

DEVELOPMENT OF COOCH BEHAR  
STATE UNDER THE MAHARAJAS  
(1847 – 1949) – A STUDY OF ITS  
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL  
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY

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May , 2015

## DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled 'DEVELOPMENT OF COOCH BEHAR STATE UNDER THE MAHARAJAS (1847 – 1949) --- A STUDY OF ITS HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE' has been prepared by me under the guidance of Prof. Ratna Roy (Sanyal), (Supervisor) and Dr. Nilangshu Sekhar Das (Co – Supervisor), University of North Bengal . No Part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously .

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# ABSTRACT

The history of the Princely State of Cooch Behar (situated in the northern most part of India) is one of the interesting theme from the point of view of historical research . This Princely State represents one of the advanced and at the same time modern activities of the ruling Koch dynasty . Around 450 years , the royal dynasty in Cooch Behar formed a glorious history of its own . The kingdom was founded by Maharaja Bishwa Singha in 1522 . From 1522 to 1765 the history of Cooch Behar witnessed of an uninterrupted sway of the rulers . After 1765 the history of Cooch Behar entered in to an arena of political turmoil and in order to escape from political turmoil the rulers invited the British for military assistance . Such kind of an application gave an opportunity to the Colonial masters to interfere in the political matters of the State . Accordingly in 1773 a treaty was signed between the British Raj and the ruler of Cooch Behar , known as the Anglo – Cooch Behar treaty of 1773 . Through this treaty the British Government could not fulfill their dream of implementation of British Paramountcy in the State . Because since 1783 – 1839 was the period of reign of Maharaja Harendra Narayan, who could not bow down his head in front of the British . He was the last independent ruler of the State . With his death , the opportunity to run free in the State of Cooch Behar came to the British . Maharaja Shivendra Narayan ( 1839 – 47 ) the successor of Maharaja Harendra Narayan , was an automatic

choice of the British . His son Maharaja Narendra Narayan (1847 – 63) was under the guidance of the British ( during the minority period) obtained English education . None of the ruler of the State before him got the opportunity to learn in English . Thus the tradition of the State transferred from orientalism to advanced modern culture . It can be stated that after Maharaja Harendra Narayan , a new era of modernity knocked the door of the State . Maharaja Narendra Narayan during his short period of rule took some advanced modern measures for the welfare of the State , which were as follows : to settle boundary dispute , to abolish sati system in the State , to establish English medium School , to start topographical survey etc . These measures prepared the ground for the successors to take important steps towards the development of the State . These measures ushered the period of modernization in the State of Cooch Behar .

The history of Cooch Behar turned into a new paradigm under the guidance of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan ( 1863 – 1911 ) . The impact of Western methods upon Oriental system of Government was leading gradually but surely to disappearance of the traditional character of the Indian Rulers . Maharaja of Cooch Behar was not an exception to this . An interesting point here to deserve mention that in all the departments in the administration, Maharaja took a very deep interest . He took active role in the development of education specially female education and also of Mahommedan education and for the spread of education, schools and colleges were established in the State . Maharaja was well aware of the unhealthy condition of the people in the State . New medical facilities and hospitals were introduced in every corner of the kingdom . It was he who felt then urgency of regis

-tration of birth and death , because such kind of calculation helped the State to understand what was its population and what was the condition of the health of the general people . Although in 1901 and in 1911 Census operations were organised in the State .

Maharaja was the first ruler of Cooch Behar, who introduced the work of copying from old records , which in course of time helped the successors to run the State successfully . During his rule the system of survey and settlement works were introduced in the town and in the sub – division -al area .

Maharaja was the towering figure of modernisation , a reflection of which was noticed in the introduction of Cooch Behar State Railway for better communi – cation . A picturesque town and a flourishing business centers were increasing day by day since the advent of the Railways . The State Railway was on the move at first for carrying commodities and later on for passengers which ushered in an era of development not only for Cooch Behar but also for the whole of adjoining areas .

Maharaja Nripendra Narayan also maintained a well formulated finance department , through which State could able to know what measures were appropriate to the situation and what was the income and expen -diture of the State . Maharaja also took initiatives for the development of muni -cipal work at Cooch Behar . Accordingly in 1883 a Town Committee Act was passed by the State Council of Cooch Behar . He was out and out modern in out -look . It was he who organized shooting arrangement as an adorer of English cul – ture . But he could not forget the modernization of the State which was the

specialty of the Maharaja .

Thus from the above analysis it is amply clear that Maharaja Nripendra Narayan was the harbinger of modernisation .

The successors of Nripendra Narayan followed the same line . During the reign of Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan (1911- 1913) and of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan (1913 – 1922 ) , in addition to , the traditional work, the Nripendra Narayan Hostel , the Nripendra Narayan Memorial Hall at Mekhligunj were made and such other construction works also deserve mention . Maharaja also nourished forests for saving the State from environmental pollution . Such an initiative during those days was a rare instance .

During his reign there were other fields where development took place - Veterinary Hospital , Sadar Police Training College ; etc . Nirupama Devi wife of Victor Nityendra Narayan ( brother of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan) did much for the allround development of women of Cooch Behar . She started a journal namely 'Paricharika' in which welfare motivation of the royal authority reflected through the writings ( continued for eight years) . Apart from this, education , medical , agriculture , industry , introduction of various acts for legislative welfare and all the other fields developmental work continued .

The development of Cooch Behar reaches the peak of success during the reign of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan ( 1922 - 1949 ) . In fact his welfare measures can be divided into two parts . At first Maharaja followed the tradition in social , cultural and economic field and secondly , he implemented some new and modern schemes which were innovative in character .

Those innovative measures can be categories as follows –

- (A) Formation of Public Health Department ;
- (B) Implementation of Society for Cruelty to Animals ;
- (C) Introduction of new rules for medicine ;
- (D) The Cooch Behar Income Tax Amendment Bill of 1945 ;
- (E) Scheme of medical training to nurse ;
- (F) Municipal Act of 1944 ;
- (G) Formation of Cooch Behar State Transport ;
- (H) The Cooch Behar Air Craft Act of 1946 ;
- (I) Ancient Monument Preservation Act of 1947 and others .

Thus the period (1847- 1949) under review in Cooch Behar ushered in an era of modernity which set an example to other Princely State of India . More importantly such an approach of a royal dynasty was on the whole historically significant .

## ***PREFACE***

The subject of the proposed study is the development of Cooch Behar State under the Maharajas (1847-1949), it is at the same time a study of its historical significance. The Princely State of Cooch Behar situated in the Northern most part of India . Being born and brought up in Cooch Behar from my childhood I feel nostalgic of my native town . Though small in size compared to other Princely States , what was the magic wand that made the State an ideal State to other Princely States of India . The proposed dissertation is a humble attempt to explore the areas of developmental works much taken by the Maharajas which set an example to others princely states during the period .

In this work an attempt has been made to ascertain the exact nature of development under the Maharajas and of its historical significance . To that end official records, as available ; have been duly selected for study . By way of examining the nature of the said development , the work seeks to establish the fact that the developmental activities of the Koch Maharajas were mostly effective in the matter of modernization of Cooch Behar. Development of a kingdom depends, in the main, on its ruler . Cooch Behar is not an exception to that .

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Needless to mention , no words will be adequate to express my gratitude to the members of my family who have stood by me over these long testing times in the accomplishment of my research work .

# ABBREVIATIONS

1. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. : Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State
2. B.P.P. (2002) : Bengal Past and Present (2002)
3. C.B.D. (1938) : Cooch Behar Darpan (1938)
4. C.B.S.R : Cooch Behar Select Records
5. T.C.B.G. : The Cooch Behar Gazette
6. S.J.S (2011) : Smaranika Jenkins School (2011)
7. S.N.B.S.L. ( 1996) : Smaranika North Bengal State Library (1996)

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# ***INTRODUCTION***

# ***INTRODUCTION***

The Princely State of Cooch Behar situated in the northern most part of India has preserved its separate identity for a much larger period than most of the Native principalities of Hindustan .<sup>1</sup> It was founded on the ruins of the ancient Hindu kingdom of Kamrup by a war- like tribe called kuchs or Kochs, who swept down the North and formed the Kingdom which was named after their clan. The dynasty was lasted since then for nearly 450 years held uninterrupted sway .<sup>2</sup> This proves that the founders of the kingdom were very powerful , for otherwise they would have been over thrown by the Mughal Emperors .<sup>3</sup> The progenitor of the koch kings was a Mech or Koch – it was not certain which – named Hariya Mandal, a resident of Chikan-gram, a village in the Khuntaghat Paragana of the Goalpara dictrict .<sup>4</sup> His son Bishwa Singha moved his Capital from Chikangram to Cooch Behar, where he built a fine city . In this way the royal history of Cooch Behar started its progress .<sup>5</sup>

After the accession of Maharaja Nara Narayan to the throne of Cooch Behar a new dimension ushered in the state . In 1555 he struck both gold and silver coins which were known as Narani or Narayani coins .<sup>6</sup> In the 53<sup>rd</sup> year of Raja Shaka Nara Narayan led his army into Assam and also subdued the neighbouring states of Kachar, Manipur, Jaintia , Tipperah, Kairam, Dimuria and Sylhet .<sup>7</sup> Thus during his reign (1555 – 1587) Cooch Behar was an extensive kingdom.

After Maharaja Nara Narayan , from 1587 to 1765 due to the political turmoil a number of rulers ascended to the throne of the State . In 1765 with the accession of Maharaja Dhairjendra Narayan misfortune began to over -

shadow Cooch Behar . Before his accession , during the reign Maharaja Rupa Narayan, Bhutias, the erstwhile friend and northern neighbour of Cooch Behar had gradually extended their conquest to the plains . They at first played the role of king makers in Cooch Behar . Apart from that a battle was fought at Singeswar Jhar ( a place on the west bank of the river Teesta) between the Mahomedans and the kings army.<sup>8</sup> In this battle the army of the Koch king was shattered and a treaty was signed with Bhutan . Maharaja with the assistance of the Bhutias drove back Mahomedan General into Rangpur from where they came .<sup>9</sup> During the rule of Maharaja Deven – dra Narayan {(1763–1765) minor} the Bhutias became very powerful and extended their authority over the State.<sup>10</sup>

After his short period of rule an era of critical politics was evolved at Cooch Behar (as said earlier) . During this period an important role was played by Dewan Deo , Nazir Deo , Maharani and others . Thus from 1765 to 1783 Dhairjendra Narayan, Rajendra Narayan, Dharendra Narayan , Dhairjendra Narayan (2<sup>nd</sup> time) ascended to the throne of Cooch Behar . During this period there was an open confrontation with the Bhutias . In this emergency Nazir Deo applied to the Colonial Government for military aid against Bhutan . This led to the conclusion of a treaty on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 1773 between the East India Company and Cooch Behar .<sup>11</sup> From 1773 the British Government tried to introduce British regulations in Cooch Behar .

From 1773 to 1783 Cooch Behar passed through evil days . But the constant resistance of Maharaja Harendra Narayan ( 1783 - 1839 )

was the main obstacle in the fulfillment of British designs. But after the death of Maharaja Harendra Narayan in 1839, the East India Company had the free run in the State. The interesting point is that the Colonial Rulers maintained a friendly relations with the tributary State of Cooch Behar. This relationship ushered an era of modernisation in Cooch Behar. During the rule of Maharaja Shivendra Narayan (1839 – 1847) Cooch Behar state achieved a new dimension. Maharaja devoted his attention to the internal administration of the State which was ignored for several years. A perceptible changes could be noticed in every branch of administration.<sup>12</sup> Maharaja established a Dharma Sabha for the discussion of the affairs of the State.<sup>13</sup> Before him this type of practice was totally absent in the history of Cooch Behar. However, the development of the princely state of Cooch Behar found a new look from 1847.

It is almost difficult to register one's claim to an original contribution to the vast repositories of studies on the development of the princely state of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas (1847-1949). Yet there is always a room for a serious student of history to look at the subject from his own angle of vision. The proposed study is of a similar nature. The present chapter may be treated as an introduction to the proposed study. An attempt is made here to give an idea of the nature, objective and scope of the said study on the development of the Princely State of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas (1847 - 1949).

The title of the thesis is *Development of Cooch Behar*

*State under the Maharajas (1847 – 1949) – A Study of its Historical Significance .*

By ‘Development of Cooch Behar State under the Maharajas ( 1847 – 1949 )’ is meant the gradual progress of Cooch Behar during the ruling Koch dynasty, the progress in the field of social , cultural , and economic area , and by ‘Its historical significance’, is meant the impact of the all- round welfare activities of the Koch Maharajas for Cooch Behar .

Nature of the Study : As the explanation of the title shows , an attempt is made in the thesis to ascertain the exact nature of the development of the Princely State of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas (1847- 1949) and its historical significance .

To that end an attempt is made in the first ( Chapter I ) to show how the constituent avenues of development under Maharaja Narendra Narayan ( 1847 - 1863 ) have contributed to the modernization of the glorious Princely State of Cooch Behar .

Thereafter the study is divided into five self- component parts . The first part (Chapter II) deals exclusively with the chief avenues of all-round development of Cooch Behar under Maharaja Nripendra Narayan – The harbinger of modernization ( 1863 – 1911 ) . This chapter is divided in the following sections and sub - sections in order to show the different aspects of social - cultural - economic upliftment of the princely state of Cooch Behar during his rule . His reign was the longest among the Koch rulers . He got enough time to consolidate the state on the means of advanced modern ideas . Thus this Chapter is much longer in comparison than other chapters .

**(1) Development in social field :**

**A . The State Council for administrative purpose .**

**B. The spread of Education for boys and girls .**

- i) Establishment of a good number of primary schools ;
- ii) Establishment of a good number of high schools ;
- iii) Setting up of student- hostels ;
- iv) Establishment of ‘Sunity School’ for girls ;
- v) Establishment of Victoria College for Undergraduate Education ;
- vi) Implementation of entrance examination in education system ;
- vii) Establishment of Maharaja (Public) Library in the kingdom ;
- viii) Setting up of Artizan School .

**C.Introduction of Medical facilities for the people of Cooch Behar.**

- i) Setting up of medical dispensaries in the town of Cooch Behar and in the mafussil area ;
- ii) Measures taken for reducing epidemic diseases .

**D. Establishment of Public Works Department (P.W.D) for construction works .**

- i) Construction of roads and bridges for better communication;
- ii) Introduction of Cooch Behar State Railway for wider communication .

- iii) Establishment of Cooch Behar Palace – a symbol of architectural work .
- iv) Establishment of ‘ Madan Mohan Thakur Bari’ - a replica of temple architecture .
- v) Construction of several official & civil buildings in Cooch Behar .
- E. Formation of Tonga Service .**
- F. Introduction of new tobacco seeds for Agricultural purpose .**
- G. The scheme of plantation Work .**
- H. Cooch Behar Town Committee Act for municipality .**
- I. Cooch Behar Merchandise Marks Act for trade purpose .**
- J. Census Report of 1901 and 1911 a source of demographic Study .**
- K. The scheme of publication land revenue settlement work of Cooch Behar and re – settlement of 1906 - 07 .**
- L. The formation of Cooch Behar Land holders Association in 1908 .**

**(2) Development in Cultural Field :**

- A) Printing of the Cooch Behar Select Record as an official document ;
- B) Introduction of Shooting Camp ;
- C) Organising Fairs & Festivals in Cooch Behar ;
- D) Royal patronage on Philkhana ;
- E) Sporting Management : Tennis Court , Lawn Tennis , Polo Ground , Cricket Ground .

**(3) Development in Economic Field :**

- A) Maintenance of various funds ;
- B) Maintaining budget for several years ;
- C) Exchange of Narayani Rupees;
- D) Revenue collection system .

The Second Part ( Chapter III ) deals with the well developed activities of Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan (1911 - 1913) . His advanced activities may be , divided in the following heads --

**(1) Development in Social Field :**

- A. Continuous royal schemes in various aspects ( Education, Medical , Communication , etc ) .

**(2) Development in Cultural Field :**

- A. Followed the tradition of the Raj (predicessors) .

**(3) Development in Economic Field :**

- A. Maintaining the tradition of Royal Patronage .

The third part ( Chapter IV) examines the phenomenal benevolent measures of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan (1913-1922) in

**(1) Benevolent Measures in Social Field :**

- A) Following the tradition;
- B) Establishment of Dynamo House for supplying hot water ;
- C) Setting up of Nripendra Narayan Memorial Hall at Mekhligunj for meeting purpose ;

- D) Re-opening of Veterinary Hospital for animal treatment ;
- E) Arrangement of training of police officers and constables at Police training College ;
- F) Introduction of various Act for legislature of Cooch Behar ;
- G) Lac Cultivation in Cooch Behar was a preservative cultivation ;
- H) Development of Industrial and Agricultural resources in Cooch Behar;
- I) Recognition of the Rights of the illegally settled tenants in Cooch Behar;
- J) Settlement Operations in Cooch Behar under Royal guidance .

**(2) Benevolent Measures in Cultural Field :**

- A) Publication of ‘Paricharika Patrika’ – royal magazine in Bengali ;
- B) Maintaining Reserve-forests for the preservation of various trees;
- C) Introduction of Stamp with portrait of the ruler ;
- D) Formation of Cooch Behari Chhatra Samiti for welfare of Cooch Behari ( Natives of the State) ;
- E) Control of gambling in the State of Cooch Behar in fairs;
- F) Fairs and festivals in the State of Cooch Behar .

**(3) Benevolent Measures in Economic Field :**

- A) Following the tradition .

The fourth part ( Chapter V) is in the form of observation on (I) the role of the Cooch Behar State Regency Council (1922 – 1936) and (II) the innovative schemes of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan (1936 – 1949) .

**(I) The role of the Cooch Behar State Regency Council (1922 – 1936)**

**(A) Development in Social field :**

- 1) Educational development in the State was in progress .
- 2) Medical facilities was at the peak .
- 3) Public works Department worked on various project .
- 4) Formation of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan Prajabatsal Chikitsalaya for public treatment .
- 5) Transfer of management of Sunity Academy for better educational infrastructure .
- 6) Water supply scheme in the State .
- 7) Re – organization of Fire – Brigade service in Cooch Behar .
- 8) Moderation of Narendra Narayan park .
- 9) Formation of public health department for better medical facilities .
- 10) Introduction of the Cooch Behar subject for identity in 1932 .
- 11) Appointment of agricultural officer in Cooch Behar for better agricultural development .

**(B) Development in Cultural Field :**

- 1) Follow the tradition .

**(C) Development in Economic Field :**

- 1) Revision of rates for town and bunder lands .
- 2) Introduction of progressive enhancement of revenue and rent in the State .
- 3) Introduction of new stamps in Cooch Behar .
- 4) Implementation of relief measures of jotedars and tenants .

- 5) Rent order money system in the State .
- 6) Land revenue policy for economic development .

**(II) Innovative Schemes of Maharaja ( 1936 – 1949)**

- 1) Arrangement of exhibition on agriculture and industry in the State.
- 2) Society for prevention of cruelty to animals .
- 3) Publication of history books on Cooch Behar .
- 4) Publication of Cooch Behar Darpan .
- 5) Establishment of Cooch Behar Model Diary .
- 6) Moderation of Cooch Behar State Palace Garden .
- 7) Introduction of new rules for medicine in the State .
- 8) Cooch Behar Income Tax ( Amendment) Bill of 1945 .
- 9) Implementation of medical training of dhais ( midwives) and Nurses .
- 10) Formation of fish culture in Cooch Behar .
- 11) Establishment of Cooch Behar State Transport for better communication .
- 12) Introduction of Motor spirit rationing order in the State .
- 13) Implementation of Municipal Act of 1944 .
- 14) The Cooch Behar Air Craft Act of 1946 .
- 15) Construction of an ideal storage in the State .
- 16) Rule for commercial crops (tea) in Cooch Behar .
- 17) Establishment of maternity and child welfare center .
- 18) The Ancient Monuments preservation act of 1947 .

The fifth part, Conclusion is in the form

of summary of the observations made on the impact of the development ( Historical Significance ) of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas . The last part is in the form of an appendix and also bibliography .

Hypothesis of the Study :

The proposed study , as already stated , seeks primarily to ascertain the nature and significance of the development on Cooch Behar under the Maharajas (1847-1949) .

By way of examining the nature of the said development, the study seeks to establish the fact that

- 1) Development of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas achieved a phenomenal success during the period ,1847-1949 .
- 2) Education , Public Works , Public Health , Sanitation , Municipal Administration, Land Reforms , Environmental awareness etc ; got a new impetus under the Maharajas .
- 3) Economic development in the princely State of Cooch Behar was noticeable .
- 4) The Cooch Behar State Railway accelerated the process of development not only for Cooch Behar but also for the whole of the surrounding regions .

The study arrives at the conclusion that classical development in Cooch Behar was profound only when it was conditioned by the modern outlook of the ruling dynasty . The Maharajas of Cooch Behar spent a lot of time in London . They got their education there and when they came to Cooch Behar , they took the whole responsibility of the kingdom one after another , they took active initiatives for the development of the State to make it clear that Cooch

Behar had a glorious historical fame in this part of the country . So any attempt to construct the development of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas and of its historical significance is bound to meet success .

Research Questions :

While analysing the development of the Princely State of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas (1847 - 1949) - a study of its Historical Significance , the proposed study attempts to answer the following principal questions :

- (i) Did the ruler of Cooch Behar inherit a mentality for the Development of the Princely State ?
- (ii) What were the chief avenues of development ?
- (iii) Was the education system modern ? If so , to what extent ?
- (iv) Was the modern means of medical facilities available in Cooch Behar ? If so to what extent ?
- (v) Was Cooch Behar culturally a modern Princely State ? If so, to what extent ?
- (vi) Did the economic growth led to alround development of the Princely State ?
- (vii) Can we call these Socio- Cultural- Economic development transitional ?

Methodology :

The proposed study , historical in approach and content , is essentially based on the official records and on the analytical methodology . For this the primary sources , i.e. the documents have been collected . Secondly , the whole range of literature on the development of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas have been analysed for the preparation of a meaningful frame work . To that end relevant historical official

documents and books have been selected and in case of group of historical official documents coming under the same category of the proposed work, the most , representative one is taken up for the study. Chapter I, II, III, IV and V constitute the main part of the argument and each of these Chapters ends with a concluding portion showing a summary of the observations made in course of the discussion . In the last part the focus is concentrated on the historical significance of the development of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas as a whole . In regard to the collection of primary data and critical references , the libraries and institutions have been utilised in Kolkata and at other places .

Over view of the Literature covering the Area of Study :

Having stated the problem of enquiry and its significance ,It would be useful to recount the work done by in the area of the proposed study . Available literature may be classified into six broad categories .

The first category covers the manuscript form of documents selected for study in original , or in case of history of Cooch Behar , in translation .

In the second category are included those critical Studies in official documents that deal with (i) various Social – Cultural - Economic aspects , and (ii) the nature of the development of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas .There is a large number of official and historical documents covering the area of proposed work . Only those are consulted which are found useful for preparing a conceptual framework . Some of the documents consulted may be mentioned in a short space like this .

Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State ( 1878 – 1941 ) is a main

source for the study of the benevolent activities of the Maharajas of Cooch Behar. Cooch Behar Census Report - 1951 shows the geographical and actual condition of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas. Cooch Behar Darpan (1938) is a alive source which indicate the cultural atmosphere of Cooch Behar was at its height. The Cooch Behar Gazette (1896-1947) drew the phenomenal modern outlook of the Maharajas of Cooch Behar. The Cooch Behar Select Records vol. I & II(1884) is a combined text of personal and official letters of the Maharajas of Cooch Behar. W.W. Hunter's A Statistical Account Bengal (vol.-x) 1883, is a vivid account of Bengal, although the text throws some light on the Social – Economic condition of Cooch Behar. Sir F. Jenkins wrote some papers on Cooch Behar, which is a valuable source in writing the history of Cooch Behar. Durga Das Mazumdar's West Bengal District Gazetteers (Koch Bihar) 1977, shows the geographical as well as monarchical condition of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas.

The list of studies on the development of Cooch Behar is far from complete. The scholars and critics as mentioned above and those not now referred but formally acknowledged in the relevant sections of the thesis have furthered the researcher's understanding of the development of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas and its significance in particular.

The third category includes the study on the Cultural life of the Koch dynasty in Cooch Behar and abroad. There is a good number of memoirs which deals with these objects, namely, Nripendra Narayan's Thirty seven

years of big game shooting in Cooch Behar ( The Duars and Assam ) 1908 ; Deen-doyal Chawdhuri's Nripendra Smiriti (1915); Sunity Devi's The Autobiography of an Indian Princess(1921); Gayatri Devi and Santha Ram's The Memoirs of the Maharani of Jaipur – A Princess Remembers (1982) .

Critics and scholars have analysed the various facets of western culture on the ruling dynasty. There is , however , no agreed opinion on the nature and significance of the said development . For instance , Swapan Kumar Roy has argued in the introductory part in his book ( 'Prachin Koch Beharer Sampurna Itibritto' ) that the complete history of Cooch Behar is still under construction ( from the point of view of writing ) .<sup>14</sup>

The fourth category covers the kind of literature that deals with the socio - cultural aspects of Cooch Behar . There are some studies that cover the whole range of the royal history of Cooch Behar . They, however, lack elaborate analyses of the said development . Amanutullah Ahmed's Cooch Bihar Itihas (1936), discusses the early history of Cooch Behar and at the same time it focused on the historical sources regarding Cooch Behar.<sup>15</sup> Ghanashyam Dalai's Sachitra Kuchbehar – Rajchitra (1915) , Karali Charan Ganguli's Final Report On the Survey and settlement operations in the Cooch Behar State (1913-1917) ,1930,S.C.Ghosal's History of Cooch Behar ( 1942 ) , Brindeswari Devi's Beharodanta ( 1859 ) , Bhagavatee Charan Bandopadhaya's Cooch Beharer Itihas (1882), H.N.Chaudhuri's Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlement (1903) , Sashibhusan Halder's Cooch Behar Hitaishinee Sabha Baktritamala (1965), Biswanath Das (ed.) Rajopakhyan (1985), D.Nath's History

*of the Koch kingdom ( 1515 – 1615 )*, 1989; Nripendra Nath Paul's *Itikathay Cooch Behar* ( 2000 ) Ratna Roy (Sanyal)'s *The Raj and the Princely State of the Cooch Behar – A Study of Anglo - Cooch Behar Relations* ( 2004 ) , Hemanta Kumar Roy Barma's *Cooch Beharer Itihas* ( 2005 ) , Swapan Kumar Ray's { *Prachin KochBeharer Sampurna Itibritto* (2006) , *Prachin Koch Beharer Aartha - Samajik Itihas* ( 2008 ) , *Koch Beharer Rajdarabarer Sahityacharcha* (2011) } , Amlanjyoti Majumdar's *Literary Works of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur* (2010) , Arun Bhusan Majumdar's *Pratyush O Pradosh Kaler Kamta - Cooch Behar* (2008) , Ranjit Deb's { *Cooch Beharer Eytihyamoyee Rajprasad* ( 1999 ) , *Cooch Beharer Itihas* ( 2005 ) } , Mahendra Debnath's *Shahar Cooch Beharer Tinsha Bachar* ( 2007 ) , belong to this category .

There are again independent studies showing the social , cultural history of Cooch Behar , but they , too naturally do not help to assess , in full, the development of the princely state of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas (1847 – 1949) in general . In this connection the researcher can mention the name of the following books - W. W. Hunter's *Annals of Rural Bengal* ( 1897 ) , Sarabji Jahangir's *Princess and Chiefs of India , vol.- II* ( 1903 ) , E. A. Gait's *History Of Assam* (1906) , Arthur Claude Campbell's *Glimpses of Bengal , vol - I* (1907) Charu Chandra Sanyal's *Rajbansis of North Bengal* (1965), Amiya Kumar Bandhopadhaya and Sudhir Ranjan Das's *Cooch Behar Zillar Purakirti* (1974) , R . C. Majumdar's *History of Modern Bengal {part one ( 1765 – 1905 ) }* 1978 , B .N . Mukharjee ( ed. ) *Early Historical Perspective of North Bengal* ( 1987 ) , Ian Copland's *The British Raj and The Indian Princes-Para*

mountney in Western India (1857 – 1930), (1987) , Michael. H . Fisher’s Indirect Rule in India – Residents and Residency System ( 1764- 1858 ) , 1991 ; Ranajit Dasgupta’s Economy, Society and politics in Bengal : Jalpaiguri (1869-1947), 1992 ; Ichhimuddin Sarkar’s Aspects of Historical Geography of Pragjyotisa – Kamarupa (Ancient Assam) ,1992 ; Nripendra Nath Paul’s ( ed. ) { Koch Kings of Kamrup ( 1985 ) , Maharaj Harendra Narayn o Shibendra Narayaner Bhaktigiti Sangraha ( 1999 ) } , Nicholas Rhodes And Shankar . K . Bose’s The Coinage of Cooch Behar ( 1999 ) , Sachindra Nath Roy’s Sahitya Sadhanaya Rajanya Shasita Koch Behar ( 1999 ) , P . K . Bhattacharya’s (ed.) The Kingdom of Kamata Koch Behar in Historical Perspective (2000), Biswanath Das’s ( ed. ) Sunity Devi – Cooch Behar Maharanee Sunity Devir Jiban Katha (2000) ,Shubhendu Majumdar’s Adhunik siksha O Cooch Behar Victoriya College (1888-1938) , 2000 ; Bhagirath Das’s (ed.) Cooch Beharer Loksanskriti Utsav (2001), Abhijit Roy’s Koch Bihar raj- Jnankosh (1510-1949), 2002; Hemadri Sankar Bhattacharya’s Cooch Behar O Prachin Prathar Kichu Jana O Ajana (2002) , Ranjit Deb’s North Bengal at a glance – Cooch Behar , Jalpaiguri , Darjeeling ( vol-I) 2002 , Abhijit Sarkar’s Cooch Beharer Chithi (2004) HitenNag’s (ed.) America through Hindu Eyes ( 2004 ) , Cooch Beharer Itihas ( 2005) }, Gauri Shankar Bhattacharya’s Uttarbanger Pathe Pathe ( 2005 ) , Soven Sanyal’s { Alipurduyarer Pathe Prantare (2006) Cooch Beharer Kichu Katha Kichu Itihas (2008) } , Saswati Deb’s Cooch Behar Parichaya ( 2006 ) , Sujit Kumar Achrya’s Kam Kamta Kamakhya Tatha Koch Rajbansider Dravidio Utshya (2007), Rupkumar Barman’s From Tribalism to State (2007) , Dilip Kumar Dey’s Cooch Beharer Lokosanskriti (2007), Tapas Kumar Bandhopadhaya’s

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The object of the proposed study , in this section , is to systematize a hitherto incoherent discussion on the development of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas (1847-1949) in an assailable form .

