

C h a p t e r    IV

Political History from 12th Century A.D. to 13th Century A.D.

There is no evidence to show the existence of the pāla rule in South-eastern Bengal in the early years. It is evident from the epigraphical sources that South-Eastern Bengal was possibly ruled by independent minor dynasties right from the last part of the Seventh Century A.D. We find that the dynasties of the Rātas, the Khadgas, Nāthas, the Devas, the Harikela rulers ruled chronologically in South-Eastern Bengal. They were followed by the Chandras who were at first probably the feudatories of the Harikela rulers and ultimately captured power and held their sway in South-Eastern Bengal from the last quarter of the 9th Century A.D. to 11th Century A.D. If we take into consideration the Bāghaurā and Nārāyanapur image inscription of Mahīpāla II as evidence of the existence of the Pāla rule in South-Eastern Bengal, it seems obvious that the Pāla rule spread to that regions between the reign of Mahīpāla I and Mahīpāla II stretching the period from 1043 A.D. - 1075 A.D. The foreign invasions of the Chola King Rājendrachola and the Kalachuri King Karna appear to have seriously affected the power and prestige of the Chandra rulers and cleared the way for the establishment of the

Pāla rule in the South-Eastern Bengal for some times at least and during the time of the weakness of the Pāla power as a consequence of the Kaivarta revolt and subsequent establishment of the Kaivarta rule in Northern Bengal in the last quarter of the 11th Century A.D., the Varmans established their sway in the South-Eastern Bengal.

### T H E V A R M A N S

There is probably no doubt that the Varmans of East Bengal succeeded the Chandras. Among the valuable sources of information which throw light on the history of the dynasty, mention should be made of the Belāva Copper plate of Bhojavarman<sup>1</sup>, the Bhuvaneśvara plate of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva<sup>2</sup>, the Vajrayoginī copper plate of Sāmalavarman<sup>3</sup> and the Sāmant<sup>u</sup> sāra<sup>h</sup> copper plate of Harivarman<sup>4</sup>. The Belāva copper plate of Bhojavarman records the purāṇic genealogy of Yadu from Brahmā through Atri, Chandra, Buddha, Purūravas, Āyu, Nahusha and Yayāti. There is also the reference to Hari in the family of Yadu who appeared as Kṛishṇa. The relatives of Hari were the Varmans who dominated Simhapura.

The Varmans of South-Eastern Bengal claim to have descended from an offshoot of the Yādava family of Simhapura. There is diversity of opinion among the scholars about the identity of the Simhapura. R.D. Banerjee has drawn attention to the Prasasti of Lakhāmaṇḍal which refers to eleven generations of Chandragupta, the Prince of Jalandhara who claims to belong to the Yādavas of Lunar race reigning at Singhapura<sup>5</sup>. This Singhapura is undoubtedly the Seng-ha-po-lo of Yuan Chwang situated to the North side of the salt range in the Punjab<sup>6</sup>. Hultzsch has pointed out a dynasty of Varmans who ruled in Simhapura in Eastern India<sup>7</sup>. The Kamarti (Ganjam dist.) plate of Chandravarman and Bṛihatprotha (in Palakonda Tāluka, Vizāgāpaṭam) grant of Umāvarman reveal the existence of a line of Kings in Kalinga who resided in Simhapura or Sihapura<sup>8</sup>. The character of these plates are early Southern type belonging to the 4th or the 5th Century A.D. According to Hultzsch, this Simhapura is, perhaps, identical with the modern Singupuran between Chicacola and Narasannapeta<sup>9</sup>. On the otherhand R.D. Banerjee has identified the place with Sihapura of Mahāvamsa which was situated in Lāṭa (Rādha) between Vaṅga and Magadha which is generally identified with Singur in the Hoogly district<sup>10</sup>. But if we analyse the identification critically, it appears that the first is too far away and there is

no evidence to show its existence after the 7th Century A.D.<sup>11</sup>. The third is only known from the legendary account of Vijayasimha, contained in Mahāvamsa which can hardly be accepted as sober history. The Kingdom of Simhapura in Kalinga appears to have existed as early as the fifth Century A.D. and as late as the 12th Century A.D. It is known that two Kings of Kalinga, Mahārājā Chandravarman and Mahārājā Umāvarman were ruling between 350 - 550 A.D. and they issued grants from Simhapura<sup>12</sup>. The identification gains further ground from the fact that the Varman probably came to Bengal in the train of Kalachuri Karṇa's invasion of Vāṅga. It appears from sources that Karṇa's father seems to have attacked South-Eastern Bengal from that region, It is likely that the Varmans accompanied Karṇa and stayed in Bengal and in an opportune moment carved out independent Kingdom for themselves. So the probability is in favour of the identification of the place with Simhapura in Kalinga. D.C. Ganguly, however points out that Simhapura may be placed somewhere in Eastern Bengal and be even regarded as the Capital of the Varmans. He further adds that there is nothing in the Velāva grant to locate it outside Bengal<sup>13</sup>.

The Varmans came into prominence in the political scene of South-east Bengal by supplanting the Chandras in the last part of the 11th Century A.D. When the armies of Rājendrachola led an expedition against Bengal about 1023 A.D. - 1024 A.D.<sup>14</sup>, they found on the throne of East Bengal a King called Govindachandra apparently belonging to the Chandra dynasty of Vikramapura. This is supported by a statement in the life of Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna Atīsa, compiled by late Sarat Chandra Das from Tibetan sources<sup>15</sup>. According to this work, Dīpaṅkara was a contemporary of the King Bhū-indra-Chandra of Vaṅgāla. The adult life of Dīpaṅkara as gathered from this source, seems to have fallen between 1000 A.D. to 1022 A.D. and it may be assumed that Bhū-indra-Chandra was <sup>the</sup> a ruler of Vaṅgāla during this period. The Tibetans seem to have referred the Govindachandra as Go-indra-Chandra and substituting 'bhū' for its equivalent 'go', we get the modified Tibetan appellation 'Bhū-indra-Chandra'. Hence the reign of Govindachandra in Vaṅgāla is to be assigned to the last quarter of the 11th Century A.D. But in the next quarter, we find the Varmans established in the same region and issuing copper plate grants from the same capital, as is evident from the Belāva copper plate

and others. Thus the Chandras appear to have been supported in Vāṅga by the Varmans not long after the Chola raids in 1023 - 24 A.D. In connection with this, we have to take note of the Rewa stone inscription<sup>16</sup> of Karṇa dated in the Kalachur<sup>ni</sup> year 800 corresponding to 1048 - 49 A.D. It is indicated in the verse 23 of the record that one of the earliest exploits of Karṇa took place after his accession in 1041 A.D. It has been pointed out that<sup>17</sup> the ships of the King of Eastern country being driven against the peaks of the mountains of his (Karṇa's) elephants, by the force of the tempest arrogance, cracked and sank into the sea of Karṇa's troops<sup>17</sup>. V.V. Mirashi has rightly pointed out<sup>18</sup> that this records the end of the Chandra line of Kings in Vāṅga where either Govindachandra or his successor came into conflict with the forces of Karṇa and lost his life. His point is that Vajravarman was put on the throne of Vikramapura and Karṇa's daughter Virasrī was given in marriage to his son Jātavarman to cement the alliance. N.K. Bhattasali has pointed out that it was Jātavarman who appears to have rendered useful service to Karṇa and so he was put on the throne<sup>19</sup>. As this is the first victory of the reign of Karṇa, so it would not be unreasonable to put it soon after Karṇa's accession in 1041 A.D.

