

P R E F A C E

In the present work an attempt has been made to highlight the history of Cooch Behar state and its relations with the British from 1773 to 1839. Cooch Behar was the only native state situated in the North Eastern part of India. British contact with the state had a great impact on the region. There are so many works on the British policy and relations with the other native states on India. But Cooch Behar has not received sufficient attention of the Scholars. Recently some work has done on Cooch Behar's history of the earlier period; But the British era hitherto remains untouched.

I have selected this particular period of Cooch Behar's history because this period marks the most remarkable period of the development of British relationship with the state. The year 1773 was a transitional period in the history of Cooch Behar. The conclusion of the Anglo-Cooch Behar treaty in the year 1773 had a great bearing upon the state. Moreover, this treaty gave the East India Company the firm footing in the Eastern region and an opportunity for a new venture for trade and commerce with the Himalayan states which was the long cherished desire of the company.

The selection of the year 1839 had also a great importance both for the history of Cooch Behar and the East India Company. This is the year of the death of Maharaja Harendra

Narayan, last independent ruler of Cooch Behar who throughout his reign opposed the British overlordship. All the efforts of the British Government during his reign proved abortive. But after the death of this feudal Ruler the British had a free access over the state. Though British relationship with the state continued upto the Merger but I think the glamour of the relationship ends in the year 1839. Because from this time Cooch Behar became a friendly state to the British. Naturally, it was nothing but the continuation of the former policy towards the state. The British contact ultimately smoothed the transition of Cooch Behar to the threshold of modern age.

No authentic and systematic study on the period is available. Cooch Behar Select Records, Vol. I & II, Merger ^{Merger} and Chauvet's Report on Cooch Behar are the two valuable printed source for the history of the period. Amanatullah Ahmed's History of Cooch Behar (in Bengali), Cooch Behar state and its land Revenue Settlement by Harendra Narayan Choudhury are the two book available on the history of the state. Sarat Chandra Ghosal's History of Cooch Behar is the English translation of Amanatullah Ahmed. Dr. Surendra Nath Sen's Prachin Bangla Patra Samkalan (Collection of letters in Bengali) throws some light on the period. There are ample Records on the later period of the history of the state but it needs a separate study.

Paucity of source materials for such a regional study and prolonged search for it demanded a long time for the completion of the work.

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