The fifth category includes some of the unpublished Ph. D thesis . The notable thesis -- Dr. Kamalesh Chandra Das's "Modernisation of a Princely State Cooch Behar Under the Maharaja Nripendra Narayan ( 1863 – 1911 )" in which the main focus falls on Maharaja Nripendra Narayan only ; thus the work is limited in its scope . Dr. Partha Sen in his thesis " Study of some aspects of the history of Kamta Cooch Behar since 1772 to the date of accession of Shivendra Narayan ", discusses some aspects of Cooch Behar up to the accession of Maharaja Shivendra Narayan i.e 28 th August 1839 . Dr. Sekhar Sircar's thesis, " Land Settlement and Revenue Administration and taxation under the Maharajas of Cooch Behar State ( 1773 - 1949 )", is a good work from the economic point of view . But the work is silent on other ( social and cultural ) aspects .

The last category covers the critical studies on the nature and significance

of the development of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas . This category deals with the following journals, magazines, news- papers , namely, Ajitesh Bhattachariya (ed.) *Madhuparni* , vol. of Cooch Behar (ed.) by Annada Gopal Ghosh ( 1990) ; Nirmalya Acharya's *Ekkhan* (1995 - 96) ; *Smaranika ( North Bengal State Library )* 1996 ; *Bengal Past and Present* (2002 ) ; *Smaranika (Dinhata Municipality)* 2002 ; Sukhendu Das ( ed. ) *Cooch Behar Zilla Sankha* (2006) ; *Smaranika ( Sunity Academy )* 1981, 2006, Aninda Bhattachariya and Rajarshi Biswas (ed. ) *Manshai* ( 2007 , 08 ) ; Deba-brata Chaki ( ed. ) *Uttar Prasanga vol.- 1,2,3* ( 2008 ) ; *Smaranika ( Khudra Patra – Patrika Parishad , Uttarbanga ,17-18 Dec, 2010 , Smaranika ( Jenkins School ) , 2011. Uttar Banga Sambad* (2008) .

The nature of the proposed work in this connection relates primarily to two basic questions - to what extent does the presence of the classical modern history of Cooch Behar influence the technique of modernisation of the princely state under the Maharajas ; and is this presence necessary to establish the meaning of development .

From the above analysis it is very clear that there is no coherent and comprehensive study on the subject undertaken for the present research . This brief overview further highlights the fact that there exists a major gap in understanding the continuous development of the Princely State of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas from 1847 - 1949 as a whole .

Moreover a truly comparative perspective has not been followed in any of the work cited above . Whenever comparative analysis has been attempted it has been piecemeal . Hence this study has been undertaken to bridge a genuine research gap in an important field in the history of Cooch Behar .

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*CHAPTER - I*

**MAHARAJA NARENDRA NARAYAN  
(1847 – 1863) - THE BEGINNING OF  
DEVELOPMENT IN COOCH BEHAR**

## ***CHAPTER – I***

### **Maharaja Narendra Narayan (1847-1863) – The beginning of development in Cooch Behar**

The glorious history of Cooch Behar represents a new era of advanced modern outlook under Maharaja Narendra Narayan. After Maharaja Harendra Narayan , his successor Maharaja Shivendra Narayan before his accession on 28<sup>th</sup> August, 1839 had a pro - British attitude . He, in fear of his future problem of succession, surrendered to the British Government.<sup>1</sup> Maharaja Shivendra Narayan was also the secret choice of the British as the future ruler of Cooch Behar .<sup>2</sup> On 23<sup>rd</sup> August , 1847, Maharaja Narendra Narayan , son of late Maharaja Shivendra Narayan ascended the throne of Cooch Behar , who started the era of advanced modern Princely State .<sup>3</sup>

Till the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the nineteenth century, the relations between the East India Company and the rulers of Cooch Behar were not friendly , if not bitter . From 1848 Colonial Government tried to control the internal affairs of the State by engaging British resident at the court . Nevertheless , in 1848 Secretary of the British Government wrote a letter to J. P. Grant , Secretary of the Bengal Government which reads “ His Honour in Council concurs in the opinion of the Deputy Governor that it is managed or superintended in its management, should be placed under the jurisdiction of the Government of Bengal, all questions , however , of an important political bearing being referred for the orders of

the Supreme Government.”<sup>4</sup>

With the introduction of British overlordship in the years following the Mutiny, relations between the two developed steadily. During this period British Government announced that its policy of territorial extension was to be abandoned. So, friendly relations with the British was one of the vital grounds of the development of Cooch Behar State started under Maharaja Narendra Narayan. During the early years of his life, he was under the guidance of Mr. Moore, who performed the task of a private tutor (English education).<sup>5</sup> Maharaja Shivendra Narayan, before his death, expressed a wish that the British Government should undertake the supervision of his son's education. As a result Maharaja Narendra Narayan went to Krishnanagar for undergraduate education. He came back to the Kingdom of Cooch Behar in 1859 after completing his academic career. This was unusual in the history of the State. No ruler of Cooch Behar before him, obtained English education. So it must be said that from the death of Harendra Narayan a new era started in the history of Cooch Behar with full modern outlook. The age-old traditional pattern was about to change and a modern outlook was visible according to British model. During this interval period East India Company, appointed an agent to protect Cooch Behar.<sup>6</sup>

In 1848, the territory of Cooch Behar, as long as it might be managed or superintended its management, was placed under the jurisdiction of the Government of Bengal in all matters specially in political bearing. In 1849 an important step was taken. During this year the custom of *sahamaran* (*sati*) was prohibited in

Cooch Behar . Such an attempt indicated that Maharajas' outlook was modern and may be compared with that of Raja Rammohan Roy , who fought against the cruel practice of sati which was abolished in 1829 by an Act . The next important step was taken in the demarcation of the boundaries between Cooch Behar and Bhutan. As a consequence to that effect, a survey was taken by Captain Mathew, under the order of the government , and the deputy collector Mr. Bedford laid the boundary in 1851 , which included the work of surveying the twenty - two challas ( small pieces of land ) in Maraghat .<sup>7</sup> Major Jenkins proposed to consolidate these isolated pieces of land into one plot . However being approved by the Government only the necessary boundary - pillars were ordered to be erected .

Bhutan, however, respected this settlement of the boundary . In 1857 Bhutias committed several dacoities within the Cooch Behar territory . One of which was in the house of Sakalu Pradhan of Tenganmari in which a large amount of money was plundered .<sup>8</sup> In 1861 due to the repeated raid by the Bhutias appropriate steps were taken for the protection of the boundaries in Cooch Behar.<sup>9</sup> In November 1849 another boundary dispute evolved with Guma .<sup>10</sup> These disputes has long been settled and the land formed the part of Chhat Bara Lowkuti .<sup>11</sup>

In 1850 another boundary dispute with Rangpur aroused which was smoothly solved by the company officers on behalf of Maharaja Narendra Narayan . The Fouzdari Ahilkar on the complaint of the ryots of the state of Cooch Behar applied to the magistrate of Rangpur to send the defendants to him for the purpose of investigation. The dispute however, continued and in course of survey

of 1856 , Mr. Ryland, Deputy Collector was appointed under Mr. Pemberton to settle them with Cooch Behar authorities . It was ultimately solved in 8<sup>th</sup> May , 1861.<sup>12</sup>

After solving the boundary disputes , another step was taken in 1859 . During this year a topographical survey of Cooch Behar was made under the supervision of the revenue – surveyor Mr. J.G . Pemberton . It is important to note that Mr. Pemberton’s map was the first regular map of the State of Cooch Behar . From the letter of Mr. Pemberton it is obvious that the Raj of Cooch Behar was about 60 miles in length and its average breadth was about 20 , and it contained about 1,800 squares .<sup>13</sup>

The communication system of Cooch Behar was in a pitiable condition . So in 1859 Maharaja Narendra Narayan took initiatives for the construction of roads in the Town of Cooch Behar and for the management of the work a superintendent was appointed .<sup>14</sup>

Since the Nineteenth Century the Colonial Rulers implemented various policies for the development of education in India and also in Bengal . In the Charter Act of 1813 one of the provisions was for the spread of English Education . In 1835 the famous ‘Macaulay Minute’ was introduced which enacted the Filtration Theory ( education from the low level ) . Similarly in 1854 ‘Wood Despatch’ was passed by the Government, which enacted some provisions for female education and also of granting scholarship to meritorious students . In the avenue of education Cooch Behar was not far behind . It was at first during Maha- raja Narendra Narayans rule that initiatives were taken for the establishment of a

English medium school for boys . Previously there was lack of educational facilities for boys in Cooch Behar . As a result in 1861 a boys' school , namely , Jenkins School was established , after Colonel Jenkins , Agent to the Governor – General , North – East Frontier , who was a good friend of the Maharaja and a good benefactor of the State of Cooch Behar .<sup>15</sup>

After the Mutiny of 1857, the policy of the British Government towards the native states softened . Accordingly in 1862 the British Government of India granted an amendment (Sunnad) to the Maharaja of Cooch Behar conferring on him and his successors the right of adoption on failure of natural heirs . In the same year the Government formally recognised the title of Maharaja Bahadur, and granted Maharaja Narendra Narayan a Sunnad conferring upon him that Distinction .<sup>16</sup> In 1862 , Lieutenant Sadler was appointed to obtain information regarding roads and grounds &c., between Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri to the west , Dhubri to the east , and Rangpur to the South .<sup>17</sup> This survey was undertaken with a view to facilitate the movement of troops .

Maharaja also took important steps regarding justice . A High Court was established in 1859 and Babu Kalikamal Mitra was appointed as the manager of the court .<sup>18</sup> Not only that , Previously dewani , fauzdari court of appeal (Raj Sabha) was in Cooch Behar . But the procedure of these courts was not well organised. Therefore, Maharaja Narendra Narayan laid down royal instruction for the modification of these courts .<sup>19</sup>

In the sphere of culture (Cooch Behar), Maharaja Narendra

Narayan's contribution was noticeable . In the festival of Durga Puja at Debibari , the temple of Debi Durga was decorated with flowers and candles and on the occasion of Dol jatra, the kingdom of Cooch Behar celebrated it as a royal ceremony .<sup>20</sup> This festival is the speciality in the North – Eastern Region .The festival of Durga Puja had a history of its own in Cooch Behar . The available sources namely, Khan Chowdhuri Amanutullah Ahmeds 'History of Cooch Behar', shows that during the rule of Maharaja Nara Narayan , his brother Sukladvaja committed treachery against Maharaja and prepared a plan to kill him . But before he fulfilled his desires , one day Devi Durga appeared to resist him from committing that sin and ordered him to tell Maharaja to organise Durga puja festival . Sukladvaja vividly described the matter to Maharaja and accordingly he organized Durga Puja at Devi Bari . One notable feature was that the icon of Devi Durga here is a fighter ( her child like Ganesh , Kartik , Laxmi or Saraswati was not figured) who kill her opponent .

Scholarly persons were well patronized in the princely state of Cooch Behar . In this connection it is to be noted that during the reign of Maharaja Narendra Narayan special attention was given for the promotion of music and painting . At that time a singer namely Dangar Basu came from Dhaka, to perform music at the Royal Darbar of Cooch Behar .<sup>21</sup>

Maharaja also took initiatives for the introduction of stamp system for administrative purpose.<sup>22</sup> Before him there was no evidence of the use of stamps . In the matter of official cases a charge was taken by the administrative department namely "institution fees". For the implementation of

paper stamp a Stamp Act was passed by Maharaja in 1861 . An interesting point is that when the Act was passed, there was Superintendent of stamp. But after the said office was abolished, the whole matter was conducted by the Duar Muktear (gateman of royal palace) .<sup>23</sup>

Maharaja also purchased a coin printing machine for financial purpose and for printing of Narayani coins . Maharaja also established an assembly namely , Hitaisinee Sabha ---- where scholarly persons gave their views regarding ( polity, industrial education, physics, agriculture, trade & commerce , antiquity ) the development of the State of Cooch Behar .<sup>24</sup> Cooch Behar was a modern princely state , which was always thinking for public welfare . During his rule in 1854 a devastating famine broke out in Cooch Behar . Maharaja's royal officers at first closely monitored the situation and decided that grains should be collected from Seraj-ganj at a ceiling price and to be distributed among the people of Cooch Behar at a low price .<sup>25</sup>

Regarding the history of CoochBehar, Maharaja Narendra Narayan's wife, Brideswari Devi , wrote a poetical history of Cooch Behar in her book 'Beharo Danta' in 1859, which is the first written document produced by the royal dynasty of Cooch Behar .<sup>26</sup> Such a work from a Maharani was an exceptional case and it highlighted the actual condition of the State .

In 1857 Sepoy Mutiny occurred in the British regiment at Barrackpore . As a result a few disloyal soldiers including the brother of Nana Saheb escaped from the regiment and came to the princely state of Cooch Behar in

1861 , in the hope that the Maharaja of Cooch Behar would help them , and would give them horses with which they could escape the north- west frontier . But all the hope went in vain , when Maharaja gave order of arrest and sent them to the Company officers as prisoners .<sup>27</sup>

This scattered event proved that Maharaja Narendra Narayan was a blind follower of the British Government in true sense . In this connection , it is to be noted that in the year 1861, Captain Hopkinson replaced Col . F. Jenkins as the Agent of the Company in the North – East frontier . The new Agent modified the previous Anglo – Cooch Behar relations which was as follows : “ Now it must be best way to keep the Rajah straight to advice him that while we acknowledge that the treaty gave us no right to regulate his conduct . So neither did it require us to protect him against the consequences of his misconduct, so far as domestic revolution was concerned . When the Rajah knew that we left him responsible to his subjects then he would probably either mend his ways and conciliate their support or fearing the responsibility. He would also seek to place himself more completely under our protection , and to that end , would be glad to accept such new terms as we might impose. They comprehended the appointment of an agent at Cooch Behar . Whose salary and establishment would be defrayed out of the revenues of Cooch Behar , and to whose advice the Rajah would be expected to defer or even a more comprehensive measure for limiting his present authority ”.<sup>28</sup>

Apart from that , in the field of literature the interest of Royal dynasty of Cooch Behar during this period is noticeable . On the order of

Rajmata Kameswari Devi, Ripunjoy Das wrote a historical work in prose style , which is known as ‘ Maharaja Banshabali’.<sup>29</sup> This work highlighted the chronological history of Cooch Behar since the accession of Maharaja Vishwa Singha ( 1522 ) .

From the above analysis it is clear that during the reign of Maharaja Narendra Narayan some sort of advanced modern measure were taken in the State of Cooch Behar , which found a steady progress during the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan .

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8. *Ibid.*
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In reporting upon these outrages committed by the Bhutias , Colonel Jenkins , in 1859 , strongly urged the adoption of hard Measures towards Bhutan , and foreshadowed the occupation of the Duars as the only effectual means of putting

down these depredations . Scarcely had full two months passed when in the beginning of November 1861, a gang of 70 or 80 Bhutias from The Bholka Duar committed dacoity in Taluks Chhat Bhalka and Deotikhata Naziran . When such things were happening in the extreme north- east of the state , Bhutia outrages were also occurring in the tract of the state of Cooch Behar near Pundibari , where a guard of 10 sepoy had to be deputed for the protection of the subject .

10. *Ibid.*

In November 1849 another boundary dispute evolved with Guma . At that time Aran Sing , the Zamindar of Guma who lived in the east or left bank of the river Gadadhar , opposite of the taluk Chhat Bara Lowkuti , with a large body of armed men, encroached upon the char of the river on the west bank. In the affray that took place some rayots of the state of Cooch Behar were killed.

11. *Ibid.*, p, 291.

Captain Strat , Assistant of Goalpara , was deputed by colonel Jenkins to settle the boundary and had it laid down by Mr. Bedford . Mr. Kelso , sub - assistant revenue surveyor , who shortly after , surveyed this boundary showed the alluvial ground of the Gadadhar around Bara Lowkuti as in dispute.

12. *Ibid.*, p,292.

13. *The C.B.S.R* , Vol. - II, p,205.

14.*Ibid.*, p, 206.

Mr. Pemberton explain his arguments on the following plan of operations ---

“I intended to commence on the western side of the kingdom , and enclose in the first instance, a grand main circuit of about four hundred square miles

; this portion will be divided into three main circuits, and these again into Sub - divisions , the contents of which will fill a sheet of imperial paper . This I can do accurately by measurement ; The plan is simple , can be easily accomplished , and will ensure correct Topography ; the greatest attention shall be paid to the interior details”.

15. Chowdhury , H.N. , *op. cit.*, p,292.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. Halder, Sashibhusan (ed.) , *Cooch Behar Hitaisinee Sabha Baktritāmala* ,Cooch Behar , 1965 , p,117 .
- 19.*Ibid.*
- 20.Chowdhuri, Deendayal , *Nripendra Smiriti* ,Calcutta, 1915 , pp, 34-35 .
- 21.*Ibid* .
- 22.Bandapadhaya, Bhagabatee Charan , *Cooch Beharer Itihas*, Cooch Behar State Press, Cooch Behar , 1882 , p, 76.
23. Chowdhury, H.N. – *op.cit.*, p, 381.
- 24.Ray, Swapan Kumar , *op.cit*, p,170.
- 25.Bandapadhaya ,Bhagabatee Charan , *op. cit.* , p, 76 .
26. Debnath , Mahendra , *Atma Kathane Maharanee Brindeswari o Jenkins School* (Bengali) , Lekhapara Publisher, Cooch Behar , 2010 , p, 32.
27. Ray , Swapan Kumar , *op. cit.*, p, 171.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*, p,172.

*CHAPTER - II*

**MAHARAJA NRIPENDRA NARAYAN  
( 1863 – 1911 ) – THE HARBINGER OF  
MODERNISATION IN COOCH BEHAR**

## ***CHAPTER - II***

### **Maharaja Nripendra Narayan ( 1863 – 1911 ) – The harbinger of modernisation in Cooch Behar**

The history of Cooch Behar turned into a new paradigm under the guidance of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan . When he ascended the throne of Cooch Behar State he was a minor . The impact of western methods upon oriental system of government was leading gradually but surely to the disappearance of an ancient Indian prince .<sup>1</sup>

During the period from 1864 to 1878 the Commissioner of Cooch Behar was empowered by the Government with full authority of the State. In 1864 Colonel Haughton joined his duties as Commissioner and continued in this post till 1873 . During this period besides the work of administration an important part of his duty was to see that the young prince was properly cared for and brought up .<sup>2</sup> For that reason Colonial rulers sent Maharaja to London where he took education in English . Here it deserves to mention that the Colonial rulers wanted to set a western educated ruler on the throne of Cooch Behar as they wanted an ally in this part of the country. Geographically Cooch Behar was situated at the frontier of north-eastern India and this frontier was always more important for the British Government to run their supremacy in India . Maharaja Nripendra Narayan's accession helped them to strengthen foothold in the north – east frontier . The year 1878 was

an important landmark in the history of Cooch Behar . On the 6<sup>th</sup> March 1878 Maharaja Nripendra Narayan's marriage with Sunity Devi ( daughter of the Brahmin leader Keshab Chandra Sen) was the main motivation behind the modernization of the State .<sup>3</sup>

During the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan the Princely State of Cooch Behar got all sorts of development. The true form of modernisation developed in Cooch Behar from 1883 when Maharaja attained maturity . He has done a great deal towards the improvement of the town by erection of beautiful structures, and has brought the town to its present good condition . There were a lot of developmental schemes initiated by Maharaja Nripendra Narayan from 1878 to 1911 which were as follows –

#### **A ) Development in Social Field**

In the Social field the following progressive measures were taken by Maharaja Nripendra Narayan :

**The State Council** The Cooch Behar State Council was opened with Maharaja as President , and three members , namely , the Superintendent of the State , the Dewan and the manager of the Chaklarjat Estate . The first meeting of the State Council was held on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1883.<sup>4</sup> The function of the State Council were three fold viz - a) Legislative , b) Executive and c) Judicial . On the legislative side the Council Passed laws and enactments. On the Executive side it regulated the management of the different departments (General Department, Revenue Department and Judicial Department) . In Judicial field the Council was the highest Court of appeal .<sup>5</sup>

During the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan three category of authority were introduced in the State of Cooch Behar viz, - a) Maharaja (the Ruler of the State), b) The Council and c) the departmental heads . Such a category indicated the representative character of the administration .

**Education** Enlightenment of an area depends on modern means of education . Therefore, during his rule strong measures were taken to this end . Maharaja shows his farsightedness with the formation of Night Schools for old persons as he knows that if the parents are educated then the children are sure to be educated .

With the gradual spread of schools in the interior and the continued development of the more important institutions in the town of Cooch Behar , it was found difficult for the members of the Local Committee either to master or to properly attend to the details of a business and accordingly a separate post of the Superintendship for the Education Department was created in 1870 to advise in all matters connected with Education, to inspect and examine the schools and to deliver occasional lectures .<sup>6</sup>

From 1871 onwards the works of the department began to be carried on systematically on the lines matured by celebrated educationists for Bengal , and year after year liberal grants continued to be given for extending the scope and sphere of education in Cooch Behar .<sup>7</sup> A Guru – Training School was established in February 1873 ; and a normal school , a portion of which had existed since 1870, was formally opened in 1875 with the full complement of classes , masters and stipend .<sup>8</sup> Under the auspices of these two institutions , a complete net – work of Sch-

ools and Patshalas very shortly covered the State of Cooch Behar from one end to another and a Deputy Inspector of Schools, one sub – inspector, four inspecting Pandits ( teachers ) were gradually appointed from 1876 – 1877.<sup>9</sup> The rapid progress of education in Cooch Behar from 1871 – 1879 were shown in the following table -<sup>10</sup>

**Table - 1**  
**YEAR**

		<b>1871 – 72</b>	<b>1875 – 76</b>	<b>1879 – 80</b>
Description of Schools	State	----- 4	7	6
	Aided	----- 49	177	289
	Unaided	----- 29	98	95
<b>Total</b>		82	282	390
		<b>Rs.</b>	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>Rs.</b>
Amount of Expenditure	State	----- 22, 233	42,591	60,685
	Private	----- 6,273	22,357	33,213
<b>Total</b>		28,506	64,948	93, 806

**Source:** Chowdhury, H.N.- The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlement ,  
Cooch Behar State Press , Cooch Behar , 1903 , p, 325.

In 1878 – 79 the superintendent of Cooch Behar , after vividly monitoring the actual condition of educational progress in Cooch Behar, wrote that “the fear justly entertained in 1877, of a reaction on the Patsalas ,owing to the disappointment of a vast number of qualified candidates to win Primary scholarships , which must necessarily be of a limited number.”<sup>11</sup> In 1878 an educational policy was initiated by Deputy Commissioner of Cooch Behar .<sup>12</sup> The principle that the limit of State aid ( Cooch Behar ) has been reached was fully recognized by the officers of the Education Department in 1878 . Officers were acted on , to gradually withdraw aid from schools which had given proof of sufficient innate vitality, and

to use the grants so withdrawn to open new schools in less favoured localities . Some times also , though rarely, aid was withdrawn on the ground of the obstinate neglect of the subscribers to pay their quota or to send their children regularly to school .<sup>13</sup> Apart from that in 1878 three Brahmin students got Sanskrit scholarship , which indicated that Sanskrit got equal importance during this period.<sup>14</sup> However during the year 1877 – 79 ,the arena of education was , on the whole , quite remarkable one . The following chart shows the number and strength of all schools at Cooch Behar:<sup>15</sup>

**Table - 2**

Class of Institutions	1877 – 78			1878 – 79		
	Schools	Pupil	Average daily attendance	Schools	Pupil	Average daily attendance
I- State Institution						
Higher Class	1	191	129	1	197	130
Vernacular Middle Class	2	358	266	2	400	284
Normal Schools	2	75	52	2	67	35
Boarding	1	-----	-----	1	-----	-----
II – Private Institutions under grant in aid system						
Middle Class English	3	75	51	3	79	59
Middle Vernaculars	93	3,294	2,718	93	3,381	2,865
Lower Vernaculars	118	3,457	2,759	121	3,675	2,796
Night Schools	23	586	444	25	596	479
Girls Schools	29	421	305	33	455	294
Boarding	1	-----	-----	1	-----	-----
III- Private institution receiving no allowance from the State						
Middle Class English	1	19	15	2	45	27
Middle Vernacular	4	121	80	4	158	119
Lower Vernacular	19	408	278	30	669	475
Indigenous Patshalas	29	287	246	26	374	345
Night Schools	10	221	168	10	289	237
Girl's Schools	14	139	109	16	196	151
Muktabs	10	180	132	10	184	92
Boardings	----	-----	-----	1	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-- Total -----	360	9,832	7,752	381	10,765	8,388

**Source :** Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State (1878-79),p, 56.

In 1884 the Superintendent of education of Cooch Behar remarked that the education department had been allowed sufficient time to develop the educational policy inaugurated by Maharaja Nripendra Narayan and his Regency Council.<sup>16</sup> Regarding the allotment for grant – in – aid of middle class schools , the Superintendent of Education of Cooch Behar made the following argument ,“ It being necessary so to redistribute the education budget for the year under report as might with the limited means at the states disposal do ‘ the greatest good to the largest number’, the superintendent was led to allot Rs. 6000 only for grant – in – aid middle class school . The chief reason for doing this was to leave a fairly adequate margin for the development of a really useful system of primary education in the state for which great care was being taken by all the educational bodies in the country. In this as well as in other matters connected with the department , the superintendent had been endeavoring to follow , as far as practicable, the director of Public instruction of Bengal , and the education commission for India ”.<sup>17</sup> Mahomedan education also received good impetus in 1884 . During this year the number of institutions for the special education of the Mahomedans including the sudder madrasa and The Anjumani Islamia was 19 , of which 6 were aided and 13 unaided .<sup>18</sup>

**Victoria College** : In 1888 the establishment of Victoria college for undergraduate education marked the year as one ushering in the fundamental change in the educational system . Considerable funds had to be found of course for the college which, in view of the principle laid down by the Maharaja that the normal allotment for education was not be exceeded , had to be taken away from primary and secondary edu

-cation .<sup>19</sup> The Principal of Victoria college wrote a letter to the educational department of Cooch Behar that the college possessed the minimum number of Professors , viz. one for every subject except English , and as a fully developed college teaching up to the M.A standard has seven classes in every subject , future need be felt of assistant lecturers as in government colleges of similar status .<sup>20</sup> As compare with modern days the post of a Principal of a college was very important during the Colonial Period . He could implement academic measures in consultation with the authority of the State . A college boarding institution was started simultaneously with the establishment of the college .<sup>21</sup> This institution changed educational structure of Cooch Behar . It was the attempt of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan who felt the necessity of introduction of higher education for the students of Cooch Behar . In 1897 Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal was appointed as the Principal of the institution . His scholarly views helped the Maharaja to take important measures for the welfare of the people of Cooch Behar .

**Sunity College :** In accordance with the wishes of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan and his wife Maharani Sunity Devi a small pucca building 32'- 6 " x 27' - 9" has been erected for the accommodation of the girls school under the name of "Sunity College" .<sup>22</sup> The estimated cost for constructing the building was Rs. 3217 , out of which Rs. 2000 has been paid by the Dewan of Cooch Behar from the provision for the birth day ceremony of Maharaja . The foundation stone of the building was laid by Maharani Sunity Devi in July , 1889 . The building was completed in November 1889 and formally opened by Maharani in March 1890. The inside room was 36'x18'

and, therefore, accommodated 100 students, a verandah in front with cast iron pillars 6ft. wide.<sup>23</sup> This building with its ornamental facade has greatly improved the part of the town in which it is situated. Nevertheless, the construction of a girls' school (College), indicated that Maharaja thought of a girls' college in future for Cooch Behar. Now this school attained 131 years with prestigious academic infrastructure.