Naturally the date of the fall of the Chandra dynasty and the date of the installation of the Varman family in Vikramapura may thus be put about 1042 A.D. Belāva copper plate grant of Bhojavarma is only the source which provides us with the genealogy of the Kings of the Varman dynasty. The way in which it analyses the conquests of Jātavarman leaves any doubt that it was Jātavarman who laid the foundation of the independent dynasty of the Varman and his reign marked the epoch of the greatness of his family. Vajravarman, the first ancestor of the <sup>d</sup>ynasty, mentioned in the grant, is not referred as a King but he is praised as a brave warrior, a poet among the poets and a scholar among scholars. R.D. Banerjee has pointed out that Vajravarman was probably the first King who captured <sup>It</sup> <sub>^</sub>arikela or Chandradvīpa and set up a new Kingdom of his own and his son Jātavarman extended the empire and thereby he may be held as the real founder of the Yādava dynasty<sup>20</sup>. D.C. Ganguly has supported the view and pointed out, on the basis of the verse 6 of the Belāva plate that Vajravarman conquered Eastern Bengal<sup>21</sup>. But there is nothing in the record which can be taken to mean his conquest of Eastern Bengal. In this connection, we may rightly point out that R.D. Banerjee had formerly stated

that there<sup>vs</sup> nothing to show that Vajravarman was a King  
 himself<sup>22</sup>.

There are reference to the conquests of Jātavarman in the verse 8 of the Belāva copper plate of Bhojavarman which runs as follows "He spread his paramount sovereignty, by eclipsing (even) the glory of Pṛithu, son of Vena, marrying Vīrasrī (daughter) of Karṇa, by extending his dominion over the Āngas, by humiliating the dignity of Kāmarūpa, by bringing to disgrace the strength of the arms of Divya, by damaging the fortune of Govardhana, and by vesting wealth in Brāhmaṇas versed in the Vedas" <sup>23</sup>.

Now the reference to Karṇa whose daughter Vīrasrī was married to Jātavarman and reference also to Divya who was humbled down by Jātavarman enable us to fix the date of Jātavarman with some amount of certainty. It is evident that he was a contemporary of the Kalachuri King Karṇa (1041-70 A.D) and also of Vīrahapāla III (1058 - 75 A.D.) who married another daughter of Karṇa. He was also a contemporary of the Kaiivarta chief Divya and of Mahīpāla II (1075 - 1080 A.D.).

So the rise of Jātavarman may be placed some time between 1055 - 1073 A.D.

Among the enemies defeated by Jātavarman, we can easily identify Divya who was the Kaivarta leader and defeated Mahīpāla in a revolt. R.D. Banerjee has analysed that Jātavarman defeated two Kings of the name of Divya and Govardhana and established himself in the Aṅga<sup>24</sup>. But the verse in the Rāmacharit does not mention it. There is a controversy among the scholars about how Jātavarman came into conflict with Divya and subsequently defeated him. Perhaps a reminiscence of the fight between Divya and Jātavarman is preserved in the Nālandā stone inscription.

It relates about an ascetic of Somapura (Pāhārpur in Rājshā<sup>h</sup>i dist.) that "when his house was burning (being) set on fire by the approaching armies of Vaṅgāla, he attached (himself) to the pair of lotus feet of the Buddha (and) went to heaven". It would then appear that Jātavarman invaded Northern Bengal<sup>26</sup>. The above view has been refuted by the statement of A.K. Maitreya that Divya might have attacked Vaṅga after his occupation of Varendrī and so it might have offered an opportunity to Jātavarman to defeat him in a battle<sup>27</sup>.

Now it appears that Jātavarman took full advantage of the anomaly and confusion that arose after the revolt and carved out an independent Kingdom for himself. Regarding the conquest of Āṅga country by Jātavarman which was certainly under the possession of the Pālas, it appears that he fought both the Pālas and Divya and it was by dint of his victory over both that he probably carved out an independent Kingdom for himself in Eastern Bengal. It is also probable that he first set up an independent Kingdom in Eastern Bengal and then turned his arms against them. The Kāmarūpa prince with whom he had entered into struggle, evidently leading to no results, cannot be definitely identified. D.C. Sircar holds that Jātavarman was a close relative of Vīrahapāla III of the Pāla dynasty and probably he was appointed a governor of Āṅga under Vīrahapāla III and it may be that he launched a campaign against Divya as a general of the Pālas<sup>27</sup> a. According to H.C. Ray, the Kāmarūpa prince may be identified with one of the Predecessors of Vallavadeva whose Assam plates are dated in Saka 1107<sup>28</sup>. The identification of Govardhana whose dignity was crippled by Jātavarman has been given by R.G. Basak. According to him, he may be identified with the father of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva, the Prime Minister of Harivarman<sup>29</sup>.

The view has been supported by Dr. H.C. Ray and R.D. Banerjee. But there is some difficulties in accepting the view and there is no sound basis of the inference. Mr. Banerjee has also made an alternative suggestion that Govardhana may be the ruler of Kausāmbī who helped Rāmapāla in his fight against Bhīma and his name, as a result of copyist's mistake, occurs as Dvorapavardhana<sup>30</sup>. Kausāmbī was the tract east of the Bhāgīrathī on the West and South of modern Calcutta<sup>31</sup>. The Varman Kingdom thus spread upto the Bhāgīrathī in the West, while on its East was the Meghnā.

R.C. Majumdar has pointed out that "It is difficult to believe that Jātavarman, a petty chief coming from outside, could have undertaken all these military expeditions on his own account". It has been suggested that Jātavarman accompanied the Kalachuri King Karṇa on his Bengal expedition. It would probably be more reasonable to think that he was a follower of both Gāṅgeyadeva and his son Karṇa. R. D. Banerjee has suggested that Vajravarman accompanied one of the foreign conquerers of Bengal, viz. Rajendra Chola, Jayasimha II or Gāṅgeyadeva<sup>32</sup>. P.L. Paul has even identified Jātavarman with the 'illustrious Jata' who is said in the Rewa inscription of Malayasimha to have helped Karṇadeva

in vanquishing foes<sup>33</sup>. Gāṅgeya claims to have defeated the rulers of both Āṅga and Utkala and Karṇa is said to have exercised some sorts of supremacy over Gauḍa, Vaṅga and Kalinga<sup>34</sup>. According to the Rewa stone inscription, Karṇa achieved complete victory over a King of an Eastern country, probably Vaṅga. If we assume that Jātavarman was the ruler of Simhapura in Orissa, it is reasonable to conclude that he might have joined the great Kalachuri rulers in their Eastern expeditions and ultimately carved out an independent Kingdom for himself in Eastern Bengal by supplanting the Chandras<sup>35</sup>.

Nothing is known about the length of his reign. There is also a problem about the name of the successor of Jātavarman. According to Belāva copper plate, Sāmalavarman appeared just after him<sup>36</sup>. But the Vajrayoginī plate of Sāmalavarman and the Sāmantasāra plate of Harivarman<sup>37</sup> raise doubts and make it reasonable to conclude that Harivarman, another son of Jātavarman succeeded him on the throne. The Vajrayoginī plate of Sāmalavarman mentions the achievements of Harivarman before those of him. So it may be safely presumed that Harivarman came to power before Sāmalavarman. In spite of the burnt and illegible condition of the

Sāmantasāra plate of Harivarman, it appears that Harivarman should be placed before Sāmalavarman. N.N. Vasu who first edited the plate, informed that it was issued from Vikramapura and belonged to the reign of Paramesvara, Paramavaishṇava, Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājadhirājādhirāja Harivarman and his father's name was probably Jyotirvarman<sup>38</sup>. But later on N.N. Vasu changed his reading to Jātavarman. N.K. Bhattasali also reads the name of Harivarman's father Jātavarman<sup>39</sup>. P.L. Paul who also examined the plate supported the view of N.K. Bhattasali<sup>40</sup>. If we accept this, it would then appear that Harivarman and Sāmalavarman were brothers and Harivarman succeeded Jātavarman and Sāmalavarman is to be placed after him.

