by another person, Rak Calica Das Dutta, a Brahmo, who became another pillar (Dewan) of the administration of the time¹⁶⁹. Owing to their efforts the State administration witnessed changes in respect of Land Revenue and Judicial administration.

In 1893¹⁷⁰ Maharaja Nripendra Narayan assumed the full ruling powers. He was considered to be one of the first Indian rulers to embrace the freedom of the west¹⁷¹. The administration was democratized and there was no department of the administration of the State to which he did not devote personal attention¹⁷². For the administrative convenience the entire administration was reorganised.

On assuming the authority, the Maharaja established a Council in 1883 to assist him in governing the State¹⁷³. It was founded in the pattern of a modern cabinet. As he was inexperienced in matters of the executive and the judiciary, he felt it necessary to take into account the advice of the Council and at the same time to associate his subjects more and more with the administration. So he resolved to act in some important matters with the advice of the Council¹⁷⁴.

The Cooch Behar State Council which was founded by him consisted of three members with the Maharaja as president. The

members were the Superintendent of the State; the Dewan, and an experienced Judicial officer. It is interesting to note that the Superintendent would be a British officer¹⁷⁵. In the Maharaja's absence the Superintendent would act as the Vice President of the Council. These members were entirely independent of each other, and it was the duty of each to see that all measures decided on in the Council were carried out¹⁷⁶. The President had, in all deliberations of the Council, the casting vote. Three members formed the quorum. During the temporary vacancy in the post of any member, the Fauzdari Ahilker was generally authorised to sit in the Council to form a quorum¹⁷⁷.

The Council which was formed by him was a nominated body and had all official members. Though it decentralised the power in the functioning of the State affairs, the subjects were not associated with the administration. Further in 1891 the Maharaja introduced certain reforms in the administration of the State and modified the memorandum of the Council¹⁷⁸. For the enactment of law, provisions were made for appointment of additional members from amongst the Rajgun, the intelligent and wealthy jotedars and from the local Bar. Though it was a nominated body non-official members got the opportunity to enact new legislation.

The functions of the State Council were three fold :
Legislative, Executive and Judiciary. On the Legislative side

the Council passed laws and enactments; on the Executive, it regulated the management of the different departments; in Judicial matters the Council was the highest Court of appeal, having final jurisdiction in civil, criminal and Revenue suits and proceedings. The Council had the power to frame rules and regulations for the management of Judicial side¹⁷⁹.

Thus the whole administration was divided into a number of department under the different heads. The Superintendent of the State would supervise, direct and control and administration of Criminal justice and the Police, Jail, Public Works, Education and Audit Department and would be the Session Judge, but would not act as a Civil Judge, except when sitting in the Council. The Dewan was in charge of the Revenue Department, being responsible for the collection of all kinds of revenue. The judicial member of the Council would hear all Civil and Revenue appeals. The Council also acted as an Appellate Court¹⁸⁰. All the proceedings of the Council were maintained by the Secretary to the Council, but in 1903 the post of Secretary was abolished and designated as Registrar¹⁸¹.

The Council which was constituted in 1883 was purely an advisory one, but in the memorandum of administration of 1891 it was resolved that "no new tax will be imposed without the consent of the Council, but it will be open to him to veto any such tax proposed by the Council"¹⁸². The legislature, thus

strengthened, consisted of the non-official members representing from the general people.

In 1909 a further step towards the process of democratisation was undertaken with the establishment of State Legislative Council¹⁸³. By following the example which the Secretary of State (Lord Morley) and the Governor-General of India (Minto) had set in enlarging Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils with a view to making them more representative of the people, he (Nripendra Narayan) enlarged his Council for the work of legislation¹⁸⁴. The establishment of the State legislative body was a rare move and only two other Indian States, namely Mysore and Cochin had similar arrangements¹⁸⁵.

It was a nominated body but it represented the different sections of the society. The system continued for nearly three decades to function. By introducing a democratic pattern in the State administration and giving his subjects the opportunity to share in the administration, Maharaja Nripendra Narayan became an instance to the other Indian Princely States in modernization of their administration¹⁸⁶.

For the administrative convenience and decentralization of administration the country was divided into a number of parganas and thanas (police station) were created in the places like Dinhata, Mathabhanga, Mekhliganj, Lalbazar, Haldibari and Tufanganj¹⁸⁷. The parganas were styled as sub-division and

placed under the authority of Naib Ahilkar with full power to supervise administrative works like police, revenue and general administration. He was also vested with the powers of justice of cases with certain limits¹⁸⁸. Thus, a chain of administrative control was established from the top to the sub-divisional level.

After the advent of the British and during the period of minority of Harendra Narayan, Civil and Criminal justice of Cooch Behar was subject to the ancient customs of the country. The Commissioners Mercer and Chauvet reported; "All complaints are made in the first instance to Shew Parsad Mustaffee and reported by him to the Maharanny who issued orders to him to summon the persons complained against. The complaint is then referred to the pundits appointed by the Maharanny for that purpose, when the same having been tried by them agreeable to the law of the shastar, the persons found guilty are then punished by the order of the Maharanny, according to the usage of the country"¹⁸⁹. There was no system of maintaining a register of the cases¹⁹⁰. The Judiciary during the reign of Raja Harendra Narayan depended exclusively on the will of the Raja. There was no regular Court of justice. The cases were conducted by the Raja along with his "Sabha". The general rule in the administration of justice was maintained in accordance with the Hindu Law¹⁹¹. The Governor General was in favour of formation of a code of Civil and Criminal juris-prudence for the

territory of Cooch Behar, The intention was that the Mohamedan Law, modified according to the spirit of the Regulations in force in the British provinces, must form the basis of any system of criminal law and to be introduced into Cooch Behar¹⁹². But Raja Harendra Narayan was reluctant to change the prevailing system of justice. The justice was not perpetrated impartially, there was disorder and confusion and the rights of the subjects were not guaranteed by the State. The system of judiciary remained unchanged in spite of the attempt of the British. In 1828 there was only 1 (one) Criminal Court and 4 (four Revenue Courts¹⁹³.

During the time of Shibendra Narayan the highest Court in the country was the Rajsabha or the king's Council, which he created in 1840¹⁹⁴. The Raja presided over the Court and in his absence the Sarbarakar or the manager used to preside over it with the assistance of two Dewans and heard appeals from all other courts. The functions of this court was divided into three departments such as (i) Uttam Danda or the Criminal Department; (ii) Uttama Karasangraha or the Revenue Department; (iii) Uttamartha or the Civil Department¹⁹⁵.

The Judicial administration during the time of Raja Shibendra Narayan and Raja Narendra Narayan underwent thorough changes in its management. Firstly two courts were established with Ahilkar and Suddar Ammen as the judges of the courts¹⁹⁶

and secondly, the number of the courts had been increased and British regulations were introduced into the administration of justice¹⁹⁷. The judiciary changed a little and in the courts officers were appointed, mostly immigrant Bengalis¹⁹⁸. One of the interesting features during this time was that the superior court exercised no control over the Ahilkar's Courts¹⁹⁹. In 1850 there were 2 (two) Criminal and 7 (seven) Revenue and Civil Courts and the number increased during the minority administration of Nripendra Narayan and the total number of courts in 1870-71 rose to five Criminal and ten Revenue Courts²⁰⁰.