In 1890 – 91 the Inspector of Schools after inspecting the academic progress wrote that, a higher standard of education being within easy reach of all who wish and was able to profit by High English education, many prefer to go to the Entrance Schools directly to do so through the medium of Middle English Schools. A desire to minimize the cost coupled with the question of distance of the Jenkins School, led many a parent to send the children to the village schools first.<sup>24</sup> Those whose circumstances compelled them to take advantage of the Middle English scholarships were wise to stay for the preliminary lessons in the Anglo – Vernacular schools. The pupils had not altogether gone out of the influence of the Educational Department but had simply been transferred from one class to another.<sup>25</sup> The fixed nature of the grant for primary and secondary education and the progressive increase of schools made it necessary to devise means to reconcile the ever increasing demand for Cooch Behar State authorities' assistance. Accordingly during the year 1892 the conditions under which schools received grants from the State were closely watched. State schools were carefully looked after, both as regards their strength and fee – income, the grant – in – aid schools were required strictly to conform to the departmental rules as to pay

-ment of local subscriptions and the up-keep of houses and furniture, while the keen competition for state grant stimulated the primary schools to make greater efforts to secure support.<sup>26</sup>

The following comparison shows the position of primary education in Cooch Behar –<sup>27</sup>

**Table – 3**

<b>District</b>	<b>No. of boys of School going age</b>	<b>No. of boys at school</b>	<b>% of boys at school to boys of school - going</b>
Dinajpur -----	1,21,807	21,925	17.2
Jalpaiguri -----	54,698	9,146	16.7
Rajshahi -----	98,150	17,141	17.5
Rangpur -----	1,59,271	24,394	15.3
Cooch Behar -----	45,368	7,996	17.6

**Source :** Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State (1895-96), p, 58 .

An important point in the history of education at Cooch Behar was the establishment of Entrance School in the sub-divisions namely, Mekhligunj, Mathabhanga and Dinhata.<sup>28</sup> In 1898 a boarding institution started functioning at Mekhligunj for the use of boys reading in the Higher Class English School at that place. As the institution was deserving support, it was recommended to Maharaja that a grant of Rs.200 should be made towards improving the accommodation, and that a small monthly contribution should be allotted for its support.<sup>29</sup>

In 1899 – 1900 for the benefit of Mahomedans, a

Persian School at the town of Cooch Behar and a Muktab at Maricha, an almost entirely Mahomedan village in the sub-division of Mathabhanga was formed. The following table shows the social position and religion of the pupils reading in different classes of schools in Cooch Behar :<sup>30</sup>

**Table - 4**

Name of School	Religion				Social position				R E M A R K
	H I N D U S	M A H O M E D A N S	O T H E R S	T O T A L	U P P E R C L A S S	M I D D L E C L A S S	L O W E R C L A S S	T O T A L	
Higher Class English -----	315	104	-----	419	24	306	89	419	
			47						
Middle Class English -----	170	153	6	329	11	221	97	329	
Middle Class Vernacular -----	1,153	569	8	1,730	63	729	938	1730	
Total -----	1,638	826	14	2,478	98	1256	1124	2478	
Corresponding total									
For 1898 -99 -----	1586	833	10	2,429	136	1,247	1,046	2,429	
PRIMARY SCHOOL.									
Upper Primary Schools -----	646	354	6	1,006	3	315	688	1,006	
Lower Primary Schools -----	4,940	1,934	75	6,949	26	1,852	5,071	6,949	
Night Schools -----	512	201	9	722	----	94	628	722	
Girls' Schools -----	157	41	----	198	7	61	130	198	
Indigenous Schools -----	13	----	----	13	----	----	13	13	
Muktab -----	---	59	----	59	----	4	55	59	
Total -----	6,268	2,589	90	8,947	36	2,326	6,585	8,947	
Corresponding Total 1898 -99	6,086	2,647	121	8,854	49	2,408	6,397	8,854	
Grand Total	7,906	3,415	104	11,433	134	3,582	7,709	11,425	
Corresponding Grand Total	7,672	3,180	134	11,283	185	3,655	7,443	11,283	

**Source:** Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State ( 1899-1900), p, 68 .

Regarding the aspect of entrance examination, boys set the example of success and talent . In 1899 – 1900 the percentage of successful candidates was 73 .<sup>31</sup> The Haldibari School house has been entirely rebuilt during the year 1900 .<sup>32</sup> In 1901 a scheme of re - organisation of the educational system was taken by the State ( Cooch Behar ) education department to bring the Cooch Behar State educational arrangements in line with those which will obtain in Government districts in Bengal under the term of the recent resolution of the Government on the subject , is being carefully considered .<sup>33</sup>

As regards the lower primary scholarship examination , it was conducted by the local boards , a boy and a girl passed in the first division .<sup>34</sup> In 1902 – 03 the class teacher, pundits, selected from the various State schools were being trained in batches . In due course, a subordinate officer of the State Educational Department would be sent for training in Kurseong . The training class started locally of course, on a trial purpose . During this year slight modification of the rules regarding scholarship in the State was sanctioned by the State Council with special reference to cases in which a student becomes qualified for a scholarship both within the State of Cooch Behar and under Government .<sup>35</sup>

In 1904 – 05 attention was given to the following issues in connection with Primary and Secondary education :<sup>36</sup>

- i) The measures adopted for the improvement of sub – divisional Higher English School ;
- ii) The training of the teachers of Higher English and Middle Class schools in drill ;

- iii) The preparation and publication of an authorized book for teaching elementary drill ;
- iv) The appointment of drill Inspector for systematically going round the schools to look to the teaching of drill to both the pupils and their teachers .
- v) The revision of the rules for the award of Middle and Primary scholarships on the lines adopted in Bengal and with the view of training up a body of local men for teachership ;
- vi) For inauguration of a system of local competitive examinations for Middle and Upper Primary Schools for selecting candidates for Scholarship Examinations and granting certificates to those that pass ;
- vii) The supply of drawing and drill books and few other educational appliances first to Secondary and then to some Primary schools,
- viii) The steps taken for the rigid observance of the inter – school rules and the general improvement of discipline ;
- ix) The care taken to enforce the maintenance of all the different records in every class of schools and their systematic examination during periodical inspection; and
- x) The greater stringency exercised in the realisation of school fees and subscriptions for the better payment of the teachers, so that they might be more contented and do better work .

A lower grade Pleadership Examination was held in Cooch Behar in December, 1906 in which only natives of Cooch Behar , passed the examination .<sup>37</sup>

The educational history of the year 1909, ending on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1909

was rendered important by the promulgation of the new regulations of the Calcutta University which necessitated the raising of the Higher English Schools in the State to a higher level of efficiency in order to secure and maintain their affiliation to the University. For a thorough re-organization of these schools, great effort had to be made during the year by the aid of liberal grants from the State of Cooch Behar. The development of local resources also strengthened the teaching staff and took effective measures for preventing constant changes in it. For the improvement of general condition and sanitary arrangements of the school buildings separate accommodation was provided for the Vernacular Departments. Enlarging the class rooms and also securing a supply of good drinking water for the pupils was provided. The Boarding Institutions attached to these schools were built on approved plans and were quite healthy and commodious. The system of annual prize distributions has been inaugurated and a regular grant for this purpose was allotted in the budget.<sup>38</sup>

Thus the education system was at the peak of success during the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan.

**Maharaja Library :** During the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan a library was established in Cooch Behar in Nilkuty area. But within a few days, it was shifted to the centre of Cooch Behar town (at the western side of Sagar Dighi) in 1870. It was known as Maharaja Library. As regards the rule of library it was notified that 'The library was a public library of reading and reference (but not a circulating library), open to all classes of community. No book shall, however, be allowed to go out of the building. Any one who likes to read in the Library will

receive a ticket entitling him to read in the Library'. The official records of Cooch Behar state stated that 'It is a good English Library and full of handsomely bound books and better classes of native officials are permitted to use it'.<sup>39</sup> From 1903 – 04 the Maharaja Library was named as State library.<sup>40</sup> Such a measure indicated Maharajas special care for the subject. At present it is an archive for the north – eastern region named as “North Bengal State Library”.

**Artizan School :** Among the self – employment institutions one such institution was the Artizan School. Maharaja Nripendra Narayan was well aware of the unemployment which was also a fundamental issue during those days. Therefore, such an institution was organized on 9<sup>th</sup> September 1869, and till 1874 it was under the direct control of the Deputy Commissioner. In 1875 it was made over to the Education department and subsequently transferred to the Public works Department (P.W.D) in 1878. The improvement was effected since this school had been under the supervision of the superintendent of works, there were three departments in the school viz; tailoring, carpentry and blacksmith's forge. The first was self supporting, but the other two were receiving financial help from the State of Cooch Behar.<sup>41</sup> Such an institution shows the farsightedness of the Maharaja.

**Medical :** Before 1819, the European system of medicine was unknown in Cooch Behar State. The mode of treatment was Ayurvedic. In the rural area people believed in ojhas or village quacks. In 1819 an Indian doctor was sent to Cooch Behar on a salary of Rs. 40 per month but there was no record as to what his

qualification or training was . In 1841 Maharaja Shivendra Narayan applied to the British Government for a qualified medical man and in February 1842 Dr. Syama Charan Sarkar , a graduate of Medical College of Calcutta was appointed Medical officer of the Maharaja's Court.<sup>42</sup> In 1846 Maharaja asked for a European Medical officer and Dr. Ralph Moore was appointed medical officer by the Maharaja. Before 1842 there was no attempt to open any Hospital and dispensary in Cooch Behar . The first dispensary was opened in Cooch Behar in charge of a Sub – Assistant Surgeon in 1865 .

During the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan medical facilities were at their peak as never before . He was concerned about the health of his subjects which reflects the benevolent attitude of the ruler. In 1878 a new building for the sudder dispensary was built at the town of Cooch Behar . One remarkable feature of the medical practitioners need to mentioned , was that the officers in charge of the dispensaries were permitted to sell the medicines from the dispensary stock at 10 per cent . over cost price to all the persons for whom they prescribed in their private practice, as medicine cannot be obtained elsewhere . The State officers had the privilege of receiving medicine gratis , when prescribed for them by the medical officers of the State , which formerly they used to pay for.

A private dispensary was , however , opened during the year by the Assistant – Surgeon on his own account , but when this was brought to the notice of the authorities by the Civil – Surgeon , Cooch Behar State authority promptly suppressed it, as the authority did not think that , as a medical officer in

charge of the sudder dispensary, the Assistant Surgeon should have anything to do with the sale of medicine on his own account.<sup>43</sup> Apart from that in 1880-81 initiatives were taken for sanitation and vaccination system. The sanitary condition of the town had been well attended to, drainage improved, jungle and rank vegetation frequently cut down, earth utilized in filling up holes.<sup>44</sup> Regarding vaccination it was true that many of people of the sub-divisions of Cooch Behar town namely, Dinhata, Mathabhanga, Mekhligunj and Tufangunj did not yet appreciate the value of vaccination, but it was otherwise with those who saw its efficacy during the late epidemic of small-pox, the people could not or would not in many cases understand why it was necessary to puncture the upper arms in four places in stead of one on the forearm, as was done in inoculation, and not until the reasons were thoroughly explained would some consent to have their children vaccinated.<sup>45</sup> In the process of vaccination work throughout the State of Cooch Behar each head vaccinator had six vaccinators working under his supervision. The Deputy Superintendent inspected and verified the work of every man, also arranged the head vaccinator for carrying on of the work from village to village.<sup>46</sup> In 1885 Maharaja in Council was pleased in compliance with the recommendation of the Civil Surgeon to sanction the entertainment of a supernumerary Native doctor.<sup>47</sup> During this year Maharaja also sanctioned an aided dispensary being opened at Haldibari.<sup>48</sup> The Civil Surgeon of the State stated that over 300 cases surgical operations performed at the Sudder dispensary of the town which was noticeable.<sup>49</sup> Such type of argument shows that medical treatment in Cooch Behar ushers in an era of healthy medical

atmosphere . In 1889 the superintendent of the State of Cooch Behar and the civil judge agreed with the Dewan of Cooch Behar to the proposal of opening an outdoor dispensary at Phulbari for the benefit of the State Officers and the people in the neighbourhood of purgannah Tufangunj. The dispensary formally opened on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1889 .<sup>50</sup> In 1890 special precautions were taken to ward off the disease of Cholera at Cooch Behar . Disinfectants were used freely and tar & sulphur were kept burning both outside and inside of jail walls .<sup>51</sup> The police and military hospitals serve the purpose of treatment of the infected police and sepoys of State .<sup>52</sup> In 1891 the following number of hospitals and dispensaries were working in tandem –<sup>53</sup>

1. The Sudder Charitable Dispensary.
2. The Dinhata Charitable Dispensary.
3. The Mathabhanga Charitable Dispensary .
4. The Mekhligunj Charitable Dispensary.
5. The Police and Military Hospital , Sudder .
6. The Jail Hospital, Sudder .
7. The Haldibari Charitable Dispensary .
8. The Phulbari Charitable Dispensary .

In 1893 a temporary dispensary was opened at Takagach area to cope with the epidemic malaria .<sup>54</sup> During this year some initiatives were taken in favour of the Sudder Dispensary, which were as follows :<sup>55</sup>

1. A pucca postmortem – room ;
2. A pucca building for infectious diseases ;

3. A fence round the Hospital compound;
4. Quarters for Hospital servants .

In 1897 – 98 a survey operation was taken by the Cooch Behar State Regency Council to show what kind of responsibility was taken by the State for medical treatment of the people of Cooch Behar . The survey showed that “ Bengal has an area of 1,51,535 square miles and a population of 71, 346, 787 . Cooch Behar has an area of 1307 square miles and a population 578, 868 . Up to 1895 – 96 including Calcutta hospital , there were 445 hospitals and dispensaries in Bengal or one to 340.5 square miles , while in Cooch Behar there were 6 dispensaries ( 2 – sudder and Phulbari was flexible) or one to 218 square miles . In Bengal one Dispensary to each of 1,60,330 population . In Cooch Behar the number was also one to each of 96,478 population .”<sup>56</sup>

Modern outlook was visible in some other areas . In 1898 – 99 owing to a recrudescence of plague at Calcutta in the cold – weather , the superintendent of Cooch Behar made arrangements at Gitaldaha and Haldibari for the examination of passengers entering the State of Cooch Behar by railway at these two places . Four constables and a native doctor were deputed to Gitaldaha while the examination at Haldibari was carried out by the native doctor posted at that place . No attempt was made to segregate or detain passengers ; the arrival of the passengers from any plague - infected area being merely reported to the Fauzdari Ahilkar of the State of Cooch Behar .<sup>57</sup> In this year another initiative was taken in the field of medical arrangement for railway . The Superintendent of Cooch Behar

after consultation with the manager, Eastern Bengal State Railway and the civil surgeon, proposed the entertainment of a native doctor to travel up and down to give medical attendance in all ordinary cases occurring within railway limit.<sup>58</sup> In 1900 an important step was taken for cattles. In view of large number of deaths of cattle every year and the loss the people suffered on this account, a boy (native of the State of Cooch Behar) was sent to the Veterinary College, Bengal with a stipend from the State to qualify himself as a Veterinary practitioner. As the boy would not be able to complete his studies before three years then the Superintendent of the State of Cooch Behar proposed to appoint a veterinary assistant in the rural area.<sup>59</sup> In this year another new hospital was opened at Dinhata.<sup>60</sup> In 1902 - 03 the official records speaks that the number of hospital and dispensaries were increased from eight to nine respectively.<sup>61</sup> In 1905 on the suggestion of the Superintendent of the State, an arrangement was made for the recruitment of compounders in Cooch Behar and in the zamindari dispensaries under the supervision of the State Civil Surgeon only licensed and fully qualified Compounders are to be employed.<sup>62</sup>

In 1909 – 10 an elaborate anti – cholera campaign was organized at the initiation and with sanction of Maharaja, with a view to prevent the havoc caused by the disease when it broke out in virulent epidemics in the interior of the State. Some of the principal preventive measures to be adopted are the supply of good drinking water by digging pucca wells throughout the State of Cooch Behar on the grant – in - aid system, an undertaking in which the landlord of the State would be encouraged to co – operate. A large number of Norton’s Tube wells were to be

kept ready for emergencies . Pamphlets containing short and simple hygienic rules in the Vernaculars were to be widely distributed and village pandits were to teach their pupils the elements of hygiene .<sup>63</sup> Chaukidars promptly reported cases of cholera whereupon a party formed of a Hospital assistant , head – constable , constables and a scavenger was to proceed at once to the affected village with a supply of medicines , disinfectants , sago and barley and sale of raw fruits , rotten fish and bad sweets is to be prohibited .<sup>64</sup> Thus the scheme was on the whole successful .

In such a way , during the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, medical treatment in Cooch Behar was at its best position.

**Public Works Department** During the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan public works department (P.W.D) worked in the following area –

**i) Development of communication by the construction of roads and bridges**

a) Lowkuti Road construction was completed in 1878 . The new earth work having suffered considerably from the flood , repairs had to be executed . It was also thought advisable to increase the number of bridges, and accordingly two new ones of 60 feet in length and one of 14 feet were constructed in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> mile respectively, and one between the Gurghurrea and Kaljaneerivers, enlarged to 60 feet .<sup>65</sup>

b) Cross road from Dinhat and Mekhligunj was constructed in 1878.

c) The iron bridge over Torsa river ( Kalighat) was constructed in 1880. The length of the bridge was 240 ft. divided into 8 spans of 30ft. each . The bridge has three girders of iron resting on cross girder also of iron .<sup>66</sup>

d) Wooden bridge over Gadadhar River on Lowkuti road was 235 ft. long divided

into 11 spans of 20 feet .

From 1878 onwards several road construction plans were drawn by P.W.D . In 1882 such a plan shows the length and number of roads , as follows :<sup>67</sup>

1. Emigration road West of Cooch Behar -----	43 Miles
2. Emigration road East of Cooch Behar -----	19 Miles
3. Rangpur road -----	22 Miles
4. Buxa Road -----	12 Miles
5. Bowty Road -----	4 Miles
6. Lowkuti Road including a branch at Falimari -----	26 Miles
7. Cross road from Dinhata to Mekhligunj -----	40 Miles
8. Cross road from Mathabhanga to Shitalkhuchi -----	12 Miles
9. Ditto Cooch Behar to Gosanimari -----	14 Miles
10 Ditto Emigration road near patgram to Bhutan -----	15.25 Miles
11. Kalighat Road -----	2 Miles
12. Purbabhag Road -----	12 Miles
13. Shitai Road -----	6 Miles
14. Sagardighy Road -----	3 Miles
15. Falakatta Road -----	6 Miles
16. Village Road from town to Godown -----	2 Miles
17. Ditto from Buxa Road to Baneswar hat -----	2 Miles
18. Ditto from town to Suktahat -----	2 Miles
19. Ditto from town to Sisabtalaha Ghat -----	2 Miles

20. Feeder road from Changra banda to Mekhligunj -----	5.50	Miles
21. Ditto from Dewangunghat to Emigration Road -----	3	Miles
22. Ditto from Kassiabaryhat to Haldibari -----	2.50	Miles
23. Ditto from Manikgunghat to Haldibari -----	3.50	Miles
24. Ditto from Balarampore to Dinahata -----	12.25	Miles
25. Ditto extension from Tufangunghat to Lowkuti Road -----	4.25	Miles
26. Feeder Road from Chawdhurihat to Dhubri and Teesta Road -	2	Miles
27. Ditto from Shitai hat to Durgapore -----	7	Miles

In this connection it is important to mention the road from Shitaihat to Durgapore on the border of Cooch Behar . It was originally intended to be made from Shitaihat to Gitaldaha via Durgapore with a view to opening direct communication between Shitaihat and Gitaldaha , where a market complex formed .<sup>68</sup> It was thought that if the Mahajans settled at Gitaldaha this road would attract traffic to that place from the tobacco and jute producing districts of the state, especially , the Government railway line was extended beyond the Dhurlah . Accordingly it was considered sufficient to make a Road from Shitai via Durgapore .<sup>69</sup>

In 1884 – 85 the work of road construction carried on the following projects :<sup>70</sup>

- a) Town road from railway station to Nilkuty , mettaled at a cost of Rs. 3,619 .
- b) Fair weather track from Bhaiskhuchi to Garodhat , 5 miles was an extension of the Lowkuti Road and was opened in 1881 for the shooting party , since then it is being maintained as a fair weather track .

- c) Fair weather track from Emigration road west of Cooch Behar to Pundibarihat , 4 miles was a portion of old road opened during the Bhutan expedition and leading to Patlakhawah . It is useful as a feeder for the Pundibari market .

In 1887 a railway feeder road from Chatnai to Chilahati was proposed by the Road Cess Committee of Rangpur. But the plan was not sanctioned by the Cooch Behar State Council .<sup>71</sup>

In 1888 the following fair weather tracks were opened and since then these tracks were serving as important feeders to the adjoining markets :<sup>72</sup>

- a) From Phulbari to Chilkiguri , 10 miles .
- b) From Takuamari to Majherdabri , 4 miles .
- c) From Pundibari to Patlakhawah , 7 miles .

During this year for the purpose of shooting party the following paths were opened :<sup>73</sup>

- a) Majherdabri to Bholka , 4 miles .
- b) Garodhat to Bholka , 4 miles .
- c) Garodhat to Haldibari , 10 miles .

In 1892 a light Iron screw pile bridge was constructed over the Torsa river at Kalighat . It was named the “Sunity Bridge” after Her Highness Maharanee of Cooch Behar .<sup>74</sup>

It served the purpose , when the river gradually began to expand and the abutment commenced giving way .

In 1893 a number of roads and bridges were constructed , which were as follows :<sup>75</sup>

- a) Diversion road , Mathabhanga was constructed with the iron bridge over the Dolong . It was built on two wrought iron piles 5" diameter as piers , screwed to a depth of 12 ft. each. The road way was made of corrugated iron sheets , 14 B.W.G., bolted to rolled iron joists 14" x 6" . The diagonals and bracings are of T iron and the railings are of T iron standards and gas tubing , at the cost of Rs. 5,369.
- b) Dodua Bridge on the Buxa road was made at the cost of Rs. 3,644 .
- c) Feeder road from Dewanhat to Balarampore was taken up with three branches village paths , at a cost of Rs. 5,071.
- d) Feeder Road from Pundibari, Sukandighi and Chok – kata was constructed with a cost of Rs. 2,066.
- e) Kethurghat Road was made at a cost of Rs. 224.
- f) Khagrabari Road was constructed with one culvert .
- g) Takagach Road was made at a cost of Rs. 854 .
- h) Pucca bridge on Emigration Road was done at a cost of Rs. 332.
- i) Janakinath Tewari road from Chaurahat to Bhubungamari was commenced at a cost of Rs. 2000.

In 1893 – 94 another road was constructed at Ghughumari , named , Ghughumari road , 10 feet wide . It created a road communication between Torsa Railway Station to Ghughumari , a distance of 2 miles .<sup>76</sup>

In 1896 a track from Mathabhanga to Ratherdanga Hat, in the South – West of the sub – division Mathabhanga was made at the cost of Rs. 650.<sup>77</sup> Changrabanda- Ranirhat road was made during this year .<sup>78</sup>

In 1897 – 98 the following works were taken up :<sup>79</sup>

a) A bridge on the Philkhana road was rendered necessary by the diversion of the town drainage to the Mora - Torsa at a cost of Rs. 1,775 .

b) Diversion of the Rangpur road and conversion of the Manshai bridge into a cart bridge was made at a cost of Rs. 2,066 .

c) Katamari to Manbari road was made at a cost of Rs. 4,011.

In 1898 – 99 P.W.D made a comparative figures on what amount of roads were constructed and repairs from 1898 to 1900 . The following statement was made in this regard : <sup>80</sup>

**Table - 5**

Year	Meta lled Road miles	Un-metalled Road miles	Total	cost of re-pair per mile	village path mile	Cost of re-pair per mile	Total out lay in repairs	R e m a r k
1898-99	5	376.50	381.50	87.12	187	19.51	36,843	
1899-00	5.25	358.50	363.75	58.8	164.50	16.2	21.053	

**Source :** Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State (1899-1900), p,46.

In 1903 – 04 the following works were in process : <sup>81</sup>

a) Two bridges were constructed over Haskhawa and Kalapani at a cost of Rs. 416 .

b) New village path on the Abutara Bamanhat road was completed at the cost of Rs. 1,309 and Latkabari to Chowdhurihat track and Cooch Behar to Bhaiskuchi with branches to Baneswar were commenced in the same year .

In 1904 – 05 there were a number of bridges and roads constructed , which were as follows : <sup>82</sup>

**Table - 6**

<u>Name of work</u>	<u>Estimate</u> Rs.	<u>Expenditure</u> Rs.
1. Permanent bridge over shaniajan river on Emigration Road -----	7,130	7,568
2. Pucca bridge on the Changrabandha road -----	12,600	8,911
3. New village paths from Cooch Behar to Natabari	5,271	3,441
4. Ditto Abutara to Bamanhat -----	2,631	1,218
5. Pucca bridge on the Haldibari portion of Emigration road -----	11,806	2,647
6. Approach road to Pagla Paiker's bridge -----	529	158

**Source:** Annual administration Report of the Cooch Behar State(1904-05) , p, 14 .

In 1906 – 07 only two new bridges were  
constructed, which were as follows : <sup>83</sup>

- a) Wooden bridge over Fulkumar to Nazirhat .
- b) Pucca culvert – Nowdanga – Gangerhat Road .

Due to flood damage the following principal works were done  
in the same year : <sup>84</sup>

- a) Filling up gaps in the Emigration Road and reconstruction on a separate alignment a bridge over the Teesta Char at Mekhligunj and repairing a bridge at the 46<sup>th</sup> mile .
- b) Filling up 3 big gaps and many small ones on the Coch Behar – Shitalkuchi Road .
- c) Filling up seven gaps on the Kakina Road .
- d) Filling up one large gap in the Dinhata – Mekhligunj Rangpur Road.

e) Restoring the washed away portions of the Lowkuti Road .

f) Re – constructing wooden bridge on the Patgram, Bhutan , Kashiabari and Mekligunj Road .

In 1907 – 08 the following culverts were constructed : <sup>85</sup>

6 feet span	
1. Cross road from Dinhata to Mekhligunj -----	1
2. Janaki Tiwary Road , 8 <sup>th</sup> mile -----	1
3. Purbabhag Road -----	1
4. Cooch Behar - Garodhat Road -----	1
5. Ratherdanga village path -----	1
6. Chowdhurihat Road -----	1
7. Lowkuti Road -----	1

4 feet span

1. Shahebgunj Road -----	2
2. Balarampore Road 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 14 <sup>th</sup> mile -----	2

10 feet span

1. Chowdhurihat Road -----	1
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In 1909 – 10 the following works were done -<sup>86</sup>

a) Construction of feeder road from Falimari Railway Station to Purbabhag Road 15 feet wide with side slopes 2 to 1 has been made.

b) A diversion road from 3<sup>rd</sup> mile of the Lowkuti road to the tobacco garden with two pucca culverts were constructed connecting Nilkuty with the tobacco garden and the Garodhat Road at a cost of Rs. 1,780.

c) A fair weather track from Changrabandha to Jamaldah was constructed at a cost of Rs. 1,170 .

d) Four new paths were constructed in the Tufangunj sub – division , namely – 1) Krishnapur Road , 2) Debagram Road , 3) Marugunj – Balarampore Road , 4) Salbari

Road ; at a cost of Rs. 1,351 .

Thus the communication through road was formed in planned way in Cooch Behar and in adjacent areas .

**ii) Cooch Behar State Railway:** The introduction of railways is a landmark in the field of transport and communication of an area . In India railway started in 1853 and extended so rapidly that by 1910 it became the fourth largest railway line in the world.<sup>87</sup> In case of Cooch Behar it started in 1890.<sup>88</sup> The enthusiastic effort of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan regarding the construction of railway at Cooch Behar should be mentioned here . In 1890 Maharaja requested the Government of Bengal to construct and work the proposed railway , agreeing to repay the money at the rate of one lac of rupees per annum . The Government of Bengal forwarded this request to the British Government of India .Government of India did not receive the appeal favourably and stated in reply that the project would not be beneficial to the Government and that it was doubtful whether the State could afford .<sup>89</sup> Cooch Behar State Council advised Maharaja to ask the British rulers to reconsider the whole matter and to lend Maharaja , the money required, the repayment being assured by the hypothecation of the revenues of the chaklarjat estate. The Government of Bengal was addressed accordingly. As regards the prospective benefit of the line to the Government of India pointed out that had Cooch Behar being an isolated country not connected with , and distant from the main arteries of trade in Bengal the plan would have been otherwise . Such a scheme would have had importance only for Cooch Behar itself . But as matters are the Government Railway line actua

-lly terminated upon the Southern border line of the State at a point ( Mughalhat ) where not even a village exists still less any centre or source of trade . The proposed Cooch Behar line would not only connect this point with the large and increasing town of Cooch Behar but it was joined, ( if produced ) to Alipur 11 miles further north . It also brought railway communication within 20 miles of the Bhutan frontier post of Buxa . As to the ability of the State to meet the charge of repayment without embarrassment , it was stated that a re- settlement of the land revenue of the State was about to be completed . An increase was expected there from upwards of 2.50 lacs of rupees . Maharaja Nripendra Narayan saw here an opportunity of undertaking a work of permanent benefit to the state and people and was prepared to devote a number of such an increase to meet the purpose .<sup>90</sup>

Sir John Ware Edger , the chief secretary to the Government of Bengal, communicated the terms upon which Government was advised that the loan could be made to the state of Cooch Behar . There were more cogent difficulties standing in the way of the scheme in the form in which it had been presented before the Colonial Government . These difficulties were as follows :

**Firstly-** The State would not consider it prudent to construct a meter gauge railway from Gitaldaha to Cooch Behar unless the British Government would guarantee the co-temporary conversion to meter gauge of the narrow gauge line between Kawnea and Mughalhat . It would be obviously anomalous to have the terminal portion of this line constructed on a broad gauge than the portion of which it will form an extension .<sup>91</sup>

**Secondly** – Sir Theodore Hope Railway scheme was designed to connect the Assam line with Mymensing (received sanction in England) . It would seem to be very improbable that the older project of connecting Dhubri with Kawnea through Gital-daha, would be proceeded with . The railway scheme of Cooch Behar as submitted to the British Government was bound up with this latter project . Its abandonment would necessitate a complete and radical change of the whole plan . Thus the proposed alignment of Cooch Behar Railway was drawn with the object of effecting a junction with the prospective Government line from Gitaldaha to Dhubri at a point (Abutara) some 5 or 6 miles should fall on the State . For such a plan the estimates would be increased by possibly four or even five lakhs of rupees, as more than one large bridge would have to be made by the state .<sup>92</sup>

**Thirdly** – If Government should resolve to abandon the project of connecting Kawnea with Dhubri via Mugalhat , then it was even possible that the narrow gauge line between Kawnea and Mughalhat might be done away with .<sup>93</sup>

At last the construction of the Cooch Behar State Railway was completed in 1890 and the line opened for goods and passenger traffic .<sup>94</sup> In the mean time the rules of the Eastern Bengal State Railway have been adopted in their entirety in this State , and the British Indian Railway Act of 1890 has been introduced with necessary modification . Certain suggestions regarding the management of the line have been accepted by the manager of the Eastern Bengal State Railway system , and the line is being managed as economically as possible. The police arrangements for the line during this time still form the subject of corr

- espondence between Cooch Behar State authority and the Railway authority . The manager of Eastern Bengal State Railway has accepted Cooch Behar State Council's suggestion that three men only – two constables and one head constable – were to be entertained . The line was still under the supervision of the local police .<sup>95</sup>

Apart from that the encroachment of the Torsa river at Ghughumari towards the Railway line has caused great apprehension as to its safety . All protective measures were taken by the State Public Works Department under instructions received from Eastern Bengal State Railway authorities. The chief engineer, and the manager inspected the spot during the year 1892.<sup>96</sup> Under report and being so ordered the construction of spurs was approved for the cutting of a channel to divert the course of the river, which in a due course was carried out . In spite of these precautions, however, the river has, since the close of the year approached towards the line during the late flood, and is now with nearly 200 ft. of the Railway line .<sup>97</sup>

In 1892 another project was under discussion on the extension of railway line to the town by bridging the river Torsa. The proposal for opening two flag stations at Fakirtakia and Bhetaguri was sent for consideration of the Railway authorities. The proposal was sanctioned and the manager of the Eastern Bengal State Railway took steps to carry it out .<sup>98</sup>

In 1896 the Cooch Behar State Railway was proposed to extend up to Santarabari . Thus Santarabari Railway was surveyed by the Superintendent of works , Cooch Behar, under the supervision of Manager , Eastern Bengal

State Railway System.<sup>99</sup> Maharaja Nripendra Narayan expressed his willingness to bear the expenses of the line up to Kholta, which would amount roughly to Rs. 2.75 lakhs, and asked the Bhutan Government for permission to prospect in Bhutan territory for coal and minerals.<sup>100</sup>

In the end of December, 1897 the Government of India sanctioned the construction of the part of line to Jainti, as well as a loan of two lacs of rupees to Maharaja of Cooch Behar to meet part of the construction of the portion of the line in Cooch Behar territory, and directed construction to be passed on as fast as possible.<sup>101</sup>

In 1898 the manager of the Eastern Bengal State Railway submitted a financial report on railway in which the railway expenditure was increased on the following heads:<sup>102</sup>

**Table – 7 (A)**

	<u>Rs.</u>
Preliminary expenses -----	----
Land -----	253
Formation -----	6714
Bridge work -----	58,187
Fencing, & c. -----	1,248
Ballast and permanent way -----	19,779
Stations and buildings -----	8,353
Plants -----	377
General charges -----	4,144

The amount held in suspense was Rs. 24,885.