Now, the absence of the name of Harivarman in the Belāva plate cannot be correctly explained. There is a veiled allusion to Harivarman in the verse 3 of the Belāva plate as stated by R.D. Banerjee and he has clearly hinted at in the statement that Vīrasrī and Hari many times manifested themselves in person in the dynasty. If it is true then why the scribe of the Belāva plate did not clearly mention the name of Harivarman in correct order of succession. It may be that the relation between Harivarman and Sāmalavarman was not at all cordial and that might have led the latter's son to omit the name of Harivarman.

The name of Harivarman is also found in the Bhubanesvara inscription of Bhaṭṭabhavadeva<sup>41</sup> who served as the minister for War and peace. Two Buddhist manuscripts copied respectively in his 19th<sup>42</sup> and the 39th<sup>43</sup> regnal years preserve the name of Harivarman. After the date in the colophon of the manuscript copied in the 39th year there are three verses written in a different hand which inform us that when 46 years of Harivarman's reign had elapsed the manuscript was five times recited in seven years. This shows that Harivarman ruled for at least 46 years. So it may be presumed that Harivarman ascended the throne in 1073 A.D. and ruled upto 1127 A.D.<sup>44</sup>.

Harivarman ruled in Eastern Bengal and his capital was at Vikramapura. It may be that Vikramapura was captured from the Chandras, but when it was captured is not known for certain. It is known from the Rāmcharit that the troops of Rāmapāla advanced from the South of the Ganges to the North in order to fight with the K<sup>a</sup>ivarta Chief Bhīma. If it is so then the South-Eastern Bengal was under the possession of Rāmapāla and it is probably for that reason that the author of Sabdapradīpa held Rāmapāla as 'Vaṅgesvar'<sup>a</sup>. Again the name Of Hari, the friend of Kaiivarta Chief Bhīma, is mentioned in

the Rāmacharit. It may be that he was Harivarman. But the son of Rāmapāla was successful in breaking the ties between Hari and Bhīma and then Rāmapāla entered into friendship with Hari. It is held in the Rāmacharit that a King of the Varman dynasty in the East propiciated the Pāla King in order to achieve his own ends. This King of the Varman dynasty was no other than Harivarman. It may be assumed from the above that Harivarman came into prominence in the political scene of East Bengal taking advantage of the struggle between the Kaivartas and the Pālas<sup>45</sup>.

Reference should be made about the conquest of Harivarman. On the basis of the verse 15 of the Bhubanesvara prasasti of Bhaṭṭabhavadeva, N.G. Majumdar has inferred that either Harivarman or his son made himself the master of Utkala by overthrowing the Nāgavaṃśī Sindas ruling from Bārasūra in Bastār in Central Provinces in the 11th Century A.D.<sup>46</sup>. He further has inferred on the basis of certain verses in the Rāmacharit that Rāmapāla came into conflict with Harivarman or his son somewhere in Orissa<sup>47</sup>. The view that Harivarman or his son ruled in Orissa is practically based on the stone inscription of Bhaṭṭabhavadeva in Orissa.

The above view may be refuted on various grounds.

Firstly, Orissa proper was never ruled by the Nāgavamsī rulers<sup>48</sup> and Rāmapāla met a Somavanisī Kesārī ruler in Orissa. Secondly, there is nothing in the record to connect Harivarman and Bhavadeva in Orissa. The inscription was originally fixed on the temple of Ananta - Vāsudeva at Bhuvaneśvara in the Puri district in Orissa and that led the scholars to believe that the pious construction referred in the inscription was located somewhere in the same place. P. Acharya has proved with cogent argument that there is no reason to suppose that the stone slab containing the inscription was ever fixed in any temple there<sup>49</sup>. So on the basis of the explanation of P. Acharya it would be reasonable not to regard Harivarman or his son as the ruler of Orissa until more positive evidences are available to us. Thirdly, the verse in question has been differently enumerated by N.G. Majumdar who held that Nāgas were defeated by Bhavadeva and we may locate their territory near Eastern Bengal and more reasonably identify the Nāgas of the verse with Nāgās of Assam hills<sup>50</sup>. Fourthly, D.C. Bhattacharyya has argued that the verses 26 - 27 of the inscription show that the temple of Bhavadeva on which it was fixed could not be in Rādha and suggests that it was possibly at Vikramapura<sup>51</sup>.

Now the reign of Harivarman cannot be complete unless a few words are mentioned about Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva, the Brāhmaṇa minister of Harivarman <sup>who</sup> has left a long account of his family consisting of seven generations in the stone inscription. The family was settled in the village of Siddhala in Rāḍha. The grand father of Bhavadeva was Ādideva who was the minister of the King of Vaṅga. The name of the King is not mentioned and he has been identified as Jātavarman of the Varman dynasty. Abdul Momin Choudhury held that he was probably the King of the Chandra dynasty. Govardhana, the father of Bhavadeva was a great scholar and warrior and his official position is not known to us. Bhavadeva himself was the Minister for war and peace in the Court of Harivarman. Bhavadeva was remarkable for his personality, statesmanship, <sup>Scholarship</sup> and for his aptitude in warfare<sup>52</sup>.

We hardly know anything about the circumstances which led to the rise of Sāmavarman, another son of Jātavarman to the throne. The name of Sāmavarman is preserved in the genealogical account of the Vaidik Brāhmaṇas who are said to have migrated to Bengal from Madhyadeśa during his reign, though according to one version of the story, it occurred during the reign of Harivarman. According to most of the genealogical books of the Vaidika Brāhmaṇas, the first of

their line came to Bengal at the invitation of Sāmalavarman in Śaka 1001 (= 1079 A.D.)<sup>53</sup>. This date is correct within half a Century, as Sāmalavarman can reasonably be placed in the first half of the 12th Century A.D. Sāmalavarman married Trailokyasundari alias Mālavadevī, who was the daughter of Jagaddevī, son of Paramāra Udauāditya, the King of Mālwa and rival of Kalachuri Karṇa<sup>54</sup>.

Sāmalavarman was succeeded by Bhojavarman, his son by his wife Mālavadevī and the Belāva plate was issued in the 5th year of his reign from Jayaskandhavāra situated at vikramapura. The Belāva plate does not mention any achievements of Bhojavarman.

It has been stated in the Belāva grant that land was granted in the village of Upyalikā belonging to the Kausāmbī Aṣṭagaccha Khaṇḍala Maṇḍala in Paunḍrabhukti. The appearance of the name Paunḍrabhukti does not mean that Northern Bengal was included within the dominion of the Varmans. According to D.C. Sircar, this Kausāmbī can hardly be equated with Kausāmbā of the Rajshahi district, but Paunḍrabhukti where the proposed land was granted by Bhojavarman extended to the South-Eastern part of Bengal in 12th Century A.D. R.C. Majumdar has pointed out that it may be more reasonably concluded on the basis of

the sources of information that the Kingdom of the Varmans probably confined to Eastern Bengal with Vikramapura as its Capital<sup>55</sup>.

The Varmans were the followers of Vishnu which is proved by the reference of 'Vishnu Chakra Mudrā' in line 48 of the Belāva copper plate. They were the staunch supporters of the Vedas and replacement of the Buddhist dynasty of the Chandras by the Orthodox<sup>c</sup> Brāhmanical family of the Varmans was fully in keeping with the spirit of the time. It may not be a mere coincidence that the two Buddhist ruling dynasties of Bengal, viz, the Pālas and the Chandras were overthrown by the Senas and the Varmans who were the followers of the Orthodox Brāhmanical faith within a Century.

Regarding the downfall of the Varmans, there is no reference to the ousting of the Varman<sub>n</sub>s from Vaṅga in the inscriptions of the Sena Kings. This is an inexplicable gap in our knowledge of the history of East India of the period. In the Deopārā plate, Vijayasena claims to have conquered or captured quite a number of Kings. The issue of his Barrackpur grant from Vikramapura, the Capital of the Chandra and Varman Kingdoms, point to the fact that Vaṅga was also included in his conquests.