In 1864, Colonel Haughton took over the charge of Commissioner of Cooch Behar and abolished Raj Sabha. He established the Deputy Commissioner's Court which heard the specific appeals from the judges and exercised the controlling power of the High Court of British India, but unlike the High Court it heard no regular appeal²⁰¹. The process of extending judicial facilities to the people of the interior started there on. The Sub-divisional charge of collection of Revenue and Criminal adjudication was vested with the Naib Ahilkar²⁰². Besides the Sub-divisional Naib Ahilkars, one of the two assistants of the Fouzdari Ahilkar was vested with civil powers in 1892 and became an assistant to the Dewani Ahilkar. Both the Assistant Dewani Ahilkar and the Sub-divisional "Naib Ahilkar had jurisdiction in suits of the small causes court involving cases upto the value of Rs. 500 and in other civil suits upto the

value of Rs. 100²⁰³.

One of the important matters in the process of modernizing the administration of the State's Judiciary after the installation of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, was the creation of Civil judge. The Civil judge became the Head of the Department of Law and Justice and also Judicial member of the State Council²⁰⁴. The post of Dewani Ahilkar was abolished and in its place the Assistant Civil judge was created to take its place. The jurisdiction of the Assistant Civil judge was extended to all Civil suits and it acted as an original court in the Sub-divisions²⁰⁵. The extension of court not only benefited the subjects at the same time the native officers were given better opportunity in the administration of justice and led to the decentralization of structure.

The establishment of the Cooch Behar High Court in 1893²⁰⁶, was an important step towards modernity in the field of judicial administration. It was becoming apparant, however, under present day practice that Maharaja would be more likely to observe the convention of appointing judges of the High Court, to preside over the full bench, reserving to himself the exercise of the prerogative of mercy and indulgence in suitable cases on equitable basis²⁰⁷.

To re-organise the Sub-divisional Courts and to give more representative nature, some modifications were made and by which

sanction was accorded in 1902 to the formation of a Bench of Magistrate and appoint local gentlemen to constitute the Bench²⁰⁸. Thus, during the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, the courts were rebuilt and the judiciary was brought into the fashion of the British India and codifying system led to an organised system of judicial administration in the State.

In the administration of the local authority the process of democratization and administrative decentralisation touched the grass roots of the Cooch Behar State's system during the period under review. In 1885 the Cooch Behar Town Committee was established²⁰⁹. It consisted of the members with Fouzdari Ahilkar as chairman. It acted as municipality for the town of Cooch Behar. The members were nominated by the Maharaja. In 1897 the "Town Committee Act" was extended to the Sub-divisional towns of Dinhata, Mathabhanga and to the Bandar at Haldibari²¹⁰. The smaller town committees depended mainly on the state grants; the Cooch Behar town committee have got the independent right to collect a sum of little more than a half the amount of the State grants²¹¹.

In the rural areas the old system of Deunia was reduced and the "Choukidari Act" was passed²¹² for the functioning in the rural areas through the appointed Panchayats²¹³. The enactment was made on the model of Bengal Act. This was probably a self-governing organization with the association of the local people. Although the system of local administration, both urban and rural, introduced by the Maharaja was being managed by the

nominated members, it was Maharaja Nripendra Narayan who realised that the local government should be used as the platform of the first political institution of the public.

From the above analyses it is obviously clear that Maharaja Nripendra Narayan had tried his best to shape the administrative system with a development-orientation. The participatory character of administration has been reflected to a minimum extent on the ostensible ground that the Maharaja's choice of nomination was not concentrated to only the royal elites but also the rising middle class, inter alia. The administration fostered by Maharaja Nripendra Narayan had its double edged objective; (i) to make a merger of the interest of the royal family with the British interest; (ii) to give a proper system of administration which could serve best for the people. The administration as well as administration of justice were more or less democratic in character of decentralised in form.

SECTION-V : EDUCATION

Education provides one of the most important channels of transition from the traditional to modern. The vehicle of modernization without education leads to an illusion. Every society irrespective of race and cultural heritage has been developed by the magical touch of education. It develops

cultural values comprising of the systems i.e., religion, philosophy and science, the spread of literacy and secular education. It also occupies a key position in the formation of modernized society, culture and also shapes the pattern of occupation.

The modernity of the State which was beyond imagination without the spread of education, was realised by the enlightened ruler Maharaja Nripendra Narayan. It was during his rule that Education Department was given special attention, and accordingly we find that the Cooch Behar State emerged in comparison to other neighbouring districts of Bengal as the node of culture and hub of learning as well as an advanced region²¹⁴.

Before analysing the contribution of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan to the spread of education in the Cooch Behar State, a brief analysis of the traditional form of education prior to his reign should be made. The education had been confined to sanskrit learning and at the sametime the Persian language was taught in the royal family²¹⁵. One of the main features during this time was that the education was restricted and not imparted to all inhabitants of the State, and it was mainly concerned with the aristocrats and members of the royal family.²¹⁶ As regards the language of the local inhabitants it was different from that of the Bengalee. It was something like proto Bengali type²¹⁷. Raja Harendra Narayan himself was the patronizer of

native education, and for example he himself composed a number of books : Upakatha and Sundarkanda Ramayan. Besides these many ancient epics and puranas were translated into the native language. These books were later published by Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha²¹⁸.

The English education could not make its headway into the State until the first half of the 19th century. It can be mentioned here that during this time the British India was just entering into the arena of Western education through the efforts of some Bengali reformers such as Vidyasagar, Rammohan, and the members of the young Bengal. The education in the State of Cooch Behar, both Vernacular and English, had its beginning, from the time of Maharaja Narendra Narayan (1847-1863). It was during his period of minority, a Vernacular school was established in 1857²¹⁹. It sowed the seed of popular learning in the State. In building the school the name of Maharanee Brindeswari Devi deserves special mention. But the school was established only for imparting education to the kinsmen of the Maharaja²²⁰.

In the establishment of first higher English school, the name of Colonel Jenkins, the Governor General's Agent in the North East Frontier, is worthy to be mentioned. It was due to his insistence the English school was founded in 1861 and named after him²²¹. In the beginning it taught upto the third standard of the Entrance curriculum, and it was ten years after, in 1870,

that the first batch of three boys passed the Entrance Examination from it²²².

✓ During the period of minority of Nripendra Narayan, the effort to popularise education was taken by Colonel Haughton, the then Commissioner of Cooch Behar. In 1864, three Vernacular Schools were opened in the interior of the State²²³. The result was that for the first time the interior population were given the opportunity to acquire Vernacular education. To supervise the management of these schools the post of Inspector of Schools was created²²⁴.

The primary education in the State had its beginning in 1860⁽²²⁵⁾. The education which was mostly restricted to the royal elites had started to come out for all and every one. Thus universal spread of education in the State of Cooch Behar was made possible by the infusion of British influenced education.

From 1865-1870 the number of schools rose to 58 out of which the number of Government aided schools was 37 and with a strength of 130 in total. But the Persian Madrasas and Sanskrit toles were no less negligible²²⁶. The total expenditure on Education came up from Rs. 7,022 in 1865 to Rs. 29,515 in 1870. This figure reveals the interest of the State in furthering education. A portion of money was collected in the shape of subscription from the local people²²⁷.

