

Chapter - I

Koch Dynasty: A Political Outline

The Koch kingdom was a state situated south of the Himalayas and in the northern part of Bengal during the 16th to 18th centuries. Though there is a great deal of obscurity leading to some academic controversies about the way it was established but it is a fact that the state was established in 1496, in the vacuum created after the collapse of the Kingdoms of Kamarupa and Kamta and became one of the great regional powers of North East India. Nonetheless, it was unique for its long existence and can boast of its remote antiquity, sustained continuity and survival down the centuries. The early history of the kingdom has to be sought in the history of Assam. In early times the territory was known as *Pragjyotisha*.

The geographical frontier of the Kingdom was well set by the natural boundaries. The Baranadi and the Brahmaputra rivers constitute the eastern boundary while the river Tista and Karatoya are the indicators of the western boundary. In the northern flank Bhutan constitute the frontier and convergence of the Brahmaputra and the Karatoya in Rangpur (now in Bangladesh) is normally reflected as the southern frontier of the county.¹ However with the passage of time the administrative jurisdiction of the domain of Koch kingdom changed in several periods of its presence. The countryside of the kingdom is basically plane with a trivial south eastern incline along which the major rivers of the kingdom run. There are slim ups and downs and while some regions may be so down as to be flooded by the streams during the rainy season, others are a little elevated and stay permanently above water. There are neither mountain peaks nor any hills inside the monarchy. The waterways in Koch territory run in a sloping path from north-west to south-east. As a law they take

their upsurge in the Himalayas and come in the kingdom from the western *duars* of the state and after passing through they release their waters into the Brahmaputra. The streams are normally fame and thin in the dry period, they become extremely tumultuous and severe during the rains. The most significant rivers of the state include *Tista, Karotoya, Sankosh, Torsha, Dharla, Raidak, Kaljani, Jaldhaka, Mujnai, Gadadhar*, etc. The system of rivers in the kingdom had a noteworthy role in the creation of states in the area since the commencement of the historical stage. As the normal frontier the river system had relevant role in the security of the region. Floods as usual incidence in the rivers had guarded the area from the attack of adjacent adversary.² Owing to overflow the loam of the kingdom is of alluvial pattern and extremely productive.

The current name of the above mentioned physical area is Cooch Behar but previously the region was part of a much bigger territory of Kamrup.³ The name of the kingdom was also changed with the passage of time. We have several references in our hand where the territory has been described as *Pragjyotish, Kamarupa* and *Kamarupa-Kamta*. For instance *Kalika Purana*, a Sanskrit text compiled in the early medieval period, placed the Pragjyotisha kingdom between the Dikkar Basini (*Dikkrai*) river and the Karatoya river during the pre-Christian period especially in the period of Naraka and Bhagadatta, the legendary heroes of the area.⁴ The term *Pragjyotish* was replaced by the name *Kamarupa* in the early centuries of the Christian era. The term *Kamarupa* can be found in the *Allahabad Prasathi* of Samudra Gupta (325-76 A.D), where the kingdom has been described as a border kingdom of the Gupta Empire.⁵ But in Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsa*, a Sanskrit text composed in fifth century both the term *Pragjyotisha* and *Kamarupa* can be found.⁶ With the coming of the *Varmanas* in the political scenario the term *Kamarupa* became widely used. But we can get a new term of the territory from Yuan Chawang's account, who stayed in *Kamarupa* and described the area as *Kia-Mo-Leo-Po*.⁷ In *Yogini Tantra*, a late medieval Sanskrit text, we can find the name *Kamata*.⁸ *Baharistan-I-Ghaibi* also refers the state as *Kamata*.⁹ The term 'Cooch Behar' seems to have been first used in relation to this territory in *Shahjahan Nama* about the mid of the 17th century. In the

Anglo-Koch treaty (1773) the territory was mentioned as Cooch Behar.¹⁰ However the terminology of the area as during the medieval period was described as Kamata, where the *Khen* kings settled a kingdom.¹¹

Prior to the formation of the Koch state in early sixteenth century the physical extent of the state was under the suzerainty of Kamarupa kingdom and also under some other hereditary rule. But for the convenience of our investigation we will begin our study of political history from the appearance of the Khen family because former to the Khen the political development of the area was in its infant phase. So it is better to start the glimpse of historical growth of the region from the emergence of the Khen.

Emergence of the Khen:

The Khen authority over the region established in the first half of the fifteenth century.¹² From the *Kamarupa Buranji* we can know that after the dynasty of Arimitta, a new clan containing of three kings Niladhvaja, Chakradhaja and Nilambara reigned over the area with its capital at Kamatapura.¹³ W.W. Hunter stated that king Niladhvaja succeeded the Pala house not to trouble on the Khen affairs.¹⁴ S.K. Chatterjee on the other hand is of the view that Niladhvaja battled and defeated the last rulers of the Pala dynasty of Bengal.¹⁵ So it is problematic to trace the source of Niladhvaja. In *Kamatesvara Kula Karik*, Srutidhar Rup Narayan states that the monarchs of Kamata were the posterities of king Vardhana of Vardhankot.¹⁶ They being frightened of Nanda (Mahapadma Nanda) took shelter in the Kamata with the name of *Bhanga Kastariya* and later recognized as Rajbamsi.¹⁷ Incidentally D.C. Sircar recognized Vardhanakot with Bardhankot and brands it a portion of the Nivrti country.¹⁸ Conferring to the second *Patala of Bhramari Tantra* the sons of Vardhana discarding *Kastriya* practice took shelter in Ratnapitha (Kamarupa) and were identified as Rajbansis.¹⁹

From the traditional accounts we can know that Niladhvaja, the originator of the Khen family was however indicated to come to the authority from a very modest position. According to *Gosanimangala* he was cow herd of a Brahmin who found the symbols of kingship on the boy's figure and released him from the labor.²⁰ At the guidance of this Brahmin having beaten the last Pala ruler near Guwahati he announced himself king and assumed the title Niladhvaja. He made his capital at Kamtapura on the west bank of the river Dharla by settling many Mithila Brahmins in his domain. Gunabhiram Barua updates us that this was a prevalent ritual short of historical certainty. He did much to re-begin the devotion of the Khen people. They were elevated to the pride of clean Hindus for this admirable performance.²¹ On the other side while remarking on the Khen dynasty R.D. Banarjee pointed out that Niladhvaja conquered the city of Kamtapura which was previously in existence. Niladhaja made certain modernizations of the fortified city which had been constructed sometimes ago.²²

Niladhvaja was succeeded by his son Chakradhvaja in 1460. Significant event during his sway was the occurrence of the Bengal Sultan Barbak Saha.²³ Though the Sultan did not make any outstanding success in the battle against the monarch of Kamata. The supremacy of Chakradhaja is also said to have been related with the discovery and founding of the shrine of *Gosani* of Kamateswari, the chief divinity of the house. The shrine of *Gosani* or *Kamatesvari* is located within Kamatapura the capital of Kamata. Chakradhvaja was succeeded by his son Nilambara in the monarchy of Kamata in 1480. The territory of Nilambara is said to have comprised the larger part of Goalpara and Kamarupa the whole of Rangpur and Cooch Behar and portion of Jalpaiguri and Dinajpur.²⁴ Edward Gait opines that he also took a distant part of North Eastern areas which was under the control of the sovereigns of Gauda.²⁵ Nilambara is attributed to have built the long way extending from Kamatapura to Ghoraghat (Rangpur) remained of which may be found in the current Dinhata-Mekhligang road.