In the verse 21 of the Deopārā plate<sup>56</sup> the following Kings are <sup>said</sup> to have been imprisoned by Vijayasena :  
Nānya, King of Mithila, 'Vira, King of Koṭāṭavī, Vardhana,  
 King of Kausāmbī and Rāghava, identified with the King of  
Kalīnga who ruled from 1156 - 1170 A.D. N.N. Vasu doubts the  
 identification<sup>57</sup>.

It is held that Vaṅga was snatched from the Varmans and annexed by Vijayasena<sup>58</sup>, but the name of Vaṅga King is not referred in the plate of Vijayasena. We may seek a clue to the identification of Rāghava of the Deopārā plate and in case of such identification the mysterious and hitherto unexplained verse 14 of the Belāva plate comes to our help. The difficulty in its proper interpretation lies in the expression of verse which have been read variously<sup>59</sup>. N.K. Bhattasali inclined to read it as 'Sankāsv-a-lank-ādhipah' and translated the verse in the way "Oh, fie ! How painful ! The world is bereft of heroes today. Has this trouble of Rākshasas appeared again ? May Alankādhipa (Viz. opposite of Lankādhipa, Rama or Raghava) fare well during His apprehended danger" !

We have to remember that the Pālas had lost complete control over Bengal, South of the Ganges during the period, but they commanded respect as the past emperors East India.

Vijayasena, newly risen to power in Rāḍha, was eager to strike North and East and make himself the undisputed master of Bengal. He had already gathered formidable forces and everybody in Bengal expected that sooner or later the blow would fall. The Belāva plate granted land on the East bank of the Bhāgīrath<sup>60</sup> and it appears to have been granted at the period of Sānkā or apprehended danger. The favour of Rāmapāla of the old imperial line was sought against the formidable force of Vijayasena and Rāghava, probably a scion of the Varman line, appears to have been the leader of the Varman Kingdom of the period. In the verse III of the Belāva plate, it has been stated that Hari manifested many times in the Varman line. The first was Kṛṣṇa. The second was Harivarman and the third might be varman chief Rāghava who <sup>ω</sup>ielded all <sub>^</sub>power during the period. Vijayasena first attacked on the Kausāmbī King Govardhana who was probably the Sāmanta of the Varman King and this dragged the Varman into war with Vijayasena. Rāghava, the leader of the Varmans being defeated, became a prisoner. Thus fell the Kingdom before the onslaught of Vijayasena<sup>61</sup>.

#### THE DEVA DYNASTY

During the period of the decline of the Sena power as a result of the Muslim invasion, a line of Kings of the Deva

dynasty flourished in the political scene of Eastern Bengal. The history of the family is known from the Mehār copper plate<sup>62</sup> the Sobhrampur copper plate<sup>63</sup>, the Chittagong copper plate<sup>64</sup> of Dāmodaradeva and the Ādāvādi copper plate<sup>65</sup>, the Pākamoḍā copper plate<sup>66</sup> of Daśarathadeva. The family is said to have descended from the moon and was the follower of the Vaishṇava cult which is evident from the representation of <sup>Vishnu</sup> or Garuda or of Mādhava overpowering Chānūra in the Mehār copper plate of Dāmodaradeva. The Vaishṇava faith of the royal dynasty to which Dāmodara belonged is evident from the name as well as those of his three predecessors<sup>67</sup>. It may be assumed, as N.G. Majumdar held, that the dynasty "professed the Vaishṇava faith like Varmans and the Senas"<sup>68</sup>. The Deva dynasty which we have already discussed flourished in Samatata region under Śāntideva in 720 A.D. The dynasty continued till the end of the rule of Kāntideva in 825 A.D. This dynasty was supplanted as noticed earlier by the Chandras of Harikela. After that we have no record to suggest the continuation of Deva line. It is only in the 2nd half of the 12th Century that we come across of the existence of a group of rulers starting from Purushottama having the Surname of Deva, though all the dynasties bore the title Deva and ruled over the same regions and we feel tempted to bracketed them under the same Deva family, we have no sources of information to arrive at any definite conclusion in this respect.

It is possible to form the genealogical list of the dynasty from the sources available to us.

Purushottama  
 /  
 Madhumathanadeva<sup>69</sup>  
 /  
 Vāsudeva  
 /  
 Dāmodaradeva  
 /  
 Daśarathadeva

It has been stated in the Sobhrampur copper plate that the dynasty sprang from the 'moon' and from whom sprang the line of Purushottama, the first ruler of the Deva family. In the Chittagong plate no phrases are used indicating the kingly position of Purushottama. In the Mehār plate he is introduced as a headman of the Deva family, 'Dev-ānvaya-Grāmanī' phrase actually the same as 'Dev-ānvaya-Kamala-Vikāśa-bhāskara' applied to King Daśarathadeva in his Ādābādi plate<sup>69</sup> a. It is not unlikely that from the position of a Grāmanī, Purushottama's son Madhusūdana rose to the eminence of a King. Therefore, it is reasonable to hold that Purushottama was only a grāmanī and not a ruler. His son Madhumathana is called 'Lord of the earth.' and Deva-Vāms-Odadh-Indū, viz, 'Moon in the ocean of the Deva dynasty' and is credited with having 'snatched away

the wealth of the enemies in war'. These epithets distinctly show that Madhumathana waged successful wars against his contemporaries and carved for himself a principality. He is called 'nripati' in the Chittagong plate. His son Vāsudeva is also called 'Lord of the earth' and a great 'archer'. It is evident from the Mehār plate that he was 'versed in all the śāstras and foremost in military skill'. In the Chittagong plate, he is described as one 'whose feet were rubbed with the foreheads of princes bowing down to him in homage'. It is evident that Vāsudeva imposed his authority over the neighbouring chiefs and thus led the way for the rise of Dāmodaradeva, born of his queen Mitrādevī. Dāmodaradeva ascended the throne in 1153 Saka or 1231 A.D. and in the 1165 Saka or 1231 A.D, his third (Chittagong) copper plate was issued. He ruled probably from C 1230 = C 1255 A.D.<sup>69 b</sup>. Dāmodara was 'well versed in polity' and bore the title of 'Gajapati'. He is said to have caused 'contraction (or dejection) to the lotus like faces of heroic enemy Kings'. In the Chittagong plate, he is called 'overlord of all Kings' and in verses 4 and 5 of the same plate he is said to have defeated many Kings and brought them under subjection. In the Mehār plate also he bore the title of 'Gajapati' and probably in allusion to it, in verse 6, his 'column of the best

elephants, well equipped in battle array' is highly spoken of. In the Mehār plate he assumes the title of 'Arirāja Chānūra Mādhava'. The editors of the Mehār plate have pointed out that this biruḍa 'cannot but remind us of similar biruḍas assumed by Viśvarūpasena<sup>69 c</sup> in his inscription and applied by them to their predecessors - Vijayasena, Vallālasena and Lakshmaṇasena. Arirāja - Vṛishabha - Śaṅkara, Arirāja - nihsaṅka - śaṅkara, Arirāja - Mādhava - Śaṅkara, Arirāja - Vṛishabhāṅka - śaṅkara and Arirāja - asahya - śaṅkara. The biruḍas with Arirāja 'arch enemy' prefixed to them are highly significant when considered together with the additional title 'Garga - Yavanānvaya - Pralay - Kāla - Kudra' assumed by Viśvarūpa. All those biruḍas are suggested of the valourous and terrible struggles against the Muslim aggression in Bengal. Though of the same political significance, the assumption of the titles of Dāmadaradeva suggests that Dāmadaradeva came into conflict with the Sena ruler of Vaṅga and was probably able to win these titles for himself or at any rate Dāmadaradeva considered himself strong enough to assume these titles in opposition to the Senas. But it is surprising to note that Dāmadaradeva adopted these titled in the fourth year of his reign, viz. in 1234 A.D. while in the Sobhrampur plate, issued in the year 1236 A.D., only the title of 'Gajapati' is retained

and in the Chittagong plate dated 1243 A.D., both these titles are dropped. We do not know for certain whether Dāmadaradeva sustained a set-back towards the close of his reign. The answer cannot be definitely given in the present state of our knowledge. The inscription of Dāmadaradeva does not definitely speak of the any loss of territory<sup>70</sup>.

