

CHAPTER: FIVE

LOCATING KAMTAPUR MOVEMENT AMONG SOME OTHER ETHNIC MOVEMENTS IN NORTH EAST INDIA

Merger of CoochBehar dynasty to the Dominion of India is remarkable event in the history of North Bengal after the partition of India. This merger did not come in a smooth way .There was serious difference in opinion among the Rajbanshi community in question of the merger with West Bengal. Uttarkhanda Dal a strong organization of the Rjbanshi community opposed this merger. Some of them even advocated to join with Pakistan and a dominant section of the Uttar khanda Dal was in favour to remain as independent state and another section was in favour for Assam. Here a sharp difference surfaced in question of their origin and their identity as a section of the Rajbanshi community claimed that they are carrying the pure blood of the Aryan races thus they differ from the Koch and superior to them in question of their racial origin which ultimately influenced their demand one for Kamtapur State and another for Greater Coochbehar State.following the difference in naming their language Kamtapuri language and Rajbanshi language .

5.1 MERGER OF COOCH BEHAR TO DOMINION OF INDIA

The Maharaja of Cooch Behar sent the Chief Minister of the state, Himmat Singh Maheswari in the Constituent Assembly of India as state representative and formed an advisory Committee, consisting of Satish Chandra Roy Singha Sarkar, Khan Chowdhury Amanatullah Ahmed and S. K. Bose Majumder, member of the state Legislative Council to assist him.

Both the dominions of India and Pakistan were trying to get Cooch Behar with them. The peoples of Cooch Behar were divided in to three groups: one for remaining as independent state, another for merger with India, and third one for Pakistan. The pro Pakistan groups of Cooch Behar even without waiting for the decision of the Maharaja hoisted the Pakistan flag on the soil of Cooch Behar. Maharaja could realise that he had to take the instant decision either to join with Pakistan or India knowing fully well that the independent position could not be survived being a land locked small piece of land. Accordingly an agreement was signed with Governor General of India and the Maharaja of Cooch Behar kingdom. Naturally, the Hindu king had no other option but to prefer Dominion of India to a declared Muslim state, Pakistan. According to the agreement, the transfer of power completed from the Maharaja to the Chief Commissioner of the State V. I. Nanjappa on the 12 September 1949 A.D.

Now the very basic point comes in this discussion how Cooch Behar became a district of West Bengal. Because it was not at all easy task to convert a kingdom into a district who

enjoyed a long Journey for near about 500 years in the capacity of kingdom out of which more than 200 years as independent status.

A section of the members of the Hitasadhani Sabha first of all tried to remain as centrally administered state apart from those sections who wanted to join with Pakistan. But when they find their proposal to remain as centrally administered state will not be acceptable than they opted for the merger with Assam. Against this proposal for the merger with Assam a strong groups emerged in Cooch Behar. The Prajamandal in inside of Cooch Behar and People's Association outside the kingdom with the demand for the merger with West Bengal. These demand and counter demand were so strong that Jawaharlal Nehru had to assured in the public meeting in Calcutta that the decision for merger either for Assam or West Bengal will be taken through the plebiscite.

In that context, among those who had contributed a lot for the merger with West Bengal, the name came first, he is Sarat Chandra Basu. A strong section of the central ministers were in the opinion that Cooch Behar should be merged with Assam as in their opinion, the aboriginal people of Cooch Behar was much closer with the Assamese in question of ethnicity than with the people West Bengal. But Sarat Chandra Basu who had a strong influence over the central leadership of the then National congress took the initiative in favour of West Bengal.

Another great personality in this regard should be remembered. He is Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal.

It is learnt from the autobiography of Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, also an ex Chief Minister of West Bengal that Sardar Ballav Bhai Patel, the then Home Minister of Central Government was in favour for the merger with Assam. Dr. Ghosh was given the assignment to judge for the two princely states Cooch Behar and Mayurbhanj for their merger by the working committee of the National congress. Dr Ghosh suggested for the merger of Mayurbhanj with Orissa and Cooch Behar with West Bengal. Here it should be mentioned that Keshab Chandra Sen a legendary figure of Bengal established the relationship by giving marriage his two daughters one with the king of Cooch Behar and another with the king of Mayurbhanj. It might be a co-incident, but two Bengali daughters influenced the two kingdoms with their Bengali culture.

5.2 UTTARKHANDA MOVEMENT

I like to include the Uttarakhand Movement in my study, as the last survey that I have conducted for the research work to find the root causes of this unrest and the geo-ethno environmental impact on the present Ethnic unrest.

I have included Uttarakhand Movement because I made my conclusion upon the discussion of the Hitasadhani Sabha though its movement for a separate state was thought to have sank in to oblivion after the split of the organization in to different directions, the shoots of the roots remained in the political soil of North Bengal which may germinate in different form. It is now found that the demand of a separate state raised by the Hitasadhani Sabha did not obliterate

completely. The representative of Cooch Behar Praja Congress , along with Darjeeling Gurkha League, Sikkim Praja Sammelen and Jalpaiguri Gurkha League assembled at Darjeeling on 30th October,1949 where they adopted a resolution for the demand of the formation of a separate state styled as 'Uttarakhand Pradesh Sangha' In their demand they excluded Malda and West Dinajpur considering their demographic position but they included Sikkim in their proposed state and sent their memorandum to the then Prime Minister of India which could not draw any attention from the Prime Minister office.

After the reorganization of the state for about 15 years there was apparent peace remain in North Bengal. But on 5th July 1969 at Thakurpat Rajmohan Junior High school of Dhupguri Police station of Jalpaiguri District the Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samaiti fixed their meeting to discuss on the various problems of the Rajbanshi community. This meeting was conveyed by the secretary of the organization. Dhupguri Branch of Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samiti and Rajbanshi Kshatriya Yuba Samiti Convened another public meeting on the next day at the same venue under the president ship of Ramaprasd Roy and Bijendra Nath Roy and Nirmalendu Roy as joint secretary. In that meeting some political leaders of different political parties were present. Those leaders resigned from their respective political parties and declared the formation of the Uttarakhand Dal.