The consolidated Kamata state was a great challenge to the Sultans of Bengal so within few years the Bengal Sultan Hussain Saha (1493-1519) attacked the kingdom of Kamata and took the capital in 1498.²⁶ The Muslim subjugator brutally robbed the city and shrines were demolished, images of Gods and Goddesses were smashed. The kingdom as far as Hajo was seized. According to a custom Hussain Saha constructed a Madrasa in Malda which bears writing corresponding to 1502 in memorial of triumph against the ruler of Kamata.²⁷ In addition he issued coins as seen above in which he expected the title as the victor of Kamata, Kamaru, Jajnagar and Orissa. The Sultan however, appointed Danyal or Dulal Ghazi as the administrator of the occupied land with the object to follow further conquest to the east.²⁸ But the rule of the Muslim was short-lived. The *Bhuiyans* made a joint outbreak on the Danyal's battalion and demolished the last man. There after there seems to have prevailed a state of disorder in the state while there emerged a number of minor principalities under local heads usually recognized as *Bara-Bhuiyan* who increasingly declared their freedom.²⁹

Emergence of the Koch, Visvasimha (c. 1496-1533):

In the last quarter of the fifteenth century the Koch tribe was slowly rising to the authority in the sub-Himalayan tracts of Bengal by suppressing the other tribal groups and became so powerful that they were succeeded to establish a new kingdom which was named as Koch kingdom as the *Koch* tribe was the ruling power.³⁰ After few hereditary rulers, one Koch chief, Visvasimha raised to power in the Koch Kingdom. The original name of Visvasimha was Bisu³¹ though *Akbarnamah* recognized him the name Bisan.³² His father Haria Mondol was a dweller of the Khuntaghat area. Various Koch kin assembled under him residing in that area.³³ Like his father Haria, Visvasimha also structured his authority by gaining suzerainty over diverse tribes of the region and launched ambitious campaigns against the landed *Bhuiyans*. He extended his territory of control from the river Karatoya in the west and to the Baranadi in the east beating the *Bhuiyans* one after another.³⁴ He established his capital at *Kamatanagara* or *Kamatapura*.³⁵ After this he took the name of Kamatesvara (Lord of Kamata)

perhaps after the name of preached deity of the kingdom. In the contemporary chronicles Visvasimha has been designated as the *Lord of Kamata*.³⁶ After the initial consolidation of his kingdom Visvasimha attacked Bhutan and concluded a treaty with them. Bhutan promised to pay tribute to him. After his victory he made an ambitious campaign against the Ahom kingdom but his battle against Ahom country was not productive.³⁷ But he succeeded in conquering some parts of that country of Gaur.³⁸

The root of Visvasimha is credited to mythical Aryan figures. The Brahmin whose number was certainly very minor and who had to depend on the royal support for their living inclined to craft stories drawing their ancestry from Hindu Gods and Goddess or allegorical figures. According to a custom noted in *Darrang Rajavamsavali*³⁹ Visvasimha was born out of the amalgamation of Lord Siva and his mother Hira, a manifestation of goddess Bhagavati. Visvasimha was fitted in the sovereignty according to ceremonial rites and during his installation the Brahmins offered him the name Visvasimha⁴⁰ as becoming a king. It is obvious from the *Rajopakhyana* that Visvasimha became monarch on a heavenly rule and an umbrella, an insignia of divine origin being used at the installation. The story of heavenly source attributed by the Brahmins to the author of the Koch family marks a fabricated linking of the Koch with certain mythical figures while they were became Hindu. This kind of linking however offered a prospect of their dominance and assisted them to have adherence from the subject population.

But Buchanan Hamilton has informed us a dissimilar explanation about the source of Visvasimha. According to him two brothers Chandana and Madana recognized a government at Moralabasa. They reigned only for eight years and soon the people particularly the Koch 'who had a number of chiefs at first independent but who gradually united under the authority of one of themselves named Hajo'⁴¹ occupied Rangpur and Kamarupa. He had two offspring Hira and Jira of whom Hira was wedded to Hariya an associate of admixed tribe named Mech. They gave birth to Bisu who succeeded to the entire of his grandfather.⁴² Thus it apparent that Visvasimha's father was

from a *Mech* tribe and mother was from a Koch tribe, hence non Aryan and non Hinduised. Visvasimha worshipped *Siva* and *Durga* and had been introduced into the *Siva* doctrines by a Brahmin named Kalicarana Bhattacharya.⁴³ He is supposed to have revived the *Kamakhya Pitha* in the Nilachala close to Guwahati and created a shrine there.⁴⁴ He selected Ballavacharya the son of a Kanouj Brahmin called Vasudeva Acharyya and bought a great number of Brahmins from Kanauj, Varanasi and other places of North India.⁴⁵ The Brahmins were praised to settle in the Kingdom with payment free property. Their part in broadcasting the thoughts of the Sanskrit masterpieces had a great significance in the spiritual life of the people. Throughout the sovereignty of Visvasimha Pitambara wrote *Nala-Damayanti* episode of the *Mahabharata*⁴⁶ and transformed the 10th *Canta* of *Bhagavata Purana* at the request of Sangram Simha.⁴⁷ *Markandeya Purana* was translated by him into Bengali poetry. Mankara and Durgabara are supposed to have composed the *Manasa-Mangala Kavya*.⁴⁸ It was thought that the *Yogini Tantra* perhaps a sixteenth century work on *Devi* worship was composed during his time.⁴⁹

Nara Narayan (1533-1587):

At the time of Visvasimha's demise his two sons Malladeva and Sukladhvaja were absent from the kingdom and they were at Banaras taking their higher education under a Brahmin.⁵⁰ Narasimha another son of Visvasimha ascended the power, when the news reached Malladeva and Sukladhvaja they returned to the kingdom instantly raised an army and overcome Narasimha who along with his family escaped to *Morang* the sub-Himalayan area to the west of Koch kingdom.⁵¹ Subsequently the removal of Narasimha, Malladeva became king and took the designation Nara Narayan.⁵² A *Chap* was prepared on this event with his name '*Sri Sri Nara Narayan*' carved thereon and coins were also minted bearing the name of the king. His coins are named *Narayani Tanka* and they had on one side the name of the God *Siva* and on the other the name of the king both in *Devanagari* calligraphy.⁵³ He selected his brother Sukladhaja his Commander-in-Chief, who was also assumed a new name

Sangram Simha. Sukladhvaja was so accomplished and swift in military maneuvers that he was designated as '*Chilarai*' or the 'Kite king'.⁵⁴

With the accession of Nara Narayan in the throne of the Koch kingdom the history of the Koch arrived into an excellent episode of military brilliance. He recognized the Koch independence in the whole North East India. H.N. Chaudhuri opines⁵⁵ that 'his conquest comprised almost the whole of Northern Bengal, Bhutan and Assam as well as the modern states of Kacchar, Jayantia, Manipur and Tripura and extended up to the coast of Bay of Bengal'. But actually the land under his direct management was possibly much lesser than that. According to *Akbarnamah*⁵⁶ on the east is the river Brahmaputra on the north is lower Tibet and Assam and on the south Ghoraghat on the west is Tirhut. It is possibly owing to the fact that Nara Narayan certified the conquered monarchs to enjoy their self-government by giving tribute. After the demise of Sukladhvaja there was no more war in the Koch Kingdom for some years and Nara Narayan became much dedicated to religion and works of community interests for which he came to be recognized as 'the pious King'.

But the splendor of the Koch Kingdom under Nara Narayan did not last long, degeneration soon set in subsequent the death of Sukladhvaja. Nara Narayan was infertile till late in life. *Darrang Raj Vamsavali*⁵⁷ mentions that even though Nara Narayan wedded before he remained childless late in life. As a result Raghudeva, child of Sukladhvaja had been chosen as his successor.⁵⁸ But in his progressed age Nara Narayan was consecrated with a son named Lakshmi Narayan which twisted doubt in Raghudeva's mind. It appears to him that being the son of ruling sovereign he had superior claim to the throne according to the regulation of birthright common at that time. Activated by some bureaucrats and councilors he advanced to Badanagar on the bank of river Manas and affirmed himself sovereign building there a fort there.⁵⁹

The serenity loving king Nara Narayan favored to split the kingdom instead of going in a conflict against his nephew. Nara Narayan made over to Raghudeva the territories east of the Sankosa and the western part of the kingdom remained for himself and his descended. Raghudeva decided to

accept the suzerainty of his uncle to give him homage and strike coins in the name of his uncle.⁶⁰ Raghudeva's country was known as Hajo extended as far as the river Bharadi in the east and incorporated the localities of Kamarupa, Goalpara and Garo hills. The Koch kingdom practically integrated present Cooch Behar and portions of the present districts of Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Rangpur with its capital at Kamatapura.⁶¹

Nara Narayan was chiefly a man of peace and more fascinated in literary and artistic pursuits. He was an admirer of *Saiva* faith and was supposed to have built the Saiva temples. In this link mention may be made of the reconstruction of the holy place of Kamakhya in 1565.⁶² It is marked from an caption in the temple that Nara Narayan and Sukladhvaja had various qualities. Again the stone message of the Hayagriva Madhava temple states that 'the most wise king Malla Deva was the subjugator of all adversaries. In significance and kindness and for bravery he had a great standing and was purified by spiritual conduct.'⁶³ Nara Naryan was a great patroniser of Art. The court of Nara Narayan was garlanded with a great number of court versifiers for which he was acknowledged as '*Vikramaditya*' of Kamarupa.⁶⁴ He was famous to have issued orders to the intellectuals soliciting them to apply vernacular words when they transformed the renowned Sanskrit classics into poetries.⁶⁵ So Ramasaravati translated the entire Sanskrit *Mahabharata* into verses.⁶⁶ The sway of Nara Narayan noticed the peak of *Vaisnava* literature, a new branch of Assamese literature. Sankaradeva the grand Neo-Vaisnavaite reformer and court writer of Nara Narayan interpreted the *Uttarakanda* of *Ramayana*, *Srimadbhagvata* and many works of Vaisnava doctrine.⁶⁷ Ananta Kandali, Kalap Chandra Dvija were also dedicated themselves in conversions of diverse Sanskrit classics.