The Chittagong plate of Dāmadaradeva refers to a village called Keteṅgapālā which may be identified with the modern Ketaṅgyāpādā forming a part of the village of Hāshimpur, P.S. Patiyā and bounded on the North by the Marāchharāpukhariyā which is still the name of a hamlet by the hill side, on the Southern bank of the river Saṅkha. In otherwords the inscription refers to a village in the district of Chittagong and not elsewhere. The Mehār plate records the grant of land in Mehāragrāma which was included in the Paralāyi Vishaya of the Samatata maṇḍa<sup>L</sup> a lying within the Puṇḍravardhanabhukti. The Mehāragrāma being no other locality than the present village of Mehār, it is easy to determine that Dāmadaradeva's Kingdom extended at least over these districts of Tippera, Noakhali and Chittagong<sup>71</sup>.

Now we are to face with a very critical question as

to whether the territory of Damodaradeva or of his three predecessors was confined to the three districts of Chittagong divisions or it was co-extensive with not only the whole of Samāṭāṭa maṇḍala but also with the whole of the Paṇḍravardhana bhukti<sup>71</sup> a, as it was then known. Apart from assuming the title of 'Gajapati' in one plate and 'Sakala - bhupati - Chakravartin' (the lord of all the Kings) in the other, there is no other evidence whatever that Dāmodara or his predecessors were paramount sovereigns. It is not apparent also that they were the Sāmantas under the successor of Lakshmanasena who somehow maintained the position as Gauḍeśvara and paramount sovereign within the Paṇḍravardhana bhukti at least for seventeen years after Lakshmanasena. It is almost certain that Madhumāthana Madhusūdana ruled at the sometime with two later Sena Kings. But Dāmodaradeva would have usurped all the high sounding titles including Gauḍeśvara, as was done by Daśarathadeva, if Dāmodara or any of his predecessors succeeded in supplanting the Senas within the Paṇḍravardhana bhukti. But Dāmodara assumed 'Arirāja - Chānūra - Mādava' without the title of Gauḍeśvara. It is worthy of mention that it is in the Mehār plate of Dāmodaradeva that Samāṭāṭa finds mention, perhaps, for the first time as a maṇḍala within the Paṇḍravardhana bhukti and it may be assumed that

it was probably a creation of the Deva family for distinguishing it from Vaṅga apparently a maṇḍala under the rule of the later Senas within the same Paundravardhana bhukti which included in it Vikramapura and Nāvya.

The most reasonable explanation may be that while the Deva Kings were reigning in the Samataṭa maṇḍala of Paundravardhana bhukti, the Senas held supremacy over the region of Vaṅga including Vikramapura and Nāvya and passed as Gauḍeśvara within the same bhukti. Their supremacy though disputed could not till then be shaken off. It may be inferred from the above facts that the river Meghnā was the natural boundary between Dāmadara's territory and the dominion of Vaṅga under the later Sena ruler<sup>72</sup>.

A difficulty arises regarding the matter whether the early Deva rulers asserted their suzerainty over the whole of the district of Tippera. The position of the Deva rulers in Tipperā has been rendered anomalous by the Maināmatī plate of Raṇavaṅkamalla Harikeladeva issued in the 17th year of his reign which corresponded to the year 1141 Saka = 1218 A.D. From the information of the length of the service indicated in the Maināmatī plate<sup>73</sup>, it may be assumed that

Harikāladeva was not a contemporary of both the father and the grandfather of Dāmodaradeva, he was at least a contemporary of his father Vāsudeva. If he was the first of this family and the principality was included in the Sena Kingdom, it seems that with the fall of the Sena power in Gauda, an independent Kingdom arose in Eastern Bengal<sup>74</sup>. From the inclusion of the city of Paṭṭikera with the Maināmatī hillock as its probable natural land mark, it is definite that his principality was situated in the close neighbourhood of the Kingdom of the early Deva rulers and his rule would then seem to have been confined to a small portion of Tipperā.

Now whether the area of Dāmodara's Kingdom, indicated above, included the Kingdom inherited by him or also includes the territory added in his reign, it is difficult to say<sup>75</sup>. An important information may be gleaned from the Pākāmodā copper plate of Dāsarathadeva<sup>76</sup> about the conquest of territory by Dāmodaradeva. The verse 4 of the plate informs

"Khyāto Gaudamahī - mahotsavamayaṁ Chakre

Punascha Sriya "<sup>77</sup>.

The kind Dāmodaradeva performed great festival in Gauda by recovering the glory of the country. But Dāmodara did

not claim this achievement in any of his own inscription. So it might have been an achievement of the last part of his reign. It may be inferred from the claim that Dāmodara might have defeated the Gauda King of the Sena dynasty and captured their territory. But there is no mention in the grants of the Deva rulers that the Devas defeated the Sena Kings assuming the title of 'Gauḍeśvara'. It may be informed that Dāmodaradeva and his predecessors were the Sāmantas of the Sena rulers and eventually Dāmodaradeva established his sway over the Sena Kingdom. But Dāmodara did not assume the high sounding title of 'Parameśvara - Paramabhaṭṭāraka - Mahārājadhirāja'. It may be presumed from the Ādābādi plate that Daśarathadeva established his sway over the Sena King within a very few years of his ascendancy and it was he who assumed the high sounding titles of a lord.

Dāmodaradeva was succeeded by his son Daśarathadeva and the history of his reign is known to us from his Ādābādi and Pākamoḍā copper plates. It is evident from the Ādābādi plate that he assumed the titles of Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājadhirāja Arirāja Danujamādhava. He had also the illustrious titles of Asvapati, Gajapati, Narapati,

Rājatrāyādhipati, Somavamsāpradīpa Pratipannokarṇṇa,  
Satyavratagāṅgeya, Saraṅāgalavajrapāñjara etc. The epithet  
Devānvayakamalavikāsabhās\_Kara shows that he belonged to the  
Devā family. The Ādābādi plate was issued from the Kingdom of  
Gauḍa through the grace of Nārayāna. According to R.C. Majumdar,  
there is no doubt that Daśaratha came into possession of the  
Sena Kingdom in Gauḍa. According to N.K. Bhattasali, this  
must have happened after the collapse of the Sena power<sup>78</sup>.

B.M. Barua and Pulin behari Chakraborty while  
editing the Mehār plate of Dāmodaradeva have asserted that  
Dāmodaradeva was called 'Gajapati' only, while in the Ādābādi  
plate Daśarathadeva is honoured with the epithet of 'Asvapati  
Gajapati - Narapati - Rājatrādhīpati'. In the former, there is  
epithet indicating the place of which Dāmodara was the King,  
while in the latter Daśarathadeva boldly claims to have obtai-  
ned the Kingdom of Gauḍa and issued the charter from Vikrama-  
pura, which he could not have done, had he not succeeded the  
later Senas after their fall or extermination<sup>79</sup>. It may be  
supposed from the Ādābādi copper plate that Daśarathadeva  
during the time of the very inception of his reign established  
his sway in the Sena Kingdom and assumed the high sounding  
titles in imitation of the Sena Kings.

It has been held in the Ādābāḍi plate that he obtained the possession of Gauda through the grace of Nārāyaṇa. But we do not know what exactly is meant by the Kingdom of Gauda. The Muslim rulers were probably in possession of the Gauda Kingdom which practically meant at that time the territory of North and West Bengal and there is no evidence to show that the name was extended to cover Eastern Bengal. It may, therefore, be assumed that Daśarathadeva claims to have conquered a part of West or North Bengal. R.C. Majumdar has pointed out that the claim need not be regarded as a fantastic one, for it is quite likely that an enterprising Hindu ruler of Eastern Bengal led successful operation to the muslim dominion in his neighbourhood. One thing should always be kept in mind that the muslim rulers had to continue several military raids in order to consolidate their hold over the whole of Bengal and there were constant quarrels among the Muslim rulers. Daśarathadeva might have taken advantage of all these to capture a part of Gauda<sup>80</sup>. It has been narrated in the Pākāmodā plate that all the subjects of the Eastern part became inactive and intimidated as a result of the aggression of the enemy happening due to the evils of the unconcentions King. Later on the King Daśarathadeva put an end to this anarchical condition and peace and prosperity of the

people was regained. The people heaved a sign of relief and devoted themselves to worldly affairs.