**Source:** Annual administration Report of the Cooch Behar State(1898-99), p, 20.

**Table – 7 (B)**

	<b>For the Year 1897</b>	<b>For the Year 1898</b>
Mean –mileage worked -----miles	22.12	22.13
Train mileage ----- miles	22,740	38,374
Gross earnings ----- Rs.	64,261	66,123
Working expenses ----- Rs.	28,917	29,756
Net earnings ----- Rs.	35,344	36,367
No. of passengers carried ----- No.	62,492	72,698
Earnings from above ----- Rs.	21,083	24,355
Tonnage of goods carried ----- Tons	14,607	15,048
Earnings from above ----- Rs.	31,771	33,008
Percentage of working expenses to gross earnings	45.00	45.00
Percentage of net earnings on capital outlay, including suspense -----	4.58	4.52

**Source:** Annual administration Report of the Cooch Behar State(1898-99), p, 20.

In 1899 the railway was also opened for both passengers and goods traffic up to Alipur Duar. The British section of the line has, subsequently to the close of the year, been opened between Alipur Duar and Rajabhat-khawa from this place to Jainti.<sup>103</sup> In 1900 it was pointed out to Maharaja Nripendra Narayan that it was obviously necessary to try and obtain some modification in terms of the existing working agreement, with special reference to the existing portion of the agreement dealing with the provision of rolling stock and to facilitate such a modification line should be converted from 2' 6" to meter – gauge so as to secure similarity of gauge between the parent and branch line.<sup>104</sup>

In this way Cooch Behar State railway ushered in an era of better communication for Cooch Behar State and its people . Apart from that Cooch Behar State railway became the most convenient means of transport in this state as well as in India as a whole . As till the introduction of railway , road was the most convenient and cheapest mode of traffic, trading purpose and also for movement of troops in remote areas . One feature here was noticeable that through the railway cultural assimilation originated among the people of Cooch Behar and with the neighbouring areas .

**iii) The Cooch Behar Palace** The construction of a prosperous Palace at the heart of the town of Cooch Behar for the royal family was taken during the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan . The construction work had a history of arrangement . In 1881 Major Mant's design in the Indo – Sarcenic style having been abandoned in favour of a new design by Mr. Martin in the Italian style and the services of Messers . Cane and Robins having been dispensed with the contract for the whole Palace was given to Messrs .<sup>105</sup> Marllier and Edwards of Calcutta , who commenced actual work in January 1881, having been spent a good deal of time in making preliminary arrangements .

Mr. Martin had shaped his design so as to utilize the foundations already put in for the East portion and it was stipulated in the contract , though not , in so far as , under any separate or express penalty that this portion should be finished in time for the Maharaja's installation in October 1883 . Not with standing that Messers Marllier and Edwards had the experience of previous contractors and of

the local officers to steer by, they failed in keeping a sufficient quality of good bricks during an exceptionally favourable season . They also failed in keeping a sufficient staff of masons and coolies to ensure a rate of progress commensurate with the fulfillment of their promise .<sup>106</sup> The following extract from the report of Mr. Barkley, the clerk of works, would show the progress made – “In preparing the design Mr. Martin has, except with slight modifications , utilized the foundations of the North portion that had already been built , besides affording more accommodation , has helped greatly in adding to the completeness and beauty of the outward appearance of the building . The execution of the work was entrusted with Messers Marllier and Edward of Calcutta . The preliminary arrangements of the work commenced in October and a good deal of time was taken up in obtaining labour , bringing up engines from Calcutta and also organizing a regular system of work . Till the beginning of January 1882 that the work was not properly commenced”.<sup>107</sup> Mr. Martin inspected the works on the 9<sup>th</sup> April of 1882 and was satisfied that the building was being subsequently and carefully carried out and as a good start had once been made . The building was completed up to the plinth , and substructure commenced . In 1885 – 86 the ornamental lake was taken in hand and nearly finished during the year . The earth obtained from excavation was used in filling up holes and levelling the Palace compound . The spare earth might be utilized in filling up the places that would sink and slip during the first rains . It also used for levelling the portion towards the north end of the compound .<sup>108</sup>

In 1886 the north and west wings were quite completed and became

fit for the occupation of Maharaja and his family.<sup>109</sup>

Thus all the rooms were ornamented under the guidance of the Public Works Department and the Palace got its fulfilled shape . The magnificent royal palace of Cooch Behar with its artistic beauty attracted the tourist from all over the world . It bears the symbol of power and grandeur of this small Princely State situating furthest corner of India . The palace is now declared as a Heritage building and is under the supervision of the Archeological Survey of India .

**iv) The Madanmohan Thakur Bari** During the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan , the Madanmohan Thakur Bari was built which was a replica of temple architecture . The superintendent of work describes the new building in the following way :<sup>110</sup>

The necessity of removing the mass of old buildings with any architectural pretensions which constituted the Thakurbari from a prominent place in the Palace compound was left for a long time , but owing to the want of funds the much desired improvement could not have been carried out . In the beginning of the year 1889 the Dewan of the State of Cooch Behar found out a sum of Rs. 7472 by selling the ornaments of the idols which formed the nucleus of the fund for carrying out the project . The estimate cost was Rs. 19,510 , which was sourced from three channels – **First** , by sale proceeds of the ornaments of the idols , as stated above was Rs. 7473 , **Second** , the estimated value of the old materials was Rs. 3000 , **Third** , the grant from the revenue therefore came to Rs. 9037 , out of

which Rs. 800 was adjusted during the year . The new site was selected on the north of Bairagidighi on the jail road , and an entire block as bounded by the north by a new lane , west by market road , south by jail road and east by Gopal Babu street .

Apart from that this temple had other elements too , which were as follows :<sup>111</sup>

a) A gateway with an octagonal Nahabutkhanah above two side rooms 10' x 10' have been constructed of the same style as the main building .

b) A corrugated iron shed on brick walls of 3<sup>rd</sup> class bricks constructed for cock room and other out houses . It contains five rooms and the length is 73 feet and breadth 12 feet .

c) An enclosure wall was been constructed of 3<sup>rd</sup> class bricks . The total length of which is 1210 feet .

Two gateway on each side of the main entrance with ornamental pillars had been provided with three doorways in the three other walls . The walls facing the main streets had been perforated with ornamental openings on the top, which added to the appearance of the walls .

Thus the temple formed a center of sects' assimilation in Cooch Behar .

#### **v) Construction of several buildings at Cooch Behar**

a) The construction of the printing press , was consequently in progress since 1878 at a cost of Rs. 5432 .<sup>112</sup>

b) Guard – house , store – room and jailor' s office - among them two buildings each 68' x 20' had been constructed .<sup>113</sup>

c) House of kumar Gajendra Narayan was 44' x 33' with a portico in front 20' x 17' , and a separate sleeping room attached 20' x 17' . These house had been constructed with thatched roof on sal posts .<sup>114</sup>

d) Kumar Jotindra Narayans' House was 42' 8" x 33' 4" and was divided into four rooms with an open verandah in front on pillars .The work commenced in 1884 and the foundation and plinth completed .The work was completed in 1885 at a cost of Rs. 8,186 .<sup>115</sup>

e) Brahma Samaj building commenced in 1886 and was finished during that year . It had a portico in front with a tower and projecttions at each end for stair case and galleries and one semi – circular projection at the back for the pulpit .<sup>116</sup>

f) Lansdowne Hall, was Italian in style . Its external length , north to south was 109' – 4" feet and breadth 85" – 3" . The Hall was placed under a select committee and used occasionally as a place of public meeting . The main doors are 12' x 6' four – fold , have sashes embossed with Lord Lansdowne's and Maharajas crests . The total cost of construction was Rs. 12,318 .<sup>117</sup> The Lansdown Hall on the bank of Sagardighi reminds us the architectural taste of the Maharaja of Cooch Behar .

g) The Rajmata hospital building was constructed in 1909 at a cost of Rs. 17912 .<sup>118</sup>

Thus in the long process of work P.W.D took active role in the construction of several buildings .

**Tonga Service in Cooch Behar** In October 1885 a combined Mail and Passenger service opened for the conveyance of mails and passenger from Gitaldaha to Alipur by the State and the Postal Department . Due to some obligations the service was

suspended on first October 1886, and re – opened on May 1887 for passengers .<sup>119</sup>

During the Shooting camp contractors managed to provide an extra dak from Cooch Behar to the Camp, a distance of a week without interfering with the regular service . The State authority hoped that the service would continue . In 1888 a new system namely , Palky Gharry dak with a pair for the convenience of the native female was introduced .<sup>120</sup>

In this way the Tonga service continued to serve the purpose for which it was formed .

**Agricultural work on tobacco in Cooch Behar**      The subject of improving the quality of tobacco was taken up by the Commissioner in 1877 – 78 . In this year 100 bighas of land were taken up, the greater portion at Kowadara near Mathabh -anga , and a small plot at Situlkuchi , Mekhligunj , and Cooch Behar for the purpose of experimental cultivation .<sup>121</sup> In 1905 the Cooch Behar State authority decided to undertake an experiment on growing American tobacco ( the yellow leaf of Virginai ) in Cooch Behar . In Sub – divisional districts of Cooch Behar indigenous tobacco has been grown for centuries . During 1905–06 a few acres were put under Virginian tobacco .<sup>122</sup> In 1906, 82 bighas of land was selected for tobacco cultivation , because it was decided that agricultural land of Cooch Behar was best for tobacco cultivation .<sup>123</sup> In the mean while the Cooch Behar State authority made effort to improve the cultivation of tobacco and have been so far successful that the Peninsular Tobacco Company have bought up the whole crop at an average

rate of Rs.15 per maund , the prevailing market rate for local tobacco being Rs.10 . As a result of that new tobacco seeds were cultivated in 180 bighas .<sup>124</sup> Maharaja Nripendra Narayan sent his third son Victor Nityendra Narayan to United States to study the agriculture and specially in tobacco , so that it might improve the resource of the State in his return .<sup>125</sup> Here it can be stated that tobacco was the staple product of Cooch Behar .

**The Scheme of Plantation Work at Cooch Behar** Regarding plantation a good deal had been done during the year 1878 . In this year one thousand sal trees have been brought from Bhutan forests and planted in the Nilkuty area . Along with that 800 Sishu trees had also been planted near the Stock Yard .<sup>126</sup> Not only that a number of trees had been planted of different sorts, as a continuation of the old avenue on the Rungpur Road . About a mile of the Emigration Road had also been lined with young trees, in extension of the existing avenue immediately west of Cooch Behar. Existing plantation have been maintained.<sup>127</sup>

Thus the work of Plantation received an impetus in Cooch Behar and it also indicated that Maharaja was well aware of the environment and beautification of the State . Such kind of an attempt ( to protect the environment ) was identical during those days .

**Cooch Behar Town Committee Act for municipality** In 1883 the Cooch Behar State Council was pleased to sanction the constitution of the municipality for the town of Cooch Behar and appointed a committee consisting of the Superintendent of

the State as President, the Dewan and the superintendent of work as member and the Fouzdar Ahilkar as secretary.<sup>128</sup> Towards the close of the year 1885 the Municipal Committee submitted a Bill to provide for the appointment of Town Committee in Towns and other places in the State of Cooch Behar and to maintain better provision for the conservancy, improvement and watching there of and levying taxes there in.<sup>129</sup> As a result of the Act there were four Town Committees namely, Cooch Behar, Dinhata, Mathabhanga and Dinhata formed in the State.<sup>130</sup> Nevertheless, such kind of Committee represents the local self – government system in Cooch Behar. It also helped to understand the actual condition of people in the State.

**Cooch Behar Merchandise Marks Act** To provide a law relating to fraudulent marks on merchandise in accordance with the law of British India, as enacted in the Merchandise Marks Act of 1889, the Cooch Behar Merchandise Marks Bill was introduced. This Bill was adopted the provisions of the Merchandise Marks Act with respect of false trade descriptions and recasted on the lines of that Act that part of the Indian Penal Code which relates trade marks of property marks.<sup>131</sup>

**Preparation of Census Report of 1901 & 1911** During his rule an important step was taken for preparation of report on population in Cooch Behar. The work of registration of birth and death in the State helped in preparing such a report. The date of taking the census was fixed for the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1901. For the purpose of the census the courts and offices were closed on two occasions, once on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> February, when the preliminary record was checked, and again on the 1<sup>st</sup> and

2<sup>nd</sup> March 1901 for the preparation of the final record .<sup>132</sup> The census was taken on the date fixed . All forms required for the census purpose were supplied by the Government of Bengal . Maharaja Nripendra Narayan was pleased to sanction Rs. 3000 for Census purpose in the year 1900 under review and a further sum of Rs. 2,200 to meet the establishment charges for the whole of the month of April up to the close of Census operations .<sup>133</sup>

Similarly in 1911 another Census report , submitted by the Fauzdari Ahilkar, who was in charge of the Census operations in the State of Cooch Behar . In the new census it would be seen that the population of Cooch Behar increased during the last 10 years from 5,66,973 to 5,93,052 I. e. , an increase of 26,079 ( 4.59 percent) .<sup>134</sup>

**Publication of land revenue settlement work of Cooch Behar** During the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan an important work was the publication of “The Cooch Behar State and its land revenue settlement” in 1903. Babu Harendra Narayan Chowdhuri an experienced officer of the Cooch Behar State , who was in charge of the Settlement Department for a long time , was considered best fitted to under take the compilation of this book. The Dewan of Cooch Behar State wrote an introduction for the book, briefly summarizing the result of the resettlement . This work discussed the survey and settlement operations commencing in 1885 .<sup>135</sup> Maharaja in Council expressed his remark in a Resolution in which it was stated that the evils of the old ijaradari system are re – capitulated , and the difficulties experienced by the State officers , who was in charge of the settlement operations can be read on nearly

every page of the book . To all the officers , who performed their arduous duties to his entire satisfaction. Maharaja took this opportunity of expressing his cordial thanks . In this regard it is to be noted that the success of the settlement was the subsequent extension of cultivation and the increase of revenue were due to the untiring energy and active control of the Dewan .<sup>136</sup>

The settlement operations went on during the year 1906 – 07. As , however , the scope of the work wined with the progress of the operations and the increase in revenue expected was over Rs. 4,500 instead of Rs. 3,000 as originally expected. Maharaja was pleased on this matter . On the recommendation of the Dewan of the State, an additional sum of Rs. 2,000 was sanctioned for the compilation of the settlement work . The settlement office was closed at the end of the year , as will be seen in the Dewan's report the total area surveyed including the town proper which came under assessment was 1,458 bighas , the jama assessed was Rs.17,013 -3-1 .<sup>137</sup>

**The Cooch Behar Landholders Association** For better implementation of the Cooch Behar Tenancy bill , the Cooch Behar Landholders Association consisting of landholders of Cooch Behar was formed in 1908 . Maharaja Nripendra Narayan was pleased to order that no individual holding a State appointment could be permitted to join this Association and to grant the Association 6 months ' time to consider the proposed law .<sup>138</sup> This would mean that Maharaja was a benevolent ruler .

**B) Development in Cultural field** Maharaja Nripendra Narayan was out and out modern in outlook . During his rule he took many initiatives in the cultural sphere

of Cooch Behar . These initiatives were as follows :

**Printing of the Cooch Behar Select Record as an official document** During the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan an important administrative measure was taken by the work of printing Cooch Behar Select Records in 1882 . The indexes were made after the work completed. This records consists of 871 letters (official) . In this record the Cooch Behar state authority did not exclude any letter of historical or local interest . In these records some of the letters , the views expressed in which were modified by others , in such cases both sets of letters had to be entered , as otherwise the reader would not be in position of all the papers connected with the subject under discussion .<sup>139</sup> Thus the number of selected letters became large . The connection of the Cooch Behar state with the British Government commenced with the treaty of 1772 . It was after that year that references began to be made with the Government on matters relating to Cooch Behar . The Records have been published in two quarto volumes , there are 359 pages in the first volume , and 279 pages in the second .<sup>140</sup>

Keeping records in printed form was nothing but the farsightedness of the Maharaja . The two volumes of Select Records containing day to day correspondence with the British Government is a valuable primary source for the history of Cooch Behar . Researchers who are now investigating the different aspects of the history of Cooch Behar under the Maharajas , to them Select Records are the invaluable source of information .

**Introducing Shooting Camp** Maharaja was in favour of implementing British

culture of shooting arrangements. Because he loved to play shooting and hunting . For this purposes he maintained reserve forests in Garodhat and Patlakhawa area .<sup>141</sup> In 1897 – 98 under the order of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan , lands aggregating 10,418 bighas in taluk Bakshirbosh Putimari and also in taluk Bara shalbari , Cheng - timari , Atea Mochar , Takoamari , Rampore - Garbhanga , Paglirkuti , Rashikbil , Khgribari , Jaldhoa and Pholimari , at Tufangunj , aggregating 19,980 bighas , 1 cotta and 5 dhurs were resumed and were being kept as reserve forest for Maharaja's shooting purpose and suitable compensation were being given to ryots in this regard .<sup>142</sup>

The following table show the amount of shooting expenditure from 1900 - 1905 –<sup>143</sup>

**Table - 8**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>A.</b>	<b>P.</b>
1900 – 01	16,361	0	0
1901 – 02	20,037	0	0
1902 – 03	32,375	0	0
1903 – 04	31,251	0	0
1904 – 05	8 , 623	10	11

**Source:** Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State(1904-05), p, 26 .

Apart from that in 1906 at Chilapeta , in 1907 at Kolabari and at Bholka shooting camps were organized for big game shooting .<sup>144</sup> In 1908 Maharaja wrote a memoir on shooting namely , “ *Thiety Seven years of Big Game Shooting in Cooch Behar and Assam* ” in which he vividly describes his shooting arrangements.<sup>145</sup> Here he also mentioned that in 1907 – 08 the zamindars of Lakhi – mpur, Bijni , Gouripur rendered much helped in making the necessary arrangements

.<sup>146</sup> Thus Maharaja set the tone of a new cultural activity in the state of Cooch Behar .

**Fairs and festivals in Cooch Behar :** Maharaja was a patron of cultural affairs . As a part of that in 1885 fair was organized at Boda , namely Boalmari Mela .<sup>147</sup> In this occasion the thakurbari ( temple ) at Boda was renovated by the State authority . The building was 38'- 6" x 26' – 6" and was decorated with terrace roof on 'T' bars and with necessary additions and alterations. The whole building has been plastered and white washed .<sup>148</sup> In 1904 – 05 at Dinhata and at Haldibari fairs were organised by the municipality of these areas .<sup>149</sup> In 1909 the Gadadhar mela and Phulbari mela at Tufangunj and Syam Sunder mela at Mekligunj area were organised by the State authority.<sup>150</sup> Apart from that Rash mela and Rather mela , Pooneah ceremony were organized in the Cooch Behar town in several years . Among these festivals Rash mela had a history of its own . It was started in 1812 by Maharaja Harendra Narayan on the occasion of his entry in a new building at Bhetaguri . In course of time it shifted to the town of Cooch Behar. All these cultural events created an atmosphere of cultural assimilation among the people and it also helped in the arena of trade and commerce among the businessmen .

**Royal patronage on Philkhana :** From ancient times elephant shows the symbol of royal prestige. In this matter Cooch Behar was not an exception to that . In Cooch Behar town a road was constructed in Philkhana area namely Philkhana Road . It indicates that Maharaja gave lot of importance to this field . Apart from

that during the commencement of year 1883 the number of elephants at Philkhana 41. Towards the end of the year this number was increased to 54. This would suggest that royal patronage was very much favourable on the Philkhana. The Philkhana consisted of one Jamadar, two jamadars, one weighman, two gola-guard (granary-guard), one clerk, mahuts, mates and charakatas.<sup>151</sup> In 1892-93 a small catching operation of elephant was taken under the order of Maharaja. The operation would have left a profit to the State of Cooch Behar, after paying all expenses, had the elephants been sold.<sup>152</sup> In this regard it should be concluded that Maharaja organised Khedda operation during his rule for conducting the smooth running of the Philkhana.

**Sporting management of Cooch Behar** Maharaja Nripendra Narayan adopted manly forms of exercise such as fencing, racquets, tennis, polo etc. As a part of that he maintained sporting culture at Cooch Behar. In 1878 Maharaja ordered P.W.D, erection of a tennis court similar to the Viceroy's court at Simla. The Superintendent of Works was sent to Simla to take notes and measurements. The proposed court was 80 x 30 feet with masonry walls, iron sheet roofing 24 B.W.G on iron trusses under laid by a teakwood ceiling. It had got a 0.50" teak wood floor of tongued and grooved planks. A gallery of 7 feet was closed along the south side of the pent roofs of this gallery were also of teak.<sup>153</sup> The inside walls were colored by painters brought from Calcutta. The building which was commenced in October, complete within three months. Apart from that the recreation grounds at Nilkuty was maintained at a cost of Rs. 597 for Lawn Tennis and Polo and Cricket.<sup>154</sup>

Here it needs to mention that Maharaja initiated a prize for cricket matches in Cooch Behar namely , Cooch Behar Trophy. He was also a player of game like billiard and for regular practice he constructed a billiard room at the Royal Palace of Cooch Behar .

**C )Development in Economic Field :** In the economic sphere Maharaja initiated certain measures for planned administration which were as follows :

**a) Maintenance of various funds –**

i) Communication improvement fund was started in 1893 and for the first six years of its existence it received regularly a grant of Rs. 50,000 . After that it received State grants ( according to need ) for improving the communication of the State of Cooch Behar .<sup>155</sup>

ii) Cooch Behar jubilee Fund was formed in 1887 for the development of work under town committee (municipality) of Cooch Behar .<sup>156</sup>

iii) Anndamayee Trusty fund was formed in 1889 as on the basis of a will of Maharajkumari Anandamoyee , who bequeathing all her moveable and immoveable property to Maharaja Nripendra Narayan to use it for the welfare of poor and needy persons .<sup>157</sup>

iv) Cooch Behar Mutual Provident Fund was formed in 1902 for providing money as life security for all the officials , who were working in Cooch Behar state .<sup>158</sup>

Apart from that there were certain other funds such as Cooch Behar , Mathabhanga , Dinhatata and Haldibari Municipal Fund, Maharaja's Children's Fund , Reserve Fund , Pound Fund , Village Chaukidari Funds were formed to serve the

need .<sup>159</sup>

**Maintaining budget for several years :** Maharaja Nripendra Narayan maintained annual budget in every year for smooth running of the State administration . Because budget is one thing which helped the authority to take decision on what measures would be suitable for the respective year . The budget of 1880 – 81 shows that the revenue of the year would be Rs. 13,42,651 and expenditure Rs. 14,74,212 and that therefore be a deficit of Rs. 1,31,561 .<sup>160</sup> Thus the deficit of Rs. 1,31,561 in the budget estimate for 1880 – 81 became , under the financial event of the year . The budget estimate , more importantly would affect Maharaja's personal expenses , State – stables , Hospitality , Agriculture , Jail , Debuttar departments .<sup>161</sup> In 1887 – 88 budget shows that an excessive amount was spent due to Maharaja's 'English Trip Charges ' .<sup>162</sup> These extra expenditure would affect the general allotment of the year . In 1888 – 89 in view of the necessity for general economies in all branches of the administration and certain of a reserve fund , Maharaja sent two alternative proposals of retrenchment to the Regency Council for consideration . The Superintendent of the State could not recommend the scheme , contemplating the division of the State from two main sub – divisions instead of four at that time . More importantly this change would upset the present system of collection of revenue, which was in fact Khas Tehsil system , and in the furtherance of which the sub – divisions viz ., Dinahata , Mathabhanga, Mekhligunj , Tufangunj had their origin .<sup>163</sup> In 1893 - 94 an increase in finance occurred due to the earnings from Cooch Behar State Railway .<sup>164</sup> In 1904 – 05 budget , it was decided that toll tax system should be introduced on

the bridges namely, Shaniajan, 34<sup>th</sup> mile Emigration Road, which would provide money to the Communication Improvement Fund.<sup>165</sup> In 1906 – 07 budget, special grant of Rs.10,050 was given to experimental scheme on agricultural sphere.<sup>166</sup> In 1907 - 08 budget, a sum of Rs. 15,000 granted by the Maharaja for an Indian industrial exhibition in the state of Cooch Behar.<sup>167</sup> In 1908 - 09 a sum of Rs. 9,035 was granted as grain compensation allowance to the ryots of the State.<sup>168</sup> In 1909 – 10 budget a provision of ‘control’ was introduced which helped the finance department to rectify the increase on expenditure was due to ‘ Establishment and Travelling Allowances ’of Maharaja’s office budget and the Council Office budget.<sup>169</sup>

In 1910 – 11 budget shows the general increase of revenue was under the following heads –<sup>170</sup>

- a) Land revenue ----- Rs. 3,892
- b) Stamps ----- Rs. 14,420
- c) Excise ----- Rs. 1,160
- d) Interest on loans and investments --- Rs. 6,340
- e) Sundries ----- Rs. 454

Thus the budget estimate helped the state authority to decided which was appropriate to the prevailing year . It also shows that Maharaja was out and out modern in outlook .

**Exchange of Narayani rupees :** In 1887 an important step was taken by the Cooch Behar state regarding the exchange of their Narayani rupees . During this year the treasury officer of the State pointed out that the Cooch Behar State was subjected to loss in issuing the Government rupees ( British) in exchange of Narayani coins and

a complicated bullion account had to be kept in the treasury .<sup>171</sup> The treasury officer recommended the issue of a proclamation to the effect that the state of Cooch Behar would not be bound to give Government rupees for Narayani coins . The Dewan of the State of Cooch Behar supported the above recommendation and suggested that a year's time from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1888 should be given to people within which those who wished to sell their coins might do so . The Cooch Behar State Council approved of the Dewan's suggestion and authorized him to issue the necessary proclamation.<sup>172</sup>

**Revenue Collection System :** The State of Cooch Behar maintained a clinical system of revenue collection . This revenue collection system worked under the following heads :

a) Land revenue was divided into two heads namely , Mal and Debuttar . In this connection it could be said that the latter could not be properly styled as revenue at all , as it was set apart for religious purpose and was not available for expenditure on secular administration . On the other hand Khangi or house – hold – revenue was a sub – division of the Mal , and supposed to have had its origin in the fact that the Government of India , in calculating the revenues of the State for the purpose of fixing the tribute , omitted to count the revenue of certain mahals as being appropriated to the Maharaja's special and private maintenance , and these mahals were accordingly set apart for that purpose .<sup>173</sup> The revenue collection system was divided into three parts , namely Malcutcheri , the Dewanbash Kutcheri and the Sarasari Kutcheri . The first two were offices for the collection of reve-

nue and the last for the trial of summery suits for the realization of rent .<sup>174</sup>

b) The Nezarat department was renovated after 1871 with one Nazir to supervise the whole department and through this department the fees used to be realized from the parties to the suit in cash , a halt of which went to the State .<sup>175</sup>

c) In 1877 Canoongoes were appointed who had the duty of assisting the revenue officials in the following matters –<sup>176</sup>

- i) To try to bring waste land under cultivation ;
- ii) To see that the boundaries of the State ( Cooch Behar) were not transgressed ;
- iii) To make enquiries in cases in which remissions of revenue have to be granted ,
- iv) To enquire about property belonging to defaulters owing large sums to the State when the areas cannot be realized by the sale of the defaulting jotes ;
- v) To make enquiries respecting khas and relinquished jotes ;
- vi) To report on the changes caused by rivers ;
- vii) To see that the Cooch Behar authorities Hats were fully maintained, and try to develops the commerce of the country by establishing new Hats ;
- viii) To take up land for new roads ;
- ix) To make enquiries about persons who have got rent – free land, or lands assess -ed at half rates , for their lives , and take steps for setting such lands when the present occupants die ;
- x) To look after the Sal and Sishu forests and try to plants trees on khas land .
- xi) To collect statistics .
- xii) To perform other duties as necessity arises .

d) In 1869 the Government Excise system of revenues collection was introduced in the State and revenues were collected from the opium and ganja as duty fee .<sup>177</sup>

e) Before the time of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan Stamp paper was not in use in the Cooch Behar courts . Instead of stamps there was a system of charging fees on cases instituted , under the name of 'Institution Fees' .<sup>178</sup> The introduction of Stamps was a reform of the Maharaja , who passed the Stamp Act on the 25<sup>th</sup> Magh 1268 B.E . An interesting point to be noted here that no adhesive Stamps had ever been introduced in Cooch Behar . Like every other sources of income , the history of the Stamp revenue of the State of Cooch Behar had a history of rapid progress . In 1864 – 65 the Stamp revenue amounted to Rs. 25,965 . In 1883 – 84 it was Rs. 1,32,833 and it came up to Rs. 1,70,730 in 1899 – 1900 .<sup>179</sup> Thus the Stamp revenue made a rapid progress .