For the management of these schools, the Local Committee of Public Instruction was established and placed under the Government Inspector of schools of the North Eastern Division²²⁸.

With the gradual spread of schools in the interior and continued development of the important institutions in the towns, it was found difficult for the members of the Local Committee either to master or to properly attend to the details of a business, and accordingly a separate Superintendentship for the Education Department was created in 1870²¹⁹. The objectives of the department were (i) to advise in all matters connected with education; (ii) to inspect and examine the schools; (iii) and to deliver occasional lecture: .

In the beginning of the seventys the number of primary school was very meagre and the state budget provided a negligible sum for the cause. Naturally the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal expressed the hope that larger sum of money should be spend to this head for the multiplication of primary schools²³⁰. During the budget of 1872-73 out of the total estimated expenditure of Rs. 45,054 only Rs. 300 was allotted in the head for the primary education²³¹.

From the time onwards the works of the Education Department were carried on a much more systematic manner. The State began to afford liberal grants for extending scope in the sphere of

education in the State.

A complete network of schools and path-shalas (Primary schools) very shortly covered the State from one end to another. For the proper supervision of these institutions the Superintendent's office was strengthened. One more Deputy Inspector of Schools, one sub-inspector and 4 (four) inspecting Pandits were appointed²³².

Under this organised system, patronized by the British, during the period of minority of Nripendra Narayan, the number of schools increased as well as the number of pupils. As regards the development of education Hunter mentions : "In 1864, the earliest year for which information is available, there was only one school in Kuch Behar State, attended by 36 pupils. In September 1871, these numbers had increased to 46 schools, attended by 1486 pupils; and by 31st March 1875, there was a still further increase to 245 schools and 6497 pupils, of whom 352 were girls. //As compared with the area of the State and its population, these last figures give one school to every 5.3 square miles, and one person at school to every 82 of the inhabitants"²³³.

The following table (no.XI) shows in detail the comparative state of education in Cooch Behar for the two years 1873-74 and 1874-75 :-

Table No.-XI

| Name of schools | 1873-74 | | 1974-75 | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| | No. of Schools | Pupils on role on 31st March | No. of Schools | Pupils on role on 31st March |
| I. <u>State Institution</u> | | | | |
| Higher Schools | 1 | 137 | 1 | 176 |
| Middle Schools | 2 | 274 | 2 | 331 |
| Normal classes | 2 | 37 | 2 | 44 |
| Boarding school | 1 | - | 1 | - |
| Artisen School | - | - | 1 | 39 |
| II. <u>Aided.</u> | | | | |
| Middle Schools (English) | 2 | 70 | 2 | 62 |
| Middle Vernacular | 52 | 1543 | 66 | 2208 |
| Lower Vernacular | 33 | 766 | 47 | 1216 |
| Night schools | 10 | 223 | 15 | 382 |
| Girls' schools | 14 | 207 | 16 | 251 |
| III. <u>Unaided.</u> | | | | |
| Middle schools | 5 | 138 | 9 | 250 |
| Lower schools | 10 | 257 | 13 | 390 |
| Girls' Schools | 6 | 65 | 7 | 101 |
| Night schools | 7 | 124 | 9 | 147 |
| Pathsalas | 42 | 686 | 39 | 734 |
| Maktabs | 12 | 88 | 15 | 166 |
| Total | 199 | 4605 | 245 | 6497 |

(Source : Hunter, A Statistical Account of Bengal, p.437)

The Bengal Administration Reports also quoted the reports of Richard Temple, "there is one good school of the status of a zilla (district) school, which has won many scholarships tenable in the colleges of Bengal, many middle schools of which some are supported by Jotedars; one female school for upper classes founded by Dwar Bakshi, a high native official; and several girls schools in the interior; a boarding school, where many youths of the Raja's kin and caste were boarded and educated; an Artisan school which may be called a technical institution of the lower class; and many primary schools"²³⁴.

A net work of schools and Pathshalas (primary schools) connected the entire state and measure was taken for proper supervision of education²³⁵. The rapid progress of education in the State from 1875-1880 and the increase of expenditure was shown in the following tables :

Table No-XII-A

| Class | 1879-80 | | |
|-------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------------|
| | Schools | Pupils | Average daily attendance |
| I. State Institution | | | |
| Higher class | 1 | 202 | 147 |
| Middle class Vernacular | 2 | 381 | 205 |
| Normal schools | 2 | 85 | 44 |
| Boarding | 1 | Nil | Nil |

/contd...

Table-XII-A contd.

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------------|
| II. Aided Institution | | | |
| Higher class English | 1 | 31 | 18 |
| Middle class English | 2 | 80 | 62 |
| Middle class vernacular | 94 | 3,591 | 2,805 |
| Lower class vernacular | 129 | 3,970 | 2,970 |
| Night schools | 25 | 661 | 490 |
| Girls' schools | 36 | 528 | 399 |
| Boarding | 1 | Nil | Nil |
| III. Unaided | | | |
| Middle Class English | 1 | 16 | 12 |
| Middle Class Vernacular | 4 | 128 | 90 |
| Lower Class Vernacular | 36 | 949 | 804 |
| Indegenous Pathshalas | 20 | 428 | 390 |
| Night Schools | 12 | 306 | 259 |
| Girls' Schools | 14 | 123 | 93 |
| Muktabs | 7 | 151 | 108 |
| Boarding | 1 | Nil | Nil |
| Total | 390 | 11,630 | 8,891 (sic) |

(Source : A. ARC - 1880-81, p.51.)

Table No : XII-B

| Year | 1875-76 | 1879-80 |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| Description | | |
| State | 7 | 6 |
| Aided | 177 | 289 |
| Unaided | 98 | 95 |
| Total | 282 | 390 |
| Amount of Expenditure | | |
| State | Rs. 42,591 | Rs. 60,685 |
| Private | Rs. 22,357 | Rs. 33,213 |
| | Rs. 64,948 | Rs. 93,898 |

Source : H.N.Choudhury, op.cit., p.318; AARC 1880-81, pp.53-58.

The above picture shows that within ten years the number of schools increased and towards the late 70s number of increase is somewhat very high. The financial liabilities of the State reveals the endeavour of the State to the cause of spreading education. A large sum of money was kept separate in the budget of the Education Department. The State took interest in spreading education in the less favoured area. The people's interest came to light from the amount of subscription acquired from the local people in the different parts of the State.

Interestingly enough there was a decrease in the number of schools in the State from 1880-1883. The decrease was evident both in the number of schools, strength of attendance, and the amount of total subscription also reduced. The total number of schools reduced from 390 in 1880 to 283 and pupils from 11,630 to 8,769 and private subscriptions from Rs. 33,273 to Rs. 10,251²³⁶.

One of the most important event in the field of education was the establishment of a female school in the capital town Cooch Behar, in 1891.²³⁷ It was a landmark in the history of women's education in Cooch Behar. It is not that Cooch Behar was without any girls' school before that date. But it was for the first time that any girls' school, prevailed upon the imagination of the royalty.

The school received direct patronage of Maharanee Sunity Devi. It was a very rare thing of that time that the girls were eager for education. In this respect Sunity Accademy played the most vital role towards the cause of women education²³⁸.