On the foundation day there was no demand for the creation of any state. In their publicly circulated demands they included:

*'Equalisation of the value of the personal wealth in money's worth. A raiyat under W.B, E.A Act. was allowed to possess only 25 acres of agricultural land the valuation of which was at that time Rs. 75000 only, whereas a landless businessman could own truck, bus, shop, factory, service without any ceiling. Rationalization of Govt. and non-government services i.e. of family services. Reclassification of business ration card. The landless people in business, services etc belonged to 'A' category ration cards where as an adhiar who cultivate only 2 to 4 acres was categorized as 'C' class ration card holders. *Implementation of the slogans 'Matri Bhasa Matri Dugdha-Saman' by introducing the medium of education in mother tongue like Rajbanshi/kamtapuri, Bodo, Santali, Mundari, Nepali etc along with Bengali in Primary level and establish more primary schools with provision of drinking water and sanitation for girls students. *Propose to rename the North Bengal University as Thakur Panchnan University. *Establishment of High School within the radius of 4 kilo metres. *Attendance money to be paid in cash to the guardians of poorer section of the pupils in the primary schools. *Introduction of free education up to class twelve. *Establishment of, agro-based small and medium sized industries in the villages like jute spinning weaving, paper, tobacco and timber products. *Introduction of subsidy to the poor and marginal cultivators by way of free distribution seeds, manure, bullocks, agricultural equipments and cash loan on easy term at minimum rate of interest. *Introduction of irrigation facility, free of capital cost without any capital contribution by the cultivators. *Establishment of free coaching centres for IAS, IFS WBCs and allied service courses for Scheduled castes and tribes candidate as in Kolkata. *Nationalization of banks and other financial institutions and

introduction of proportionate reservation of seats of scheduled Caste and Tribes candidates in Govt services.

*Establishment of High Court, Medical College, Agricultural College, more Engineering colleges, law colleges and technical institutions in North Bengal. *Nationalization of the Banks and other financial organizations. *Promotion, preservation, maintenance and development of the cultural heritage of North Bengal and promotion of the knowledge on history, culture, languages and anthropology of the people of North Bengal and North eastern part of India. *Introduction and maintenance of quota for students in Govt and non-govt schools. *Maintenance of quota in licence and permits for business to the Scheduled Caste and Tribe candidates.

The first demand did not mention for the formation of a state, rather they participated in the state Assembly Election held on 10th March 1971. They contested in six constituencies but could not even save their security in any constituency. They gave an explanation for the miserable result that there was lack of fund which is needed for contesting the election. Thus it indicates that they had no any intention for the separate state otherwise they would not participate in the election.

In their maiden appearance in the electoral politics they contested in six seats ;in 1971; Maynaguri, Dhupguri, Sadar, Falakta seats of Jalpaiguri Districts and Mekhliganj seat of Cooch Behar. They also contested one parliament seat of Jalpaiguri.

The results are given here under:

Table 5.1 Election Result of Uttarkhanda Dal (UKD)
<u>Maynaguri: (SC)</u> Bijoy Krishna Mahato (Congress) 39,173 Haripada Roy (UKD) 6075
<u>Dhupguri:</u> Bhabani Pal (Congress) 11471 Wajuddin Ahmed (UKD) 5321
<u>Jalpaiguri Sadar:</u> Anupam Sen (Congress) 25,608 Girish Deb Singha (UKD) 1928
<u>Falakata:</u> J Roy (Congress) 13410 Panchanan Mallik (UKD) 4302
<u>Mekliganj:</u> Mihir Kr. Roy (FB) 19880 Sitanath Roy Sarkar(UKD) 1627
<u>Jalpaiguri Lok Sabha:</u> Tuna Oran (Congress) 103104 Soma Oran (UKD) 11097

From the above statement it is evident that Uttarkhanda Dal could not draw the support of the voters, rather, their miserable performance in the election clearly shows that the Rajbanshi community was not in a position to rely upon them in question of handing over the legislative power in their hand.

The Uttarakhand Dal gave the call for a separate state in the name of Kamtapur on 22. 06. 1980 through a publicly circulated Bengali leaflet published by Panchanan Mallik, the principal president and Sampad Ray , general secretary of Uttarakhand Dal.

In that leaflet they called for a separate state against the ‘slavery’ of Calcutta based political leadership. In the leaflet they told, ‘we are helpless and directionless in the whirl wind of Calcutta based economic, industrial, educational policies.

Table 5.2
Leaflet No.1

Friends, the indomitable selfishness, oppression and outrage of the power –hungry avaricious Calcutta leaders and their henchmen have surpassed the oppression of Hastings, the infamous foreign colonialist British Ruler–People of the land who never faced any scarcity of food and clothing , have now become beggars for a handful of grains, a piece of bread and a piece of cloth.—

Friends, How long will the simple straight forward people of North Bengal, closing their eyes and mouths put up their inhuman, endurable pains and treatment? The appeals, prayer, and claims of North Bengal’s people for long 32 years have yielded no result.

It is in this context of non-confidence towards such leadership and with helplessness that we, on behalf of Uttarakhand Dal submitted a memorandum under the leadership of Sri Panchanan Mullick and Sampad Roy to Prime Minister of India putting our demand to form a separate state

It is seen from their demand that their agitation at the initial stage was against the mal-distribution of allocation of fund in the state budget. They claimed in their demand that the North Bengal has an area of about 21,325 square kilometres, i.e. 25% of the total area of West Bengal inhabited by 30% of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people where of 13 M.L.A, only 3 seats in general category The vast areas of North Bengal Like tea, tobacco, timber, tourism and other crops yielded two third of the total income of the state.

On 22nd June 1980 they demanded for the separate state in the name of Kamtapur and explained in the manifesto circulated by Panchanan Mullick, Principal president and Sampad Roy, General Secretary, Uttarakhand Dal why they want a separate state . In the memorandum

they told that their aim was to set apart North Bengal from South Bengal and create a prosperous Indian state called Kamtapur in order to protect the people of North Bengal from the exploitation of 'Calcutta –centric capitalist leaders. They argued the same explanation about the establishment of the self identity, In support of their demand they cited the example of Maharashtra and Gujrat where the two states were developed as separate states by partitioning Bombay province in 1960. Before that in 1962, Nagaland came out as a separate state from Assam. In 1966 the province of Haryana was formed coming out from Punjab. Meghalaya got the status of the province taking out from Assam. Andhra province formed from Madras.