It is very difficult to understand the real meaning of the verse. It cannot be definitely pointed out who the unconce<sup>n</sup>tious King was. It cannot be the muslim invasion in the Rādha - Varendrī region during the time of Lakshmanasena, because it had taken place earlier. It may be imagined that muslim invaders invaded eastern part of Eastern Bengal due to the lack of sagacity of the last Sena King. Dasārathadeva might have driven out the enemy and that was shy the subjects inclined to him and this paved the way for the establishment of the sway of the Deva dynasty over Sena Kingdom<sup>81</sup>.

N.K. Bhattasali gives a brief account of the history of Dasārathadeva. His account, brief as it is, leaves no doubt as to the identity of Danujamādhava Dasārathadeva with Danujamādhava who according to a dynastic account by Harimīśra came into prominence after the Sena rule and with Danuja Rāi, the Rājā of Sonārgāon in Eastern Bengal who according to Zia-ud-din Barni entered into agreement with Ghiasuddin Ballban that he would guard against the escape of rebellions<sup>T</sup> ūghril Khān by water (1283 A.D.)<sup>82</sup> and in that case it may be accepted

that Sonārgāon was the Capital of Daśarathadeva and Sonārgāon probably represented the Capital City of Vikramapura and it is probable that he ruled from C 1255 A.D. to C 1290 A.D.<sup>82</sup> a.

It is quite likely as suggested by P.L. Paul that the conquest of North-Western Bengal by the Muslims and the maintenance of independence by Eastern Bengal in spite of repeated attempts by Muslim conquerors to capture it, suggests one important conclusion. A sudden cavalry raid was sufficient to break the power of the Sepa Kings in North-Western Bengal and the whole of it passed into the hands of the Muslims within a short time. But the physical feature of Eastern Bengal prevented such an eventuality. It is the country of big rivers and so cavalry was practically useless. It needed a powerful naval power to conquer this portion of Bengal. A raid might have carried on in certain part, but it could not produce any decisive result. The seeking of the help of Danujamādhava by the Sultan Giyasuddin Balban to prevent the escape of the rebellions governor Tughril Khan by boat clearly explains the weakness of the power in Eastern Bengal - a power strong in every other respect excepting navy. This explains why this part of the country could resist muslim attacks for about a Century while great Kingdoms of Northern India succumbed to muslim attacks quickly<sup>83</sup>.

KINGDOM OF SRIHATTA

From the discovery of two copper plates at Bhāterā about twenty miles away from Sylhet<sup>84</sup>, we come across a new line of Kings with the Deva title. The two copper plates give the genealogy of five Kings.

Navagīrvāna alias Kharavāna  
/   
Gokuladeva  
/   
Nārāyanadeva  
/   
Keśavadeva alias Govinda  
/   
Isānadeva

The names of all the Kings except the first one end in 'deva', make it probable that they belonged to the Deva family<sup>85</sup>. The date of the records cannot be properly read, but on palaeographical ground they can hardly be regarded as earlier than the 13th Century A.D. and may even be somewhat later. The plate I issued by Keśava opens with salutation to Śiva and then gives a genealogy of four Kings who are said to have belonged to the race of moon. The founder was Navagīrvāna (the new God) ofierce arrow, of great known the issue of Goddess of Prosperity. His son Gokuladeva claims distinction for being the grand father of Keśava. It is wonderful that the sunlight of his glory caused numbness in inimical Kings (instead of exciting

vivacity as sunlight should). From him descended King Nārāyaṇa. His son was Keśavadeva of unmeasured hymn of merit and glory whose feet were decorated with the Jewels of royal crowns, who was the ornament of earthly sovereigns, the destroyer of rival Kings<sup>86</sup>. The two words Keśava and Govinda probably were the names of the same person. The part illustrates that Gobinda was the abode of fame, the asylum of beauty, the dwelling place of all kinds of learning, the shelter of Justice. He was the centre of all light, the source of charity, the home of enjoyment of the jewels of all speech, the store house of goodness and the personification of all good qualities. He protected the land of dependent Kings. This Keśava had whirled his discuss at the enemies. He through his anger brought to an end all children of the race of his antagonists. He brought the earth under one umbrella wishing not to allow the existence of any foreign Kings. He effected the gratification of all well disposed people. He by the play of his sword, brought into subjection all other Kings and came to be regarded as the chief of all Eastern Kings. He granted land for the adoration of a liṅgam of the name of Vaṭeśvara, whose temple stood in Haṭṭapātaka (the great fair) probably the Bhāṭarārā bazar of the present day to the extent of 375 plough measures.

The inscription No. II is a Vaiṣṇavite record. It gives a list of four Kings who belonged to the Lunar race. The

first King stated in the list was Gokula who is said to have been as munificent as the Kalpa tree. His son was Nārāyāna. He was followed by Keśavadeva who dedicated a temple of the destroyer of Kaṁsa and performed the rite of weighing himself with gold silver and other articles which he presented to the Brāhmanas. His son was Isānadeva. He erected a lofty temple for the enemy of Madhu Kaitabha, a form of Vishnu and by the advice of his minister Vanamātikara, a Vaidya by caste and the concurrence of his commander in chief Vīradatta presented two ploughs of land for its support.

It is obvious that the first prince of this plate is the same with the second of the first plate, the next two are likewise the same for there is no reason to doubt that Keśava of the second plate is the alias of Govinda of the first grant and the new name Isānadeva who issued the plate II is the Fifth from Naragīrvāna.

These Rājās were the sovereigns of Kāchhār and professed to be of the dynasty of Ghaṭotkacha, son of Bhīma, of Hidimbā, the daughter of an aboriginal cannibal chief. It is extremely doubtful if the Pāṇḍas ever came so far to the east<sup>86</sup>.

#### THE KINGDOM OF PATTIKERĀ

The traces of the existence of the existence of the Kingdom of Paṭṭikerā may be found as far back as the 11th

Century A.D. The manuscript of Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, preserved in the library of the Cambridge University contains the picture of a sixteen armed Goddess with the label "Pattikeri Chundāvarabhavana Chundā" is the earliest source of its existence. It is evident from this that the image of the Buddhist Goddess Chundā in Pattikerā was widely known in the 11th Century A.D.<sup>87</sup>.

It is not at all easy to determine the status of the Kingdom during the Pāla and Sena period. It cannot be properly ascertained whether the extreme districts like Noākhāli and Chittagong were included in the Pāla and Sena Kingdoms. No evidence has yet been discovered to prove the extension of the Sena power in the Chittagong division<sup>88</sup>. The position of the early Devas regarding their sway over the whole of the district of Tippera is rendered anomalous by the Maināmatī plate of Ranavaṅkamalla Harikāladeva issued in the 17th year of his reign which corresponded to the year 1141 of the Śaka era (=1218 A.D.)<sup>89</sup>. Harikāladeva came to the throne in 1203-04 A.D. If he was the first of this family and this principality was included in the Sena Kingdom, it seems that with the fall of the Sena power in Gauḍa, an independent Kingdom arose in Eastern Bengal. Harikāladeva Ranavaṅkamalla who ascended the throne in 1204 and ruled upto 1220 A.D. was undoubtedly an

independent King. As we have seen above there was another independent Deva family very much adjacent to the Kingdom Ranavaṅkāmaḷla. It may be surmised that both of them ruling simultaneously, possibly took advantage of the decline of the Sena power and carved out independent Kingdom for themselves.