Maharanee Suniti Devi was directly involved in the affairs of this school. "The girl students were not only exempted from tuition fees and the cost of books, but were invited, on their success, to the Landsdown Hall almost every year, and were piled with sweets and prizes comprising 'useful books, nice cloths, plates, boxes and other fancy things'²³⁹. Nripendra Narayan took special attention in spreading education both for men and

women. / The education of the State took a rapid turn and many of the momentous changes took place since his installation to the throne in 1883. At the time of his coronation the number of Schools was 283 and the total expenditure on education amounted to Rs. 76,416 of which Rs. 18,020 was obtained from private subscription²⁴⁰. In the course of the next four years the number of schools gradually rose to 327 in 1887-88 with 9,297 students. The total expenditure on education came upto Rs. 81,144 in that year²⁴¹.

The year 1888 is another landmarking year in the history of higher education not only of the State itself but of the neighbouring districts of Bengal and Assam. In that year, in order to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of Queen Victoria, a College was established in Her name. A sum of about Rs. 25,000 was granted for the initial cost of house, furniture, books and apparatus, and sufficient provisions were made to meet the regular expenses for establishment of library and scholarship²⁴². From the very beginning the education was made free to all²⁴³.

The Victoria College was considered as a first grade college with Arts upto B.A. standard and was affiliated to Calcutta University and Science upto Intermediate course²⁴⁴. To encourage the student and to enhance the standard, the system of regular scholarship and other facilities were granted

to the students of Victoria College²⁴⁵. Gradually the M.A. and the Law Course was opened and this College became one of the leading institutions in the North Eastern India, particularly in North Bengal²⁴⁶.

Nripendra Narayan's attachment towards the Brahmos and his endeavour to develop the State's educational standard was evident by the fact that he invited Brojendra Nath Seal, the great scholar and eminent member of the enlightened group of Bengal. He was appointed principal of Victoria College in 1896²⁴⁷. Due to the active patronage of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, Brojendra Nath Seal attained stability, peace in mind and time for studious reflections²⁴⁸.

It was from Cooch Behar that Brojendra Nath Seal first acquired reputation abroad²⁴⁹. As Principal of Victoria College Brojendra Nath Seal devoted his attention to improve the standard of education and from a remote place like Cooch Behar the Victoria College earned the reputation of supplying brilliant students to the Calcutta University. Upto 1910 the education was free in the college and to the Cooch Behar state, half of Young Bengal is grateful for higher education²⁵⁰. Thus with the establishment of Victoria College, the vistas towards higher learning and intellectual development was gaining ground in Cooch Behar. The management of the institutions had been organised. The subordinate inspecting officers had done their

their works upto the satisfaction and brought the Education Department in a systematic form.

The appointment of Mr. E.E.Lewis, as the Superintendent of the State, marked a new era in the educational history of the State. He recommended separate budget to give extra stress for the benefit of Primary education. He also recommended improved rules for education organization and for its smooth work. Out of these recommendations of the Department, Higher and Primary, education continued to make steady progress.. He at the same time suggested special scholarship for the better education of the native youths²⁵¹. The Superintendent insisted on an elaborate system of accounts from all State schools, English as well as Vernacular, and rigorously enforced the remittance of all fee collection to the treasury month by month²⁵². The result yielded not only the steady and satisfactory progress of education but also all sense of alarm and insecurity had been removed. This development in education helped the people of Cooch Behar and a large number of youths from Bengal.

It is important to mention that during the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, the higher education had been concentrated to the capital town of Cooch Behar, but an attempt was made to scatter educational institutions in the villages and in semi urban localities. Entrance schools for higher education were established in the sub-divisions of Mathabhanga, Dinhata

and Mekhliganj in July 1890²⁵³. The Sub-divisional schools were raised in the status to afford the additional facilities to the native youths and for higher education of the interior subjects of the State. A ^{sum of} subscriptions, Rs. 25,000 was raised from the local Jotedars and public and a monthly grant was made from the State towards the expenses of these schools²⁵⁴.

Thus a net work of educational development continued in the State. In 1891-92 the growth of education showed in the Table No-XIII. There were 284 primary and Secondary schools in the State with a roll call and an average daily attendance of 8,863 and 5,646 respectively. There was an increase of 18 in the number of schools but a decrease of 29 and 161 in the nominal roll call and the average daily attendance of pupils, respectively. The cause of decrease was the out break of cholera, fever and influenza and the failure of the crops. One thing is to be noticed was that in-spite of these difficulties not a single institution was closed. On the other hand an increase of 18 schools and only a slight decrease of students may be taken as an indication that the people had began to realize the importance of education²⁵⁵.

Assuming the number of male children of school going age to be 15 percent of the total male population, the number of boys who ought to have been going to schools would amount 45,368. The State had enrolled 8,863 pupils of whom only 214 were girls.

Table No-XIII

| | 1890-91 | | | | 1891-92 | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| | No. of Insti- tutions | No. of pupils on 31st March 1891 | Average daily atten- dance | Monthly average | No. of Insti- tutions | No. of pupils on 31st March 1892 | Average daily atten- dance | Monthly average |
| I. State Schools | | | | | | | | |
| middle class | 13 | 833 | 505 | 744 | 13 | 809 | 488 | 739 |
| vernacular | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 13 | 833 | 505 | 744 | 13 | 809 | 488 | 739 |
| II. Grants-in-aid | | | | | | | | |
| Higher class | 3 | 410 | 305 | 385 | 3 | 385 | 267 | 376 |
| English | | | | | | | | |
| Middle class | 4 | 295 | 165 | 269 | 4 | 264 | 137 | 248 |
| vernacular | | | | | | | | |
| Middle class | 21 | 803 | 531 | 783 | 21 | 780 | 451 | 692 |
| vernacular | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 28 | 1,508 | 1,001 | 1,437 | 28 | 1,429 | 855 | 1,316 |

/contd...

Table XIII contd...

III. Primary.

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Upper Primary Schools | 29 | 1,102 | 724 | 1,009 | 29 | 1,033 | 693 | 1,010 |
| Lower Primary Schools | 108 | 3,377 | 2,187 | 3,108 | 111 | 3,324 | 2,092 | 3,163 |
| Night Schools | 25 | 525 | 331 | 496 | 23 | 458 | 302 | 339 |
| Girls Schools | 4 | 65 | 40 | 59 | 3 | 42 | 30 | 39 |
| Total | 166 | 5,069 | 3,282 | 4,672 | 166 | 4,857 | 3,117 | 4,551 |

IV. Private Schools.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Middle Class vernacular schools | 1 | 38 | 22 | 27 | 1 | 41 | 28 | 38 |
| Upper Primary Schools | - | - | - | - | 2 | 59 | 48 | 50 |
| Lower Primary Schools | 35 | 1,065 | 747 | 983 | 47 | 1,276 | 842 | 1,159 |
| Night Schools | 13 | 228 | 147 | 198 | 16 | 256 | 179 | 224 |
| Girls Schools | 3 | 37 | 22 | 29 | 4 | 50 | 36 | 45 |
| Indigenous | 4 | 64 | 48 | 65 | 1 | 21 | 9 | 18 |
| Muktabs | 3 | 50 | 33 | 40 | 6 | 65 | 44 | 58 |
| Total | 59 | 1,482 | 1,019 | 1,333 | 77 | 1,768 | 1,186 | 1,592 |
| Grand Total | 266 | 8,892 | 5,807 | 8,186 | 284 | 8,863 | 5,646 | 8,198 |

Source : Annual Administrative Reports, 1891-92, p.32.