They also gave an explanation in naming the organization and the name of the state. In their explanation it is stated that they gave the name of their movement 'Uttarakhand' because of large number of labours working in the tea gardens. They are sympathetic towards their causes of their action. Many of the workers hailed from the area where the tribal peoples are fighting for the same demand of forming the separate state of Jharkhand. In order to the fraternal support towards their demands they preferred to take 'khand' from Jharkhand and gave the name of their movement Uttarakhand.

5.3 THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF THE RAJBANSHI/KOCH AND THE BENGALI

A debate has been emerged about the relationship between the Koch- Rajbanshi and the Bengali not only in question of their religion but also in question of their racial identity. To understand this issue it becomes imperative to glance over the field of the anthropological study over this issue. During my study in this research work I could not find any research work which dealt on this issue in details. I felt it necessary to give an account of the anthropological position between these two races and the relation in the light of the anthropological study. But I am neither an anthropologist nor my study at the aim of exploring the anthropological analysis, I left the same for the future researcher with an earnest hope that they will enrich their research covering this important field of science which I am not in a position to cover due to my inability to dip in to this branch of science.

Moreover, as my research study is to look in to the geographical as well as environmental factors in relation with the present unrest it becomes imperative to throw some light taking the help of anthropological account as it is closely related with both the factors .

There is the argument and the counter argument whether the Rajbanshi/Kamtapuri is the dialect of Bengali or it is an independent standard language as the other language like Bengali, Oria, Ahomia, Tamil etc played a pivotal role in igniting the racial spirit to establish their independent identity which ultimately converted in to the movement for the demand of Kamtapur state. On the other hand, the Bengali community by opposing to the demand for the recognition of the Rajbanshi/Kamtapur language as an independent language and claiming it as a dialect of Bengali

language brought the issue in to the field of the armageddon of two conflicting views. Thus it becomes a conflict of racial conflict between two races.

In this context it becomes imperative to judge the situation on the light of the origin of these two races especially when the one section of the Rajbanshi community claims themselves that they are carrying the pure Aryan blood and hence they are not related with the Koch in question of their origin. Again they has no any blood relation with the Bengali and they have their separate identity and their language is the independent language .On the other hand, the Bengali is claiming that the Rajbanshi are the sub group of the Bengali races and hence their language is the dialect of Bengali. This argument and counter argument becoming more prominent and taking as the fulcrum around of which the movement are revolving. As this issue still remain unsolved the difference between the two conflicting races become more and more wide providing the avenue for more and more ethnic conflict in this region.

The study of races is a branch of science itself. The purpose of this branch of science is to typify and classify races. The study of the races of the mankind is one of the most important in anthropology, the science that studies include the natural history of man with all variations due to the ages, sex, geographical etc factors. The races of mankind are, in fact, geographical variations, historically conditioned of a single physical type-man.

All mankind are divided into three great races - Mongoloid, Europeoid, and Negroid. These three great races are divided in to seven races each of which contains a number of groups of anthropological types. These groups of types are linked by intermediate or contact groups. So the present mankind may be regarded as a mixture of numerous anthropological types that make up one biological whole. This explains to a considerable extent why one race may enter in to the make-up of several nations. So races and racial difference are not something eternal, immutable and inherent in man. Constant changes taking place in the human body under the influence of social, economic and natural factors. The higher race and lower race has no any scientific foundation. Ignoring this fact there are tendency from some corners classify one higher race and other lower race .It only unreasonably confuses the grouping of people by classes and by other socio economic factors with their biological groupings.

The environment has the important role to influence the development of the races. As people spread over the face of the earth, they came up against different natural conditions. In the beginning of the spread of man to new regions was of great significance since many group of people lived for a long time in different natural conditions isolated from each other and eating different foods. With the increase of human population there was growing contact between the groups of races with their consequent mixing. . When an isolated group increased in numbers and spread to new areas, it often came in to contact with other groups and mixed with them. As

they spread farther unoccupied or sparsely populated territory geographical isolation was again felt and as a result there was a differentiation of anthropological types.

5.4 GEOGRAPHICAL ISOLATION

In the Palaeolithic epoch, the human population was sparse and had spread in different direction of the earth that had vastly different climatic conditions and had to face natural barriers that prevented contact between other peoples. In that epoch geographical isolation played the most important role in changing the inherited features of some anthropological types. It is seen from the biological standpoint, the mechanism of procreation of the organism and changes through heredity are the same for human being as for the higher mammals.

Man's geographical isolation was often combined with social isolation because of the conflicting interests of the neighbouring groups, the absence of common language and the classes that could and frequently did take place even when the groups were racially identical.

The animal organism is adapted for life in a definite ecological niche. This accounts for the relative adaptive purposefulness in the structure and habits of animals.

In modern period man, on the contrary, only a few, not the majority of his racial specifics are of adaptive significance. In some cases, no doubt, traces of adaptation are clearly defined in, for instance, the pigmentation of the skin, the development of the fold in the eyelid, the thickness of the lips and several others. Today these features are of little importance in the struggle against the adverse natural conditions when compared with the artificial means of protection that are available to man.

Nevertheless there are certain hereditary features in the structure of the human being, including some specific racial features in the structure of the human being, that can even today change under the influence of the environment; the change may take place fairly quickly, especially in case of emigration from one country to another country. So the racial differences are to be observed only by the study of comparatively large groups since individual variations are much greater than racial. Thus it should be bear in mind that racial diagnosis cannot always be applied in full to an individual, and may sometimes give no result at all

5.5 INTER MARRIAGE

The socio-economic development of the races is the processes of intermarriage or the mingling which has been going on for a long time. In Mexico about 60% of the population are the offspring of mixed marriages between Europeans and Indians, and in Colombia the same is true of 40% of the population. There exist large number of people of mixed origin-European and

Negro, Negro and Chinese, European and Japanese, American and Indian and European. In South America triple and even more complicated mixtures of races found. They include Negro, European and American and American Indian.