The copper plate of Raṇavaṅkāmaḷla found in the neighbourhood of Comillā belonging to the 13th Century A.D. provides us with very important facts of the history of the dynasty. It records the grant of land in favour of a Buddhist monastery built in the city of Paṭṭikerā by Śrī Dhādi-eba, the chief minister of Śrī Harikāladeva in 1220 in the 17th year of his reign<sup>90</sup>. The city of Paṭṭikerā cannot be definitely If the find spot of the plate is in any clue to its location, the Maināmatī hillock probably formed a part of that ancient city and the ruins of a temple on the top of this hillock to the West of the Mahārājā's Bungalow may even point to the small monastery mentioned in the plate.

There is no doubt that this Paṭṭikerā was the Capital of the Kingdom. The City gave the name to an important Parganā in the district of Tipperā still known as Pātikārā or Pāitkārā which extends to the same hills, though the hills themselves now fall under a separate parganā named Meherkula<sup>91</sup>. In older documents of the 18th Century the name of the Parganā occurs

regularly either Pātikerā or Paikārā leaving no room for any doubt about the identification.

The unnatural character of the three names of the Grantor 'Dhadi-eba', his father 'Hedi-eba' and the writer 'Medinī-eba' belonging to the same family deserves special discussion. In spite of the names being more or less Smkritised by the writer, they clearly denote their foreign origin in the 'unique appellative 'eva' or 'eba' found in all the three names which is unknown to any Indian dialect". It may be that there was Burmese connection with the Kingdom of Pattikerā. We have evidence of a respectable family of Burmese origin which settled and survived in the 13th Century A.D. in the district of Tippera. For 'ba' and 'Ye-ba' seems to be the characteristic of the Burmese language even now<sup>92</sup>. The identification of the Patikkara of the Burmese chronicles with Paṭṭikara of the Tipperā district though put forth in the local history of Tipperā<sup>93</sup> more than 35 years ago attracted the serious attention of the Burmese scholars only recently<sup>94</sup>. The Burmese chronicles contain many references to it<sup>95</sup>. The Kingdom of Anoratha of Pagan who 'made a progress through the Western portion of his dominion as far as Bengal'<sup>96</sup> was bounded on the West by the foreign Kingdom of Pattikerā<sup>97</sup>. The Burmese chronicles narrate the romantic love story between the prince of Pattikerā

and Sweinthe, the daughter of the King Kyanzittha (1086-1112). The Burmese King agreed, his minister disagreed and the prince in languishment committed suicide. It is the subject matter of the Burmese poems and the dramas are staged in Burma at present also with the subject matter of love. The son of Sweinthe Alaungsithu who ascended the throne and ruled upto 1167, married a Pattikerā princess. According to Burmese chronicles Narathu, the son and successor of Alaungsithu, slew with his own hand this princess or Pattikerā, the widow of his father. The Arakanese chronicles explains it differently. It has been stated that 'a certain King Pattikerā of the Kingdom of Marawa sent his two daughters as presents to the Kings respectively of Arakan and Tampadīpa. The general of Arakan sent the latter princess to Pagan with a request to King Narathu to send her to Tampadīpa. Narathu, however, forcibly detained her in seraglio. The princess rebuked Narathu for his disgraceful conduct and the latter forthwith drew his sword and killed her and he was also killed by the King of Pattikerā<sup>98</sup>. How far the above stories may be regarded as historical, it is difficult to say. The above incident took place, according to the latest chronology, in 1189 or 1191 A.D. not more than 15 years before Harikāladeva came to the throne<sup>99</sup>. It is not unlikely, therefore, that King Ranavaṅkamalla was the immediate successor of the King of Pattikerā who was responsible for the murder of Narathu.

We would like to mention in this connection that in the whole district of Tipperā, there are, at present, about two thousand Buddhists living all in a group of village about 15 miles from Maināmatī<sup>100</sup>. It may be because of the close inter course between Burmā and Tipperā in the 13th Century.

There is ample scope for doubt whether Ranavaṅkamalla belonged to the old royal family of Paṭṭikerā mentioned in the Burmese chronicles. One Bīradharadeva probably ruled in that region after Ranavaṅkamalla. He ruled possibly from (1230 A.D. -1250 A.D). He was a Vaishnava and made gift of land to Ladahamādhava Vāsudeva in the Bātagaṅga Vishaya in Samatata mandala within Pundravardhana Bhukti which is known from his Maināmatī plate engraved in the 15th regnal year<sup>100</sup> a. After that it was probably amalgamated with the growing Kingdom of the Devas.

#### DOMMANAPĀLA OF RAKSHĀ KĀLĪ (SUNDARBAN)

The reign of Lakshamanasena ended in a sea of trouble that overwhelmed his Kingdom. During the time of the decline of the Sena power, one Dommanapāla set up an independent Kingdom in the Eastern part of Khādi (in Sundarbans) in 1196 A.D.<sup>100</sup> b. Khādi District formed an intergral part of the Sena Kingdom as recorded in the grants of both Vijayasena and Lakshamanasena.

and the revolution of Dommanapāla is an important indication of the weakness of the authority of Lakshamanasena in that region during his old age. D.C. Sircar seems to indicate that Dommanapāla was a feudal chief of Lakshamanasena. But the whole meaning of the inscription leaves no doubt that Dommanapāla was practically an independent chief<sup>100 c</sup>.

It is known from the inscription that Pāla family to which Dommanapāla belonged migrated from Ayodhyā<sup>100 d</sup> and took the possession of Pūrva - Khātikā either by conquest or by other means. It refers to two rulers. The proper name of first ruler is not clear as it cannot be read in full. The person is styled Parama - Māhesvara, Mahāmāndalik<sup>u</sup>. He was succeeded by Dommanapāla who is called Mahāsāmantādhipati, Mahārājādhirāja etc.

It is not clear to us whether the family, in any way, was connected with the Pāla rulers of Bengal. It seems that Dommanapāla, son of a provincial governor of the Sena, assumed independence and founded a principality in Eastern Khādī which which is now represented by the Sundarbans. The subsequent history of the family is unknown.

#### The dynasty of Isvaraghosha of Dhekkarī

There is possibly no doubt that the Kalachuri invasion of Karna ravaged the major portion of the Pāla empire and it is probable that the Pāla rulers Nayapāla and Vighrahapāla III were

gradually losing their hold over western Bengal. A chief calling himself Mahāmāṇḍalika Īśvaraghosha issued a land grant in which he assumed the style of an independent King. The grant is not dated, but may be referred to the eleventh Century A.D. about the time of Vigrahapāla III<sup>101</sup>. According to Atul Sur Īśvaraghosha came into prominence in the eleventh Century A.D. and he was a contemporary of Mahīpāla II (977 - 1027) A.D.<sup>102</sup>. A.K. Maitr<sup>e</sup>ya has placed it to the 12th Century A.D.

The character of the script of the Rānganj copper plate, deciphered by A.K. Maitr<sup>e</sup>ya, represents a variety of Northern alphabets which is evidently earlier than those used by the Senas and akin to those found in the copper plates of the later Pālas, viz. the Bāngad grant of Mahīpāla I and the Amagachhi grant of Vigrahapāla III<sup>103</sup>.