Apart from these heads , Cooch Behar State introduced certain other kinds of collection such as criminal fines, chaukidari tax etc.<sup>180</sup>

During the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan all sorts of developmental activities were introduced in Cooch Behar which made this tiny Princely State a model of developed – modern well defined State in this part of the country and from the point of view of his achievements it is amply clear to call him as the harbinger of modernization . His successors also followed the same line in order to maintain the tradition .

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2. Chowdhury , H.N. , *The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlement*,  
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3. Majumdar, R.C. , *History of Modern Bengal, Part One (1765 -1905)* , G. Bharaddwaj  
& Co., Calcutta , 1978, p, 165.
4. Chowdhury, H.N. , *op. cit.*, p, 307 .
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.* , p, 325.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.* .
10. *Ibid.* , p, 326 .
11. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S ( 1878 – 79)* , p, 56.
12. Chowdhury , H.N. , *op. cit.* , p, 326.

“ The year 1877 – 78 under report was in one respect was an important one in the history of educational progress in Cooch Behar . Up to the pre-sent time the state contribution towards the cost of mass education has increased yearly in proportion to the increase in the number of schools and the percentage of school – going population . But when the budget for 1877 – 78 was submitted for Government sanction , the Lieutenant – Governor took occasion to say that he considered that the limit to which the state revenue ought to be made liable for educational progress had now been reached . ”

13. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1878 - 79)* , p,56.
14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*
16. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1883 – 84), p,39.*
17. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S.( 1888 – 89 ), p, 39.*
18. *Ibid ., p, 43.*
19. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1888 – 89), p, 45.*
20. *A.A.R of the C.B.S. ( 1884 – 85 ), p,39.*
21. *Ibid. , p, 40.*
22. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1889 – 90) , p, 22.*
23. *Ibid.*
24. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S (1891 – 92), p, 38.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1892 – 93 ),p, 56.*
27. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1895 – 96 ), p, 58 .*
28. Chowdhury , H.N. – *op. cit. , p, 328.*
29. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1899 -1900) , p, 8.*
30. *Ibid. , p, 68.*
31. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1900 – 01 ), p, 27.*
32. *Ibid., p, 29.*
33. *Ibid., p, 32.*
34. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1901 – 02 ), p, 22.*
35. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1902 – 03 ), p, 3 .*
36. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1904 – 05 ), p, 16.*
37. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1906 – 07 ) , p, 4.*

38. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1908 – 09 )*, p, 17.

39. *S. N.B.S.L.(1996)* , pp, 9 – 11 .

40. *Ibid .*, p, 14.

41. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1880 – 81 )*, p, 63 .

42. *C.B.S.R.* , Vol. - II , p, 140 .

43. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S ( 1878 – 79)*, p,51 .

44. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1880 – 81 )*, p, 48 .

45. *Ibid.*, p, 49 .

46. *Ibid.*

47. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1884 – 85 )*, p, 18 .

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.* , p, 20 .

“ Over 300 were performed during the year 1884 – 85, though only a few of them were of any importance , there were several cases of fracture including compound comminuted , compound and simple . Amputation of leg and knee – joint, amputation of thumb, reduction of dislocation of shoulder – joint, opening of abscesses , boils and whitlows , paracentesis of hydrocele, removal of foreign bodies from eyes , ear , nose and urethra and extraction of teeth , &c.”

50. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1889 – 90)*, p, 10.

“ Annual expenditure of Rs.600 as noted below was sanctioned for the main –  
tenance of the dispensary –

	Rs.
One Native Doctor -----	30

One Componder -----	10
One Servent -----	3
One Sweeper -----	1
Contingencies -----	<u>6</u>
Total -----	50

51. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1890 – 91), p, 58 .*

52. *Ibid.*

53. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1891 – 92 ), p, 52.*

54. *A.A.R of the C.B.S. ( 1893 – 94 ), p, 58 .*

55. *Ibid. ,p, 59 .*

56. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1897 – 98) , p, 46.*

57. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1898 – 99 ), p, 9 .*

58. *Ibid.*

59. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1900 – 01 ) ,p, 5 .*

60. *Ibid. , p, 38 .*

61. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1902 – 03 ), p, 27 .*

( *Sudder , Dinhata , Mathabhanga , Mekhligunj, Phulbari, Haldibari, Shitalkuchi, Police & Military , Jail Hospital).*

62. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1904 – 05 ), p, 3 .*

“ Intelligent boys educated in Cooch Behar , who have passed the Middle English Examination and are 17 years old , are given stipends to enable them to attend the Dacca Medical School . The pay approximates that in the adjoining Distri

-cts , and it is hoped that , with the inducements offered , local recruitment may be more successful .”

63. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1909 – 10 )* , p, 5.

64. *Ibid.*

65. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1878 – 79 )* , p, 69.

66. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1880 – 81 )* , p, 61 .

67. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1882 – 83 )* , p, 75 .

68. *Ibid.*, p, 76 .

69. *Ibid.*

70. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1884 – 85 )* , p, 48 .

71. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1887 – 88 )* , p, 29.

72. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1888 – 89 )* , p, 33.

73. *Ibid.*

74. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1891 – 92 )* , p, 26 .

75. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1892 – 93 )* , p, 30 .

76. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1893 – 94 )* , p, 32 .

77. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1895 – 96 )* , p,16.

78. *Ibid.*

79. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1897 – 98 )* , p, 26.

80. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1899 – 1900 )* , p, 46 .

81. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1903 – 04 )* , p, 16 .

82. *A.A.R. Of the C.B.S. ( 1904 – 05 )* ,p, 14 .

83. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1906 – 07)* , p, 14 .
84. *Ibid.* , p, 15 .
85. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1907 – 08 )* , p, 15 .
86. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1909 – 10 )* , p, 15 .
87. *B.P.P (2002)* , p, 7 .
88. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1889 – 90 )* , p, 13 .
89. *Ibid.*
90. *Ibid.*
91. *Ibid.*, p, 14 .
92. *Ibid.*
93. *Ibid.*
94. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1892 – 93 )* , p,10.
95. *Ibid.*, p,11.
96. *Ibid.*
97. *Ibid.* .
98. *Ibid.*
99. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1895 – 96 )* , p,14 .
100. *Ibid.*
101. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1897 – 98 )* , p, 16 .
102. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1898 – 99 )* , p, 20.

“ The total capital Outlay on the open up to 31<sup>st</sup> December amounted to Rs. 8,04,427, including suspense . The out lay during the year 1898 was

Rs. 1,30,015, of which the expenditure on the open line was Rs. 30,960 and that on the line in course of construction was Rs. 99, 055 .”

103. *Ibid.* , p, 64 .

104. *Ibid.* , p, 67 .

105. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1882 – 83)*, p, 81 .

106. *Ibid.*

107. *Ibid.*, p,82 .

108. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1885 – 86 )*, p, 27 .

The Superintendent of works remarks as follows upon the enormous saving effected on the original estimate by Mr. Cane ---

“ I (Superintendent) take this opportunity to bring to your notice that the amount estimated by Mr. Cane, and sanctioned by Government for this piece of ornamental lake on the north side of the Palace , and the main road leading from the Palace, was Rs. 1,07,000, and the amount expended by me for the purpose including what will have to be spent hereafter in connection with this lake, will not exceed Rs. 45,000 effecting the net saving of Rs. 62,000 .”

109. *Ibid.* , p, 34.

110. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1888 – 89 )*, p, 23.

111. *Ibid.*

112. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1878 – 79 )*, p, 79 .

113. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1880 – 81 )*, p,59 .

114. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1882 – 83 )*, p, 74 .

115. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1884 – 85 )*, p, 44 .
116. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1887 – 88 )*, p, 29 .
117. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1892 – 93 )*, p, 25 .
118. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1909 – 10 )*, p, 11 .
119. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1887 – 88 )*,p, 54 .
120. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1888 – 89 )*, p, 56 .
121. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1878 – 79 )*, p, 16 .
122. Nag , Hiten ( ed.) – *America through Hindu Eyes* ,N.L.Publisher , Siliguri ,2004 ,  
p, 153.
123. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1906 – 07 )*, p, 3 .
124. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1907 – 08 )*, p, 3 .
125. Nag, Hiten ( ed.) - *op. cit.* , p, 153 .
126. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1878 – 79 )*, p, 71 .
127. *Ibid.*
128. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1885 – 86 )*, p, 2 .
129. *Ibid.*
130. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1903 – 04 )*, p, 10 .
131. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1889 – 90 )*, p,2 .
132. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1900 – 01 )*, p, 15.
133. *Ibid.*
134. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1909 – 10 )*, p, 31 .
135. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1903 – 04 )*, p, 2 .
136. *Ibid.*

137. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1906 – 07 ), p, 3 .
138. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1908 – 09 ), p, 3 .
139. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1882 – 83 ), p, 15 .
140. *Ibid.*
141. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1882 – 83 ), p, 14 .
142. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1898 – 99 ), p, 21 .
143. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1904 – 05 ), p, 26 .
144. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1906 – 07 ) , p, 26 .
145. Narayan, Nripendra , *Thirty Seven Years of Big Game Shooting in Cooch Behar and Assam* ,Time Press , Bombay , 1908 , p, 1 .
146. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1907 – 08 ), p, 28 .
147. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1885 – 86 ), p, 33 .
148. *Ibid.*
149. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1904 – 05 ), p, 14 .
150. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1909 – 10 ), p, 11 .
151. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1890 – 91 ), p, 64 .
152. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1892 – 93 ), p, 63 .
153. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1889 – 90 ), p, 24 .
154. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1891 – 92 ), p, 26 .
155. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1899 – 1900 ) , p, 41 .
156. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1887 – 88 ), p, 8 .
157. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1888 – 89 ), p, 19 .
158. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1903 – 04 ), p, 18 .

159. *Ibid.* , p, 7 .
160. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1880 – 81 )* , p,15 .
161. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1885 – 86 )* , p, 10.
162. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1887 – 88 )* , p, 55 .
163. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1888 – 89 )* , p, 3 .
164. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1893 – 94 )* , p, 10 .
165. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1904 – 05 )* , p, 4 .
166. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1906 – 07 )* , p, 5 .
167. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1907 – 08 )* , p, 8 .
168. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1908 – 09 )* , p, 10 .
169. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1909 – 10 )* , p, 10 .
170. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1910 – 11 )* , p, 8 .
171. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1887 – 88 )* , p, 8 .
172. *Ibid.*
173. Chowdhury, H.N. , *op. cit.* , p, 358 .
174. *Ibid.*, p,360.
175. *Ibid.* , p, 374 .
176. *Ibid.*, p, 376 .
177. *Ibid.*, p, 378 .
178. *Ibid.*, p, 381 .
179. *Ibid.*, p, 384 .
180. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S.( 1883 – 84 )* , p, 10 .

*CHAPTER – III*

**MAHARAJA RAJ RAJENDRA NARAYAN  
(1911-1913) – HIS WELFARE ACTIVITIES**

## ***CHAPTER – III***

### **Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan (1911-1913) – His welfare activities**

The history of Cooch Behar went into a new turn under Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan , who had a short period of reign as a ruler of this princely state . However , he followed the traditional method of doing welfare works for the development of Cooch Behar . Since his childhood, he spent most of the time in London , where he got his education .<sup>1</sup> The cultural outlook of the west motivated him so much in following the same kind of life style . After the death of his father Maharaja Nripendra Narayan , prince Raj Rajendra Narayan took the responsibility of the state of Cooch Behar as a Maharaja on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1911 and gave much more attention to the development of Cooch Behar.<sup>2</sup>

His welfare activities were as follows :

#### **A) Welfare activities in social field :**

**Education:** In 1911 an important work was taken by Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan in educational field ( which was projected earlier but implementation was moved during his rule) , known as grant of land for the Debigunj Nripendra Narayan Higher English School building . This implementation process had a history

which can be summarized as follows :

“ The legal remembrancer of Eastern Bengal and Assam was of opinion that the deed of free gift executed by the late Maharaja Nripendra Narayan of the plot of land measuring 8 bighas , 2 kattas , 5 dhurs for the Debigunj Nripendra Narayan Higher English School building was invalid on the ground that the conveyance was executed in favour of the School Committee . A deed of re – conveyance of the land was executed by the school committee in favour of Maharaja and the land was taken possession of by the manager of the Chaklarjat Estate as representing Maharaja . Thereupon Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan was pleased to execute a fresh deed in favour of the proposed work.”<sup>3</sup>

Apart from that much care was taken to improve the condition of the Middle English School ( introduced during the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan ) by the introduction of a more elaborate curriculum in English and by taking steps to assimilate the instruction imparted therein to be given in the lower forms of the Higher English Schools . A fresh grant of Rs. 500/- a year was accordingly been sanctioned for the employment of an additional English teacher in some of the most important schools .<sup>4</sup>

Regarding Mahomedan Education Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan’s period was remarkable . The number of Mahomedan lads attending the various schools in the state of Cooch Behar rose in 1910 - 11 to 4 ,808 and their success in the different scholarship examinations was very encouraging . Two Mahomedan candidates passed the last Matriculation Examination and of the 38 Mahomedan candidates that went up to the last Middle Scholarship Examination 18 came

out successful ,one of whom headed the list .<sup>5</sup>

In 1912 Maharaja made the following recommendations :<sup>6</sup>

a) to increase the number of educational institutions in Cooch Behar ; b) to improve their strength and efficiency ; c) to enhance the proportion of boys at school to those of school going ( age ) ; d) to raise the pay of the Model School teachers to ensure more devoted work ; e) to strengthen the Higher English Schools still further by increasing their attendance , augmenting their finances and improving the pay and prospects of the teachers ; f) to construct for the schools new houses on approved lines and to repair the existing buildings thoroughly to suit modern requirements ; g) to elaborate the boarding system by increasing their numbers and providing them with comfortable quarters and necessary cooks and servants ; h) to expand the system of Middle and Primary Education by assigning grants to new schools and rising the tone and character of instruction in the older institutions by engaging assistant teachers in them ; i) to encourage Female Education by assigning new grants to some and raising the status of a few others ; j) to improve Mahomedan Education by increasing the grant of the Sudder Madrasah , by opening a Vernacular school in its connection , and by providing with State ( Cooch Behar) grants a number of mukhtabs in the interior .

During the reign of Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan , the gradual development in education was remarkable which can be compared with the neighbouring districts of Cooch Behar . The educational report shows that “ Cooch Behar contains an area of 1307 square miles and a population of 5,93,052

souls , of whom 3,16,647 are males and 2,76,405 females . In other wards there are about 453 souls in a square mile on an average . In the neighbouring District of Rangpur there 616 souls per square mile . The State is , therefore, sparsely populated . Assuming the number of children of school going age in a country was 15 percent of the population, the number of boys that ought to be attending schools in Cooch Behar would be 47,497 . This would show that of all the boys of school - going age 30.1 percent were at school , even excluding those that were borne on the rolls of the Victoria College, Jenkins School , the Sunity College ”. The princely state of Cooch Behar , therefore , compares favourably with the neighbouring Districts of the Rajshahi Division , may even with some of the advanced Districts of Bengal, as will be seen from the figures put together in the accompanying table :<sup>7</sup>

**Table - 9**

District	Area in square miles	Population	Male children of school - going age	Boys actually at school	Percentage of boys at school to male children of a school - going age
1. Bogra	1,359	9,83,567	75, 378	24,010	31.8
2. Pubna	1,851	14,28,586	1,08,538	30,434	28.0
3.Rajshahi	2,618	14,80,587	1,13,280	28,469	25.1
4.Goalparah	3,954	6,00,643	47,771	11,146	23.3
5. Maldah	1,899	10,04,159	74,782	16,982	22.7
6. Rangpur	3,179	23,85,330	1,88,207	40,040	21.2
7. Dinajpur	3,916	16,87,863	1,33,480	27,490	20.5
8.Jalpaiguri	2,919	9,02,660	73,534	14,145	19.2
9.Cooch Behar	1,307	5,93,052	47,497	14,318	30.1

**Source:** Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State( 1912-13),p,20 .

Boarding Institutions attached to the sub-divisional Higher English School also rose in popularity during 1911 - 12 . Maharaja made some grant for expansion of holding facilities in the Mekhligunj Boarding , Dinhata Boarding , Mathabhanga Boarding Institutions .<sup>8</sup> In this connection it is to be noted that in the same year an inspector (academic enquiry officer) of the Calcutta University came to Cooch Behar for inspection the actual condition of the educational institutions both in Cooch Behar and also in sub- divisions and prepared a detailed report on the matter and submitted it to the Registrar of the Calcutta University .<sup>9</sup>

Regarding Victoria College , the result of the pupils was noticeable . In 1912 -13 academic session , the College gained the distinction of occupying the highest place in the B.A . English honours list , the only first class of the year acquired by a student of this college . It is also noteworthy that all the natives of the state of Cooch Behar - two in the B.A and four in the I.A including one Mahomedan boy , who appeared in the examination have been successful .<sup>10</sup> In the previous year 16 students , out of 21, were sent up and passed the B .A . Examination ; thereof two gained Honours in English and two in Philosophy which according to the Calcutta University standard must be considered a high record (at that time Victoria College later known as A.B.N. Seal College was under the jurisdiction of Calcutta University ).<sup>11</sup>

Thus the educational system of Cooch Behar during the reign of Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan was really phenomenal .

**Medical:** The medical department of Cooch Behar under Maharaja Raj Rajendra was

a remarkable one During 1911 - 12 some important measures were taken towards this end . A Dispensary at Nishigunj was been built for the treatment of the people of Nishigunj area . It was built in the memory of Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayans' grand – mother Rajmata Nishimayi Aye Devati at her birth place ( Nishigunj ) . It was opened on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 1911. The Medical Officers of Cooch Behar state reported that the year under review was comparatively healthy and vital statistics confirm that opinion , as will be seen from the following statement :<sup>12</sup>

**Table - 10**

**1910-11. 1911-12. 1912-13.**

Malaria: ( number of cases treated At the Dispensaries) -----	11,559	10,411	11,122
Cholera: ( reported cases) -----	690	320	2240
Small-Pox : ( reported cases) -----	229	194	88

**Source:** Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State(1912-13), p, 34.

The measures introduced for segregating the cases of Kala - azar in the Kristopore Taluk were continued . Some difficulty was experienced from the concealment of cases and several patients died in the refuge which was only to be expected from the deadly nature of the diseases . But the measures proved so successful that the number of cases decreased, and the disease did not spread beyond the boundaries of the infected Taluk .<sup>13</sup>

Captain F.P. Mackie , **M.B. , I.M.S. ,** who was on special duty for the investigation of Kala-azar , was deputed by the Government of India to visit Cooch Behar and he spent a week here (Cooch Behar) for that purpose . Some emergency

works were done in the distribution of quinine, but no satisfactory system was arrived at. In all about 1,100 tabloids were distributed, a quantity manifestly inadequate to exercise much influence on the spread of the disease. It was hoped that the demand for quinine would steadily increase when the people would begin to appreciate its beneficial effects.<sup>14</sup>

An important measure for the development of town was carried out in Cooch Behar by the Town Committee. An area of 98,000 square feet was levelled and drained to prevent the lodgment of stagnant water and the work of filling up a large sanitary tank near the Post – Office was approaching completion. The rest of the town had been divided up into the areas which was inspected by a sub - committee and were being surveyed with a view to improving them as funds would be available, by filling up tanks, raising low swampy ground and filling up holes from which earth was taken for building purpose.<sup>15</sup> In 1913 an important step was taken in the field of medical treatment. Cooch Behar state authority appointed seven officers who have examined local market. Their report was unsatisfactory. Another notable incident was that on 8<sup>th</sup> December, 1912 a surprise visit was made by the civil surgeon on the fish imported by Rail which was condemned. All these activities shows Maharaja's concern for the public health in Cooch Behar.

**Public Works Department (P.W.D)** During his rule this department took some developmental works, which could be categories as –

i) **Railway police thana** P.W.D during the year 1911-12 took up the work of

construction of railway police thana , because regarding the security of rail it needed to be set up . The work started with a definite plan which was as ---- a pucca building 26 ½' x 17 ½' with pucca floor and brick- walls has been constructed on the north of the Cooch Behar Station building .<sup>16</sup> It has a store room 4'- 7" x 4'- 7" and two lock up rooms 7' x 5' each for males and females . Here it need to mention that these two rooms have a brick partition between them and the front partition barred by iron bars . P. W. D also shows how much should be spent for that , the expenditure was Rs. 2,054 against an estimate of Rs. 2,369 .<sup>17</sup>

ii) **Palace gate and fence**            The original provision was Rs. 1,910 , which was raised to Rs. 2,581 in the revised budget . The expenditure incurred during the year was Rs. 2,217 while the total expenditure incurred under this head went up to the end of the year of 1912 was Rs. 19,956 . The bricks for the construction of the royal Palace gates were collected from the Bindhachal Stone And Trading Co.,and the value thereof adjusted . Maharaja has directed that these figures should be erected on two new masonry platforms in the palace compound instead of on the two gate pillars .<sup>18</sup>

iii) **Sanitation Scheme**            The improvement of the block bounded by Sagar Dighi Square East , Sunity Road , Dalton Road and Rivers Thompson Street was completed during 1912 . The improvement of Dabri and the filling up of the tank east of the Post Office were in progressive way continuing .<sup>19</sup>

iv) **Scheme for protecting the Sutunga Bridge**

An important work was taken by P.W.D in 1912. In 1911-12 earth

work , a pucca culvert , pitching the banks near the bridge and the khair tree plantation could be completed . The construction of the sluice gate was in progress during the year .<sup>20</sup>

v) **Roads and bridges at Dewangunj** A provision of Rs. 500 was made for the improvement of the Dewangunj - Chilahati Road . A culvert was being constructed at the 2<sup>nd</sup> mile and the wing wall of the existing bridge at the 1<sup>st</sup> mile was renewed with corrugated – iron sheets at a total cost of Rs. 364 .<sup>21</sup>

vi) **Dak Banglo at Gitaldaha** During the year 1913 a new scheme was taken for the construction of a guest house (Dak Banglo) at Gitaldaha . P.W. D made an appropriate plan toward the same , which was as follows one corrugated iron roofed house 30'-9" x 21'-6" having two rooms partitioned by a brick – nogging wall , on the roll iron joint posts with pucca floor, brick – nogging walls , wooden doors and glazed windows has been erected .<sup>22</sup>

vii) **Tanks , wells and tube wells** The tanks and pucca wells maintained by this Department were repaired . The polo ground was also repaired where necessary .<sup>23</sup>

viii) **Communication** This year's (1912) project consisted of the following bridges :<sup>24</sup>

1. Bridge at 4<sup>th</sup> mile of Dewanhat - Balarampore Road : 2 spans of 10' each .  
It is a wooden bridge on meter gauge rail posts and beams with wooden railing and corrugated - iron sheet abutment walls .
2. Bridge at 8<sup>th</sup> mile of the Garodhat road . Same as no. 1
3. Bridge at 8<sup>th</sup> mile of the Cooch Behar – Sitalkuchi Road: 4 spans of 12" each .  
( other details as no. 1)

4. Bridge at 8<sup>th</sup> mile of the Janaki – Tiwary Road : 2 spans of 18" each . Two abutment and one pier are of brick masonry .
5. Bridge on the Manikgunj Road : span 10". The abutment are pucca surmounted by steel joist . The road way is of road metal . It has gas pipe rails on iron standard . This bridge could not be finished during the year 1911 – 12 . It took much more time .
6. Road from Baneswar to Sukhandighee via Pundibari : This road construction design taken in a manner which linked Baneswar – Natabari Road with the Ghokshadanga – Sukhnadighee Road . It would be 15" wide at the formation level and a total length of 120 rft , bamboo bridge would be put in . The portion from Pundibari to Sukhnadighee ghat was nearly complete . The total amount expended during this year was Rs .1,882 against a provision of Rs . 14,897 .

In 1912 – 13 there were a lot of works taken by P.W.D on communication which were as follows :<sup>25</sup>

#### **1. Re- construction of Philkhana bridge**

It has one span of 18'- 10" and a length 22' - 8". It had pucca abutments and wing walls and brick – on – edge Floor . The railings were of gas tubes supported by T iron posts . The total cost was Rs. 1,173 against an estimate of Rs. 1,150 .

#### **2. Raising the Lowkuti Road at the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> miles**

The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> miles of the Lawkuti road were rather low and

used to be submerged in the rains to the great inconvenience of traffic . These low stretches of the road was raised at a cost of Rs. 1,025 against an estimate of Rs. 1,000 which was provided in the revised budget by a re - appropriation of grant from improvement of Garodhat Road .

### 3. Conversion of bamboo bridges into semi - permanent bridges

- a) One 6 inch arched culvert on the 5<sup>th</sup> mile of the Lawkuti Road with pucca abutments , wing walls and parapets .
- b) Bridge over a drain in 9<sup>th</sup> mile of Baneswar – Natabari Road , it has one span of 30 inch with pucca abutments . It took more than one year for finishing touch.
- c) Three Corrugated Iron Culverts 4 inch diameter with pucca face walls and parapets .

**Cooch Behar State Railway**                      The Cooch Behar State Railway made a rapid progress during the reign of Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan . The following statement shows the result of the working line during the year of report as compared with the previous year :<sup>26</sup>

**Table - 11**

	<u>For the year.</u>	
	1911-12	1912-13
	Rs.	Rs.
Gross earnings -----	2,70,980	2,79,467
Working expenses -----	<u>1,49,721</u>	<u>1,20,220</u>
Net earnings -----	<u>1,21,259</u>	<u>1,59,247</u>
Percentage of working expenses over gross earnings -----	55.25	43.01
Percentage of net earning on Capital outlay --	5.95	7.78

**Source :** Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State ( 1912 – 13) , p, 12

**Settlement operations during 1912-13** The Land Revenue Settlement of Pergunnahs Lal Bazar and Mekhligunj was to expire in 1918-19 and that of the remaining four pergunnahs of Mathabhanga , Dinhata , Cooch Behar in the following year . The operations in connection with the settlement now in force were commenced in 1886-87 and took 13 years to complete so that the actual survey operations may began from 1912-13 . The chief feature of the settlement operations during the reign of Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan was the classification of Taluks and of the soil into various grades for the purposes of equitable assessment . This was proved beneficial both to the Princely State of Cooch Behar and the people , as evidenced by the increased value of land and the general condition of the people .<sup>27</sup>

The settlement operation under the Maharajas had a long history . The first Revenue Survey of Cooch Behar was carried out by Mr. O' Donnel of the survey of India under orders of Government as the administration of the state was then under its immediate control . The existing 1 inch maps which are over 40 years old are based upon Mr. O'Donnel's 4 inch Revenue Survey of 1864 - 70 . Since then no survey was held on modern lines and Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan decided that modern methods of Cadastral Survey should be adopted and the Revenue Survey of the princely state of Cooch Behar should be carried out with the help of the Government .<sup>28</sup> This help was invoked and the Government very kindly acceded to Maharajas' request to render assistance in the matter generally both in regard to Supervision and the

provision of staff and instruments by the Director of Provincial Surveys . For the purpose of Revenue Survey, the princely state of Cooch Behar was divided by Mr. O' Donnel into six main circuits . These main circuits are being maintained , and are now grouped as follows for the present operations: <sup>29</sup>

Block A 1<sup>st</sup> year – 1912-13 , Cooch Behar , 309 – 33 sq. miles.

Block B 2<sup>nd</sup> year – 1913 -14 , Mekhligunj and Mathabhanga , 462.71 sq. miles .

Block C 3<sup>rd</sup> year – 1914 -15 , Lalbazar and Dinhata , 385.57 sq. miles .

Block D 4<sup>th</sup> year – 1915-16 , Tufangunj , 189.45 sq. miles .

with the concurrence of Major Hirst , Director of Provincial Surveys , Traverse survey of Block A was under taken during the year 1912 - 13 of report and it was almost completed ; and on the recommendation of the Dewan of the state of Cooch Behar , in his letter No. 3529 , dated the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1913 , Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan was pleased to sanction a provision of the Rs. 81,000 ( Rs. 16,453 for Traverse and Rs. 64,547 for Cadastral Survey ) being made in the budget for 1913-14 .

## **B) Welfare activities in Cultural Field**

Maharaja took active interest in the cultural sphere.

1. The main avenues of the celebration of festivals were as follow :-

**i. Imperial Durbar at Delhi and celebration in the Cooch Behar State** Being invited by His excellency ,the Viceroy and the Governor- General of India, Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan attended the Imperial durbar held at Delhi on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 1911 to celebrate the coronation of their most gracious King George V ,

Emperor of India and Queen Mary .

The auspicious occasion was under Maharajas wishes and instructions , celebrated throughout Cooch Behar . His Chaklarjat zamindaries was strong enough during the period . Maharajas' subjects were enabled to demonstrate those feelings of deep and abiding loyalty which they cherished for their Majesties .<sup>30</sup>

ii. **Allowance , Charities and Thakurbaries** Maharaja also made some grants to Rajguns, Brahmins to establishment charges , stipends to poor boys, contingent -cies , donations etc .<sup>31</sup> Maharaja provided grant for the Anandamayee Dharmashala . During the year 1912 – 13 a good number of poor people fed at the Dharmashala was 1,638 .<sup>32</sup> During the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan a charitable institu -tion was founded in the eastern portion of Madanmohan Thakur Bari . It was for -med in the memory of Maharajkumari Anandamayee for poor and needy persons in the State . Such an attempt reflected benevolent attitude of the ruler .

iii. **The Pooneah Darbar for 1319 B.S.** The Maharajas of Cooch Behar celebrated the Pooneah Darbar with pomp and gouty . During the reign of Maharaja Raj Rajen -dra Narayan , the annual Pooneah Darbar for the Bengali year 1913 was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> ,4<sup>th</sup> ,5<sup>th</sup> of May 1912 . On this occasion Maharaja was pleased to sit on the throne on all the three days and received homage from the offices and subjects of the state (Cooch Behar ) .<sup>33</sup>

iv. Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan was out and out modern , who observed that it was important to preserve the memory of his father late Maharaja Nripendra Naray -an ( the harbinger of modernisation in Cooch Behar ) in England ( Bexhill - on –Sea

where he died and at Golders Green where he was cremated). It was proposed to erect a fountain to this end.<sup>34</sup>

v. Maharaja was the first who thought that the royal coin of Cooch Behar need to be preserved in the Indian Museum. He was pleased to order on the recommendation of the Superintendent of the State (Cooch Behar) that one gold coin and one silver coin struck on the occasion of Maharajas' installation be presented to the Coin Cabinet of the Indian Museum, Calcutta.<sup>35</sup>

**2. Shooting Camp** Maharaja also maintained Shooting Camp as earlier. The shooting arrangement under the Maharajas of Cooch Behar had name and fame among the Company officers. In 1913 an arrangement was made for reception of His Excellency at Cooch Behar and at the Shooting Camp at Salbari in April 1913. The road to the Shooting Camp was kept in proper condition and the Shooting Camp was kept in proper condition and three temporary bridges on the river Ghargharia, Gadar and Takoamari were constructed.<sup>36</sup>

### **C) Welfare activities in Economic Field**

In the economic sphere, Maharaja, followed the tradition.