Therefore 19 boys out of every hundred were then in schools in the State²⁵⁶. If we compare with Rajshahi Division the average number of school going children was only 12 out of hundred as was found from the report of the Director of Public Instruction in Bengal for the year 1889-90. The following table no. XIV would be evident in this connection.

Table No. XIV

| Districts | Male Population | No. of boys school going | No. of boys at school | % of boys at school going |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Dinajpur | 7,82,292 | 1,17,344 | 15,988 | 13.6 |
| 2. Jalpaiguri | 3,05,555 | 45,833 | 5,810 | 12.6 |
| 3. Rajshahi | 6,60,226 | 99,034 | 10,735 | 10.8 |
| 4. Rungpur | 10,67,701 | 1,60,155 | 15,704 | 9.8 |
| 5. Cooch Behar | 3,02,457 | 45,368 | 8,863 | 19.5 |

(Source : Annual Administration Report 1891-92, p.44)

The number of girls' going to school appeared very meagre. On the 31st March 1892, there were 7 lower primary girls' schools in the State with Sunity College (School) and Dinahata, Mekhliganj Girls' School. The total number of Middle Vernacular and Upper Primary Schools, was 310 during the year²⁵⁷. It is evident from the above figure that the girls' education was gradually developing but the total number of girls' student was

not worth mentioning.

The Census report of 1891 mentions "Since 1881 there had been a great expansion of literate class, both male and female. In 1881 the number of literate males was 16,305; in 1891 it came upto 24,986, the increase was 53 percent. In case of female, the number in 1881 was 231; in 1891 it rose upto 545 showing an increase of above 125 percent. The rate of increase had been more rapid here than the neighbouring British administered Districts"²⁵⁸.

Maharaja Nripendra Narayan was not only eager to foster education to the youths but also concentrated his attention for the upbringing of the adults to the level of general education. Accordingly Night Schools were opened with special care²⁵⁹. Mention should be made that the devotion of the Maharaja to the cause of adult education has been a reflection of modern mind. In the year 1891-92 there were 39 Night Schools in the State of which 23 were aided and 16 were unaided. These schools nearly covered the entire State. In the same year there were 714 pupils on the roll of the Night Schools and of them 478 attended daily on an average²⁶⁰.

// The education was extended to all classes of the society. Even in Jenkins school, out of 401, pupils 24 only belonged to the upper class of the society, 307 to the middle class and 70 to the lower class²⁶¹. It is evident from the fact that to

spread education, ~~spread education~~, no educational institution was categorically restricted to any particular class of the society.

In the spread of education the role of the Christian Missions should deserve special credit. In 1895 Mr. Lewis, the Superintendent of the State, invited missionary personalities from British India and accordingly Miss Lydia Megnuson with an associate arrived at Cooch Behar²⁶². She opened an orphan-age in the Cooch Behar town. Within a very short time a few more orphanages were opened. In these institutions both males and females got their education and in the future years trained pupils devoted themselves in the works of the missionary activities and for the cause of English education. In the capital town and in the Sub-divisions it opened its branches²⁶³.

At one time in the capital town there was only one Higher English School, the opening of missionary school shared the burden of pressure of the students eager to get entrance into Higher English School. The contribution of 'Swedish Mission' in the extension of education in the state was remarkable and remembered by the people of the State²⁶⁴. Mention should be made that ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ infusing the English education, brought by the European Missionaries, Maharaja Nripendra Narayan had his latent approval and without his support and assistance the English education in Cooch Behar could not develop.

During the last decade of the 19th century education made considerable progress. The number of student in the educational institutions increased considerably. The table no.XV given below corroborates the fact. In the year 5.9 percent of the population were returned as literates²⁶⁵. During the year under review (1900-01) there was in all 344 primary and secondary schools of all classes in the State. The average of pupils increased, one school to every 3.77 square miles in the State and the total number of students in 1901-02 rose to 12,115²⁶⁶.

The total male population of the Cooch Behar State in 1901 was 3,01,380. Taking the usually accepted 15 percent of this as the number of boys of a school-going age, it appears that the number of boys of that age was 45,207, of whom as a matter of fact, 11,208 boys, or 26.2 percent, have actually been attending school. The percentage of boys of a school-going age, receiving education in Cooch Behar, can be compared very favourably with similar percentages in the neighbouring British Districts, where it was almost uniformly 17 to 18 percent²⁶⁷. The figures, of course, refer exclusively to primary and secondary education. /table no.XVI .

As regards higher education the Victoria College continued to take an important role and as a result of which gradually this College was becoming over crowded by the students of the neighbouring British districts and as a consequence the College authority imposed restriction considering its limited accommodation in schools and also in boarding house. This was done for

Table No. XV

| Class | 1900-1901 | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| | No. of Institutions | No. of Pupils | average daily attendance |
| 1. State Institutions - | | | |
| Middle class Vernacular | 12 | 806 | 547 |
| Total | 12 | 806 | 547 |
| 2. Grants-in-aid-Schools - | | | |
| Higher class English | 3 | 442 | 302 |
| Middle class English | 9 | 330 | 239 |
| Middle class Vernacular | 18 | 993 | 647 |
| Total | 30 | 1765 | 1188 |
| 3. Primary Schools - | | | |
| Upper Primary | 23 | 928 | 695 |
| Lower Primary | 154 | 5072 | 3408 |
| Night Schools | 15 | 289 | 184 |
| Girls' Schools | 7 | 116 | 70 |
| Total | 199 | 6405 | 4257 |
| 4. Private Schools - | | | |
| Upper Primary | - | - | - |

/contd...

Table-XV contd...

| | | | |
|----------------|-----|-------|------|
| Lower Primary | 59 | 1872 | 1288 |
| Night Schools | 31 | 454 | 312 |
| Girls' Schools | 5 | 62 | 47 |
| Indigenous | - | - | - |
| Muktabs | 8 | 155 | 120 |
| Total | 103 | 2543 | 1767 |
| Grand total | 344 | 11519 | 7759 |

(Source : Annual Administrative Report for the year - 1900-1901, p.26)

Table No. XVI

| Districts | Total male population | Male population of school going age | No. of boys going at school | % of boys at schools to boys school going age |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Rajshahi | 7,17,947 | 1,07,691 | 19,386 | 18.0 |
| Dinajpur | 7,74,350 | 1,16,157 | 21,752 | 18.7 |
| Rungpur | 10,61,812 | 1,59,271 | 27,970 | 17.6 |
| Jalpaiguri | 3,64,659 | 54,698 | 11,239 | 20.5 |
| Cooch Behar | 3,01,380 | 45,207 | 11,208 | 24.7 |

(Source : AARC 1900-1901, p.26)

maintaining strict discipline and proper supervision of the students of the college²⁶⁸.