The inscription has brought to light the reign of Mahāmāṇḍalik<sup>u</sup> Īśvaraghosha whose genealogy has been given in the first five stanzas of the plate. The record puts forward first of all Dhurtaghosha. His son Bālaghosha was a warrior by profession and his son was Dhavalaghosha. The son of Dhavalaghosha was Īśvaraghosha who was born of Sadhavāvi, the wife of Dhavalaghosha. The grant consisted of a village called Digghāsodikā belonging to Gāllitipyaka vishya of the Piyolla mandala and was issued by Īśvaraghosha from a place called Dhekkarī<sup>104</sup>. MM. H.P. Sastri has pointed out that Devapāla was

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the overlord of both Lausena and Icchāighosha of Dharamamaṅgala. But the view of H.P. Sastri has not been sustained by historical evidence as no where in the historical description of the Pālas, the names of the two feudatories Lāusena and Icchāighosha are mentioned. Further more Isvaraghosha has been placed to about the 11th Century A.D. on the basis of the Palaeography of the inscription. If it is so, then he cannot in any way be placed to the time of Devapāla of the 9th Century A.D. But it cannot be altogether ignosed that Icchāighosha of Dharamamaṅgala was the feudal chief of a Gaudesvara and ruled in Dhekurgad and the name of the feudal Chief of Dharamamaṅgal<sup>a</sup> is very much similar to that of the Rānganj copper plate<sup>106</sup>. But it is evident from the copper plate grant that the father of Isvara-ghosha was Dhavala ghosha, but the father of Icchāighosha of Dharamamaṅgala was soma Ghosha. So there is the coubt about the identification of Isvaraghosha of Rānganj plate with Icchāighosha of Dharamamaṅgala. It is known from Dharamamaṅgala that by the side of the river Ajay, to the East of Kendubilva, there is a Gaḍa named Shyāmarūpa which is a dense forest. According to local tradition it is Dhekkarī or Trishashṭhi Gaḍa the capital Icchāi. In this forest, the delapidated Bhabānī temple is supposed to have been in existence<sup>108</sup>. In the uneven hilly tracts on the border of Western Bengal, in Gaudāndi, within the Parganas of Senapāhadi, there was the capital of Icchāi as is

held by some traditions, because it is mentioned in the Dharmamaṅgala that the capital of Icchāi was surrounded by hills and forests. However, the historical lord of Dhekkari Isvaraghosha has been identified as Icchāighosha in the Dharmamaṅgala but nothing more than the above is known from any historical sources. It is very difficult to find any historical basis of the fact that Gauḍeśvara employed a feudal chief to crack down the power and potentiality of another feudal lord. However, it is historically true that during the early years of the Pāla rule, Gauḍeśvara had to be engaged in warfare with the indomitable lord of Rāḍha<sup>109</sup>.

The doner of the grant Isvaraghosh did not assume any of the titles of paramount sovereign. He, indeed, has not even the epithet of a 'King', but it is astonishing that he arrogates to himself the privilege of issuing order to Rājan, Rājanyakas, Rājñīs, Rāṇaka, Rājaputras and so forth who were possibly under his authority. So the title of Mahāmāṇḍalika assumed by Isvaraghosha can alone be considered to determine his real position. Mr. Maitreya has put forward two important data from Rāmācharita in this connection. In the first place, Dhekkari the place wherefrom the grant was issued, was the seat of the Sāmantas of the Pālas. In the second place, those Sāmantas were known as maṇḍalādhipati which is the same as māṇḍalika. He concludes that Isvaraghosha, the Mahāmāṇḍalika,

held the position of a vassal King under the suzerainty of the Pālas<sup>110</sup>. But there is difficulty to ascertain as to who was the overlord of Isvaraghosa and whether the word Parākramamūla occurring at the top of the plate refers to him or his vassal. The name of the earlier vassal princes of the Pālas is now forthcoming from the Nālandā copper plate of Devapāla. He is Balavarman, a vassal of Devapāla as 'the right hand person of King Devapala'<sup>111</sup>. Elsewhere too the title of Māṇḍalika or Mahāmāṇḍalika is found to have been held by vassal princes and they issued land grants like Isvaraghosha<sup>112</sup>.

The Rānganj copper plate has brought to light three names of topographical interest, viz. Dhekkarī, the river Jatodā and Chandavāra. MM H.P. Sastri and A.K. Maitr<sup>e</sup>ya have located Dhekkarī and the river Jatodā near Kātwā in the Burdwan district. But N.N. Vasu has located both of them in the Goālpārā and Kāmarūpa district of Assam<sup>113</sup>. The river is mentioned in the Kālikāpurāna as flowing through Kāmarūpa<sup>114</sup>. Chandavāra may be the same as Chandwār near Etewā in U.P. well known from the Mohammedan historians<sup>115</sup>.

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- 56 Epigraphia Indica, Vol. I, PP 305 ff.
- 57 N.N. Vasu, Opcit, P 308
- 58 Epigraphia Indica, XXX, P 26.
- 59 Originally N.K. Bhattasali read it " Ṣaṅkāsv = alabdha  
dhiyaḥ "(Dacca Review, July, 1912, P 144). Then R.D. Banerjee  
read it 'Ṣaṅkāsu labdha (?) dhiyaḥ' (Journal of the Asiatic  
Society of Bengal, 1914, P 127). R.G. Basak first read  
' Ṣaṅkāsv = alīṅk - ādhipaḥ ' but subsequently changed the  
reading to 'Ṣaṅkāsu laṅkādhīpaḥ' (Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XII,  
P 40). Basak's translation conveys no meaning. Sten Konow in  
an editorial note suggests that it is an exhortation to King  
Bhoja to engage some expedition. However it is undeniable that  
the passage hints at contemporary political happenings.

- 60 Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1935, P 83.
- 61 Epigraphia Indica, XXX, P 262.
- 62 Epigraphia Indica, XXVII, PP 182 ff.
- 63 ibid, XXX, PP 184 - 86
- 64 Inscriptions of Bengal, III, PP 158 - 60.
- 65 ibid, PP 181 ff.
- 66 D.C. Sircar, Opcit, PP 95 ff.
- 67 Epigraphia Indica, XXVII, P 183.
- 68 Inscriptions of Bengal, III, P 159.
- 69 In the Mehār grant the name referred is Madhumathanadeva, but in the Chittagong plate of Dāmodaradeva, the name is given as Madhusūdana. But the reading of the Mehār grant may be accepted as original grant. Chittagong copper plate is missing, Cf R.C. Majumdar, History of Ancient Bengal, P 284 fn I.
- 69a N.G. Majumdar, Opcit, P 181.
- 69b D.C. Sircar, Opcit, PP 141 - 42.
- 69c D.C. Sircar thinks that the name of Kaśavasena has been wrongly read in the Edilpur plate as Keśavasena whereas it was really Veśvarūpasena, engraved after erasing the name of Sūryasena son of Viśvarūpasena. There was no Sena King Kesavasena by name Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXXIII, PP 315 - 321.

70 Sobhrampur copper plate of Dāmodaradeva, Epigraphia Indica,  
XXX P 186.

71 Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXVII, P 185.

71a It is well known that during the age of the Pālas and their contemporaries wide areas of east and south Bengal were incorporated in the bhukti called Pundravardhana. The chandhas who established their Kingdom in the South eastern region of Bengal preferred to use Pundravardhana in their land grants.

In the later Varman and Sena records the jurisdiction of the bhukti extended as far as the bay of Bengal in the south and Tipperā in the east. This territorial expansion was according to some scholars, due to imperial Pāla expansion in the south and south eastern Bengal. D.C. Sircar thus writes "Possibly this was due to the fact that the metropolitan province of the Pāla empire, having its headquarter at a city of Gauda in North Bengal included South eastern and Southern Bengal" of M. Bhattacharyya, Pundravardhana in Historical perspective (Un-published Ph.d thesis), RP 14 - 15.

72 ibid, PP 185 - 86.

73 Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. IX, PP 282 ff.

74 P.L. Paul, Opcit, PP 99 - 100.

75 R.C. Majumdar, History of Ancient Bengal, P 276.

76 D.C. Sircar, Silālekha O Tāmra Sāsanādir Prasāṅga.

- 77 ibid.
- 78 N.G. Majumdar, Ādābādi copper plate, Inscriptions of Bengal,  
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- 80 History of Ancient Bengal, P 276.
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- 82a D.C. Sircar, Pāl - Sen-etc. P 142
- 83 P.L. Paul, Opcit, P 100
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- 96 ibid, P 37.
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