The opening cash balance of the year 1911 - 12 was Rs. 14,66,929 inclusive of Government money and deposits total amounting to Rs. 6,17,082, and the closing balance was Rs. 13,09,685 inclusive of Government money and deposits amounting to Rs. 4,47,733, resulting a decrease of Rs. 76,244. The state revenue for 1911 - 12 amounted to Rs. 27,40,068 against Rs. 26,94,231 of the previous year, showing a net increase of Rs. 45,837. There have been improved

receipts under all heads of the budget with the exception of those under :<sup>37</sup>

– I - General Revenue , (a) Land Revenue , (b) Interest on Loans and Investments ,

II - Law and Justice ,(a) Civil and Session Court ,

III- Miscellaneous (a) Criminal Justice , (b) Jail ,

IV – Debuttar and

V – His Highness the Maharaja Estates ,(a) Darjeeling Estate and (b) Panga Estate.

Maharaja took active role in the maintenance of various financial funds . These were as follow :<sup>38</sup>

i) **Fund for His late Highness’ children** :- During the year 1911 – 12 , a sum of Rs. 1,00,000 was provided under this head .

ii) **Reserve Fund** :- Due to the celebration of Delhi Darbar , no addition could be made to this fund .

iii) **Cooch Behar State Re-settlement Fund** :- During the year 1912 , a sum of Rs. 40,000 was paid to this fund . On 31<sup>st</sup> March 1912 the fund amounted to Rs. 1,17,700 .

iv) **Communication Improvement Fund** :- The budget grant for the year was 52,612 .

During the rule of Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan annual budget of Cooch Behar was maintained by the Cooch Behar State Regency Council .

The budget estimate for 1912-13 was as follows :<sup>39</sup>

The revenue for the year 1912-13 has been estimated at Rs. 26,63,771 and the expenditure at Rs. 26, 20, 876 leaving a surplus of Rs. 42,895 . Maharaja has reduced the provision for Maharaja’s Privy Purse from Rs.

5,00,000 to Rs. 2,00,000, while the allowance to His Highness' relations had been increased from Rs. 2,62,850 to Rs. 3,16,350. This increase was mainly due to the inclusion of the annuities payable to Her Highness, the Maharajmata, the Maharajkumars and the Maharajkumaries under the Will of His late Highness Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, the allowance sanctioned by Maharaja for the Maharajmata and the trust fund money for Maharajkumari Sukriti Sundari Devi. The usual provisions of Rs. 1,00,000 for the Children Fund and of Rs. 50,000 for the Reserve Fund had been made in the year's budget, while amounts of Rs. 15,000 for Railway Capital Expenditure, Rs. 15,000 for Re-settlement Fund, Rs. 35,000 for the settlement of the State and Rs. 3,00,000 for repayment of loan (various aspects) also had been provided.

Maharaja also made grant for the total expenditure at Venaras on account of allowance to persons residing there, Puja expenses of Thakurs, establishment charges and up-keep of the State houses, amounted in all to Rs. 12,869 against Rs. 11,987 of the previous year. The increase is due to increased grant and other expenses not included in the budget.<sup>40</sup>

At last it is to be mentioned that during the short period of his reign (1911 – 1913), Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan tried his best to maintain the tradition in social, cultural and economic field.<sup>41</sup> He also maintained Library, Philkhana, State Press etc. Maharajas' welfare activities helped to move the ship of modernisation in the name of development for the future generation.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Das , Biswanath (ed.) , *Autobiography of an Indian Princess – Memoirs of Maharani Sunity Devi of Cooch Behar*, Vikash Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. ,  
*New Delhi* , 1995, p, 146 .

“There was much discussion on the subject . The Maharajah decided on education in England, because he had great in the discipline of the great English public school.”

2. *A.A.R. of the C.B. S. (1911-12)* , p,11.

3. *Ibid.*, p, 12.

4. *Ibid.*, p, 19.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *A.A.R. of the C.B. S. ( 1912-13)* , p, 19.

7. *Ibid.* , p, 20 .

8. *Ibid.* , pp, 22 – 23 .

9. *Ibid.*, p, 23.

“ I have the honour to state that before coming away from Cooch Behar on medical leave , I finished the inspection of the ‘ recognized school’ in the interior of the State , which had been over due , and found that all the requirements of the University with one exception had been amply and promptly met , shortly after the registrar communicated these requirements to the authorities of the schools . The exception relates to the alterations and repairs to the Mekhligunj School building , which had to be necessarily postponed owing to an encroachment of the Teesta River . Funds have been raised for a new school building at Mekhligunj, liberally eked out by a State - grant , and building operations are likely to be co

-mmenced in the course of the current session .

I inspected the Dinhata H.E.School on the 12<sup>th</sup> April last , the Mathabhanga H.E.School on the 16<sup>th</sup> April and the Mekhligunj H.E.School on the 17<sup>th</sup> April .

The statements and statistical returns submitted by the School authorities are herewith forwarded .

I may add that a minute and searching examination satisfied me that the schools are up to date in methods of teaching and school management and that the residential arrangements are excellent from the sanitary as well as the disciplinary point of view . These schools , I believe , compare most favourably in point of efficiency with similar institutions in other parts of the country . Inspector of Calcutta University , 19<sup>th</sup> September , 1912.”

10. *Ibid.*, p, 32.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *A.A.R. of the C.B. S. ( 1911-12)*, p, 11.

13. *Ibid.*, p, 30.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*

16. *A.A.R. of the C.B. S. (1912-13)*, p, 34.

17. *A.A.R of the C.B. S. ( 1911-12)*, p, 12.

18. *Ibid.*, p, 13.

19. *Ibid.*, p, 15.

20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*
22. *A.A.R. of the C.B. S. ( 1912-13)*, p, 11.
23. *Ibid.*, p, 13.
24. *A.A.R. of the C.B. S. (1911-12)* , pp, 16-17.
25. *A.A.R. of the C.B. S. (1912-13)*, p, 17.
26. *Ibid.*, p,12.
27. *A.A.R. of the C.B. S. (1911-12)*, p, 12.
28. *A.A.R. of the C.B. S. (1912-13)*, p, 5.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1911-12)*, p, 7.
31. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S ( 1912-13)*,p,6.
32. *Ibid.*, p,7.
33. *Ibid.*
34. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1911-12)*, p,11 .
35. *Ibid.*
36. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1912-13)*, p,17.
37. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1911-12)*,p, 15.
38. *Ibid.*,pp,17-18.
39. *Ibid.*, p,18.
40. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1912-13)* ,p, 7.
41. Dalai, Ghanashyan – *Sachitra Koch Behar Rajchitra* (Bengali) Kuntalin Press,  
Calcutta ,1915 , p,141.

***CHAPTER – IV***

**MAHARAJA JITENDRA NARAYAN**

**(1913- 1922)**

**THE BENEVOLENT MAHARAJA OF  
COOCH BEHAR**

## ***CHAPTER – IV***

### **Maharaja Jitendra Narayan (1913-1922)- The benevolent Maharaja of Cooch Behar .**

Maharaja Jitendra Narayan, one of the illustrious sons of Cooch Behar, ascended the throne of the Princely State of Cooch Behar on 1<sup>st</sup> September , 1913 after the death of his elder Brother Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan .<sup>1</sup> Maharaja Jitendra Narayan followed in the footsteps of his elder brother in taking benevolent measures . Like his elder brother , he was educated in England and the Western cul – ture motivated him to take advance modern benevolent measures as the ruler of Cooch Behar . His love for the people of Cooch Behar was deep and he took great interest in administration . He was unable to talk in the mother tongue, although as a ruler of the State he gave great attention to the development of the state . His mother Maharani Sunity Devi in her autobiography (*Autobiography of an Indian Princess – Memoirs of Maharani Sunity Devi* ) shows that Jitendra Narayan’s great ambition was to make his state a model one and he was always eager to help forward its progress . He was an administrative as well as literary excellence .

As a ruler of Cooch Behar state his achievements were as follows :-

#### **A) Benevolent measures in Social Field**

Maharaja Jitendra Narayan during his rule of ten years , took some advanced schemes for the development of Cooch Behar on one side and followed the tradition on the other side . His benevolent thinking reflected in the following

aspects .

**Education** Maharaja Jitendra Narayan at first vividly monitored the actual development in the sphere of education in Cooch Behar and in sub - divisional area . In 1915 - 16 Maharaja implemented some measures towards this end , which may be summarised as follow –<sup>2</sup>

a) The system of Higher English Education received an impetus heretofore unknown and culminated in the steps taken for opening a new Higher English School at Tufangunj the nearby subdivision at the close of the financial year 1915 - 16) by the aid of liberal subscriptions from the people supplemented by contributions from the Nripendra Narayan Memorial Fund .

Towards the close of the financial year owing to insufficiency of space in the local Jenkins School , an attempt was set on for opening an additional Higher English school in the Town of Cooch Behar . It was proposed by the leading gentry and others , whose sons or wards failed to secure admission in the Jenkins School . Sudder Model School was reorganized and the amount spent on it together with additional grant from the State ( Cooch Behar ) and subscriptions raised from the public , went a lot towards the fulfillment of the project .

b) The system of Middle English School also received encouragement during this year .

c) The system of Middle Vernacular Education also received its due share of attention and the number of Middle Vernacular Schools were set up by three , and proved their eligibility for such grants by year of good progress with local support .

d) The Primary Schools , too were carefully looked after during the year . The sanctioned provision of Rs . 1,000 out of savings , was fully utilised during the year as reported towards the upkeep of some of the important Primary and Secondary Schools . The redistribution of grants at the end of every six months also had the effect of promoting the interests of these Schools , as it led to the weeding out of useless institutions , that received aid and replacing them by successful unaided ones with new grants from the State (Cooch Behar) .

e) Female education made fair progress in this year. Dinahata Girls' School was in a particularly flourishing condition , and it was placed on the basis of superior organisation , when a good school house with necessary equipments was provided to it . A teacher and a mistress were appointed for the first time to give the girls an all round education . Suitable quarters constructed for the staff at considerable expense , the bulk being met from local subscription . The last twelve months counted a period of further progress for the school , when definite steps were taken to enable the girls to acquire some knowledge of English . It is worth of note that of 32 departmental Primary scholarships 4 were won by the girls in open competition with the boys .

A further impetus was given to Female Education by the keen interest Her Highness Maharani had shown in laying the foundation stone of the Mekhligunj Girls' School and presiding over the prize distribution ceremony at the time of Maharajas' visit to the sub - division . His welfare attitude also led to the

steps for construction of a separate building for the Tufangunj Girls' School , for which a contribution of Rs. 125 was granted from the State and for the inauguration of a yearly prize system, styled as the 'Ila Prize' named after the princess Ila Devi .

f. Mahomedan Education continued to receive the warm support from the royal authority as the earlier case .

In 1916 after implementing the above mentioned measures , some of the also taken steps as follow were also taken by Maharaja Jitendra Narayan .<sup>3</sup>

**First** , Tufangunj Middle English School was converted into a High English School .  
**Secondly**, a similar action has been mooted regarding the Haldibari Middle English School .

**Thirdly** , effective steps were taken for furtherance of female education specially improving the condition of Tufangunj Girls' School, to level it with the girls' school at Mekhligunj and Mathabhanga .

Maharaja took active initiatives in educational field , which helped Tufangunj Nripendra Narayan Memorial Higher English School in receiving provisional affiliation to the Calcutta University for two years with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January , 1917, and application for its permanent affiliation was submitted to the Registrar of Calcutta University at the close of the year .<sup>4</sup> The Primary Schools also received due share of attention and five Lower Primary Schools were raised to the upper primary status , and one Upper primary school to the Middle Vernacular status . More importantly it is to be noted that an amount of Rs. 1,000

, was granted by the State authority for the maintenance of a number of Primary and Middle Class Schools in Cooch Behar .<sup>5</sup>

During the year 1917 , a Boarding Institution , named after Maharajas' late elder brother Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan was opened exclusively for the sons of recognised Rajguns . The institution was under Maharajas immediate control. <sup>6</sup>

In 1918 in an Educational Conference , held under the presidency of the Principal , Victoria College to discuss various educational matters where following resolutions , were passed (a) uniformity of text – books in the various High English Schools , (b) the introduction of Vernacular as the medium of instruction in the junior classes of Higher English Schools and (c) the adoption of transfer rules , which were in force in the Government Districts .<sup>7</sup>

Maharaja had a great concern for the agricultural development of the State . Cooch Behar was mainly an agriculture based princely state . Keeping this in view agricultural books were introduced in Primary educational curriculum by the Educational Committee of Cooch Behar in 1921 and in the same year history of Cooch Behar was introduced as a subject of study in the Primary educational curriculum.<sup>8</sup> In the same year another step was taken for establishing a Sanskrit Tole at Khagrabari . To the end Brahmin pundits were appointed to teach the willing students. It was also projected that the students who turned out well from the Tole could be sent to Nabadwip and Venaras to complete their education ,and on their return they may be engaged in various capacities in the Debuttar Depart

-ment ( eclectic department) .<sup>9</sup> Here it need to mention that the Sanskrit Tole sent up only one candidate for the Temple Scholarship Examinations , who passed and was awarded the scholarship .<sup>10</sup>

Maharaja also appointed an Education Committee to know the day to day condition of educational progress in Cooch Behar . During his reign there were some boarding institutions in Cooch Behar , such as – College Boarding , College Hindu Hostel , Rajgun Boarding Institution , Moslem Boarding institution .<sup>11</sup>

**Medical** In the field of Medical service for the people of Cooch Behar , the contribution of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan deserves a special mention . The general health of the people of Cooch Behar during the year 1913-14 was good in comparison with the sub – division areas of the State . Even the visiting officers of the Company also contributed to the development of the State . One of the chief features of the year was the laying of the foundation of the new Carmichael Wing by Lady Carmichael who gave a donation towards the further equipment of the Hospital operations .<sup>12</sup> During this period another measure was implemented by the state authority, in which it was stated that all medical practitioners attending infectious cases should report them to the Civil Surgeon ( proper preventive measures might be taken ) .<sup>13</sup> In the year 1913 midwives attached to the medical department attended 89 cases and at the same time it is to be noted that due to the available medical facilities there was no premature death caused by maternity in Cooch

Behar.<sup>14</sup> Such an attempt indicated that the medical system of the State took care of women's health and Maharaja was lot more concern for women's health. Maharaja issued a notification, dated 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 1914 about successfully dealing with the origin and spread of infectious diseases in Cooch Behar.

It was directed that all that practitioners in medicine who were likely to know about the occurrence of any case of an infectious disease in any locality situated within the jurisdiction of the Cooch Behar Town Committee, such as cholera, small-pox, were required to report it forthwith to the Civil Surgeon of the State (Cooch Behar).<sup>15</sup> On 15<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 the proposed Carmicheal Ward was ready for service and on the occasion state authority also opened extra accommodation for dispensary, library medical store, bed arrangement for female patients and out-door department of the Sudder Hospital.<sup>16</sup> On 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1918 Governor of Bengal, Ronaldshay came to Cooch Behar and was graciously pleased to lay, at an open durbar of Cooch Behar, the foundation stone of a ward named, Ronaldshay Ward at the Sudder Hospital of Cooch Behar.<sup>17</sup> In 1919 the following measures were implemented towards this end :-<sup>18</sup> (a) appointment of temporary Medical Officer for the Quarantine of passengers coming up to Cooch Behar through stations like Dinhata, Cooch Behar, Changrabandha, and Haldibari; (b) appointment of special officers to help the Medical Officers for the purpose; (c) the building of temporary huts for the segregation of suspected cases close to each of the stations mentioned above; (d) introduction of vaccine-

tion and re - vaccination , specially in Dinhata and Sudder Sub – Divisions , and disinfection and segregation of cases as promptly as possible on the notification of an outbreak in any locality before the disease could spread in an epidemic form . Maharaja also continued the anti – cholera and anti – small pox project in Cooch Behar .<sup>19</sup> Thus the medical service during Maharajas' rule was truly remarkable one . Very few States of the time took such special care for medical facilities to the subjects .

**Public Works Department (P.W.D)** During the reign of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan, this department work on the following projects as implemented under the recommendation of Maharaja -

**a) Boarding house at Mathabhanga** The construction work for a boarding house at Mathabhanga started in 1915 and it was completed at a cost of Rs. 1,442 .<sup>20</sup>

**b) Nripendra Narayan Hostel** A project of Hostel construction started in 1914 and the final estimated work was completed in 1915 at a cost of Rs. 3,400 . It also decided by the P.W.D that the total amount to be paid by the Nripendra Narayan Memorial Fund .<sup>21</sup>

**c) Boarding house at Dinhata** In 1915 - 16 a corrugated iron roofed boarding house at Dinhata 100" x 14" with 6 rooms , built by the Department at a cost of Rs. 1,588. In this connection it is to be noted that out of the estimated budget, Rs. 1,588 was paid by the Secretary of Higher English School .<sup>22</sup>

**d) Construction of Post Office** The construction work started in 1917 and its project plan was estimated at a cost of Rs. 25,079 .<sup>23</sup>

**e) Communication**

During the reign of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan , Communication work was at a peak . In 1913 - 14 a project work taken by the P.W.D consisted of the following area :<sup>24</sup>

1. A Girder bridge on 8<sup>th</sup> mile , Baneswar – Natabari Road of one span of 20 inch pucca abutment ;
2. A Girder bridge on the Dewanhat – Chilkirhat Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> mile, similar to the above in all respect ;
3. A Girder bridge on the Dinhata – Mekhligunj Road , 6<sup>th</sup> mile , similar to the above in all respect ;
4. A Girder bridge on the Dinhata – Mekhligunj Road , 21<sup>st</sup> mile of 2 spans of 22 ½ inch each .
5. Moranga Road :- This road plan extend from Mathabhanga to Moranga area .

Regarding the construction of timber bridge and culverts P.W.D implemented the following project in 1917 :<sup>25</sup>

1. One 5 inch ft. pucca culvert on Bhetaguri Nazirhat Road;
2. 1 pucca culvert 4 inch ft. diameter on Chowdhurihat Feeder Road ;
3. 1 pucca culvert on Kalighat road ;
4. 1 wooden bridge on Dewanhat Balarampore road ;
5. 1 corrugated iron culvert 3 inch diameter on Emigration Road west of Cooch Behar ;
6. 1 timber bridge on Dinhata Mekhligunj road ;
7. Ghargharia bridge on Lowkuti road ;

8. Bura Teesta Bridge on Emigration Road west of Cooch Behar ;

9. 1 wooden bridge on Patgram Bhutan road .

In 1918 – 1919 P.W.D work on the following proposals , which estimated at a cost of Rs. 11,743 :-<sup>26</sup>

1. Wooden bridge 18 inch long in the 19<sup>th</sup> mile of Dinhata – Mekhligunj Road ;
2. Wooden bridge 60 mile long on the Changrabanda Feeder Road ;
3. Pucca culvert 4 inch span in the 41<sup>st</sup> mile of Emigration Road west of Cooch Behar ;
4. Wooden bridge 80 inch long in the 18<sup>th</sup> mile of Cooch Behar – Sitalkuchi Road ;
5. Pucca culvert 4 inch diameter in the 10<sup>th</sup> mile of Gadhadhar Road ;
6. One wooden bridge 10 span in the 26<sup>th</sup> mile of Lowkuti Road ;
7. & 8. Two wooden bridge in the 2<sup>nd</sup> mile of Ratherdanga Road ;
9. One wooden bridge 43 inch long in the 9<sup>th</sup> mile of Falakutta Road ;
10. Pucca culvert 4 inch diameter in the 6<sup>th</sup> mile of Bhetaguri - Nazirhat Road ;
11. Wooden bridge 15 inch span in the 2<sup>nd</sup> mile of Chilakhana – Bhatibari Road ;
12. Pucca culvert 4 inch span in the 8<sup>th</sup> mile of Cooch Behar - Garodhat Road ;
13. Pucca culvert 5 inch span in the 9<sup>th</sup> mile of Cooch Behar - Garodhat Road ;
14. Wooden bridge 60 inch long in the 22<sup>nd</sup> mile of Cooch Behar – Garodhat Road .

From 1920 to 1922 a huge number of bridge and culvert construction work taken by P.W.D . These plan of work consisted of the following measures :<sup>27</sup>

1. Four feet diameter pucca culvert in the 13<sup>th</sup> mile of Changrabanda Feeder Road ;
2. Sixty feet timber bridge in the 21<sup>st</sup> mile of the Road from Cooch Behar – Garodhat Road ;
3. Thirty - two feet timber bridge in the 3<sup>rd</sup> mile of Chenakata -Bairagirhat villege path ;
4. Thirteen feet timber bridge in the 12<sup>th</sup> mile of Hazrarhat to Nayarhat and Bairagirhat villege Path ;
5. Seven feet timber bridge in the 2<sup>nd</sup> mile of Chilahati villege Path;
6. Three feet diameter pucca culvert in the 13<sup>th</sup> mile of Changrabanda Feeder Road ;
7. Six feet span pucca culvert in the 4<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> mile of Lowkuti Road ;
8. Four feet & six feet span pucca culvert in the 12<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> mile of Patlakhawa Road ;
9. A timber bridge in the 5<sup>th</sup> mile of Mathabhanga – Moranga Road ;
10. Construction of iron bridge on the Ghargharia river and Lowkuti Road near Marugunj ;
11. One span of pucca culvert on Houghton Road .

From the above analysis it can be concluded that Maharaja was

well aware about the easy communication system within the State and the continuous construction work moved steadily during the rule of the benevolent Maharaja of Cooch Behar .

**Establishment of Dynamo House ( Engine shed )** During the reign of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan, establishment of Dynamo House was a new type of scheme moved by the Public Works Department (P.W.D) under the recommendation of Cooch Behar State authority . In 1915 this scheme implemented at a cost of Rs. 11,333 . This house consisted of a hall 50 inch x 40 inch with a front verandah 6 inch width . There were two concrete beds 7 inch deep 22 feet 6 inch x 16 feet 6 inch each of the seats for Engines . The house is 3 inch high at plinth level and 27 feet at parapet level .<sup>28</sup> It was founded for supplying hot water to the Palace.

**Nripendra Narayan Memorial Hall at Mekhligunj for meeting purpose**

For meeting purpose a general assembly hall , named Nripendra Narayan Memorial Hall established at Mekhligunj on the recommendation of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan in February 1916 . It was estimated that an amount of Rs. 5,865 might be spent for the completion of the work .<sup>29</sup>

**Reopening of Veterinary Hospital for animal treatment** In the field of medical treatment a new dimension was introduced through the re - opening of Veterinary Hospital for animal treatment in August ,1915 . It has a background history,which is as follows a Veterinary Assistant was lent by the Veterinary Department, Bengal , to take charge of the hospital . The institution was inspected by the Government Veterinary Department . This Department had equipments for surgery purpose of

the animals . This hospital helped the people of town and mofussil who would domesticate animals .<sup>30</sup>

**Arrangement of training of police officers and constables at police training**

**college** Maharaja Jitendra Narayan took active initiatives for the training of police officers and constables . In 1916 one cadet was sent to the Police Training College at Sardah .<sup>31</sup> At the same time it need to mention that Maharaja sanctioned Rs. 5,440 for improving the condition of the police force of Cooch Behar .<sup>32</sup>

**Introduction of various acts for Legislative welfare** In the sphere of administration some renovation introduced in 1921 in the Legislative act of Cooch Behar , which were as follows :<sup>33</sup> **(1)** Act – I of 1921 – The Cooch Behar General Clauses Act ; **(2)** Act II of 1921 – The Code of Civil Procedure ; **(3)** Act III of 1921 – The Transfer of Property Act ; **(4)** Act IV of 1921 – The Cooch Behar Limitation Act ; **(5)** Act V of 1921 – The Cooch Behar Majority Act ; **(6)** Act VI of 1921 – The Cooch Behar Registration Act ; **(7)** Act VII of 1921 – The Cooch Behar Guardians & Wards Act ; **(8)** Act VIII of 1921 – The Negotiable Instrument Act ; **(9)** Act IX of 1921 – The Criminal Tribes Act ; **(10)** Act X of 1921 – The Cooch Behar Interest Act ; **(11)** Act XI of 1921 – The Cooch Behar Suits Valuation Act ; **(12)** Act XII of 1921 – The Cooch Behar Bankers' Books Evidence Amendment Act .

**Lac cultivation in Cooch Behar was a preservative Cultivation** During the year 1918 Maharaja was pleased to declare the cultivation of the Lac insect and the production and manufacture of Lac within the State of Cooch Behar to be a State monopoly . No person could cultivate the Lac insect or produce or manufacture

Lac within the state of Cooch Behar without the permission of the Maharaja . Here it need to mention that all wild plum and palash trees in the state barring those growing on bonafide homestead land were also declared State property . Cutting , destroying or diminishing the value or utility of jujube or palash plants or anything done to the trees by which the capacity for multiplication of Lac producing insects is or may be injuriously affected has been prohibited and made penal under Maharajas' order .<sup>34</sup>

**Development of Industrial and Agricultural resources** In 1918 Maharaja Jitendra Narayan introduced a new scheme for the development of industrial and agricultural resources in Cooch Behar . Maharaja decided to form a Board of Agriculture and Industry in Cooch Behar and appointed Mr. J.L .Hinds as the supervisor of the Revenue Department in 1<sup>st</sup> April 1918 .<sup>35</sup>

**Recognition of the Rights of the illegally settled tenants in Cooch Behar** During the year 1918 the Dewan of Cooch Behar submitted a report on the number of illegally settled cultivators occupying lands in Cooch Behar dealing with their condition and the relation , they bear to the immediately superior landlords and submitting proposals for their protection from possible eviction . In view of the fact that these cultivators are liable to eviction and ejection unless they can establish their right in the Court of Justice . They had been holding such lands continuously for 12 years . Maharaja deemed it desirable and necessary , leaving out of consideration the length and duration of possession held by them . To protect them from ejection and to grant them such rights as would enable them to improve

and enrich the soil and cultivate it without disturbance except on reasonable grounds justifying eviction . Maharaja Jitendra Narayan was accordingly pleased to order that these persons be recognised in the Terijes (final record of rights) of the new settlement under the title of “Cultivating Rayat” and to declare in detail the incidents of their rights . Measure for prevention of illegal settlement in future are under Maharajas’ consideration .<sup>36</sup>

**Settlement operations in Cooch Behar under Royal guidance**      The settlement operations under the royal patronage had some sort of characteristic element in Cooch Behar . This segment (settlement operations) moved in a new way during the reign of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan . The latest Revenue Survey map of Cooch Behar was one of 1868 - 70 . Here it deserve to mention that no fresh maps were prepared after the first Settlement of the state of Cooch Behar which was concluded in the seventies .<sup>37</sup> Hence it was decided to have a Traverse Survey as well as a Cadastral Survey of the state on the lines adopted by the Government of Bengal . The Traverse Survey began in 1912 - 13 and was completed in 1916 - 17 . The State of Cooch Behar was divided into 7 main circuits and 68 sub – circuits . Cadastral Survey ( Kistwar ) and preliminary record – writing ( Khanapuri ) began in 1913-14 . The soil classification adopted in the Rakamcharcha Settlement of 1889 was followed in the present settlement . For purpose of Kistwar and Khanapuri , the paraganas were taken up in the following order :<sup>38</sup>

**Table - 12**

<b><u>Year</u></b>	<b><u>Paragana</u></b>
1913 - 14	Cooch Behar ;
1914 – 15	Cooch Behar and Mathabhanga ;
1915 – 16	Cooch Behar, Mathabhanga, Lalbazar , Dinhata and Mekhligunj ;
1916 -17	Dinhata , Tufangunj , Mekhligunj and Lalbazar ;
1917 - 18	Dinhata and Tufangunj .

**Source :** Ganguli , Karali Charan , Survey and Settlement operations in the Cooch Behar ( 1913 – 27) ,Cooch Behar State Press , Cooch Behar , 1930, P - 19

In 1918 Maharajas' Council has been pleased to order that<sup>39</sup> –

- a) The persons ( illegally settled persons , continuously holding the land for 12 years should be protected from eviction) shall be recognised in the Terijes of the new settlement under the title of “Cultivating Raiyats ” ;
- b) The existing rents of Cultivating Raiyats are now recorded in the Terijes ( final record of rights ) as the legal rent payable shall not prejudicially affect the percentages of profit under the law heretofore by superior grades of tenure – holder;
- c) Tenant shall file a petition for recognition on stamp papers, fee being assessed at Rs. 5 per **Hal** or a portion of a **Hal** and another petition (if not filled already) on a paper bearing Rs. 2 stamp for copy of the map ;

Maharaja has been pleased to accord general approval to the three following points being left in abeyance to be settled when the assessment proposals and the question of new lease of Jotedars come up for discussion, the points left in abeyance may be originally quoted :<sup>40</sup>

“

1. Are we to insist on a Registered Patta being now given to all Cultivating Raiyats ?

If so, will the form there of be prescribed by the Dewan of Maharajas' & Council, in terms of the incidents of the tenancy ?

2. What measures are to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the state of things which the present proposals are meant to remedy and put an end to ?

3. To what extent, if at all, the rents of Cultivating Raiyats should be taken at the basis of assessment of the tenure holders above them ?”