↳ Maharaja Nripendra Narayan had a secular vision in spreading education to the grass roots of the society. The lower classes of the society were given better opportunity irrespective of their caste, creed, race, religion and economic status. He was in favour of compulsory primary education to spread the literacy in the rural areas²⁶⁹.

In respects of higher education, he was with the view "I wish in other words, that in the State may be found every opportunity of any of my subjects to prosecute such studies as

he or his parents desire"²⁷⁰. This remarks showed his modernized attitude in the sphere of education.

The secular attitude of the Maharaja in respect of education may be enumerated. In the year 1891-92 out of 8,863 pupils reading in the different classes of schools in the State, 5,868 were Hindus and 2,863 Mohamedans. Out of which 5,572, comprising both the creed, were from lower strata of the society. The proportion of the Mohamedans population to the Hindus in Cooch Behar was 1 to 2.6. This proportion was fully borne out by the number of pupils of both creeds in schools of the State²⁷¹. This secular nature resulted an steady improvement of the State's education.

The increase of the students in the schools ultimately placed the State at the top position in comparison to the neighbouring British District. The following table no.XVII would reveal the fact.

The promulgation of the new regulation of the Calcutta University in the year 1909²⁷² to maintain a rigid standard of its affiliated institutions accentuated new arrangement of the educational institutions of Cooch Behar on a more organized footing. In order to keep affiliation of the institution, Maharaja Nripendra Narayan had tried to implement modern methods through reorganization of the schools and arrangements were made

Table No. XVII

| Districts | Male Population of School going age | Number of boys at school | Percentage |
|----------------|---|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. Rajshahi | 1,11,253 | 21,032 | 18.9 |
| 2. Dinajpur | 1,23,596 | 24,375 | 19.72 |
| 3. Rangpur | 1,68,766 | 33,849 | 20.05 |
| 4. Jalpaiguri | 63,432 | 12,530 | 19.75 |
| 5. Cooch Behar | 45,207 | 10,842 | 23.98 |

(Source : Annual Administration Report of the State of Cooch Behar for the year 1906-07, p.17)

for liberal grants to these institutions from the State exchequer. Efforts were also taken to strengthen the teaching staff and providing training to them. The teachers and supervisory staff had started compulsory training from the Kurseong Training Centre²⁷³. Thus, the British system of modernizing the educational institutions was truly followed by the English educated Maharaja Nripendra Narayan.

During the last days of the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, the principle of secularism was sufficiently followed in imparting and spreading education among the Muslims along with the Hindus. The Muslims, backward in education in comparison to the Hindus, had received fresh importance in the year 1910-11. This emphasis to spread the light of education among the Muslims augmented a sense of enthusiasm among this community. During

the year there were over 4,000 mohamedan pupils in various schools in the State and there can be no doubt that the mohamedan education was steadily progressing. Their success in the scholarship examination was also encouraging. In 1911-12 two candidates go through Matriculation Examination and 38 candidates of the said community sent for Middle Scholarship Examination out of which 18 got success and one topped the list²⁷⁴. Arrangements from the State exchequer was also made to give scholarship to the talented Muslim students. In the years mentioned 12 candidates both boys and girls of the Muslims community got their scholarship²⁷⁵.

Even in the last days of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, special grants were accorded to the development of Sudder Madrassa. Provision was also made for an additional grant for furthering the cause of Muslim education in the State²⁷⁶.

In spite of the efforts of the State the female education made a slow progress. As regards female education, Maharanee Sunity Devi remarked, "we have tried hard for education of our country women. But we find it uphill work for many years"²⁷⁷. In 1910-11 the number of girls' Schools were 19 excluding Sunity Academy and these had a strength of 352 pupils²⁷⁸. In spite of the increase in the number of girls student the progress was very slow.

The female education did not much widely spread owing to

the ostensible ground that the entire nineteenth century and even the first quarter of the twentieth century Bengal along with Cooch Behar experienced a rigidity and restriction of the women in comparison to their male counterparts. This may be a fact which made Maharaja's effort along with Maharanee Sunity Devi, into a bottle neck to the spread of education among the women in the State of Cooch Behar.

✓ Maharaja Nripendra Narayan not only devoted all his earnestness to raise the standard of general education but also took measures to spread Vocational Educational institutions. The Artizan school was opened for technical education but in 1887 it was converted into Public workshop²⁷⁹.

The developmental trend in the field of education continued. The returns for 1909-10 showed a total of 327 schools and 11,711 pupils, the corresponding figures for 1910-11 showed 341 schools and 12,913 pupils or an increase at 14 schools and 1202 pupils. The below mentioned table no.XVIII would reveal the increasing trends in the Education Department.

✓ The reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan witnessed an increase in the number of schools and students, and Cooch Behar appeared as a model state, especially in respect of education, among the Princely States of India. As a sequel to the educational policy during the last two decades of the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan the literacy had marked a steady progress. In

Table No. XVII

| Class | 1909-1910 | | | 1910-1911 | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | No. of Insti- tutions | No. of pupils on 31st March 1910 | Average daily atten- dance | No. of insti- tu- tions | No. of pupils on 31st March 1911 | Average daily atten- dance | Total Rs. An. P. | Total Rs. An. P. |
| I. State Institutions | | | | | | | | |
| Middle class Vernacular | 13 | 938 | 613 | 13 | 954 | 629 | 6420 6 2 | 6399 10 11 |
| Total | 13 | 938 | 613 | 13 | 954 | 629 | 6420 6 2 | 6399 10 11 |
| II. Grant-in-aid Schools | | | | | | | | |
| Higher class English | 3 | 520 | 376 | 3 | 624 | 437 | 16905 0 2 | 19594 8 0 |
| Middle class English | 11 | 507 | 321 | 11 | 539 | 363 | 6476 7 8 | 6642 13 3 |
| Middle class Vernacular | 14 | 690 | 400 | 15 | 687 | 458 | 3081 14 8 | 3342 15 6 |
| Total | 28 | 1717 | 1097 | 29 | 1850 | 1258 | 26463 6 6 | 29580 4 9 |

/contd...

Table XVII contd...

III. Primary Schools

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|----------|----------|--------------|----------|----------|
| Upper Primary | 29 | 1255 | 834 | 30 | 1415 | 1613 | 3705 | 0 | 0 | 4139 | 0 | 0 |
| Lower Primary | 131 | 4647 | 3281 | 127 | 4743 | 3568 | 10902 | 0 | 6 | 11466 | 10 | 0 |
| Night Schools | 10 | 168 | 109 | 9 | 184 | 122 | 362 | 0 | 0 | 282 | 8 | 0 |
| Girls' Schools | 6 | 113 | 74 | 6 | 110 | 80 | 153 | 0 | 0 | 168 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 176 | 6183 | 4298 | 172 | 6452 | 4783 | 15122 | 0 | 6 | 16956 | 2 | 0 |