Lakshmi Narayan (1587-1627):

Nara Narayan was succeeded by his only son Lakshmi Narayan.⁶⁸ Following the tradition *Raikatas* of Baikunthapur and other officials brought *nazars* with the newly coined money at the time of his installation. He was not skilled in politics and war tactics like his father and he was also a weak

administrator. So the displeasures between the Koch royal families sustained.⁶⁹ During his reign Raghudeva denied to admit preeminence of Lakshmi Narayan and confirmed him sovereign and struck coins in his own name. Lakshmi Narayan went to battle with him, defeated him and came into custody of the imperial standard.⁷⁰ This unlocked the line of attack to both the Afghans and the Mughols intruders into their politics. Raghudeva had an ambition to make himself as the sovereign ruler of the whole of the Koch kingdom and for this he started to build relationship with Isha Khan the Afghan leader of Eastern Bengal.⁷¹ Lakshmi Narayan as a consequence twisted his attention to accept the ceremonial dominance of the Mughol emperor Akbar and for the reason encouraged friendship with Mansingh the governor of Bengal by giving his sister in marriage to him.⁷² Raghudeva there after attacked the Koch king Lakshmi Narayan and Bahirband was seized. At this state of affairs Lakshmi Narayan asked for the assist of Mansingh who instantly sent a force in help of the former. Being beaten in May, 1596⁷³ Raghudeva obliged to quit Bahirband hearing the reports Isha Khan hastened to help his supporter but his force was diplomatically blocked by Mansingh. Isa Khan crushed Man-Sing but could not continue to facilitate Raghudeva.⁷⁴

After the loss of Raghudeva, his son Parikshit hurried to the territory and assuming the independence executed Indranarayan his step brother. After becoming king Parikshita also followed his father's strategy against the Koch Kingdom.⁷⁵ Parikshita became closer to the Ahom king Pratapa Simha in 1608. The Ahom king as they concerned in the combat with the Kacharies desist from any hindrance in Koch affairs. The disagreement among the two Koch houses sustained unabated. Parikshita made an assault on Bahirband and Lakshmi Narayan experienced an immense crush of men.⁷⁶ Under the circumstances Lakshmi Narayan submitted himself before the *Nawab* of Bengal and officially established the imperial vassalage approving to give tribute and sought aid from the Islam Khan⁷⁷ the *Nawab* of Bengal, then dispatched Mukaram Khan with a great military against Parikshita. The movement ended in the occupation of the kingdom of Parikshita who also made his surrender to the Mughols.⁷⁸ Lakshmi Narayan was provisionally put in charge of the eastern part of

Kamata but with the change in the administration, Qasim Khan the Bengal *Subedar* brought Lakshmi Narayan in imprisonment to Dhaka. ⁷⁹ In the time in power of emperor Jahangir, Ibrahim Khan replaced Qasim Khan as *Subedar* of Bengal and Lakshmi Narayan was set free with presents i.e. an Iraqi horse, a superb elephant, a Turki horse, a unique sword and a few jewelry. ⁸⁰ But he had to stay in Hajo and hold on the emperor's behalf up to 1626 and died in 1627. ⁸¹ By this time Lakshmi Narayan's kingdom incorporated Ghoraghat on the south of Sankosa river in the east and Karatoya river on the west. ⁸²

It was in the sway of Lakshmi Narayan that Madhavadeva and Damodardeva, the follower of neo-vaishnava reformer Sankaradeva left their inhabitant state because of the cruelty of the Ahom king. When they arrived at the Koch Kingdom, Lakshmi Narayan acknowledged them protection. Stimulated by the king's backing they dedicated to guide a spontaneous religious life. The neo-vaishnavism advocated by Madhvadeva is supposed to have been the imperial creed. ⁸³ Animal sacrifices were also banned for an instance in the Kingdom's worship. But on the other side the Saiva faith was living during his rule among the ordinary people. Among the works of spiritual text of the period mention may be made of the conversion of Gobina Misra's eighteen *Parvas* of the *Bhagavata Gita* and Vipra Visared's translation of *Kirata, Bana* and *Karma Kanda* of the *Mahabharata*. ⁸⁴

Vira Narayan (1627-1633):

King Vira Narayan succeeded his father Lakshmi Narayan to the royal throne in 1627 and in his installation *Nazir* Mahindranarayan held the imperial umbrella over his head. ⁸⁵ In his short spell of five years, Vira Narayan failed to demonstrate skills of a strong administrator. The control of Vira Narayan was noticeable by the defeat of material magnificence and quick declining of territories. The *Raikat* discarded the Koch suzerainty. ⁸⁶ The Bhutias did not recognize the allegiance of the king. It is simple to conclude that he continued to stay under Mughol vassalage, paying normal tribute to the Mughol ruler. Vira Narayan passed away in 1632. He is supposed to have been an immense supporter

of knowledge and education.⁸⁷ Sri Kavi Sekhara the court writer of the king is identified to have translated the *Kirata parva* of the *Mahabharata*.⁸⁸ Vira Narayan was a Vaishanava in reliance. A full and half Narayani coins have been exposed on which the reverse legend bears the royal commitment towards Krishna instead of the customary attachment to Siva.⁸⁹

Prana Narayan (1633-1665):

Following the death of Vira Narayan his son Prana Narayan was accordingly installed as king. Seals and new coins were arranged bearing the name of the new king.⁹⁰ *Rajopakhyana* accounts that during the time in power of Prana Narayan there was no outside turbulence in his kingdom.⁹¹ But it appears from *Buranji* and histories composed in Persian that the sway was troubled due to attacks from external and the hostility of associates. When Prana Narayan became king of Koch kingdom, the Mughols in Bengal too were completely preoccupied with their own evils. The regal power of Kamarupa was gravely challenged by the clever king Balinarayan of Darrang, aided by the Ahom King.⁹² Prana Narayan came ahead with an accessory of his troops to assist Islam Khan in his movement against Balinarayan and the Ahom (1636-38) subsequent the trail of custom of devotion to the Mughols.⁹³

In 1657 the Mughol Emperor fell sick. Disorder and bewilderment prevailed in the Mughol Empire following an in-house disagree among his sons. Taking benefit of the circumstances Prana Narayan explicitly launched insolence to the Mughols, closed disbursement of tribute and rests himself up as a sovereign ruler.⁹⁴ He took the great supporter of Kamarupa (Koch Hajo) which belonged to the Mughol Empire. He is also said to have attacked Ghoraghat. In 1661 Aurungzeb sat on the imperial throne. His newly chosen *Subedar* of Bengal Mirjumla reached Dhaka and in order to take revenge invaded Koch kingdom (13th December, 1661).⁹⁵ Prana Narayan took shelter in the foot hills of Bhutan. The monarchy was annexed to the Mughol Empire, coins were struck in Aurungzeb's name and the name of the center city was altered to 'Alamgirnagar'.⁹⁶ Mirjumla after plundering

Koch kingdom fixed the tribute at ten lacks of Narayani coins.⁹⁷ It appears from the account of Shihabuddin Talish that having left an army under Istunder Beg he marched to the invasion of Assam.