Some of the races have produced intermediate contact groups as a result of their mingling over a long period. The example of this mixed group is the Urals group (part of the Mansi and Khanti peoples). These groups were formed by the mingling of Europeoids and Mongoloids. Another example Lapps (Soma people) and Mari people. It is estimated that at least half of mankind of today consists of people who are to a great extent racially mixed.

The ease with which the races intermarry and the ever growing numbers of people involved is evidence that they have a common origin. This fact alone shows how groundless are the race theories that deny the blood relationship of people of different races.

When the races mix the majority of the racial features of their progeny have an intermediate character; this has been definitely proved by anthropologists. In the course of time permanent groups are formed. It begins to mix with others. It is probable that some races underwent a much fuller development in the distant past but even then the socio-economic factor, although much weaker than at later stages, modified the processes of race formation reducing some and strengthening other racial difference or complexes of difference. This explains to some extent the visible difference of the races; furthermore, the degree of independence of the races is conditioned by the extent to which they have been drawn in to the processes of mingling. So in the present day there are not really any races anywhere. The myth of the 'pure' race is the invention of the racists that contradicts scientific facts.

It should be kept in mind that the races of man, having developed from a single stock—primitive man are from a strictly scientific point of view, biologically similar subspecies division. So as far as their evolution is concerned, none of the races stands higher or lower than others in the level of physical development.

The racists usually consider the white race to be the higher and the colored (black and yellow) races to be the lower. Some of them support the Aryan theory and according to which they discarded themselves to be the higher races. The racists even claim that the few 'Higher Races' have created all culture and civilization.

The Germanic peoples present a good example showing that culture is independent of race. Their ancestors were barbarians at the time of the Roman state reached its highest level. Later, when the Germanic peoples found themselves in conditions more favourable to development, they reached a high cultural level while retaining their racial peculiarities.

In view of above discussion it may be said that the development of man and his races proceeded under the influence of various factors and the socio-economic factors in the end began to dominate over biological factors and even to force some of them to cease functioning.

5.6 COMMON FEATURES TO ALL RACES

Before entering in to the discussion on the relation between the Bengali and the Rajbanshi/Koch it is needed to sum up the above observation to look in to the matter of my study in the light of the anthropological relation between two communities.

The races are of common origin and cannot be regarded as different stages of development. Each of them is characterised by a definite but hereditarily changing complex of morphological and physiological features. The race took shape under the joint influence of natural and socio-economic conditions of life. The fundamental role in the development of man is played by social and not biological factors, so that natural selection has gradually lost its significance.

5.7 THE RELATION BETWEEN THE BENGALI AND RAJBANSHI ON THE LIGHT OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL FACTORS

The racial origin and identity and the status of the mother language now playing a pivotal role in the field of the ethnic unrest not only in North Bengal but almost in every ethnic movement of the world in general. The dominant races always try to establish their dominant authority over the minority races.

In Bengal, now West Bengal after partition of India the Bengali still holds the dominant position in the state in all respects. Their attitude toward the minority groups follows the same. The claim that the Rajbanshi/Kamtapuri language is the dialects and even sub dialect (as claimed by some intellectuals of the Bengali community) of Bengali may be regarded as the dominating attitude of the dominant group of the state. Sitting upon the seat of self-conceit they do not feel it necessary to feel the heart beat of the minority group.

It should be mentioned here, that two men are not identical in all respect. Even the twin child bear the difference in their appearance by which they can be differentiated from each other. Although this difference is there, but there are common similarities among the different groups of peoples which make them to be identified as distinct race. These common similarities have a fairly stable hereditary character and serves as basis for classifying those who possess them as belonging to particular:

They are:

- i) Colour of the skin (the degree of the pigment of the skin).
- ii) Types of hair (straight, undulating and curly).
- iii) Shape of the eyes-which depend on the nature and size of the fold on the upper eyelid.
- iv) Heights.
 - a) Pigmy (less than 1480 mm).
 - b) Short (between 1480 mm and 1581mm).
 - c) Medium (between 1582mm and 1676 mm).
 - d) Tall (between 1677mm and 1720mm).
 - e) Very tall (1721mm and above).
- v) Shape of the nose; determined mainly by the height of the bridge, the form of the spine, the width of the wings and the direction of the long axes of the nostril.
- vi) Shape of the skull; expresses in cephalic index. It is the ratio of breadth to length using the formula (breadth multiply by 100 and divided by length). The longer the head, the smaller the index figures.
- vii) Shape of the face; its shape is determined mainly by the development of the check bones. For example, if they project forward and out ward as are the case with many Mongoloids they give a broad, flat face (flat horizontal profile); if the check bones are not prominent as is the case with many Europeoids they give a narrow face that project forward.
- viii) Blood groups; for the anthropological classification the character of the blood is examined. For the quality of agglutination blood is grouped as O, AB, A-B, MN Rh positive and negative. On the quality of resistance against the virus if the similarities in character in the blood is found between two races of mankind it is taken that there is close bondage between them.

Although the area of the present study is not the anthropological account of the origin and characteristic of the mankind in classification of races but as I have to find out the root of the disputes on the question of the relationship between the Rajbanshi and the Bengali in general and the relation between the Rajbanshi and the Koch I have taken the help of the anthropological findings. In order to find the answer whether the Rajbanshi and the Koch are the same in their origin or if it is taken that the Rajbanshi really has been originated from the 'pure' Aryan blood then whether he should be recognized as the superior races over the Koch needs an anthropological prescription to find its answer.

5.8 THE IDENTITY OF BENGALI

Who are the Bengali? Whose blood they are carrying? There is no doubt that no single stream of blood is flowing through the body of the Bengali. The blood of the Bengali is mixed blood; as

such the Bengali cannot claim the carrier of pure blood. Race as we mean a more or less big biological group of individual having relatively similar from the morphological point of view.