IV. Private Schools

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|----------|--------------|-----------|----------|
| Middle class English | - | - | - | 2 | 121 | 88 | - | - | - | 949 | 10 | 0 |
| Middle class Vernacular | - | - | - | 1 | 78 | 52 | - | - | - | 32 | 0 | 0 |
| Upper Primary | 1 | 41 | 30 | - | - | - | 15 | 0 | 0 | - | - | - |
| Lower Primary | 75 | 2318 | 1630 | 84 | 2791 | 2089 | 1188 | 0 | 0 | 3797 | 0 | 0 |
| Night Schools | 20 | 319 | 203 | 22 | 366 | 275 | 254 | 0 | 0 | 378 | 0 | 0 |
| Girls' Schools | 9 | 94 | 52 | 9 | 119 | 96 | 91 | 0 | 0 | 105 | 0 | 0 |
| Muktabs | 5 | 101 | 82 | 9 | 182 | 146 | 231 | 0 | 0 | 338 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 110 | 2873 | 1997 | 127 | 3657 | 2746 | 3779 | 0 | 0 | 5599 | 10 | 0 |
| Grand Total | 327 | 11711 | 8005 | 341 | 12913 | 9416 | 51784 | 13 | 2 | 57635 | 11 | 8 |

(Source : Annual Report on Education - Cooch Behar for the year 1910-11, p.2)

1891 the number of literate both male and female was 25,531 whereas in 1911 the total literate persons, including male and female, rose upto 43,925, out of which 1659 were female. It proves that the enlightened policy of the Maharaja helped in increasing the percentage of literacy in the State²⁸⁰. Besides promoting the education in his own state he patronized many institutions in Bengal including Victoria Institution in Calcutta²⁸¹.

A summary observation of the above analysis of education, which emerged out as one of the basic facets of modernity, may be made. Upto 1863 the educational development, though laid down transitory step, had its little progress. During the time of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan's accession over the throne, there was practically no regular form of education in the State except of few Vernacular and a English medium School. The period from 1863 to 1983 the number of schools increased but there was actually no systematic method²⁸². The spectacular growth of education and literacy would have never been possible but for the positive drive of the enlightened Maharaja and his noble consort. His love for the mother tongue, not with-standing his English surroundings and education, was matched by a zeal for spreading the knowledge of the vernacular. The Royal family of Cooch Behar under the leadership of Maharaja Nripendra

Narayan and his educated wife Sunity Devi, imbibed the best spirit of the times, and tried to percolate it down to the subjects, mainly through rapid dissemination of education and culture.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. As regards ethnic identity of the people Tabagat-I-Nasiri, informs us that there were three non Indian Mongoloid tribes such as Koch (Kunch), Mech (Mej) and Tharu (Tiharu) in Northern Bengal. (Maulana, Minhaj-ud-din, translated from original persian manuscripts, By H.G.Raverty, Vol.I, (1881) Reprint, New Delhi, 1970, p.560; N.N.Vasu is of opinion that the two tribes Koch and Mech are said to have belonged to the same stock (Vasu, N.N., The Social History of Kamrupa, Vol.I, first Reprint, New Delhi, 1983, p.130); Their manners and customs are identical. Moreover, we learn from Gait that the Koches and Meches freely inter-married from early times (Gait, E.A., History of Assam, Third Revised Edition, Calcutta, 1963, p.48); Koch chief Hajo married his daughter to Hariya Mandal of Mech tribe and through this marriage Bishwa Singha, the first great king of Cooch Behar dynasty was born, Robinson, W.A., Descriptive History of Assam, Reprint, 1975, Delhi, p.252).
2. Hunter, W.W., A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol.X, 1876, Reprint, New Delhi, 1984, p.353.

3. Hodgson mentions that Bishwa Singha apostalised to Hinduism and the people were renamed Rajbansis; Journal of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, Vol.XVIII, Part II, July to Dec., 1849, p.705.
4. Bhupendra Nath Dutta mentions that the Koches of North Bengal used the title Rajbansis, were of Hindu origin, Dutta, B.N., Bharatiya Samaj Padhyati (Bengali), Second edition, Calcutta, 1953, p.94.
5. Hunter, W.W., op.cit., pp.346-358.
6. Ghosal S.C., History of Cooch Behar, Cooch Behar, 1942, p.119.
7. Ghosh, Ram Chandra, op.cit., Hitaishini Sabha, p.185-186.
8. Campbell, op.cit., p.396.
9. Mitra, A., Census - Cooch Behar:1951, Calcutta, 1953, p.XIII.
10. Hunter, op.cit., p.396.
11. Campbell, op.cit., p.185
12. "Afterwards, however, Mr. Mackleod desired that I should appoint Asmat-ullah as Dewan. To this I would not consent because, first, it is not the customs of the 'Raj' that the Dewan should be a muslim". Letter of Raja Harendra Narayan to The Vice President in Council, Fort William, 17th Dec., 1814, SRC, Vol.I, op.cit., p.85.
13. There were three kinds of marriage prevalent in the Koch or Rajbansi Tribes, Viz; (1) 'Gundhurba'; (2) 'Brahma'; (3) 'Pasua' or Dhoka; Hunter, op.cit., pp.374-376.

14. Sanyal, Charu Chandra, op.cit., p.10.
15. Ibid., p.10.
16. Ibid., p.10; Roy Girija Sankar, Uttar Bange Rajbansi Samajer Devdevi O Puja Parban, Unpublished thesis, North Bengal University, 1972, pp.22-23.
17. Sanyal Charu Chandra, op.cit., p.20.
18. Gazetteer Cooch Behar, Part I, Cooch Behar, 1918, p.109.
19. Deunia - a land lord owing twenty acres of land or more, did not usually plough that land himself but supervised cultivation work. He was the head of the village and advised in all matters. His Darighar is the village court. His duty is to receive any important person visiting the village.
20. Cooch Behar State Chowkidari Act, No.III of 1893, Cooch Behar State Press, p.I.
21. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, July 1872, No.210, p.225.
22. Ganguly K.C., Final Report on Survey and Settlement Operations, 1913-1927, Cooch Behar, 1930, p.13.
23. Ibid., p.13.
24. Cooch Behar Gazette, 1918, p.109.
25. Ibid., p.109.
26. Ibid., In the year 1912 the total number of Krishiprojas recorded under different grades of tenants and under-tenants in the State was 49,125, Ganguly, K.C., Final Report, op.cit., p.54.

27. Hunter, op.cit., p.396.
28. Choudhury Benoy Bhusan, "Agrarian Social Structure in Colonial India; Major trends in the Recent studies on the Themes", seminar paper at North Bengal University, 1987, p.20.
29. Vasu, Nirmal; Hindu Samajer Garan, Visva Bharati, 1356 B.S., p.143.
30. Roy, A.K., See "Some Notes on the Kshatriya Movement in North Bengal", in journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh; Vol.XX, No.1, April, 1975, Dacca, pp.47-71.
31. Ibid.
32. Mukherjee, Mahim Chandra, Circulars Orders And Notifications & C From May 1893 to December 1929, Vol.IV, part I, Cooch Behar Press, 1930, p.9.
33. Turner, Samuel, op.cit., p.2.
34. Letter from Norman Macleod, Commissioner of Cooch Behar to John Monckton, Acting Secretary, to the Govt. Secret Department, Dated 20th April, 1815, SRC, Vol.I, op.cit., p.338.
35. Ibid.
36. Amanatulla mentions that about a hundred boys and girls were sent for sale to Bengal from Assam and Cooch Behar. Each girl fetched a price varying from Rs. 17 to Rs. 15, but a Koch boy could realise Rs. 25 and a Kalita boy Rs. 50; Cooch Beharer Itihas, op.cit., p.226.
37. Turner, S., op.cit., p.11.