Apart from that regarding soil classification for the Rakamcharcha Settlement, it was divided under the following four heads :-<sup>41</sup>

(i) *Awal* - ( first class ) : Land which is called *dahala* ( low and even land ) falls under this class . It has a small portion of sand and fertile .

(ii) *Duyem* - ( second class ) : This was even land , higher than *awal* the portion of sand is greater and the crop - producing power less than *Awal* .

(iii) *Sheyam* - ( Third class ) : This is higher than *Duyem* land but not so even . The portion of sand and clay is about equal .

(iv) *Chaharam* - ( fourth class ) : This is *danga* or high land and contains a large portion of sand .

In a Resolution on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1920, published in the Cooch Behar Gazette of the 26<sup>th</sup> April, the elimination of all redink entries and the restoration of the original classification of soil had been ordered. Thus the settlement operation under Maharaja Jitendra Narayan worked systematically.

### **B) Benevolent Measures in Cultural Field**

In the sphere of Culture, Maharaja Jitendra Narayan's period was a remarkable one. These measures were as follows:

**Publication of Paricharika Patrika – royal magazine in Bengali** In 1917 Paricharika Patrika was published. Before its publication there was no evidence of published journal from the royal court of Cooch Behar. It was for the first time that a magazine published in Bengali and edited by a royal woman, Nirupama Debi wife of Maharaj - kumar Victor Nityendra Narayan (brother of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan). This journal explained on the day to day life style of women's in the palace and at the same time it inspired women's to take education for self confidence. Maharaja Jiten - dra Narayan sanctioned an amount of Rs. 655 for the purchase of fresh type ma - chine in the State press.<sup>42</sup>

In 1918 Maharaja appointed an archeologist for the preser - vation of ancient icon, sculpture in Cooch Behar.<sup>43</sup> Apart from that Maharaja not only patronized Paricharika Patrika (magazine), he made grant for the establishment of Sahitya Sabha under the presidentship of his brother Maharajkumar Victor Nity - endra Narayan.<sup>44</sup>

**Maintaining Reserve Forests for the preservation of various trees** Preservation of

trees was a passion of the Maharaja Jitendra Narayan and for it a number of forests regularly maintained by the Public Works Department . All the Forests ,maintained according to the particular needs of each . Such an attempt indicated that Maharaja wanted to maintain ecological and environmental atmosphere. The following chart of 1917 shows that preservation of various trees in the State was truly remarkable :<sup>45</sup>

**Table - 13**

Sl. No.	Locality	Class of Forests	Natural or Cultural	Areas.		
				B	K	Ch.
1.	Nilkuty	Sishu	Cultural.	125	0	0
2.	Do.	Do.	Do.	121	0	0
3.	Do.	Do.	Do.	2	15	0
4.	Peelkhana	Do.	Do.	0	13	0
5.	Charakerkuty	Do.	Do.	585	6	12
6.	GhegirghatNatuarpur	Do.	Do.	300	1	18
7.	Nababgunj Balasi Torsa	Do.	Do.	178	13	7
8.	Char Forest	Do.	Natural.	17	0	4
9.	Kholta	Do.	Cultural.	8	0	0
10.	Bogribari	Do.	Do.	10	0	0
11.	Gossanimari	Sal	Natural.	67	0	0
12.	Jigabari	Do.	Do.	1	15	5
13.	Natabari(charaljani)	Do.	Do.	57	0	0
14.	Charan Sathalee	Do.	Do.	67	0	0
15.	Chota Salbari	Do.	Do.	2	15	0
16.	Bara Salbari	Do.	Do.	50	0	0
17.	Nilkuty	Do.	Cultural.	1	0	0
18.	Do.	Do.	Do.	7	0	0
19.	Mathabhanga					
	Balarhat	Do.	Natural.	38	15	0
20.	Teldhar Bodeswary	Do.	Do.	261	2	0
21.	Garati	Do.	Do.	124	0	0
22.	Nilkuty	Teak	Cultural.	3	0	0
23.	Peelkhana	Do.	Do.	2	5	0
24.	Dowaguri	Do.	Do.	3	0	0
25.	Nilkuty	Do.	Do.	8	2	0
26.	Talliguri	Do.	Do.	3	0	0
27.	Kholta	Do.	Do.	6	0	0
<b>Total</b>				<b>2050</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>

**Source:** Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State( 1917-18),p, 28 .

**Introduction of Stamp with portrait of the ruler** On 17<sup>th</sup> September 1915 ,(the date of the anniversary of Maharaja Jitendra Narayans' installation) Maharaja Jitendra Narayan implemented new adhesive Stamps , printed with the portrait of the ruler i.e the portrait of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan. Such kind of implementation was a symbolic measure on the part of the ruler .<sup>46</sup>

**Formation of Cooch Behari Chhatra Samiti for welfare of Cooch Behari ( natives of the state )** In 1920 Cooch Behar felt the heat of Non Co- operation Movement . But this movement created a little enthusiasm in Cooch Behar and one out come of this movement was the formation of the body namely, Cooch Behari Chhatra Samiti , composed entirely of natives of the State . Maharaja was gracious enough to become the patron of the organisation . Maharaja granted stipend and scholarship for the natives , those who wanted to educate .<sup>47</sup>

**Control of gambling in the State of Cooch Behar in fairs** Gambling known as 'Triguti Khela' , allowed at fairs held in Cooch Behar under license issued to professional gamblers . It was held that gambling was not illegal in the state of Cooch Behar authorized by proper authorities under license issued in the usual form by the Town Committee in cases where the latter are in charge of the fair .<sup>48</sup>

**Fairs and festivals in the State of Cooch Behar** The Princely state of Cooch Behar was famous for fairs and festivals . During the reign of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan , fairs and festivals held at Garodhat , Phulbari , Mekhligunj and Changra-banda areas . There were fairs also held at Dinhat , Haldibari . In 1920 a fair namely , Gadadhar Mela was held in Taluk Ambari at a confluence of the Kalja

-nee and the Gadadhar rivers . During the reign of Maharaja , Debibari Mela and Rash Mela was also held at Cooch Behar . All these fairs were regularly monitored by the Town Committee of Cooch Behar under the guidance of Maharaja .<sup>49</sup> Apart from that the annual Pooneah ceremony and shooting camp at Patlakhawa organized by the State authority .

**(C) Benevolent Measures in Economic Field** Maharaja Jitendra Narayan followed the tradition of the predecessors in this field . The following measure adopted for the welfare of Cooch Behar .

**Following the Tradition** In following the tradition , Maharaja equally managed all the aspect of economic field. He maintained various funds, which were essential for management of the state ( Cooch Behar ) and also maintained annual budget in every year .

i) The main funds were as follows :<sup>50</sup>

1. Anti- cholera Fund :- It deals with the work of protecting the people from Cholera which was epidemic disease .
2. Resettlement Fund :- It deals with the work of settlement operations . In settlement operations annual expense layout from this fund.
3. Children's Fund :- This fund providing the annual expenses regarding the education of the royal children .
4. Special Fund :- In maintaining the prevailing situation , this fund laying the money as required .
5. Reserve Fund :- Cooch Behar State authority also maintained such type

of fund for annual savings from state income .

6. Town Committee Fund :- This fund layout the annual expanses for the maintenance of sanitation in Cooch Behar .

ii) Annual Budget for Every year :-

Cooch Behar State authority maintained budget in every year , which helped the administration in managing the State and also motivated it to take more new welfare works . In budget Maharaja actively participated and recommend annual expenditure for education , medical , Public Works Department , Cooch Behar State Railway , various funds .<sup>51</sup>

As per the benevolent measures are concerned , the reign of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan was a notable one . As a King of the State of Cooch Behar he played a dual role . On the one hand he activated all the traditional avenues of development (xerox copy ) in Cooch Behar which were started by his father Maharaja Nripendra Narayan and on the other hand he implemented some benevolent schemes for the welfare of Cooch Behar . One of the passion of Maharaja was to preserve ancient icons . For that reason in the annual meeting of Sahitya Sabha he announced that the state authority would take immediate steps for the preservation of antiquities in the state .

Maharaja Jitendra Narayan was an outstanding ruler, who gave a new momentum to the state in all the avenues as it was generated by his forefathers . Not only that , more or less it is true to sumup his period as a period of combination of traditional trend with that of culmination of new schemes .

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1915 – 16 ), pp, 20-21 .
3. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1916 – 17 ), p, 32.
4. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1917 – 18 ), p, 35.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.* , p, 3.
7. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1918 – 19 ), p, 36.
8. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1920 – 21 ), p, 1.
9. *Ibid.* , p, 2 .
10. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1921 – 22 ), p, 3.
11. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1913 – 14 ), p, 33.
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13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.* , p, 8.
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18. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1919 – 20 ), p, 36.
19. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1916 – 17 ), p, 32.
20. A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1915 – 16 ), p, 26.
21. *Ibid.*
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24. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1913 – 14 )*, pp, 17 – 18 .

25. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1917 – 18 )*, p, 32.

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27. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1921 – 22 )*, pp, 31 – 32 .

28. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1915 – 16 )*, p, 25.

29. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1916 – 17 )*, p, 30.

30. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1915 – 16 )*, p, 18.

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32. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1918 – 19 )*, p, 2.

33. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1921 – 22 )*, p, 2.

34. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1918 – 19 )*, p, 2 .

35. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1917 – 18 )*, p, 2 – 3 .

36. Ganguli, Karali Charan , *Survey and Settlement operations in the Cooch Behar State (1913 – 27 )*, Cooch Behar State Press , Cooch Behar , 1930, p, 19.

37. *Ibid.* , p, 18 .

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Ibid.* , p, 20 .

“ The incidents of the rights of the *Cultivating Raiyats* Shall be -

- i) They shall be heritable and transferable .
- ii) Cultivating Raiyats shall not be ejected except in execution

of a decree passed on the grounds fully specified in the Tenancy Act in force, such as improper use of land rendering it unfit for purposes of tenancy or breach of condition or covenant consistent with the *Tenancy Law*.

iii) The tenancy shall be protected from extinction in case of sales of jotes for arrears of Revenue or of sales of, under-tenures under the operation of the law.

iv) There shall be merger in case of purchase by the immediate superior landlord.

v) The existing rent of all *Cultivating Raiyats* shall be recorded in the Terijes as the legal rent payable, and shall continue to be paid throughout the currency of the new settlement, and shall not be altered save by the decree of a Competent Court and in accordance with the provisions of the Tenancy Act in this behalf.”

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Ibid.*, p, 26.

42. *A.A.R of the C.B.S ( 1916 – 17 )*, p, 50.

43. *A.A.R of the C.B.S (1918 – 19 )*, p, 2.

44. *Smaranika , Khudra Patra - Patrika Parishad , Uttarbanga , 17 – 18 th December , 2010 ; p, 15 .*

45. *A.A.R . of the C.B.S. ( 1917 – 18 )*, p, 28.

46. *A.A.R . of the C.B.S. ( 1915 – 16 )*, p, 2.

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51. Roy , Swapan Kumar , *Prachin Kochbiharer Sampurna Itibritta* ( Bengali), Baiwala, Kolkata, 2006 , p, 298 .

*CHAPTER – V*  
**MAHARAJA JAGADDIPENDRA NARAYAN**  
**(1922 -1949 )**  
**- THE INNOVATIVE RULER OF**  
**COOCH BEHAR**

## ***CHAPTER – V***

### **Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan (1922 -1949 )**

#### **- The Innovative Ruler of Cooch Behar.**

The history of Cooch Behar specially its development reaches the peak of success during the reign of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan (1922 – 1949) . Due to his minor age , he was under the guidance of Rajmata Indira Devi and the Cooch Behar State Regency Council from 1922 to 1936 . During this period Cooch Behar State Regency Council looked after the State's affairs on behalf of minor Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan .

In fact his period can be divided into two parts . First, The Regency Councils' activities on behalf of minor Maharaja and after 1936 when Maharaja attained maturity and followed the tradition in social , cultural and economic field . Secondly, he implemented some new and modern innovative schemes . Maharaja like his father was a benevolent ruler . One of the special features of his nature was that most of the time during his day to day activity , was spent on the queries of the smooth running of the administration . He always wanted to make his people happy and for that reason gold - silver trophy, certificates were given to the people . Never the less his period was a golden era in the history of Cooch Behar .

Let us now explain the role of the Cooch Behar State Regency Council which may be discussed under the following heads :

**A. Development in Social field** This arena covers the educational , medical , veterinary , P.W.D , Railway System etc. , which were as follows :

**Education** During his rule important measures were taken by the Cooch Behar State Regency Council towards the spread of education . In 1922 – 23 the Education Committee of Cooch Behar implemented a further impetus towards the improvement of the sub - divisional Higher English Schools and the issue was that there must be a trained B.T teacher in each of the Higher English Schools . As a result, permission was obtained from the syndicate , Calcutta University , to send up candidates for the Matriculation Examination in Hygiene from the Dinhata Higher English School with effect from 1924 and the Tufangunj Nripendra Narayan Memorial Higher English School also received permanent recognition from the University.<sup>1</sup> A scheme for the improvement of the pay and prospect of the pundits of all the Primary and Secondary Schools in the State was submitted.

Subsequently it was sanctioned by the honourable Cooch Behar Regency Council , offering better inducement for works to the teacher and giving scope for suitable men in the department .<sup>2</sup> In this year another proposal was introduced in the undergraduate education and it was to open B. Sc. Class in the Victoria College . Since the formation of the Victoria College , the academic stream was only for arts subjects . This proposal was submitted and sanctioned by the Cooch Behar State Regency Council and side by side the recognition of the Calcutta University was applied for . In response to this application the University Inspector paid a visit to the college.<sup>3</sup>

In 1925 implementation had been made on admission and transfer rules for students in higher English Schools.<sup>4</sup> The formation of Schools for the spread of education was on going under the guidance of State Council. Thus, the number of schools were increased to 344 ( Primary and Secondary School ).<sup>5</sup> In 1928 such number was increased to 350, which indicates that spread of education in Cooch Behar was phenomenal.<sup>6</sup> On 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1930 one state model school was converted into a Middle English School.<sup>7</sup> In 1931 Sunity Academy ( girls' school ) was recognised by the Calcutta University with permission to present candidates for the Matriculation Examination to be held on 1933.<sup>8</sup> Such implementation indicates that girls' education received a warm support in Cooch Behar. Similarly, in 1932 another issue was implemented regarding the admission of girl students in the High English Schools of the State of Cooch Behar. The Regency Council accorded provisional sanction to the admission of 5 girl students for co - education in the Mathabhanga and the Mekligunj High English Schools. It was directed that the Managing Committee of the Schools concerned would make suitable arrangements for retiring rooms for the girls and that the Head Masters and other teachers of the Schools would accept the responsibility involved in this new departure.<sup>9</sup> During his reign ( Jagaddipendra Narayan ), girl students were admitted in the Victoria college to spread undergraduate education among the girls'.<sup>10</sup> In 1934 Cooch Behar State Regency Council framed new rules for the grant of free studentships in state institutions. Here it is to be noted that these grants were open to the Cooch Behar subjects, sons and daughters

of the State Servants ( Cooch Behar ), and other permanent residents of Cooch Behar , eighty per cent. being reserved for Cooch Behar subjects .<sup>11</sup> In this year apart from Middle English Schools, State Model Schools, Middle Vernacular Schools, Primary Schools, Upper Primary Schools , Lower Primary Schools , Night Schools , Girls' Schools ; the Industrial School which was under the instruction of Cooch Behar Bayan Silpa Vidyalaya , the only technical school in Cooch Behar , got financial support from the authority .<sup>12</sup> In 1937 under the revised regulations of the Calcutta University , elementary scientific knowledge has been made a compulsory subject and accordingly steps have been taken for imparting instruction in this subject. A special grant of Rs. 376 was sanctioned by the Cooch Behar State Council for the equipment of the science room . The necessary apparatus , chemicals , charts and specimens of rocks and minerals have been purchased . A demonstration room , too , had been fitted with a sink and water connection .<sup>13</sup>

Besides all these, Cooch Behar State authority also took active initiatives in the sphere of education . The following comparative statement shows the receipt and expenditure for the year 1939 – 40 , the average cost of educating each student in under graduate section and the state share of cost per capita :<sup>14</sup>

	Rs.	A.	P.
EXPENDITURE{			
1. Establishment -----	40,320	0	11
2. Contingencies -----	3,278	15	0
	-----		
Total----	43,598	15	11

RECEIPTS {	1. Receipts from fees etc. -----	19,578	0	0
	2. State grant -----	24,020	15	11
	3. Cost for education of each student per annum --	143	4	2
	4. State share of the cost for each student per annum –	78	14	10

In addition to that it is to be noted that the privilege of free tuition was granted by the Maharaja to all State (Cooch Behar) scholars .

In 1940 Maharaja took initiatives for the Mahomedan students of Cooch Behar . He made a grant for the Madrasah and Muktabs . The following chart shows that what amount of initiatives taken by the State authority in this arena : <sup>15</sup>

<u>Statistics.</u>	<u>Table - 14</u>	
	<u>1939 – 40</u>	<u>1940-41</u>
a) Number of Institutions -		
Junior Madrasahs -----	10	9
Muktabs -----	29	31
	} 39	} 40
b) No. of pupils in Junior Madrasahs	668	699
c) Do in Muktabs -----	884	956
d) Total No. of pupils in all classes of schools	7,037	7,717
e) Pupil in schools reserved for mahomedans	1,452	1,655
f) Do. In the other schools -----	5,585	6,062
g) No. of girls reading in schools	---	220
reserved for Mahomedans		

**Source :** Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State (1940 - 41 ) ,p, 61.

Thus the education system of Cooch Behar moved steadily under the guidance of Regency Council on behalf of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan at the initial stages and later by the Maharaja (mature stage) himself.

**Medical** The medical system of Cooch Behar was a sound one during the reign of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan. In Cooch Behar the main building of the Sudder Hospital being old and was in a very dilapidated condition and was unfit for further use as a hospital. Therefore, the State Regency Council of Cooch Behar, had been pleased to construct a two storeyed building to be built in the memory of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan.<sup>16</sup> For maternity cases in 1923 one midwife was employed at Dinhata and another employed at Mathabhanga.<sup>17</sup> In 1924 some measures were taken by the state authority to cure people of the disease of cholera. Temporary medical officers were appointed and a few hands from the existing permanent staff with compounders were sent to the mufussil to cope with the diseases. Two temporary dispensaries were opened in this manner, one at Kholta and other at Bhaiskhuchi. Anti-Cholera inoculation was introduced which proved successful. The police and the military forces and the sudder hospital staff were inoculated first as a preventive measures against cholera. A large number of tube-wells were sunk for the supply of pure drinking water in the cholera infected places. There were altogether 1,603 cholera cases out of which 1,113 ended fatally and 490 were cured.<sup>18</sup> In 1926 reports of cholera came from all the sub-divisions of the state and the disease threatened to spread in epidemic form. The disease was, however, checked in all the sub-divisions except Mathabhanga

where it broke out in an virulent form . The sub – divisions were divided into five circles with a medical officer and staff for each circle , to deal with the outbreak . A large number of tube – wells were sunk in the affected areas to supply pure drinking water .<sup>19</sup> Several taluks of Cooch Behar were infected by small – pox in 1927 . In order to cope with the disease , two temporary medical officers were appointed by the authority .<sup>20</sup> To improve the treatment facilities , Cooch Behar State Council permitted the civil surgeons of the sudder hospital to attend the All India Medical Conference .<sup>21</sup> The hospitals and dispensaries , sudder jail , sub – jails, police stations and out posts were regularly inspected by the Civil surgeon . Several schools were also inspected by him .<sup>22</sup> The health of the students of the Jenkins School was examined by the sanitary officer assisted by the Sanitary Inspector of the sudder circle .<sup>23</sup> Apart from that Cooch Behar State Council regularly monitored various other aspect in the sphere of medical treatment . The statement below shows the receipt under different heads of medical department for the last three years :<sup>24</sup>

**Table - 15**

<b>Heads</b>	<b>1927- 28</b>		<b>1928 – 29</b>		<b>1929- 30</b>	
	Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.
1. Prescription fees	1,307	4 0	1,377	2 0	1,418	4 0
2. Sale proceeds of Medicine	1,039	15 6	1,083	9 0	1,112	0 3
3. Ditto bottles, &c.	72	12 6	82	7 0	90	8 0
4. House rent of Rajmata cottage wards	184	0 0	202	8 0	371	8 0
5. Subscription for the aided dispensaries	1,362	0 0	1,068	0 0	972	0 0
<b>Total -</b>	<b>4,016</b>	<b>0 0</b>	<b>3,813</b>	<b>13 0</b>	<b>3,964</b>	<b>4 3</b>

**Source :** Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State ( 1929 -30 ) , p, 67 .

In 1928 a clinical laboratory was formed by the Medical department of Cooch Behar for diagnostic purposes in the town, because at Cooch Behar Tropical diseases practically prevailed throughout the year. Hence since the beginning of the year 1928, a regular clinical laboratory was started in a miniature scale in the sudder hospital under a specially trained sub – assistant surgeon and every effort being made to improve it gradually. <sup>25</sup>

For the people of Sitai a cottage dispensary at Sitai was opened with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> august, 1932. For the maintenance of the dispensary monthly subscriptions amounting to Rs. 30 was available from local sources. It has been accommodated for the present in a private rent – free house and the Superintendent of vaccination, a sub – assistant surgeon was placed in its charge. Regarding vaccination, during the reign of Maharaja Jagadipendra Narayan, serious steps were taken by the medical department. In 1933 four vaccination inspectors and twenty - five vaccinators were engaged in vaccination work. A subsidiary center for anti – treatment was established at the sudder hospital on the 15<sup>th</sup> December in 1933. It was under an officer of the state medical department, who had previously undergone a course of training at the Pasteur Institute, Kasauli.

The State Council sanctioned a sum of Rs. 140 for the last months in 1936 for laying out a garden in the compound of the hospital. Under the direction of the Garden Superintendent of the state it was laid out and it had added considerably to the beauty of the hospital building and it was thought that

it had not been without beneficial effect psychologically on the more sensitive patients .<sup>26</sup>

In 1937 the medical department of Cooch Behar sent sub- assistant surgeon of Sudder Hospital at Calcutta School of Tropical Medicine for receiving training on anti – malaria work .<sup>27</sup> During this year a survey of almost all the houses of the town was made . The weeds and jungle in the tanks behind the Palace Stables were cleaned . Larvicides were sprayed on stagnant water in the town. The pucca drains on the eastern side of the town, the water troughs maintained for cows and buffaloes at the crossings of roads , unused wells, and stagnant water in drains by the side of hydrants , had been found to be the main breeding – places of mosquitoes , especially during the dry season .<sup>28</sup>

The other part of medical treatment i. e the veterinary department also developed very steadily during the reign of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan . There was only one veterinary assistant surgeon in the service of the State . As he was in charge of the veterinary hospital in Cooch Behar town it was not possible for him to visit the rural area often , and in fact he used to go to the rural area and then there was a particularly bad outbreak of cattle disease . The Regency Council of Cooch Behar decided that the veterinary department should be strengthened , accordingly , a second veterinary assistant surgeon for touring was appointed in 1924 .<sup>29</sup>

Thus the Medical system of Cooch Behar under Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan was a commendable one .

**Public Works Department ( P.W.D )** During the reign of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan the public works department ( P.W.D ) worked on the following schemes under the guidance of State Council -

**i) Head post – office** A two storied pucca building for the Post Office was completed in 1924 . Its main building consisting of two storeys . The ground floor has a big central hall measuring 55' x 40', for the post office proper with a treasury room 12' x 10' counter &c . To the right of the central hall was a telephone exchange Room . At the back a record room was provided . The other three sides were enclosed with 7' wide open verandahs . On the 1<sup>st</sup> floor were the quarters for the post and telegraph masters with separate entrances and staircases .<sup>30</sup>

**ii) Re decoration of rooms in Palace** In 1927 the following alterations had also been carried out :<sup>31</sup>

- a) Removal of Her Highness' staircase into His late Highness .
- b) Enlargement of late Maharaja Jitendra Narayan's Study room into a bigger sitting room by enclosing a portion of the next room .
- c) Removal of the northern central staircase into the passage to the west of the late father Maharaja's suite of rooms and conversion of the staircase room into a bathroom .
- d) Conversion of the library room into a sitting room , small drawing room into a bed room , gun room into a billiard room and the billiard room into a library .
- e) Providing a complete marble flooring to the new billiard room and marble flooring border to several of the rooms .

f) Replacing the old large doors with either etched and embossed glass panels or ground glass panels with a fan light on top .

**iii) Police barracks at Cooch Behar** The work of constructing a two storied pucca building for the police barracks at Cooch Behar was in progress throughout the year 1928 . Rs. 47,647 was spent during the year .<sup>32</sup>

**iv) Construction of a dispensary at Bamanhat** A corrugated iron roofed building on steel trusses and 10" pucca walls consisting of 4 rooms viz. - one doctor's room 17' x 12', one operation room 12' x 8' , one store room 12' x 8' and one dispensary 9' x 8' with two side verandahs . The whole work was completed in 1928 .<sup>33</sup>

**v) Building for Cooch Behar State Press** A pucca building 181'- 5" x 35' - 9" having 7' wide verandah in front and two sides were constructed in 1930 at a total cost of Rs. 39,968 with exception of steps and surface drains . The building consists of 7 rooms viz. , one Bengali composing room 35' - 4" x 25', one English composing room 67'- 3 ½" x 25' , one printing machine room 25' x 23' , one clerks' room 25' x 12' , one record room and other officer's room each measuring 12' x 12' - 3 ½" .<sup>34</sup>

**vi) Construction of a Circuit House in Cooch Behar Town** In 1930 a two - storied pucca building having in the ground floor two rooms 20'x 18' each one to be used as dining room and the other drawing room , 2 office rooms 12' x 8' each , 2 bath rooms one 13'- 3" x 8'- 6' , another 8' x 8' , one stair case room 10' x 20' , one pantry 10' x 8' , one store room 10' x 8' and two small verandahs in back 13' - 6" x 8' and 6' x 8' and a verandah 8' wide in front and the two sides . Besides the above

there is a carriage porch at the front . In the first floor it has two bed rooms 20' x 18' each , 2 dressing rooms 12' x 8' , 2 bath rooms 8' x 8' each and another bath room 13' – 3" x 8' and 8' wide verandahs in front and back .<sup>35</sup>

**vii) Construction of Khas Mahal building** The following buildings were constructed at a cost of Rs. 3,582 in 1938.<sup>36</sup>

a) A corrugated iron roofed building with two rooms measuring 12' x 12' and 12' x 10' with 4 ft. wide verandah, pucca plinth , wall and terraced floor , was constructed at Mekhligunj .

b) A corrugated iron roofed building with two rooms measuring 12' x 12', each with 4 ft. wide verandah and pucca plinth , wall, terraced floor, constructed at Mathabhanga .

c) A corrugated iron roofed building with two rooms , one measuring 12' x 12' and the other 12'x 10' on wood posts and frames and with mat walls were constructed at Haldibari .

**viii) Construction of the military barracks** In 1938 a new barrack was constructed at a total cost of Rs. 7,488. This barrack was totally reserved for military force.<sup>37</sup>

**ix) Communication** In this avenue there were a lot of schemes implemented by the Public Works Department which were as follows :

In 1923 P.W.D took the following works (construction of bridges and culvert) regarding communication in Cooch Behar.<sup>38</sup>

1. Four feet span pucca culvert in the 1<sup>st</sup> mile of Baneswar to Natabari road .
2. Eight feet span pucca culvert in the 6<sup>th</sup> mile of the road from Cooch Behar to Garodhat .

3. Four feet span pucca culvert in the 9<sup>th</sup> mile of the road from Cooch Behar to Garodhat .
4. Five feet span pucca culvert in the 10<sup>th</sup> mile of the road from Cooch Behar to Garodhat .
5. Six feet span pucca culvert in the 7<sup>th</sup> mile of Patlakhawa Road .
6. Five feet span pucca culvert in the 5<sup>th</sup> mile of Patlakhawa Road .
7. Four feet span pucca culvert in the 3<sup>rd</sup> mile of Shahebgunj - Bamanhat Road .
8. Strengthening the Iron Bridge over the Girja river in the four mile of the village path from Dewangunj to Chilahati .
9. A timber bridge in the 17<sup>th</sup> mile of the Cooch Behar - Sitalkuchi Road .
10. Adding a span to the wooden bridge in the 21<sup>st</sup> mile Dinjata - Mekhligunj Road .
11. A 20 feet span bridge on the 7<sup>th</sup> mile of Cooch Behar – Sitalkuchi Road .
12. A masonry bridge in the 45<sup>th</sup> mile of the Emigration Road west of Cooch Behar .
13. One feet span masonry culvert on the Haughton street in the town of Cooch Behar .

In 1925 the following culverts and bridges were constructed by the P.W.D. <sup>39</sup>

1. One 4' span pucca culvert on the 6<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> mile of Patlakhawa Road .
2. One 5' span pucca culvert on the 3<sup>rd</sup> mile of Kakina Road .
3. One 4' span pucca culvert on the 20<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> mile of Kakina Road .
4. One 6' span pucca culvert on the 3<sup>rd</sup> mile of Janaki- Tiwary Road .
5. One 12' span timber bridge on the 6<sup>th</sup> mile of the Changrabanda - Jamaladah Road .
6. One 6' span pucca culvert on the 7<sup>th</sup> mile of the Phulbari – Chilkiguri Road .

7. One 3' diameter corrugated iron culvert on the 14<sup>th</sup> mile of the Cooch Behar – Sitalkuchi Road .
8. One 3' diameter corrugated iron culvert on the 13<sup>th</sup> mile of the Katamari – Mana - bari Road .
9. One 12' span iron bridge on the 7<sup>th</sup> mile of the Lowkuti Road .

In 1926 a few works were constructed , which were as follows :<sup>40</sup>

1. One 5' span pucca culvert in the 6<sup>th</sup> mile of Rangpur Road .
2. One 6' span pucca culvert in the 6<sup>th</sup> mile of Dinhata - Baxirhat Road .

In 1927 the following work was in progress :<sup>41</sup>

1. 20' span iron bridge on the 14<sup>th</sup> mile of Baneswar- Pundibari road.
2. 40'span iron bridge on the 4<sup>th</sup> mile of Latkabari- Chowdhurirhat Road .
3. 3' diameter corrugated iron bridge on the 10<sup>th</sup> , 11<sup>th</sup> , 12<sup>th</sup> mile of Mathabhanga - Moranga Road .