When we say the Aryan race we mean those groups of people who follow religion, language and customs of the Aryan. Similarly when we say the Hindu race, we mean those group follow the culture and customs of the Hindus. The Bengali race thus means who born in Bengal and follows the particular mode of lives and culture and speaks in Bengali. From this fact it revealed that there is no definite definition of race as universally accepted. But here the anthropology may come to rescue from this complex situation to some extent. The primary index to define a race on the basis of anthropological points has already been discussed in this chapter.

Many of the Indian scholars based on the observation of Sir Hurbat Risley, the then the Chief Commissioner of the Anthropological Department of India. The Ethnographic Survey was conducted in India in 1901 under his supervision where he appointed some Indian Employees who were not at all specialist in anthropology. They were provided only a preliminary training on the method of taking the measurement of the anthropological data. According to Risley the Bengali is a race of the mixing of two groups of blood-Mongoloid and Dravidians.

It is now clear that there were two races—Pre—Dravidians and Proto-Australoid were the primitive inhabitants of Bengal. The blood of the Bengali is the mixture of the two groups and in the later period with people of the Mediterranean, in the later period the blood of the Aryan and Mongoloid. They spoke in different languages and in course of time throughout the process of social mixing they took the present shape.

It is said by the different scholars that the Rajbanshi has been originated from the Koch tribe. In this regard it has been discussed in this chapter of this study. There we find the similarities of different groups of races including the Mongoloids. But the term ‘Koch’ seemed to be ambiguous in the mind of Edward Gait, it is clear that when one use the word Koch it represents also a distinct group of people or a particular community. In Rabha language the word Koch means ‘human.’ In this context, Gait opined, that in Assam proper the term Koch had become the name of a Hindu caste into which are received the converts to Hinduism from the rank of the Kachari, lalung, Mikir and other tribes.(Gait,p 46)

There is no doubt that a few Mongolian tribes, especially the Kacharis (Bodo) had joined the rank of Koch or Rajbanshi after being converted in to Hinduism. In question of the relationship between the Koch/Rajbanshi and the Bengali it is observed from the cephalic index that the appearance they got from the Alpine groups of races who were believed to came through the sea-route of the Asia-Minor or through Baluchisthan and spread at first Sindh, Kathabar, Gujrat, Maharashtra ,Kurg and Tamilnadu. A group of them reached Orissa and Bengal along the Eastern coast. They may be regarded as the forefather of the higher caste peoples of Bengal

although they could not maintain the purity of the blood. Their blood was mixed with the blood of Austric and the Dravidians. In the 'Manjushree Mulkalpa' an ancient book described the inhabitants of Bengal as 'Dasyu'. In the Mahabharata same description is made. There it was said, that the peoples of Anga, Banga, Kalinga, Pundra were from the womb of Sudhama, the queen of the Dasyu king Bali through implantation semen of the sage Dirghatama. From this statement it is clear throughout the long course of the social history mixing of different bloods took place which gave birth to the present appearance of the Bengali. Same historical accounts may be seen in case of the present Rajbanshi/ Koch community with the variation of the mixing of bloods to some extent.

Naturally, the question comes who were the Dasyu ? This is important to know because in the age of the Mahabharata almost all the groups of people of the Eastern part of India were termed as Dasyu, as they opposed the Pandavas and joined with the front of the Kauravas in the Kurukhetrya War. So from the epic period there were some relations existed between different groups of peoples of this part of the country and they lived here before the Aryan came.

It is taken as granted that those people spoke in the non-Aryan languages. The presence of Kol and Dravidian in the western fringes of the Bengali area and of the Boda and Mom-Khemer speakers in the northern and eastern frontiers testifies this statement.

The following charts of the anthropological measure shows the fact that the mixing of different bloods took place in the blood of the Rajbanshi/Koch.

Table 5.3			
Anthropological Measurement			
	Cephalic Index	Nasal Index	Height
1. Kshatriya Rajbanshi (Jalpaiguri)	76.2	72.8	1608 mm
2. Rajbanshi (E. Dinajpur)	78.3	71.5	1600 mm
3. Paliya Rajbanshi (Malda)	76.8	74	1592 mm
4. Rajbanshi (Murshidabad)	77.7	74	1610 mm
5. Rajbanshi (25 Parganas)	75.4	76.9	1607 mm
Source: 'Bangalir Nrittaik Parichaya'; Atul Sur.			

It should be noted here, that in the Rajbanshis of Jalpaiguri Mogoloids characteristic of the epicanthic fold is found but it is absent in case of the Rajbanshi community of west Dinajpur. It indicates that the Mongoloids blood got mixed with blood of the Rajbanshi Community in case of Jalpaiguri. On the other hand, in case of the Rajbanshi of West Dinajpur they got the blood from the Dravidian races.

From the above facts it is evident that no pure blood is flowing neither in the blood stream of the Rajbanshi and nor in the blood of the Bengali.

The races of man, having developed from a single stock-primitive man-are, from a strictly scientific point of view, biologically similar subspecies divisions as far as their evolution is concerned, none of the races stands higher or lowers than the others in its level of physical development.

The mingling of races is frequently due to one group multiplying rapidly as result of socio – economic development; it's spreading its territory it embraces neighbouring groups and assimilates them. The process of inter marriage or mixing of bloods started during the Upper Palaeolithic and became more intense in the course of subsequent millennia, led to progressive increase in the number of intermediate groups and to all races again developing in to a single physical type. Intermarriage therefore has great significance for the differentiation of races.

Certain groups of anthropological types such as the Artic (Eskimo), Pigmy, and Australian aborigine groups, were for a long period in complete isolation and this intensified the racial features peculiar to them. During the course of time, however, even these comparatively isolated groups have lost their so called 'racial purity.' So today there are no really any pure races anywhere.

The boundaries between the majorities of racial groups have already been obliterated by the process of intermarriage. It is to be supposed that anthropological types and their groups will mingle and disappear more rapidly than the races and great races. Where there are large numbers of great races living in a solid mass, the Chinese, for instance or living in isolation like the Eskimos or Pygmies, they may remain relatively untouched by racial mixing.(Nesturkh; p65-66).