In Mirjumla's non-existence the peoples of Koch Kingdom rose in rebellion against the new set of laws and regulations introduced by the Mughol officers for the gathering of tribute.⁹⁸ As a consequence the peasants united hands with overthrown ruler Prana Narayan who soon became victorious in recovering the throne of Koch Kingdom.⁹⁹ Thus the Mughol command was removed and Koch Kingdom yet again became sovereign in 1681. Subsequent *Subedar* Sayesta Khan who succeeded Mirjumla reached Rajmnahal in March, 1664 and articulated his purpose to attack the Koch Kingdom.¹⁰⁰ Prana Narayan thought that it judicious to suggest obedience to the Mughol Emperor in order to protect the security to the kingdom. Consequently he decided to disburse five lacks of Narayani coins as warfare compensation. The Subedar received the conditions and as soon as the protection reached him, royal army had been removed from the margins of the kingdom. Therefore after a little spell of freedom the Koch Kingdom became once again a vassal kingdom. Towards the conclusion of the Prana Narayan's sway the limits of Koch Kingdom extended (1600 square miles) Jajhat and Bahirband *Parganas* in the south Bhaskarpur near Khuntaghat on the east and Morang was on the west.¹⁰¹

With his demise in 1664 the rule of Prana Narayan ended. His regime was affluent in diverse fields. He himself was educated in grammar, literature and *Smritisastras*, and specialist in the art of singing and dancing and author of harmonious essays. His court was decorated with five *Pandits* of immeasurable teaching. Prominent among the spiritual literature were the translation of *Adiparva*, *Dronaparva* of the *Mahabharata* and the composition of *Draupadir Svayambara Kavya* by Srinath Brahmin¹⁰² and the translation of some *cantas* of *Mahabharata* by Ramesvara,¹⁰³ Jagat Jiban Ghosal, the court poet of Purnia wrote the *Manasa Mangala Kavya*. Being an admirer of Sankardeva's Neo-Vaisnavism, Prana Narayan is believed to have confident the cause of the *Sakta* and *Saiva* religions and their observances.

Moda Narayan (1665-1680):

King Moda Narayan ascended his father Prana Narayan in 1665. During this period four sons of Mahindra Narayan, *Nazir Deo* tried to acquire the throne.¹⁰⁴ Mahindra Narayan dissatisfied them by putting Moda Narayan the second son of Prana Narayan on the royal chair, but the authority of the new king became undermined from the beginning by the great authority of Mahindra Narayan.¹⁰⁵ During the rule of Moda Narayan there was reciprocal conflict in the kingdom. Taking benefit of the condition the Bhutiyas began to obstruct in the inner affairs of the state and the *Nazir Deo* offered the post of Prime ministership to a royal blood. He slowly brought the military under his control and sentenced to death some of the officers who sided with *Nazir Deo* and banished others.¹⁰⁶ This strategy however led to an open disagreement which was subsided through the engagement of Vajnarayan as *Chatra Nazir*.¹⁰⁷

In 1680 Moda Narayan passed away without any sons to the royal chair. However he had a quite personality and in religion he was a neo-vaishnavait. Dvija Kaviraja's completion of the translation of the *Dronaparva* of the Mahabharata was the spiritual literature of his time.¹⁰⁸ On Moda Narayan's demise the sons of *Nazir Deo* Mahindra Narayan again made an effort to detain the throne with the help of the Bhutias.¹⁰⁹ The capital was plundered, people were killed and others were made captives by them.¹¹⁰ At this vital juncture Jagadeva and Bhujdeva the Raikat brothers of Baikunthapura marched with an army and drove them out from the kingdom.

Vasudeva Narayan (1680-1682):

On the death of Moda Narayan without any issue the Raikats installed Vasudeva Narayan the third son of Prana Narayan on the royal throne. Coins were minted in his name and *Simha Chap* had been prepared.¹¹¹ As soon as the Raikat brothers left for Baikunthapura, Yajna Narayan once more attacked the capital with the Bhutias and Vasudeva Narayan was murdered.¹¹² Yajna Narayan then affirmed himself king. In the intervening time the news of the tragedy reached Baikunthapura and the

Raikat brothers hastened towards the capital of the Koch kingdom with a big army. In a violent fight Yajna Narayan was crushed and he runaway in the hills. ¹¹³ Afterward Mahindra Narayan the grandson and the great grandson of Prana Narayan was positioned to the throne by the Raikats. ¹¹⁴

Mahendra Narayan (1682-1693):

Mahendra Narayan was only five years old when he ascended the throne of Koch kingdom. ¹¹⁵ But his reign was full of political turmoil because *Kumar* Yajna Narayan after his initial defeat again started hostilities against the king. After departure of the *Rraikats*, Mahendra Narayan again lost his control over the state apparatus and the provincial governors in far-away territories gave up their commitment. Moreover the Mughals started repeated in-roads and started snatching away the peripheral territories of the Koch kingdom. Mahendra Narayan took some steps to revive his control by making Yajna Narayan as *Charta Nazir*. ¹¹⁶ With this the Bhutanese government also started co-operation with the King. After the mutual peace between king and the *Nazir*, Yajna Narayan opposed the Mohammedan to drive away them from the Koch territories but the Mughol forces commanded by Ibadat Khan occupied the three central *chaklas* of Fatepur, Kazirhat and Kakina. The officer in charge of Tapa, Monthona and Jhori and some other *parganas* formally accepted the Mughol suzerainty and became *Zamindars* by taking charters in their own name. ¹¹⁷ Panga and Baikunthapura promised to give tribute to the Mohammedans. In 1691 *Nazir* Yajna Narayan died without any issue. Four grandsons of Mahendra Narayan namely Santa Narayan and Satya Narayan, sons of Darpa Narayan, Rupa Narayan and Visnu Narayan sons of Jagat Narayan now became commander of the army. The king halfhearted conferred the *Chatra Nazirship* on Santa Narayan. ¹¹⁸ Mahendra Narayan after a so-called reign of eleven years died in 1693 at the age of sixteen years. He was physically well gifted and in religion a pious neo-vaisnava. Dwija Rama his court poet translated the *Bhismaparva* of the Mahabharata. ¹¹⁹

Rupa Narayan (1693-1714):

After the short-lived reign of Mahendra Narayan again the succession debate flared up because the late king had no legal son. So, Santa Narayan the *Chatra Nazir* aspired to be king but the army opposed him. In this situation his brother's son Rupa Narayan was settled to the throne. With the accession of Rupa Narayan the main family of the Koch dynasty changed and the era of the rule from the members of the *Nazir* family started.¹²⁰ With the debate over the ownership of *Chaklas* of Boda, Patgram and Purvabhag strong hostilities flared up again between the Koch kingdom and the Mughols. To conclude this rivalry a treaty was signed in 1711 and it was determined that the control of *Chaklas* of Boda, Patgram and Purvabhag would stay under the Koch king while the *Chaklas* of Kajirhat, Kakina and Fatepur would be under of the Mughol authority.¹²¹ But the Mughols changed the provisions of the treaty and got ownership over the *Chaklas* of Boda, Patgram and Purvabhag.¹²² Rupa Narayan was the last king of Kamata Kingdom who had influence over western Kamarupa. After his reign the area of the kingdom was restricted chiefly to the borders of the present district of Cooch Behar. He altered his capital at Guriahati from Atharakatha.¹²³ He passed away in 1714 after the reign of twenty one years.