38. Martin Montgomery, Eastern India, Vol.V, Reprint, Cosmo Publication, Delhi, 1976, p.542; Hunter, op.cit., p.357.
39. Turner, S., op.cit., p.9.
40. Quoted in Hunter, W.W., op.cit., p.425.
41. Quoted in Choudhury, H.N., op.cit., p.546.
42. Hunter W.W., op.cit., p.392.
43. Gangulay, K.C., op.cit., p.16.
44. Munshi, Joynath, op.cit., p.73; Ahamed Amanatulla, op.cit., p.228.
45. Letter from Jenkins, G.G's Agent in N.E.F. to the Secretary to the Government of India, SRC, Vol.II, 24th February, 1841, p.96.
46. Ibid.
47. Majumder, Durgadas, District Gazetteers - Kuch Behar, Calcutta, 1977, p.56.
48. Brahmo Public Opinion, August 8th, 1878, p.228, (S.B.S.L)
49. Devi, Sunity, op.cit., p.53.
50. Ibid., p.97.
51. Ibid., p.156.
52. "Sunity Debi visited England with her husband, the Maharaja of Cooch Behar in the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebration in 1897 and made a number of subsequent visits. And thus broke the traditional purdah system of the Cooch Behar society", Borthwick, Meredith, op.cit., p.241.

53. A.A.R.C., 1909-10, p.3.
54. Ibid., p.3.
55. Mukherjee, Mahim Chandra, op.cit., Part II, pp.238-39.
56. A.A.R.C., 1908-1909, p.2.
57. Mukherjee, Mahim Chandra, op.cit., Part II, pp.238-39.
58. Hunter, op.cit., p.398.
59. Ibid., pp.399-400.
60. DasGupta, Asruman, "Krishak Samaj-o-Riner Daya". 1st year 1st issue, Cooch Behar Darpan, 1345 B.S., p.10.
61. This is a coloured cloth of 5 Cubits long and it hangs down upto the knees, the two ends of cloth are sewn together. It is an open cloth; Sunders, S.A., Survey And Settlement of Western Duars, 1889-95, Calcutta, 1895, p.49.
62. "The Urban centres had been developed in Haldibari, Mekhliganj, Tufanganj and Mathabhanga. From the census it is learnt that at Haldibari through which Eastern Bengal Railway runs showed an increase of population of 9.9 in Between 1891 to 1901. The increase of population can also be seen in the areas of Tufanganj, Dinhata but there was less increase in the areas of Mathabhanga and Mekhliganj. In 1921 the population of Cooch Behar town was 11,461". Census report, 1921, Vol.V, Part I, p.72.
63. Cited in Misra, B.B., The Indian Middle Class, Second Edition, Oxford University Press, 1983, p.125.
64. Turner, S., op.cit., p.11.

65. Proceedings of the Government of Bengal, General (Political) Department, February, 1864, No.55-57, (Appendix), p.6.
66. Hunter, W.W., op.cit., p.434.
67. Ganguly, K.C., op.cit., p.11.
68. Notes on the Resettlement of Land Revenue, By H.G.Twynam, Vice President, Regency Council, incharge of Settlement Department, August 12, 1923, p.2.
69. Proceedings of the Revenue Department, July, 1872, No.210, p.225.
70. AARC, 1906-1907, pp.2-3.
71. Ganguly, K.C., op.cit., p.9.
72. Ibid., p.9.
73. Ibid., p.13.
74. Cited in Choudhury, Harendra Narayan, op.cit., p.328.
75. Ibid., p.326.
76. Turner Sumuel, op.cit., p.9.
77. AARC, 1893-94, p.13.
78. Choudhury Harendra Narayan, op.cit., p.194.
79. AARC, 1893-94, p.13.
80. The Statesman, 20th Sept. 1911 (N.B.S.L).
81. Ghosh Ananda Chandra, Lecture in the Cooch Behar Hitaishini Sabha, Edited by Sashi Bhusan Halder, 1272 B.S., p.158.
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83. Ibid., p.10.
84. Ibid., p.10.
85. Choudhury Harendra Narayan, op.cit., p.338.
86. A.A.R.C., 1906-1907, p.203.
87. Ahamed Amanatulla, op.cit., p.295.
88. Turner Samuel, op.cit., p.143.
89. Ahamed Amanatulla, op.cit., p.296.
90. Registrar, A Short Historical Sketch of Cooch Behar, (Manuscript), Cooch Behar Royal Council, 1936, p.24.
91. Ganguly, K.C., op.cit., p.8. The important urban centres were the six Sub-Divisions- Dinhata, Mathabhanga, Haldibari, Mekhliganj, Tufanganj and the capital town Cooch Behar.
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93. Bexhill Chronicles, Sept. 23rd, 1911 (U.K) (N.B.S.L); In 1854 the last famine occurred but the state successfully dealt with the situation, Bandopadhyaya B.C., op.cit., p.92.
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103. Choudhury, H.N., op.cit., pp.253-254.
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111. Choudhury, H.N., op.cit., pp.354-355.
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140. Hunter, W.W., op.cit., p.389.
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148. AARC, 1890-91, pp.3-4.
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203. Ibid.,
204. Choudhury H.N., op.cit., p.403.
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210. Mazumdar Durgadas, op.cit., p.166.
211. Ibid., pp.166-167.
212. Chowkidari Act. 1893-94, No.III, Cooch Behar.
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241. AARC, 1887-88, pp.39, 41.
242. AARC, 1888-89, p.43.
243. AARC, 1888-89, p.43; Letter of H.H. the Maharaja of Cooch Behar, 28th July 1939, op.cit., pp.5-7.
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257. Ibid., p.42.
258. Cited in Choudhury, H.N., op.cit., p.148.
259. The first Night School was opened at Cooch Behar during the minority period of Nripendra Narayan in the month of Baisak 1272 B.S.; Ghosh Ram Chandra, op.cit., p.190.
260. AARC, 1891-92, p.41.
261. Ibid., p.49.
262. "Desh Bidesher Sambad" (News), Cooch Behar Darpan, 1st year, 9th issue, August 19th, 1345 B.S., p.109.
263. Ibid., p.109.
264. Ibid., p.109.
265. Mazumder, Durgadas, op.cit., p.176.
266. AARC, 1901-02, p.9.
267. AARC, 1900-01, p.27.
268. AARC., 1901-02, p.11.
269. AARC, 1907-08, p.14.
270. Ibid., p.14.
271. AARC, 1891-92, p.42.
272. AARC, 1908-09, p.17.

273. Ibid., p.17.
274. AARC, 1911-12, p.19.
275. Ibid., p.19.
276. AARC, 1911-12, p.26.
277. Devi Sunity, op.cit., p.241.
278. Annual Education Report of Cooch Behar, for the year 1910-11, p.2.
279. Choudhury, H.N., op.cit., p.338.
280. O'Malley, Census, 1911, Vol.V, Part II, p.76.
281. The Statesman, 20th Sept, 1911, (N.B.S.L).
282. Leaflet issued by H.H. Maharaja Jitendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur, 25th January, 1915.