At one time natural isolation and natural selection played an important in racial formation but later the mixing of races and anthropological types became primary factor. One may even say that the mixing of races has ceased to be a race –forming factor and has become one that trends to eliminate racial differences. The present day lesser races and non–contact groups reflects the effect of the environment to a still lesser degree, their specific features are formed more and more under the influence of the social milieu.

5.9 KOCH RAJBANSHI AND KOCH VERSUS RAJBANSHIS

The researcher of this study has no any inclination neither of the Koch or Rajbanshi nor in favour or against the movement for the demand of Kamtapur state. It is for the academic discussion required for the research study this question needs to be examined.

To get the answer is very important. Who are Koch and who Rajbanshi? In my field work I met different persons those who claimed belonged to either Rajbanshi or Koch and in seminar

both who claimed the language as Kamtapur or it is Rajbanshi. With my hypothetical question for which the proposed state would be aimed at either for the Koch or Rajbanshis I met veteran leader and scholar Sri Dharmanarayan Burma with this question. He is the author of several books ,like' Kamtapur Bhasha Prasnga, he demanded that the Rajbanshi originated from the pure Aryan blood and their language is Kamtapuri not Rajbanshi. Koch is different from the Rajbanshi in their origin. Again I met with Dr. Dharendra Nath Das, Sri Nagendra Chandra Ratta, Sri Sujan Burman of Kamtapuri Bhasa Unnayan, Dinhata of Cooch Behar all of them demanded that Koch and Rajbanshi are not same in question of their origin . They told, the language is same but it is not Rajbanshi, it is Kamtapuri. When I met Prof. Nikhelish Roy of Bengali Dept. North Bengal University he told me that Koch and Rajbanshi is the same and the language is not Kamtapuri but Rajbanshi. I met several cross sections of the people of the Rajbanshi- Koch community and got such contradictory reply.

When the Rajbanshis are claiming themselves that they are not Koch, their language is different from the Koch language. The Koches are Non Aryan and the Rajbanshis are Aryan. So those community who were known as the man of the soil, and when the history of the Cooch Behar and the Baikantapur dynasty were known as the history of them, their literature , custom are the literature and custom of the aboriginal people of North Bengal, if they appear with such separate identity then the total history has to re-write again and if the proposed Kamtapur state come into true than for whom Kamtapur it would be that question also waiting for the reply.

There is no doubt that Bodo races entered into the North Eastern part of Bengal several hundred before. Again, it can be taken as granted, if the Lichhabis of North Bihar were belonged to the Indo-Chinese group of origin in the 6th B.B then there should not be any doubt that from the ancient time the races of the Indo-Chinese group of origin lived in Assam and North Bengal. Here the number of the Brahmin and the Hindus of the Western of the country were very negligible. The Brahmin and the caste Hindus came here in the recent past century. The most of the population of North Bengal either belonged to Bodo races of origin or the mixed origin of Austric-Drabir-Mongoliad. From the lower Bengal and Bihar (Bhatia) those people came and mixed with this population and formed the present races.

The origin of the dynasty and their history have already been discussed earlier .In this chapter let it be discussed about the different opinion among the Koch -Rajbanshi origin as the present study of the research about the root of the unrest . In order to find the clue of this unrest it is needed to compile the contrast opinion of the different school of thoughts within the Rajbanshis itself to find the difference and origin of the demand of Kamtapur state and the Greater Cooch Behar.

No races can claim they are carrying the pure blood from which they were supposed to have been originated. In the blood of Rajbanshis as a general rule of social process several stream of

bloods had mixed during the course of time. Here again, the flow of the Indo- Chinese Bodo races converged at great speed. Whether the Rajbanshis are Bengali this question generally effect the identity and unity of Bengali as a whole , similarly, the question whether the Koch and Rajbanshis are same or not draws the line of division jeopardizing the unity of this great population that are regarded as the biggest aboriginal people of North Bengal.

Upendra Nath Burman, Popularly Known as, the ‘Bishma ‘among the Rajbanshi community and Ex M.P. now died, said in an interview some years back when I was working on the ethnic unrest of North Bengal and published the book under the title ‘*Bichhinataher Utsya Sandhyane kamtapur Theke Uttar Purba Bharat*’ there I quoted the remarks that he made in his book under the title ‘*Rajbanshi kshatriya Jatir Itihas*’ and collaborated with his statement. He strongly advocated his statement that the Rajbanshi and the Koch are completely different in origin. In support of his statement he suggested to consider the following points. 1) appearance 2) language that means the difference between the two languages 3) religion 4) customs 5) the history of the past which means the history of their origin.

Upendra Nath Burman further said in his book, ‘all the Koches bear the origin of Mongolites. Early koches were black and ugly to look at. On the other hand, the Rajbanshis are handsome and many of the Rajbanshi bear the appearance of the Aryan. The appearance of the Rajbanshi of the southern part is more handsome than that of the Rajbanshi of north. The Rajbanshis of that Rangpur and Dinajpur are more handsome than that of Rajbanshis of Jalpaiguri. It is needless to say Rangpur was the principal centre of the Rajbanshis in the ancient period. The Rajbanshi language was originated from the Prakrit and Magadhi. Sanskrit is the grandmother of the Rajbanshi language but no such phonetic characteristic is found in the Koch language.’” He further argued, the koches were converted in to the Hinduism at the time of Biswa Singha when he embraced the Hinduism but the Rajbanshis from their birth are Hindus. In performing the ritual practice in ‘puja’ or offering god there are difference between the Rajbanshis and the Koches. The ritual practice of Rajbanshis is similar with the practice of the Hindus; their customs are like as the Hindus. The Hindus use the water from their hand. The rituals of the Koches are not sanctioned by the Hindus and they do not use the water from the hand of the Koches. Koches were the invaders and came from the outside of the country.

All the scholars and even those who claimed themselves as Rajbanshi stated the fact that the Cooch dynasty was founded by Biswa Singha who declared himself as Rajbanshi.

The question lies here. If the Koches and the Rajbanshis are taken as the different races of origin that what would be the racial identity of the Cooch Behar Dynast?