Upendra Narayan (1714-1763):

After the departure of Rupa Narayan his eldest son Upendra Narayan ascended the throne in 1714. The usual coins and seals were struck in the new king's name and the management of the state continued as before.¹²⁴ During the reign Upendra Narayan the Bhutiyas began to make attacks in the plains and Upendra Narayan could not oppose them. He had to face a serious situation when Mughol *Faujdar* invaded the western part of the Koch Kingdom.¹²⁵ Upendra Narayan in this disaster concluded an agreement with Bhutan and with the help Bhutias drove back the Mughol *Faujdar* towards Rangpur.¹²⁶ As a consequence the Bhutiya power in the kingdom became growing.¹²⁷ Upendra Narayan died in 1763 after a time in power of 49 years. Upendra Narayan was a neo-

Vaishanava in religion. Among the religious literature Dvija Narayan's translation of *Uttara Bhaga* of *Naradiya Purana* and Srinath Brahmin's translation of the *Mahabharata* were done under his guidance.¹²⁸

Devendra Narayan (1763-65):

After the death of Upendra Narayan the throne of Koch kingdom dissolved upon his son who was then a minor.¹²⁹ The government of the Kingdom was carried on by the chief ministers on behalf of the small king under the instruction of the mother of the king.¹³⁰ By this time the power of the Bhutias amplified to an immense degree. A Bhutia agent stayed in the capital with some military and it was essential to take his assent in certain matters of government.¹³¹ When Devendra Narayan was six years of age he was assassinated by a Brahmin named Rati Sharma by the order of *Rajguru*.¹³²

Dhairyendra Narayan (1765-70-1775-83):

After the assassination of the boy king Devendra Narayan in 1765 Dhairyendra Narayan ascended the throne of Cooch Behar. His rule marks the end of the royal glory of the Koch Kingdom because it was in his reign that the internal dissention broke out in the royal family. With this the foreign invasions were very frequent as Bhutan continuously tried to poke into the matters of the royal affairs of the Koch kingdom. The strenuous situation rose in its peak as in 1769 with the death of *Nazir* Rudra Narayan and his brother was appointed to the *Nazirship* but the actual control in the kingdom was in the hands of *Dewan*¹³³ who was given support by the Bhutias. Frightened by the growing power of the *Dewan Deo*, the other officials of the kingdom requested the king to impose certain check over the *Dewan Deo*'s activity and the consequence of which was the assassination of the *Dewan Deo* by the king in 1769.¹³⁴ For this assassination the Bhutanese authorities planned for revenge against the king and they did not fail to take payback against the king. The Bhutia army

invaded the Koch kingdom and they made the king and the new *Dwan Deo* imprisoned during the yearly feast at Checchakhata in 1770.¹³⁵

The Bhutanese authority ascended Rajendra Narayan as the new king to the power. The new king was supported by Pensu Toma with his military.¹³⁶ But in 1772 Rajendra Narayan died suddenly and the succession debated once again came into surface.¹³⁷ On the consideration the news *Nazir*, Khagendra Narayan accordingly installed Dharendra Narayan in 1772, the son of Dhairyendra Narayan on the royal throne. But the Bhutanese government intended to put their man in the throne and they hunted to put his own alternative to the throne which led to the final attack of Bhutan upon Koch kingdom.¹³⁸ A huge army was sent under the command of Jimpe, who after conquering the state occupied the capital.¹³⁹ *Nazir Deo* and his army were defeated and he was driven out to the state. The Bhutanese power under Jimpe formed forts at Gitaldah, Bheladanga and Mawamari and also well confined the capital.¹⁴⁰

In this serious situation the original king's party of Koch Kingdom got puzzled. After consulting with the heads of the state, they appointed the East India Company on behalf of the king for help against the Bhutanese and in return promised to give an instant tribute to the Company or a *Malgujary* from Koch kingdom.¹⁴¹ A treaty was signed on the 5th day of April 1773¹⁴² by which the Company decided to help Cooch Behar against Bhutan in lieu of an annual tribute. By this treaty Koch kingdom approved the suzerainty of East India Company and came to be a tributary state. After the conclusion of the agreement a power under the command of Captain Jones took the capital of the Cooch Behar and drove back the Bhutanese power.¹⁴³ Charles Purling the Collector of Rungpur even sent a letter to Bhutan pointing out the penalty of an escalation of war and requested return to Dharyendra Narayan failing which an attack would be made.¹⁴⁴ Thereafter Bhutan came to a peace agreement with the East India Company on April, 25, 1774.¹⁴⁵ In 1775 Dhairyendra Narayan officially assumed the sovereign authority for the second time.

Harendra Narayan (1783-1839):

When Dhairyendra Narayan passed away in 1783, it was time for infant Harendra Narayan to be sworn in as the next king and as per Dhairyendra Narayan's will until Harendra Narayan matured enough to look after the administration, *Rajmata* would direct the state administration.¹⁴⁶ During the phase from 1783-1789 fight and disagreement amplified in the Koch royal house. But the first years of his sway in-house dissatisfaction between *Dewan* and *Nazir* came out again. The frequent complaints and claims of both the parties at last induced the Company to hinder in the domestic dealings of the Koch kingdom. In a declaration dated 3rd April, 1788, the administration of Lord Cornwallis chose a commissioner with Messers Lawrence Mercer and Jhon Lewis Chauvet to report on the pretensions of the parties¹⁴⁷ and on a variety of additional subjects associated with the state of Koch Kingdom and on the form in which the British authority should be exercised for its better executive.¹⁴⁸ The commissioners submitted their report recommending complete autonomy in favor of the king conceding small allowance to the *Nazir Deo* and the *Dewan Deo* and the engagement of a commissioner or Resident at Koch Behar. Consequently Henry Douglas was selected as Commissioner in 1789¹⁴⁹ who put the management in order. From 1789 to 1801 the entire organization was beneath the British commissioner who conducted the affairs of the kingdom in the name of the minor king.

In 1801 Harendra Narayan gained the majority and the supervision was left in the hands of the king. He sought to rule according to the usual style and with authority as exercised by his predecessors before. Accordingly he demanded the removal of the commissioner. From 1801 almost each effort of the Company to interfere in the inner dealings of the Cooch Behar was unsuccessful due to the resistance of Harendra Narayan. The actual reason of his resistance was to maintain his sovereign position before his subjects. Harendra Narayan was an honest and pious *Sakta* was full of attachment to gods and Brahmins. The control of Harendra Narayan was magnificent for the religious literature. He himself was a poet of reputation and a galaxy of poets was shining in his court. In the

later days in his life he adopted the abstemious habits keeping the government in the hands of *Dewan* Kali Chandra Lahiri he went to Varanasi and passed away there in 1839.

Sivendra Narayan (1839-1847):

After Harendra Narayan his son Sivendra Narayan ascended the throne in 1839 by the Koch officials.¹⁵⁰ New currency was issued in his name. The ritual of coronation of Sivendra Narayan was experiential in accordance with the system and directives of the Koch royal family. After his accession he dedicated his concentration to the domestic management of the kingdom. As regards to the income there was no methodical gathering and the people obviously were overburdened with taxes and at the same time the state reserves suffered. Moreover he had to face heavy monetary crisis due to the over-spending of his father.¹⁵¹ By a cautious surveillance of the behavior of the revenue officers and a rule of his expenses, he succeeded in cleaning off the arrear tribute payable to the British and freed himself completely from the confidential debts that his father bequeathed him.¹⁵² Sivendra Narayan also gave concentration to the Judiciary. Two courts were instituted at this time.¹⁵³ In 1840 a court of justice or *Rajsabha* for the final negotiation of civil revenue and illegal cases was recognized.

Sivendra Narayan was a man of many qualities. Being a pious *Sakta* Sivendra Narayan gave a great deal of consideration to the erection and restore of temples in the Koch Kingdom. In 1841 a *Dharmasala* was established where the religious mendicants found food and lodging.¹⁵⁴ Dvija Vaidyanath translated the *Siva Purana* which is considered the only text about the Saiva sect found in the court of Koch kingdom. He is also said to have composed *Sakta* songs.¹⁵⁵ In the later years of his existence he went Banaras where he breathed his last on the 23rd August, 1847.¹⁵⁶

Narendra Narayan (1847-1863):

When Sivendra Narayan passed away in 1847, child Narendra Narayan was staying with his father at Baranasi. Over there he was crowned in next to his father as the king of Cooch Behar before

returning back to the capital. Narendra Narayan was then only 6 years old. Kalichandra Lahiri was then the *Dewan* of Behar. After discussing with *Rajmata* (mother-Queens) Kamteswari and Brindeswari Devi, Dewan took Narendra Narayan to Krishnanagar for imparting education to the king. Narendra Narayan was intelligent. Within a few days he gathered knowledge in Sanskrit grammar, literature, smriti and other subjects. After returning back to Cooch Behar he continued his studies in European style. Narendra Narayan was positioned under the tutorship of Mr. Noor ¹⁵⁷ in accordance with the last wish spoken by the late king that East India Company's government should take care of his son's education. He was under the responsibility of Babu Rajendralal Mitra while studying at the Ward's Institution, Calcutta. ¹⁵⁸ *Rajmata* Kamteswari and Brindeswari Devi looked after state administration till the king reached his adulthood. ¹⁵⁹ In 1860 Narendra Narayan took up state's administration in his own hand. ¹⁶⁰ At the time of his formal accession the chief officers were misappropriating the public money and equally the state revenue suffered a lot. ¹⁶¹ Moreover during his reign problem with Bhutan flared up again and these were solved but not permanently. There was trouble with Rungpur and the two governments determined on a joint survey. ¹⁶² In 1859 a topographical survey was made under J.G Pemberton revenue surveyor whose map is measured as the first regular map of the country. ¹⁶³ His reign mark by the growth in education, religion and other fields. He was an intellectual, well-judged able administrator with fine character. Under his rule Behar kingdom flourished increasing state's income to much extent and his subjects lived peacefully.