Dharma Narayan Burman in his book ‘*Rajbanshi Kshatriya Jatir Itibritta Banam Tribal Andolon*’ referred a point that was said by Dr. Atul Sur in his book ‘*Bangalir Nrittatik Parichay*’ where he told the appearance of the upper caste (brahmin, kyasatha . baidya) similar

to the Alpid language group of the Aryan. On the other hand, lower caste Bengali belonged to the primitive inhabitants of Bengal. They are the descendents of the Pro Australoid races.'

Sri Burman put the question what would be the argument in the racial division when the similarities appear in the appearance between the lower and the high caste Bengali community? When the characteristic of the appearance of the Pro-Australoid like short nose, black complexion, and curved hair are seen in the appearance of the high caste Hindus or the appearance of the Alpine group of races seen in the appearance of the low caste Bengali community how it would be explained?

The answer to the question that was raised by Sri Burman will also give the answer to the very basic position of the present racial identity. It is not the important point that which blood was there in the flow of the blood of races, the important point is the formation of the new races due to the mixing of the different flow of blood. If there was the blood of Alpine group of races that mixed with the blood of Bengali it is the pride of the present Bengali community. Similarly the Bengali should feel proud if the blood of the Pro Australoid dark peoples mixed with the blood of the same Bengali Community. So if there is no definite appearance of Bengali, if no definite complexion for Bengali, if the complexion of the so called higher caste like Brahmin that was artificially created by the self proclaimed guardian of the society becomes black short in height, - still he or she will remain Bengali. Again, if the complexion becomes fair, attained the height as said for the Aryan, the Bengali similarly remain as the Bengali not the Aryan or non Aryan Bengali. His identity is one. He is Bengali. In question of religion Bengali cannot be divided into Hindu Bengali or Muslim Bengali. Bengali should remain as Bengali only. It is the pride of a community. A race fully developed through the convergence of the different blood of different groups of races, accepting different groups of languages assimilating of different culture through the course of the social processes through the passage of time. This can be compared with the properties of the magnet. A magnet can never be found having only one pole, either North Pole or South Pole, similarly no races of carrying the pure Aryan blood or Pure Dravidian blood will be found. The present races are as if the cloth made of the number of fibres of different colours. If one tries to isolate the fibres from the cloth to arrange them according to their texture and colour the cloth will not remain as the cloth, similarly, if one tries to isolate him with the aim to find its origin from the immemorial past, the identity of the race will be the first victim.

It is not needed to go far. Let have a glance over the list of the wives of Biswa Singha along with their land where they belonged and the sons from their womb.

Table 5.4**List of the King's Queen and Son**

Sl.No.	The father land of the queen	Name of the queen	Name of the sons
1	Nepal	Ratna Kanti	Nara Singha
2	Gour	Hemaprava	Naranarayan
3	Gour	Padmabati	Shukradwaj
4	Kamrup	Chandra Kanti	Kamalnarayan
5	Kamrup	Purnakanti	Madan
6	Kamrup	Hemkanti	Ramchandra
7	Kamrup	Rati	Surasingha
8	Kashmir	Tilottama	Mansingh
9	Kashi	Chandra Kanti	Mecha
10	Kashi	Chandranana	Brisha Ketu
11	Kashi	Joya	Ramnarayan
12	Kashi	Bijoya	Ananta
13	Kashi	Joyanti	Dipsingha
14	Shantipur	Lalita	Hemdhar
15	Shantipur	Labanyabati	Meghnarayan
16	Shantipur	Padma mala	Jagat
17	Mithila	Shatarupa	Rupchand
18	Mithila	Kanchanmalika	Surya
19	Unknown	Unknown	Harisingha

Source: Kochbeharer Itihas: Khan Chowdhury Amantullah (p 92)

This list is an example only to show how a race comes to be existed by the mixing of different groups of blood. But a peculiar mentality for attraction toward the fair or white complexion is shown even among many Indian although they are considered as black in the eyes of the white peoples. Many Indians selected their match from the whites of Europe and Amarica but it is a rare case where an Indian although he or she is black chosen their life partner from the black. The same mentality is shown to show the relation with the Aryan blood and feel proud for the ignoring the fact that the blood of the black of this country not only the blood of our fellow country man but also the blood of their fore fathers are flowing through the most of the Indians. Many of us feel shame to recognize the relationship with them. As a result those people are gradually becoming more and more isolated from the so called people of the Aryan origin. So the call for the integration appears to them a simple word without bearing any meaning.

The Rajbanshis are Kshatriya. No harm to accept it. But why they feel it needed to invite the Brahmin from the Nabadwip to get their reorganization for that? The Rajbanshis had a glorious past. That should be their best weapon to establish their identity. Prayer for the recognition from the Brahmin for their Kshatriya hood is nothing but it indicates the feeling of inferiority complex.

When the question came whether the Kshatriya will be recorded as the schedule caste because some of them suggested that as the Rajbanshi community being recognized as the Kshatriya, the second highest position of the Hindu caste system they should not be included in the scheduled caste list of the Hindu community. But Panchanan Burman who took the lead for the recognition as the Kshatriya hood for the Rajbanshi strongly advocated for the inclusion in the scheduled caste category to avail the special facilities that are extended to the lower strata of the Hindu society. So the Rajbanshis are now enjoying the privileges that the lower caste of the Hindu society enlisted in Schedule Caste can enjoy.

A section of the Rajbanshi community claimed that Koches are not Rajbanshi. But again, a section of Bengali was reluctant to recognize this vast mass of the people as the Bengali. From the easy of the 'Sahitya Samrat Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay wrote in his '*Banga Darshan*, 'many Koches are living in Bengal. They are found in Dinajpur, Malda, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Bangura, Dacca, Maymansingh and some other districts of Bengal. In Bengal their number are about one lakh. Whether this one lakh Rajbanshi can be called Rajbanshi? Somebody said they should be regarded as Bengali. But we are doubtful about this. (*Banga Darshan* ,Magh 1287 saskabda)

Upendra Nath Burman is regarded as a scholar not only among the Rajbanshi community but equally respected by the others. Similarly Dr. Giraja Mohan Roy also respected by all section of the community. Both of them belong to the same origin of race i.e. the Rajbanshi. But these two scholars are in the two opposite thought of schools. The opinion of Upen Barman has already been discussed earlier now the opinion of Dr. Giriaja Mohan Roy is mentioned which he wrote and collaborated in the interview given by him to the researcher of this study:

Rajbanshi in the opinion of Dr. Roy belonged to the Indo–Mongoloid group of race. He supported this view on the basis of the height and other appearance of the Rajbnshi similar to the height including other appearance of the Mongoloids groups of people living in Assam, Burma, Tripura, Nepal and foot of the Himalayas. In his opinion the Rajbanshi is a branch of the Indo – Mongoloids Bodo mongoloids groups of people.

Dr. Roy ignored the opinion of Upendra Nath Barman on the basis of the following observation:

Firstly, the formation of the body of both the Rajbanshi and Koches are same.
Secondly, from the ancient time marriage relation has been established between them
Thirdly, religion, culture, language, literature, and the mode of living are same for both of them.

Fourthly, the logic upon which the Rajbanshi claim themselves as the Kshatriya the Koche also claims for the Kshatriya hood upon the same logic . The demand of the Rajbanshi that they fled in fear of torture of Parashuram who vowed to eliminate all the Kshatriya from the earth and hide themselves at the foot of the Himalayas. The koche also said that to save the anger of Parashuram took the shelter by the side of the river the Sankoch and outcaste as 'Mlechha'. And from the name of the Sankoch the name 'Koch' has been derived. That means that both of them are the Kshatriya and out of fear to be killed by Parshuram they took the shelter in North Bengal. So these two groups are same in origin.

Fifthly, they are known in Assam as the Koch–Rajbanshi.

(*Utterbangar Sankriti; Rajbanshi Kshtriya Jatir Puja Parban* ' Grija Shankar Roy)

5.10 THE REGIONAL IMBALANCE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE FEELING OF REGIONALISM

(A CASE STUDY OF NORTH BENGAL)

An attempt is made in my presentation to bring to the fore the socio-politico- economic dimension of regional variation in West Bengal and its effect upon the feeling of the regionalism that ultimately watered the germination of separatist movement.

The largely quantitative description in my study focuses on three set of disparities within the state. It describes disparities in income and poverty between industrial zone of South Bengal and industrially dry northern zone of North Bengal including other indicators of human development which links to the issues of voice and representation of marginalized groups and the role of decentralization of economy and cultural resources in addressing poverty and disparities.

In question of backwardness it may be stated here there is also a wide disparity in matters of various social benefits among the peoples of different groups and different regions. The greater the inequality between the different regions of the state as well as in the country there is the greater the social and economic isolation between the regions.

Fear of becoming demographically minority is also one of the root causes that the people suffer from what is known as identity crisis. It must bear in mind that integration should not become the name of assimilation.

Poverty and inequality also appear as one of the greatest threat not only to the sustainability of human life but also the very existence of the unity among the different section of the ethnic groups.

The participatory role of the people is perceived today as an essential part of the development strategy. It does not only mean peoples involvement in a particular programme it also means

open access of the people in a wider range of social choice and greater use for political, economic and social opportunities. Participation in economic life enables people to realize their potential and offer their contribution to society. It also affords a basis of self respect and dignity which make them feel at par with other people of the state and feeling of the isolation does not find strong ground to germinate taking in to the account of the fact economic growth is meaningful for the people if it can be translated in to the betterment of human life.

I have visited from the south to the north of this state including North East states. One of the key impressions during my field study has been the seemingly increasing disparity.

In the absence of in depth knowledge or understanding of the social relation in the backward areas of the state I like to confine within the limit of macro-view of social and economic indicators of the state. It appeared to me this state is marked as much as disparities with the state or by absolute deprivation. The main reason , whatever the development their either in the field of economy or in the field of culture all are confined within the radius of certain areas in and around Kolkata .Nothing has been done for the decentralization of economic activities and consequently the cultural development became the captive in the hand of single centre.

North Bengal has a long historical back ground. It has vast natural resources and man power. The region is full of tea plantation areas but it is lagging far behind in terms of industrial progress. The result is obvious. The scope absorbing unemployed youth is limited.

To substantiate of my contention I have already presented a comparative study between the Punjab and West Bengal taking in to the account of the fact that both the states were the victim of partition

Table 5.5

A comparative study between the Northern and Southern part of West Bengal.

The average child mortality rate of the state is 67 per thousand; it is 92 in Coochbehar, 76 in West Dinajpur, 78 in Malda and 58 in Darjeeling. (Infant and Child Mortality Estimate, by S.Rajan and others E.P.W.May9-15 1995)

The average number of hospital bed of W.B for every 1018 population.it is 2748 for West Dinajpur.2112 for malda, 1828 for Coochbehar 1145for Jalpaiguri 483 for Darjeeling (Health on the March W.B 1991)

Average literacy rate of the state is 69.2; it is 67.21 in Coochbehar, 63.62 in Jalpaiguri, 54.87 in West Dinajpur, 50.71 in Malda, 72.87 in Darjeeling.Per head yearly income for the state is Rs 2230; it is 1971 in Coochbehar, 2173 in Jalpaiguri, 1776 in W Dinajpur,1686 in Malda 26234 in Darjeeling (Statistical Abstract W. B1978-89;97-98. Burea of Applied Economic and Statistics)

Agriculture 33% of the cultivable land gets the irrigated water. Govt. spent Rs 30.90 per hecter in the districts malda and Coochbehar.it is 1401.22 for Midnapur and Burdwan.

North Bengal represents 20 % of the total population of the state but shares only 3 pc of total electricity produced in the state. The I.D.B.I report reflects the true picture in the field of industrial development where it stated; the share of the IDBI Refinance Assistance to the state of West Bengal has varied marginally. As a percentage of assistance flowing to the backward region of W.B, North Bengal share has been declined from 26% to 18% WBFC has assisted so far about 400 medium scale industries in the state, about 90 % of this unit has come out in South Bengal .North Bengal share is only 5%.