Nripendra Narayan (1863-1911):

When Narendra Narayan passed away in 1863, as per will of the king his ten month child-son Nripendra Naryan was crowned in as the next king of Cooch Behar. At first the state administration was looked after by Queen Kamteswari, Brindeswari and Nistarini Devi since Nripendra Narayan was only a child. ¹⁶⁴ The British Government recognized the claim of Nripendra Narayan as the lawful heir to the throne ¹⁶⁵ on condition that the little king would be conferred upon him when he attained

majority.¹⁶⁶ Later the power of administration was handed over to the Commissioner appointed by the British Governor General. Colonel Hawton was appointed as the Commissioner of Behar in 1864.

Nripendra Narayan returned to Cooch Behar on 3rd March 1879¹⁶⁷ having been educated in England in the modern life. He attained his majority on the 3rd October 1883 and the installation took place on 8th November, 1883.¹⁶⁸ In the coronation ceremony formalities were strictly followed.¹⁶⁹ The charge of the administration was formally made over to the new king. Nripendra Narayan had the aim not to make any violent disturbance in the planning of the administration that were introduced after much consideration by the British administrators thought the separation of authority and scheme of control witnessed a significant change.¹⁷⁰ A Deputy Commissioner under Nripendra Narayan was in supreme charge of all state departments. The administrative apparatus of the state was created on the model of a British district.

Nripendra Narayan had been highly influenced by his father in law Keshab Chandra Sen's ideas i.e. the Brahma faith that helped to an immense extent in molding his social, ethical, political and private outlook and efforts were made by him to increase the customary thinking in link with religion which prevailed in the royal family.¹⁷¹ His variety of education and close association with the upper classes of Indian and foreign societies enabled him to overcome all superstitions.¹⁷² He stated the Brahma religion as the state religion but he encouraged and supported the institutions of every creed, be it Hindu, Muslims, Christian or Brahma. Nripendra Narayan died in 1911 in England and was succeeded by his eldest son Raj Rajendra Narayan.¹⁷³

Raj Rajendra Narayan (1911-13):

Rajendra Narayan was the eldest son of Nripendra Narayan. During his childhood he took lessons under a British female home tutor. Nripendra Narayan sent Rajendra Narayan to England for studying. There he got admission to the "Preparatory" School of Mr. Castor and studied for three years. In 1897 he got admit to "Itan". After studying over there for three years he took admission in

Oxford University in 1900. Completing his studies at Oxford, Rajendra Narayan returned back to India and helped his father in carrying out state proceedings. By the demise of Nripendra Narayan the throne of Cooch Behar had dissolved upon his eldest son Raj Rajendra Narayan. The government of India recognized him as exclusively and fairly free to the throne. Two durbars were held in the Durbar hall. The Hon'ble Mr. F.W. Duke, Acting Lieutenant of Bengal, officially installed Kumar on his familial throne and delivered a speech at the Durbar held on 8th November, 1911, Nazarana were presented to the new king by his officers and an announcement was made.¹⁷⁴ He wished the cause of education particularly the primary and secondary education to be expanded by him as far as the state resources admit.

Jitendra Narayan (1913-1922):

Jitendra Narayan was the second son of Nripendra Narayan and Suniti Devi of Cooch Behar and was known as Kumar Victor. In 1900 he left for England and got admitted to Itan School. After finishing his studies there, he took admission in Edinburrow University. He returned back to Cooch Behar after completion of his studies. Since Raj Rajendra Narayan passed away leaving back no descendant of his own, Jitendra Narayan ascended to the throne of Cooch Behar in 1913.¹⁷⁵ After being crowned-in Jitendra Narayan with utmost skill started administering his state. He took firm steps for the development of the state. The reign of Jitendra Narayan was remarkable for more than one reason. During his reign the First World War took place in which the British government became involved. Jitendra Narayan also extended his helping hand to the government by sending his younger brother Hitendra Narayan in the war.¹⁷⁶ Besides it was during his reign the Non-Cooperation movement was gaining ground in the national level. In Cooch Behar very few symptoms of the movement had appeared from the British districts of Rungpur and Goalpara.¹⁷⁷ Jitendra Narayan died in 20th December, 1922 in London¹⁷⁸ leaving two sons and three daughters.

Jagaddipendra Narayan (1922-1949):

After the death of Jaitendra Narayan his son Jagaddipendra Narayan succeeded to the throne of Cooch Behar and the succession was duly recognized by the Government of India.¹⁷⁹ The Government of India recognized the state council to form a *Council of Regency* for the administration during the minority of Jagaddipendra Narayan. Maharani Indira Devi was the Regent for the fourteen years (1922-36). During the Regency period the State witnessed the civil Dis-obedience movement in British India. But the movement did not have much influence in the state as it was suppressed by the state.¹⁸⁰ Due to the economic burden over the peasants a few peasant revolt broke out in the state and they were organized under the leadership of Thakur Panchanan Barmah.¹⁸¹ However the unrest did not take a full form. In 1936 Jagaddipendra Narayan attained majority and he was formally handed over the administration of the state by the Governor Anderson on 6th April, 1936.¹⁸² During his reign the impact of the quite India movement of 1942 was deeply felt in the state. Though attempts were made to check the growth of the movement, it made deep impression on the mind of the people of the kingdom.

During his rule a party known as "Hitasadhani" gained power. Patrons of that party wanted Cooch Behar to be centrally administered state. Most of the subjects of the land supported that party. Leaders of that party visited Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel and others at Delhi and expressed their demand and aspirations before them. In a public gathering at Calcutta, the then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru declared that the fate of Cooch Behar would be decided upon the public vote of that state. Indian Dominion attained independence in 1947. On 20th August 1948 Jagaddipendra Narayan in an agreement merged the state with the Dominion Government of India.¹⁸³ Thereafter Cooch Behar was transformed into Central Administered State. Jagaddipendra Narayan obtained annual amount of eight lakhs & fifty thousand as his Privy purse. At last on 1st January, 1950 Cooch Behar was incorporated within West Bengal, state of the Indian Dominion.¹⁸⁴ Jagaddipendra Narayan was left as stateless King. Thus five century old kingdom came to an end and the royal sovereignty of Cooch Behar got washed away by Democracy.

So from the above story it is evidently clear to us that the political journey of the Koch kingdom and later the Cooch Behar State was full of events. The Koch kingdom emerged in the mid of sixteenth century by ignoring the over-arching supremacy of the Mughol empire. The first few rulers especially up to the time of Lakshmi Narayan the entire North East India was under the Koch suzerainty. The able Koch rulers conquered one after another state by virtue of their political as well as military magnificence. During this period the Mughol Emperor or its agents in Bengal neither poke into the matter of the Koch state nor do they take chance of any hostilities with the Koch Kingdom. It was not only a major incident in the political glory of the Koch kingdom but also a remarkable event to the entire princely community of contemporary times as the sovereignty of the kingdoms was in danger in view of the imperial attitude of the Mughol Empire. But after the death of Lakshmi Narayan the politics of the kingdom confined in a much lesser area as most of the subjugated kingdoms freed themselves from the Koch realm. The Koch kingdom gradually reduced its power in view of the weakening leadership. None of the remaining kings had much courage to retain or re-establish the old glory of the Koch kingdom. This gradual loss of power invited the English East India Company in the later half of the eighteenth century to take the advantage of the situation and with an agreement with the Koch authority submitted the sovereign power to the British authority. Thus the sovereign stature of the kingdom had gone and Koch kingdom emerged as a tributary state of the British Empire. The succeeding history is a story of internal dissension and loss of political glory. The overarching British power almost seized all the powers of the state and puppet kings were placed in the throne of Koch state. Lastly the state joined with the union of India in the occasion of the independence of India and it became a district of Union of India by signing the merger agreement.

Notes and References

1. Durgadas Majumdar, *West Bengal District Gazetteer: Koch Bihar*, Calcutta, 1977, p. 2.
2. The military invasion of Bakhtiyar Khalji in North Bengal and lower Assam in the early thirteenth century was checked by the floods in the rivers of the region. Similarly Mughol invasion in the region in 1661-62 under the leadership of Mir Jumla was also a sheer failure for heavy rainfall and flood in the rivers of the Koch kingdom. H.G. Raverty, (transl.), *Tabakat-i-Nasiri: A General History of Muhammadan Dynasties of Asia*, London, 1872-81, pp. 567-72.
3. S.L. Baruah, *A Comprehensive History of Assam*, New Delhi, 1985, pp. 171-181.
4. Panchanan Acharyya, (ed.), *Kalika Puranam*, ch. 38, vs., 95-123, Calcutta, 1384 B.S., pp. 318-321.
5. H.C. Chakladar, *Geography of Kalidasa, Indian Studies: Past and Present*, IV. 3, 1963, p. 451.
6. *ibid.*, For details about Pragjyoish and Kamarupa, see, Ichimuddin Sarkar, *Aspects of Historical Geography of Pragjyotish Kamarupa (Ancient Assam)*, Calcutta, 1991.
7. Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India (c.629-645)*, Vol. II, pp. 185-186, edited by Rhyas David and S.W. Bhushel, London, 1904.
8. Swami Sarbeswarananda, (ed. & tr.), *Yogini Tantra*, Calcutta, 1385 B.S., pt. 1, ch II, vs. 16-18, p.114.
9. The *Ain-i-Akbari* refers to a Koch country, in which there were two kingdoms 'Kamata' and 'Kamrupa'. B. Roy, *District Census Handbook, Cooch Behar, West Bengal*, Calcutta, 1961, p. 3.
10. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *Cooch Behar Itihas*, (Bengali) Cooch Behar, 1936, pp. 374-75.
11. The racial and social identity of the Khen is not beyond the scope of debate. K.L. Barua has identified the Khen as *Kayasthas* because Khan was a surname of the *Kayastha Bhuiyans* of western Assam. K.L. Barua, *Early History of Kamarupa: From Earliest Times to the end of the Sixteenth Century*, Shillong, 1933; Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed on the other hand, relying on the description of *Kamteswar Kulakarika* of Srutidhar Rup Narayan of the sixteenth

- century, connected the origin of Kamteswaar with the *Rajbanshis*. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, pp. 36-39.
12. S.K. Chatterji, *Kirata Janakriti: The Indo-Mongoloids, Their Contribution to the History and Culture of India*, Calcutta, 1998, p. 115.
 13. S.K. Bhuyan, (ed.), *Kamarupa Buranji*, Guwahati, 1987, p. 99.
 14. W.W. Hunter, *The Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol. X*, New Delhi, 1984, pp. 368-69.
 15. S.K. Chatterjee, *op.cit.*, p. 115; N.N. Vasu doubts the very existence of this line of kings due to lack of the contemporary historical accounts. N.N. Vasu, *The Social History of Kamarupa, Vol. II*, New Delhi, 1926, pp. 30-31.
 16. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, 39.
 17. *ibid.*
 18. D.C. Sircar, (ed.), *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India*, 2nd Vol., Calcutta, 1960, pp. 100-101.
 19. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, 39.
 20. We have a reference to a local tradition according to which *Kamteswra* (the Lord of Kamata) after becoming king from humble base founded the city of Kamtapura after the name of goddess Kamateswari which was also known as *Chandi* or *Gosani*. Niladhvaja may be identified with *Kantesvara* of the *Gosanimangala* as it mentioned only about a ruler of the line. But we have seen that there were three kings of that line. *ibid.*, pp. 36-40.
 21. H.N. Chaudhuri, *The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlements*, Cooch Behar, 1903, p. 228-32.
 22. R.D. Banerjee, 'Gosanimari' in *JASB, Vol. XIX*, 1977, p. 20.
 23. M.R. Tarafdar, *Hussain Shahi Bengal*, Dhaka, 1955, pp. 361-365.
 24. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 229.
 25. E.A. Gait, *History of Assam*, Calcutta, 1963, p. 45.

26. *ibid.*, According to *Riyas-us-Salatin* Hussain Saha invaded Kamata or Kamarupa after his conquest of Orissa. Abdus Salam, 'Riyas-us-Salatin', *JASB*, 1894, pp. 132-33.
27. P.N. Bhattacharyya, *Kamarupa Sasanavali, Nidhanpur Copper Plates*, Rangpur, 1338 B.S., p. 31.
28. Muhammad Kazim Mirza, *Alamgirnamah*, Eng tr. by N. Vansittart, Calcutta, 1883, p.72.
29. E.A. Gait is of the opinion that after the departure of the Mohammedans there were no kings of the whole of the Kamata country which was ruled by a number of petty Chiefs. E.A.Gait, *op.cit.*, p. 46.
30. *ibid.*, p. 49.
31. Visvasimha was so named because he was born on the first *Bihu* day.
32. Abul Fajal Allami, *Akbarnama*, Vol. I-II, translated into English by Beveridge Henry, New Delhi, 2010, p. 1067.
33. N.C. Sharma (ed.), *Darrang Rajvamsavali*, v. 51, Guwahati, 1973.
34. E.A. Gait, *op.cit.*, p. 49.
35. *ibid.* In *Darrang Rajvamsavali* Behar is referred to as Visvasimha's capital which shows the territory in which the capital Kamatanagara was built by Visvasimha.
36. N.N. Vasu, *op.cit.*, p. 46.
37. N.C. Sharma (ed.), *op.cit.*, pp.41-42.
38. *ibid.*
39. *ibid.*, p. 7.
40. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 87.
41. S.K. Bhuyan, (ed.), *Deo Dhai Assam Buranji*, Guwahati, 1962, p. 126.
42. *ibid.*
43. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 95.
44. *ibid.*
45. *ibid.*

46. *ibid.*
47. Shashibhusan Dasgupta (ed.), *A Descriptive Catalogue of Bengali Manuscripts*, preserved in the State Library of Cooch Behar, Manuscript no. 58, 1948, p. 62.
48. A.K. Chakravarty, *Literature in Kamata-Koch Bihar Raj Darbar. From Fourteenth to the Eighteenth Century*, Dhubri, 1964.
49. D. Nath, *The History of the Koch Kingdom 1515-1615*, New Delhi, 1986, p. 178.
50. N.C. Sharma (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 53 (v. 266).
51. Munshi Joyanath Ghosh, *Rajopakhyana* (Bengali), edited by Biswanath Das, Calcutta, 1989, pp. 29-30.
52. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 101.
53. Nicholas Rhodes and S.K. Bose, *The Coinage of Cooch Behar*, Dhubri, 1999, pp. 4-16.
54. E.A. Gait, *op.cit.*, p. 52.
55. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 232. It is evident from the *Darrang Raj Vamsavali* that all the states of North East Kachar, Jayantia, Tripura, Dimrua, Manipur, Sylhet were annexed by Nara Narayan in his kingdom. N.C. Sharma (ed.), *op.cit.*, pp. 80-99.
56. Abul Fajal Allami, *op.cit.*, Vol. III, p. 96.
57. N.C. Sharma (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 126, (v. 618).
58. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p.120.
59. *ibid.*, p. 121.
60. Provided he agreed to stamp the name of Nara Narayan on his coin. J.P. Wade, *An Account of Assam* (1800), edited by Benudhar Sharma, North Lakhimpur, 1927, p. 210.
61. S.L. Baruah, *op.cit.*, p. 215.
62. E.A. Gait, *op.cit.*, p. 58.
63. *ibid.*, p.44.
64. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 132.

65. S.K. Bhuyan, *Studies on the Literature of Assam*, Guwahati, 1956, p. 123.
66. A.K. Chakravarty, *op.cit.*, p.86.
67. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.* p.130-132.
68. E.A. Gait, *op.cit.*, p. 64.
69. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, pp.136-137.
70. *ibid.*, p. 138.
71. S.N. Bhattacharyya, *A History of the Mughol North East Frontier Policy: Being a Study of the Political Relations of the Mughol Empire with Koch Bihar, Kamrup and Assam*, Calcutta, 1994, p. 118.
72. Abul Fajal Allami, *op.cit.*, pp. 1068, 1081.
73. *ibid.*, p. 1068; Charles Stewart, *History of Bengal*, Calcutta,1903, p. 119; E.A. Gait also observed on the authority of the above source that Lakshmi Narayan offered his submission declaring himself as a vassal of the Mughol Empire. E.A. Gait, *op.cit.*, p. 65.
74. S.N. Bhattacharyya, *op.cit.*, pp. 108-18.
75. E.A. Gait, *op.cit.*, p.65.
76. S.N. Bhattacharyya, *op.cit.*, pp.125-26.
77. Mirza Nathan, *Baharistan-i-Ghaybi, Vol.I*, Guwahati, 1936, p. 40.
- This event is suggested by S.N. Bhattacharyya, is of immense significance in the annals of Mughol North East frontier policy. It symbolized the completion of the process which had begun with the political subjugation of Koch kingdom in the winter of 1596 and which was soon to affect the states of Kamarupa and Assam as well. S.N. Bhattacharyya, *ibid.*, pp. 126-27.
78. R.C. Majumder, (ed.), *The History of Bengal, Medieval Period*, Calcutta, 1973, p. 150.
79. S.K. Bhuyan, *op.cit.*, p. 290.
80. *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 521.
81. *ibid.*

82. *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 40.
83. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p 151-152.
84. A.K. Chakravarty, *op.cit.*, p. 69.
85. Vira Narayan carried on the administration of the kingdom as heir apparent during his 'honorable' exile at Hajo after his release from Delhi, apparently under Lakshmi Narayan's instruction. Stephen Cacella calls the Prince Gabur Shah (Gaburasa). C. Wesseles, *Early Jesuit Travelers in Central Asia, 1603-1721*, The Hague, 1924, pp. 126-127, 131.
86. Dinesh Chandra Sen, *Brihat Vanga* (Bengali), Calcutta, 1935, Vol. II, p. 1072.
87. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 154.
88. A.K.Chakravarty, *op.cit.*, p. 69.
89. *JNSI, Vol. XXXIII*, pp. 123-31, *The Numismatic Circular*, London, 1981, p. 115.
90. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*,p. 155.
91. *ibid.*
92. *ibid.*, pp. 155-56.
93. *ibid.*, pp. 156.
94. S.N. Bhattacharyya, *op.cit.*, p. 299.
95. J.N. Sarkar, *The Life of Mirjumla*, New Delhi, 1979, p. 287.
96. Khafi Khan, *Munta-Khab-ul-Lubab in the History of India*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, 1st edn.,London, 1867-77, p. 265; J.N.Sarkar, *op.cit.*, p. 289.
97. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 159.
98. Gautam Bhadra, *Mughal Juger Krishi Arthanity O Krishak Bidraha* (Bengali), Calcutta, 1983, p. 165.
99. Amalendu Guha, 'The Medieval Economy of Assam'in the *Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. I*, Tapan Roy Chowdhury and Irfab Habib, (ed.), New Delhi, 1984, p. 485.
100. S.N. Bhattacharyya, *op.cit.*, p. 309.

101. *Alamgirnamah*, p. 692, as quoted in the Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, pp. 159-160.
102. Siva Prasad Dakua, *Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha Manuscript*, 1269 B.S.
103. A.K. Chakravarty, *op.cit.*, p 73.
104. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 244.
105. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 169.
106. *ibid.*
107. *ibid.*, p. 170.
108. A.K. Chakravarty, *op.cit.*, p. 65.
109. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 170.
110. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 245.
111. *ibid.*, With the death of Moda Narayan the order of succession from father to son which started from Visvasimha discontinued.
112. *ibid.*, p. 246.
113. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 174.
114. Bhagabati Charan Bandopadhyaya, *Cooch Beharer Itihas* edited by N.N. Pal, Calcutta, 1987, p. 68.
115. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 175.
116. *ibid.*
117. *ibid.*
118. *ibid.*, p. 178.
119. A.K. Chakravarty, *op.cit.*, p. 73.
120. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 247.
121. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 179.

122. *ibid.*, The *Faujdar* wanted to take tax from the following *Chaklas*. At the conclusion of the treaty the *Chaklas* Boda, Patgram and Purbabhadg were taken *Ijara* on behalf of the king in the name of *Nazir* Santa Narayan as it was thought derogatory for an independent king.
123. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 248.
124. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 183.
125. C. Stewart, *History of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1903, p. 431, The king had to refuge in the woods of the foothills.
126. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, 184.
127. *ibid.*, p. 185.
128. *ibid.*, p. 187.
129. *ibid.*, 188.
130. *ibid.*
131. *ibid.*, p.190-192.
132. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 250.
133. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 196.
134. *ibid.*, p. 198.
135. *ibid.*, p. 200.
136. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, pp. 251.
137. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 203.
138. *ibid.*
139. *ibid.*
140. *ibid.*
141. *Committee of Circuit Proceeding*, Calcutta, 1927, pp. 38-39.
142. Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, *op.cit.*, pp. 373-75.
143. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 253.

144. *ibid.*
145. *ibid.*
146. *Selections from the record of the Government of Bengal*, Paper on Cooch Behar by Major Francis Jenkins, Calcutta, 1851, p. 33.
147. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 258.
148. *Proceedings of the Governor General in Council, Revenue Department, Vol. 129*, pp. 83-96.
149. H.N.Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 259.
150. *ibid.*, p. 285.
151. *ibid.*
152. *ibid.*
153. *ibid.*, p. 286.
154. *ibid.*
155. A.K. Chakravarty, *op.cit.*, p. 96.
156. Nirupama Devi (ed.), *Beharodanta* by Maharani Brindeswari Devi (Bengali), Cooch Behar, 1330 B.S, pp. 12-13.
157. *Letter from officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the officiating Secretary Government of India* (Foreign Dept. Vol. II, No. 156; 1848, p.144.)
158. Sashi Bhusan Halder, 'Lectures on Maharaja Narendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur Jiban Charita' at the meeting of the *Cooch Behar Hitasadhanai Sabha*, 7th issue, 1272 B.S. p. 58.
159. Nirupama Devi (ed.), *op.cit.*, p.58; N.N.Pal, *op.cit.*, p. 89-90.
160. Sashi Bhusan Halder, *op.cit.*, pp. 132-33.
161. *Proceedings of the Governor of Bengal, General (Political)*, November, 1859, No. 1.
162. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 289.
163. *ibid.*, p. 292.

164. Letter from Maharannies of Cooch Behar to W.Agnew officiating Agent in North East Frontier, dated, 16th August, 1863, *Select Records*, Vol. II, p. 268.
165. *Proceedings of the Government of Bengal, General (Political) Dept.*, March, 1864, No. 3, p.2.
166. Letter of W. Agnew, Officiating Agent of Government of India in North East Frontier, 15th June, 1864, to the Maharanis of Cooch Behar, (*Select Records*), Vol. II, p. 275.
167. H.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 296.
168. *ibid.*
169. *ibid.*
170. *ibid.*, p. 297.
171. Yogesh Chandra Bagal, *Keshab Chandra Sen*, Calcutta, 1365 B.S., pp. 143-44.
172. *Hindu Patriot*, 29th September, 1911.
173. The king left Cooch Behar for England on 30th April, 1910 for best treatment. But despite all efforts he passed away on the 18th September, 1911.
174. *Annual Administrative Report of Cooch Behar State for the year 1911-12*, para 3.
175. *Annual Administrative Report of Cooch Behar State for the year 1913-14*, para-3.
176. Swapan Kumar Roy, *Prachin Cooch Beharer Sompurna Itibritta*, Kolkata, 2006, p. 280.
177. *Annual Administrative Report of Cooch Behar State for the year 1921-22*, para 12.
178. *Cooch Behar Gazette*, 4.12.1922, *Annual Administrative Report of Cooch Behar State for the year 1922-23*, No. 1127, p. 2.
179. *ibid.*
180. A.G. Ghosh, (ed.), *Madhuparni* (Bengali), 1396 B.S., pp. 404-05.
181. *ibid.*
182. Swapan Kumar Roy, *op.cit.*, p. 312.
183. *ibid.*, pp.386-434.
184. *ibid.*