In 1928 -29 P.W.D took the work of metalling the roads in Cooch Behar town namely Nripendra Narayan Road, Sunity Road , Kameswari Road , Smith Road .

Apart from continuous work under P.W.D in 1938 with a view to improving inter – communication with in the state, and with the neighbouring British territories , the Cooch Behar Darbar worked out a scheme of road development in the state (Cooch Behar) in collaboration with the Road Development Officer, Government of Bengal and in consultation with the railway authorities . The project would extend for 10 years and included the cost of metalling all the important roads in the state (Cooch Behar) connecting all important hats ,bundars etc.<sup>42</sup>

In 1939 - 40 the following village paths were joined through bridges -<sup>43</sup>

1. 75 ft. wooden bridge ( 5 spans of 15' ft. each ) at the 3<sup>rd</sup> mile Chenakata – Bairagirhat village path .
2. 60 ft. wooden bridge ( 4 spans of 15' ft. each ) at the 1<sup>st</sup> mile of Dowaguri – Nayarhat village path .
3. 40 ft. wooden bridge ( 3 spans ) at the 2<sup>nd</sup> mile of Okrabari village path .
4. 40 ft. wooden bridge (3 spans ) on the 1<sup>st</sup> gap at the 2<sup>nd</sup> mile of Rajarhat village path .
5. 20 ft. span wooden bridge at the 4<sup>th</sup> mile of Dewanhat - Chilkirhat village path .

In order to maintain projected plans a Special Road Development Fund was introduced in 1940 for communication in Cooch Behar during the rule of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan .<sup>44</sup>

**Maharaja Jitendra Narayan Prajabatsal Chikitsalaya** In 1923 the former sudder hospital was renovated with various equipments and facilities . Among the whole scheme Rs. 20,000 was granted by the Maharani Sahiba ( mother of Jagaddipendra Narayan ), Rs. 12 ,000 was deposited in the Imperial Bank of India . Rs. 12 , 384 was spent during the year for the purchase of some materials . The new hospital building's name was given in the memory of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan . Thus the hospital building known as Maharaja Jitendra Narayan Prajabatsal Chikitsalaya .<sup>45</sup>

**Transfer of management of Sunity Academy** With a view to improving the condition of the Sunity Academy for the education of girls (1925), in which Maharaja takes a great interest of the management of the institution, which was an aided one,

was transferred to the Education Department of the State of Cooch Behar.<sup>46</sup> It was decided that the existing Committee of Management should continue to function and assist in giving effect to the decisions of the council on the various questions involved, and that the standard of the Academy should, for the present, be so raised that it might teach up to the 4<sup>th</sup> Class of a High English School. A sum of Rs. 10,000 was allotted for providing additional accommodation for the academy, of which Rs. 5,000 was provided by the Cooch Behar State authority and the balance was met from the funds of the Academy. A ford motor bus was also provided for bringing some of the girls to the Academy and taking them back to their homes.<sup>47</sup>

**Water Supply Scheme** The water supply scheme is estimated to the cost of Rs. 2.5 lakhs. It was decided to spread the expenditure over two years – Rs. 1.25 lakhs being provided in 1926 – 27 and Rs. 1.25 lakhs in 1927 – 28. It was also decided that sum of Rs. 45,000 would be appropriated from the accumulated surplus of the pound fund towards the capital cost of the scheme and that a sum of Rs. 80,000 would be provided for the scheme in the budget for 1926 – 27, thus making up the total sum of Rs. 1,25,000 sanctioned for the expenditure during 1926 – 27. The north – west portion of Narendra Narayan Park, which was in the center of the town, was selected for the location of the water works and power house. A provision of Rs. 25,000 has been made in the Public Works Department budget, 1926 – 27 for the construction of the new power house. The whole

scheme will be carried out under the supervision and direction of the chief engineer, public health department, Bengal. The proposal of the chief engineer, public health department, Bengal, in connection with rural water supply were also approved by the Cooch Behar State Regency Council and an experiment was being carried out in the shape of sinking tube wells in 25 taluks (villages) close to Cooch Behar town with a view to seeing, after the experiment had been given a proper trial, whether it would be feasible to introduce a tube well scheme on a large scale throughout the state with a view to providing the population in the rural areas with a good water supply so far as may be possible.<sup>48</sup>

**Re – organisation of Fire – Brigade** As the arrangements for dealing with fires in the town of Cooch Behar were wholly made quite for the purpose, the Regency Council sanctioned a scheme for the reorganisation of the town fire brigade submitted by the vice-president, Regency Council. The scheme is briefly as follows:<sup>49</sup>

- i) The purchase of a Dennis Motor Trailer Pump ( as used by The Calcutta Fire Brigade ) which is connected to , and drawn by , a Motor Lorry .
- ii) The purchase of a one – ton Ford Lorry Chassis fitted with a body specially designed by the Chief Officer of the Calcutta Fire Brigade.
- iii) The construction of a garage for housing the Ford Lorry and Trailer Pump .
- iv) A crew of seven men drawn from the Police Force , who will be trained with the Calcutta Fire Brigade .

**Motor watering car** To meet the difficulties experienced in watering the roads of the town of Cooch Behar , the purchase of a Motor Watering Car

at Rs. 3,150 was sanctioned by the Cooch Behar State Regency Council in 1926.<sup>50</sup>

**Narendra Narayan Park**

An important order was issued by Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan on 19<sup>th</sup> June 1926 regarding the modernisation of Narendra Narayan Park . The important clauses of the ordinance were as follows :<sup>51</sup>

1. To carriage motor car , motor cycle , bicycle or tricycle shall be driven or ridden in the Park at a speed exceeding 5 miles per hour . They are permitted to be used in the metalled roads only inside the Park .
2. No person shall ride on horse – back in the Park .
3. No person shall bring a dog into the Park .
4. The following acts were strictly prohibited –

The plucking , gathering or digging up of anything growing in the Park , the felling of trees the breaking of benches or plants , the cutting of names or marks on trees or on the branches , the disfiguring of furniture , the removing or disfigure -ing of labels or marks attached to trees or plants , pie – nicking , shooting bird – nesting , the grazing of horses or cattle and fishing , or polluting the water of the tanks . No bathing was allowed in the tanks after 2 p.m .

5. The playing of football , cricket , hokey , tennis or other out door games in the park is also prohibited .
6. No person should commit any nuisance in the Park ground or molest or annoy any person or person – resorting to it .
7. Any person convicted of a breach of any of the above rules shall be liable to a fine not exceeding Rs. 20 .

**Electric supply** In 1926 – 27 a sum of Rs. 50,000 was provided for the expanding the electric system of Cooch Behar . In addition to this a sum of Rs. 25,000 was provided in the public works department for that year for a new Power House . An additional amount of Rs. 37,000 was sanctioned for the construction of Electric godown in Cooch Behar .<sup>52</sup>

**Public Health Department** For the purpose of better combating epidemic diseases – more specially cholera ,small – pox , kala – azar and malaria , the Regency Council accorded sanction to the formation of Public Health Department for the state consisting of one sanitary officer ( assistant surgeon ), three sanitary officer (sub- assistant surgeon ) , twenty –five vaccinators , three medicine carriers and three sweepers with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> October , 1927 .<sup>53</sup> The total cost of the scheme was Rs. 15,800 a year including traveling allowance , disinfectants and medicines , contingencies and house allowance . The sanitary officer was given one sanitary inspector in reserve whom he could send out in case of emergencies to any particular place . For the purpose of proper administration of the department , the Cooch Behar state was divided into two divisions : (I) Sudder Cooch Behar, Dinhata , Tufan-gunj ; (II) Mathabhanga , and Mekhligunj .<sup>54</sup> To each of the two divisions – one sanitary inspector was posted . Owing to the formation of this department ; the existing provisions amounting to Rs. 4971 under ‘vaccination’ and ‘sanitation’ in the Medical budget were no longer required . Deducting this amount from Rs.15,800 which was the total cost of the scheme , the extra cost per annum for the department was Rs. 10,829 or Rs. 11,000 approximately .<sup>55</sup>

**Cooch Behar Subject** On 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1932, the Cooch Behar State Regency Council implemented an important issue on the identity of natives. The State Council successfully abolished the so called term “Native of the State” and “Domiciled Native of the State” and adopted single classification namely, “Cooch Behar Subject”. Such privileges as had before been accorded to “Native” and “Domiciled Natives” were accorded to “Cooch Behar Subject”.<sup>56</sup>

A Cooch Behar Subject has been defined as one :<sup>57</sup>

1. Who owes allegiance to His Highness the Maharaja of Cooch Behar, his heirs, successors, and assigns and renounces all claims to the status of British Indian Subject or the status of subject of any Indian State.
2. Whose great – grand – father, grand – father and father have continuously resided in the Cooch Behar state.
3. Who has no home or permanent abode without the limits of the Cooch Behar state.

**Agricultural Officer** To assist the Revenue Department with expert advice regarding adoption of improved methods in Agricultural Operations and to do propaganda work amongst cultivators, an Agricultural Officer in the Department of Agriculture, Bengal, was appointed on Rs. 100 per month for a period of one year from the 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1933.<sup>58</sup>

## **B. Development in Cultural Field :**

In cultural sphere the following measures were implemented during

the reign of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan .

Shooting arrangement in the reserve forest was also continued as following the step of the forefathers . In 1927 a shooting camp was organized at Takoamari . During this year Lord Lytton, the Governor General of Bengal visited Cooch Behar for a five day shoot at Takoamari .<sup>59</sup>

In 1925 a significant decision was made regarding the graveyard of Maharajas which once again shows that the outlook of the Maharaja and the royal family was modern . Since the rule of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan graveyard was placed at the Palace ground . During the rule of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan, Cooch Behar State Regency Council took measures to remove the royal graves from the Palace Compound . These were re – erected at the Keshab Ashram and the construction can be summerise as - a corrugated iron roofed shed 34' – 6" x 34' – 6' constructed for the purpose at a cost of Rs. 5,422 . The shed was built with wooden roof trusses supported on Rolled Steel joist posts and had wire – netting walls on all sides , pucca plinth and floor with artificial stone paving.<sup>60</sup>

In 1925 a new kind of party emerged in Cooch Behar which helped the people of rural areas to cope with the thief's . Maharaja was a cultured man who knew that it was not possible to protect the people of distant part of Cooch Behar from thief's , rather it was good to form a village defense party which can protect the rural people from the recurrent crisis . This scheme proved to be useful in dealing with dacoits .<sup>61</sup>

Cooch Behar royal authority took active part in

allround cultural development of the state of Cooch Behar . In 1940 – 41 the students of Jenkins school actively participated in scout movement i.e a social volunteers squad . This scout continues to progress satisfactory . It had a unique format which can be summarise as - the cube pack and the two scout troops had the full complement of twenty – four units each . Apart from that it was true that there had been many vacancies in the troops caused by senior boys leaving the institution ; and these were soon filled by younger one . As a consequence the number of new recruits have become large . The scouts continued their work of social service wherever required .<sup>62</sup>

In 1933 a scheme implemented by the state authority of Cooch Behar regarding the preservation of replica , idols of Hindu gods and goddesses , memorable tablets scattered all over the place at the historic site of Gossanimari .<sup>63</sup>

In this way the cultural atmosphere of Cooch Behar set an example of classical period under the royal patronage .

### **C . Development in Economic Field**

During the reign of Maharaja Jagadipendra Narayan radical changes were notable in the economic field of the State of Cooch Behar which were as follows -

**Revision of rates for town and bunder (port) lands** On 21<sup>st</sup> March 1927 the Cooch Behar State Regency Council implemented an order regarding the revision

of rates for town and bunders lands and the classification of the several bunders in Cooch Behar State were as follows –<sup>64</sup>

1. period of settlement - The period would be fixed at 10 years .
2. classification - Cooch Behar town should be treated separately from the other towns and bunders . For bunders lands in the town of Cooch Behar there will be only two rates , viz.-

Class I - For the entire frontage Rs. 1 – 4 ( Rupee one and annas four only ) per cubit or Rs. 400 per bigha . Back holding Rs. 10 ( Rupees ten only ) per bigha . The existing rates are Rs. 400 (Rupees four hundred only ) a bigha for the frontage and Rs. 8 ( eight only ) a bigha for the back holding . All lands comprised in the block of which boundaries are given below come under Class I :-

Two hundred forty – five feet west of centre of Dalton Street and 107 feet Nripendra Narayan Road .

One hundred and seventy seven feet east of centre of Smith Road and 107 feet north of Nripendra Narayan Road .

Junction of Sunity Road with kutchha road east of Smith Road .

Junction of Sunity Road with kutchha road west of Dalton street.

Class II - For the actual frontage occupied by the shop As. 12 ( annas twelve only ) per cubit ( 20 cubits deep ) or Rs. 240 (Rupees two hundred and forty only ) per bigha and Rs. 8 ( Rupees eight only ) a bigha for the back holding as at present . All lands not included in the Class I block come under this class .

It is to be understood that houses other than shops in the

block comprising the lands in “Class I” will bear a ground rate of Rs. 10 (Rupees ten only) a bigha and in “Class II” Rs. 8 (Rupees eight only) a bigha .

3. For the towns and bunders in the state of Cooch Behar , there will be three rates only viz. –

Class I . – Rs. 100 (Rupees one hundred only) a bigha for the entire frontage, occupied or unoccupied , and Rs . 5 (Rupees five only ) a bigha for the back portion of the holding .

Class II. – Rs. 80 ( Rupees eighty only ) a bigha for the actual frontage occupied by the shop and Rs . 4 ( Rupees four only) a bigha for rest of the holding .

Class III. – Rs. 4 (Rupees four only ) a bigha for the whole area ( bunders ) , occupied or unoccupied .

For houses other than shops in all the three classes, there will be an uniform rate of Rs. 4 (Rupees four only) a bigha for the whole area , occupied or unoccupied .

The following is a list of the Mofussil towns and bunders Classified according to the rates given below –

**Class I**

Dinhata , Mathabhanga , Haldibari

**Class II**

Dinhata sub - division

Chaudhurihat , Gossanimari , Mekhligunj , Bhetaguri , Sitai ,

Bamanhat , Bakshirhat , Sahebgunj , Gitaldaha .

Mathabhanga sub – division

Siberhat , Nishigunjhat , Ghoksadanga , Sitalkhuchihat .

Mekhlignj sub – division

Mekhlignj , Dewangunj , Jamaldah , Ranirhat , Changrabandha .

Cooch Behar sudder sub – division

Baneswar , Dawanhat , Pundibari .

Tufangunj sub – division

Bakshirhat , Balarampurhat , Ranirhat (Tufangunj town ) ,

Bhaiskhuchi , Bara Mahadeva Bundar , Krishnapur , Ghoramara , Natabari .

**Progressive enhancement of revenue and rent**      On 11<sup>th</sup> April 1927 the Cooch Behar State Council made the following orders regarding the enhancement of revenue and rent in Cooch Behar : <sup>65</sup>

1. When the maximum jama (rent of revenue ) as settled now does not exceed Rs. 5 or the increase does not exceed 75 per cent of the old as well as the existing jama , the increase is to take effect once , in which the new settlement for a term of 30 years is to come into force .
2. In other case the maximum jama settled now is over 75 percent of the old as well as existing jama , 75 percent of the higher of the last two jama ( viz. the old and the existing jama ) subject to a minimum of Rs. 5 in any case is to take effect at once and of the remainder of the increase , one half is to take effect in the third year and the remaining half in the fifth year .
3. The jama of no under – tenure will be made progressive unless gradual enhance –

ment is allowed in the case of the jote (or tenure) comprising the under – tenure .

4. As regards the under – tenures of different grades , no under – tenant’s jama will be made progressive unless the enhancement of the jama of his immediately superior landlord is made gradual .

5. In the case of progressive enhancement the amount annually payable during the first four years will be separately shown in the terijes ( final record of right ).

**New Stamps in Cooch Behar** In 1929 it was decided to introduce into the state of Cooch Behar a new type of Stamps containing the altered Court of Arms of the state, that is, substituting the figure of tiger for that of lion . The treasury officer and the sub – divisional Naib Ahilkars were directed to destroy by burning in their presence all the old stamps that were in , and came to , their possession on the 1<sup>st</sup> April , 1929 , on which the introduction came into force and furnish certificates stating the number and value of the stamps thus destroyed . The stamp vendors also were directed to return on the 1<sup>st</sup> April , 1929 to the treasury or sub – treasuries all the old stamps in their possession and receive in exchange fresh stamps of the same value and denomination .<sup>66</sup>

**Relief of Jotedars and Tenants** In 1932 the Cooch Behar State Regency Council issued an order in favour of jotedars and tenants , which were as follows –<sup>67</sup>

1. For every jote for which the whole of the arrears and current demand has been satisfied with in the current revenue year 1932 , the jotedars would be entitled to a remission of one – third of the revenue demand on that jote due for 1933 .

2. For every jote for which the whole of the arrears and current demand up to and

including the kartick (name of Bengali month) kist ( installment ) of the current year was satisfied , the jotedars would be entitled to a remission of one – fourth of the revenue demand on that jote for 1932 .

3. Similar concessions were to shown to all the tenants and under Tenants by jote – dars and other superior land – lords (whether jotedars and superior land – lords have themselves received the above concessions or not ) in all cases where tenants and under - tenants have paid to their respective land lords all kists due up to the end of 1932 .

**Rent money order system** To facilitate the payment of rent by the state subjects ( Cooch Behar ) the postal authorities were moved to sanction the introduction of the Rent Money Order System in the state of Cooch Behar . Extension of the system to this state was granted with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> August 1935 .<sup>68</sup>

**Land Revenue Policy** To mitigate the hardships to the subjects of the state of Cooch Behar attributable to the prevailing economic depression , remission of revenue were granted to the jotedars and similar concessions were extended to all classes of under tenants. Extensions of time for payment of kists (indebt ) were also granted .Of Jotes in respect of which default had been made for many kists , a small number were made khas (vested land) and brought under the Khas Mehal Department . The result of the policy followed has been on the whole satisfactory in as much as it gave relief to the jotedars to some extent while the revenue collections of the state showed a marked improvement .<sup>69</sup>

In this way developmental activities in Cooch Behar State sate an

example of a modern state . Such an advanced and technical way was possible only because of the state , under the supervision of the royal authority .

### **Innovative Schemes**

From 1936 to 1949 Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan implemented various schemes, which were can be called as innovative measures from the part of a royal authority . These innovative measures were as follows -

**1.Agriculture and Industry** In 1937 an important measure was taken by the Regency Council for improving the economic strength of Cooch Behar . For creating better up liftment, the Council took steps in agricultural and industrial fields . These steps were as follows :<sup>70</sup>

- i) An agricultural , Industrial and Public Health Exhibition was held in the month of November 1937 on the Parade Ground at Cooch Behar and lasted for ten days .
- ii) An Agricultural Farm for experimental and demonstration purpose was established during the year near the Cooch Behar Town .
- iii) As Cooch Behar was purely an agricultural state, forcible endeavours were made to encourage in the economic interest of the state , the establishment of factories and mills concerned in production ancillary to agriculture .

**2. Society for prevention of cruelty to animals** A public meeting was convened in 1937 by Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan to establish a branch at Cooch Behar of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to animals (Calcutta) . The society, during the first year of its foundation (Cooch Behar), rendered useful service to the cause of preventing cruelty to animals including the provision of automatic water troughs

for animals and an approved lethal chamber for the destruction of diseased dog .<sup>71</sup>

**3. History books on Cooch Behar** During the reign of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan a number of historical books on Cooch Behar was published by the royal state press . The name of the books along with their authors were as follows -<sup>72</sup>

1. History of Cooch Behar ( Part –I ) - Khan Chaudhuri Amanutullah Ahamed .
2. Rajopakhyan - Joynath Munshi .
3. Cottage Industry – Satyendra Nath Roy .

**4. Publication of Cooch Behar Darpan** In 1938 due to the effort of the royal authority a Bengali fortnightly newspaper namely Cooch Behar Darpan was published from the Cooch Behar State Press .<sup>73</sup> In this news paper all sorts of socio – cultural activities of the royal dynasty was noted . It helped the Bengali speaking people to know the benevolent measures of the Maharaja .

**5. Cooch Behar Model Dairy** A model dairy was started in the Cooch Behar Town in January 1939 with sixteen Hariyana cows purchased through the Union Dairy , Lahore . Its purpose was to supply the public with pure pasteurized milk and to maintain a level of purity .<sup>74</sup>

**6. Moderation of Cooch Behar State Palace Garden** The principal work executed in this section was laying out of a Nursery for the supply of plants in connection with the anticipated renovation of the Palace Gardens during the year 1938 – 39 .<sup>75</sup> This was completed and many thousands of plants have been raised from seed , cuttings and layers . The existing rose and annual gardens were been commenced and

plants was made where by this could be completed in the coming year . A new service road connecting the Palace with the existing municipal road on the north side of the Palace Compound , necessitating the felling of several large trees and bamboo clumps and the planting of trees along side the road , had been undertaken . The cunna beds on each side of the main drive to the Palace have been redesigned and low growing flowering trees planted behind these beds to make an avenue running the entire length of the main drive . The banks of the both jheels ( small pond in the palace compound ) were planted with flowering shrubs as well as the surrounding ground .<sup>76</sup> An oil – engine tractor belonging to Maharaja’s Shooting Camp has been transferred to the work of gardening and was being used for rolling and grass – cutting . So the tool compliment have been greatly increased .<sup>77</sup>

**7. New rule for Medicine** In 1945 The Cooch Behar State Regency Council implemented an order that the public may not have any difficulty in distinguishing the American from the German patient of the same name, retailers were hereby instructed to note that if the tablets are sold under the name ‘Atabrine’ and not under the general name ‘Quinacrine Hydrochloride’, the container in which the tablets are kept and sold must bear a prominent indication of the name of the manufacturer.<sup>78</sup>

**8. Cooch Behar Income Tax (Amendment) Bill 1945** It was a bill to amend the Cooch Behar Income Tax – 1941 . Whereas it was expedient further to amend The Cooch Behar Income Tax Act – 1941 , for the purpose here in after appearing ; It is here by enacted as follows –<sup>79</sup>

1. This act may be called The Cooch Behar Income – Tax (Amendment) Act of 1945 .

2. It shall , on publication in the Cooch Behar Gazette with the assent of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan took effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April , 1945 .

3. Cooch Behar Excess Profit Tax (amendment) Bill 1945 .

A Bill to amend the Cooch Behar Excess Profit Tax Act 1943 where it was expedient to Cooch Behar Excess Profits Tax Act 1943, for the purpose here in after appearing , it was hereby enacted as follows –<sup>80</sup>

1. This act may be called the Cooch Behar Excess Profit Tax Amendment Act of 1945 .

2. It shall on publication in the Cooch Behar Gazette with the assent of Maharaja , took effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April , 1945 .

In the section 4 of the Cooch Behar Excess Profit Tax Act of 1943 , the words – ‘fifty percent’ shall be substituted in place of the words ‘twenty – five percent’ .

**9. Medical Training of Dhais ( midwives) and Nurses** On 8<sup>th</sup> February , 1945

The Cooch Behar State Regency Council implemented the following training facilities and eligibility for the midwife and nurses of Cooch Behar .<sup>81</sup>

1. At the sudder hospital of Cooch Behar, a class would be arranged for training of 6 (six) female personnel who would be taken through a regular course of theoretic-al lectures and practical training in general nursing and midwifery for a period of 2 (two) years to enable them to take up independent responsibility of the work as Dhai and nurse either as a state employee in any of the hospital in the state of Cooch Behar or in private capacity any where with in Cooch Behar .

2. The candidate should pose a minimum education of having read up to the Class

V in the primary school .

3. They should get a monthly allowance of Rs. 20 each during the training period and are to give an undertaking that they will serve the state of Cooch Behar at least for two years , after completion of the training if required .

4. The syllabus for the course of lectures and the practical training was drawn up by the civil surgeon . They would have lectures in elementary anatomy, physiology , midwifery, nursing , and hygiene . These lectures will be delivered by the civil surgeon, assistant surgeon and lady doctor .

5. They would undergo examinations at the end of the first and second year of their course and those who will pass the final examination at the end of the second year will be granted a certificate to enable them to obtain service in Cooch Behar or do private practice in the line .

**10. Fish culture in Cooch Behar** On 4<sup>th</sup> March , 1945 the royal durbar of Cooch Behar implemented an order for the modernisation of the fisheries of Cooch Behar . The fish culture of Cooch Behar turned into a new way as all the tanks , which were under the control of Cooch Behar Town Committee transferred to the development department . This order proved to be a successful one regarding the production and requirement of fishes in Cooch Behar.<sup>82</sup>

**11 . The Cooch Behar State Transport** On 27<sup>th</sup> March 1945, The Cooch Behar State Transport was formed for the people of Cooch Behar. It opened the easiest way of journey for passengers through bus .The Cooch Behar State Regency Council imple-

mented an order regarding journey through bus that the State Motor Transport Service should be opened with effect from the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1945, Soulmari – Falakatta to Cooch Behar.<sup>83</sup> From the middle of May, 1948 State Transport Department of Cooch Behar has made necessary arrangements for running a through passengers and goods service between Siliguri and Cooch Behar.<sup>84</sup>

**12. Motor spirit rationing order** On 14<sup>th</sup> July, 1945 an amendment was made in the Motor Spirit Rationing order, 1941 namely –

In the first schedule appended to the said order, for Form “F”. The following form shall substituted, namely:<sup>85</sup>

Form – F

License number

( In respect of motor spirit to be used other wise than in motor vehicles and motor boats )

( Name and address of license ) Mr. / Mrs.

Is / are hereby licensed to acquired motor spirit to the extent of – ( in words or figures ) upto ----- 194, subject to the following Conditions –

1. The maximum quantity to be acquired in any one calendar month should not exceed gallons ( in wards or figures ).
2. The motor spirit acquired under the license would be used for no purpose other than .
3. Motor spirit should be acquired from a supplier or dealer .
4. The license was not transferable and both the license and the book of receipt

forms shall remain in the custody of the license .

5. On expiry of the license both this license form and the cover of receipt book together with unused receipt forms would be returned to the office of issue along with if necessary , an application in another form 'm' for renewal .

**13. Implementation of Municipal Act of 1944** On December 1945 , The Cooch Behar State Regency Council implemented the Municipal act ( No. III of 1944) . In this act it was stated that from 1<sup>st</sup> day of January 1946 , the Cooch Behar town , excluding the Palace and Cooch Behar State Railway Station areas , be treated as a municipality .<sup>86</sup> The number of commissioners for this municipality being fixed at 11.<sup>87</sup>

**14. The Cooch Behar Air craft Act of 1946** Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan was himself a trained pilot . He invented the scheme shorter and comfortable journey through airplane . The first plane landed at Cooch Behar in 1934 for trailing purpose . In 1937 – 38 the aerodrum was formed at Cooch Behar .<sup>88</sup> Nilkuty area was selected for flying and landing purpose .The State Regency Council passed the Cooch Behar Air Craft Act of 1946 , which helped to spread Air craft communication .<sup>89</sup>

**15. Construction of an ideal storage** In 1947 an ideal storage was constructed for preservation of foods and grains .This storage proved to be handy at the time of need . The floor should be concrete , wooden floor over soil should always be avoided .<sup>90</sup> If a bare soil must be used , the walls of the store house should be of brick or concrete with foundations ( including door space ) going to a depth of 3 ft. Doors should be fitted tightly ; no gaps were allowed . windows openings should not be

less than 3 feet from ground level and the wall below should have a smooth unless there is glass ½ inch wire netting may also be used .<sup>91</sup>

**16. Rule for Commercial crop ( Tea )** In exercise of powers vested under section 3 (2) of the Cooch Behar Special Exercise Act ( III of 1945 ) and Under section 2(2) of Cooch Behar Export Duty Act ( VI of 1941) , the Cooch Behar royal durbar declared on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1947 that Tea be enlisted as special excisable goods under the first Schedule of Special Excise Act of 1915 and also be treated as article of export subject to the levy of duty under the Cooch Behar export Duty Act of 1941 .<sup>92</sup>

**17. Maternity and Child welfare centre** From September, 1947 the maternity and child welfare center situated near Maharaja Jitendra Narayan Hospital was open to render all possible service and advice to all children (under 5 years) and to all expectant mothers free of charge .<sup>93</sup> A lady doctor attended the center every Saturday afternoon to give advice regarding pre – natal, natal and post – natal care and examines expectant mothers . The midwife in – charge goes out for house visit to contact expectant mothers and to give them advice regarding health. The name and address of all patients who may require help at confinements at their dwellings were registered at the centre long before expected confinement . The midwife in charge and her assistants conduct normal labours free of charge at the dwelling of such registered case .<sup>94</sup>

**18. The Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1947** In 1947 an Act was passed by the Cooch Behar State Regency Council for the preservation of ancient monuments and objects of archeological , historical or artistic interest . Where it was

expedient to provide for the preservation of ancient monuments , for the exercise of control over traffic in antiquities and over excavation in certain places, and for the protection and acquisition in certain cases of ancient monuments and of objects of archeological, historical or artistic manner .<sup>95</sup> It was here by enacted as follows –<sup>96</sup>

1. This Act may be called the Cooch Behar Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1947 .

2. It would extend to the whole of the Cooch Behar State .

3. It would come into force on publication in the Cooch Behar Gazette with the assent of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan .

Maharaja Jagadipendra Narayan on the one hand an administrative person and on the other hand his sportsmanship spirit motivated him to implement various innovative schemes in the state . He like his father wanted to make the State a model State in British India .<sup>97</sup> He was the last ruler of Cooch Behar whose period was instrumental in bringing social , cultural and economic transformation . All sorts of news published in the news paper about the development of Cooch Behar . On 4<sup>th</sup> October 1948 Governor of West Bengal , Mr. Kailash Nath Kartzu explained the condition of Cooch Behar to Sardar Patel in which it was stated that “ Muslims from Eastern Pakistan were infiltrating into Cooch Behar and some reports went to the length of suggesting that there would be a definite attempt made to make Cooch Behar to join Pakistan and this movement would not be wholly repugnant to the ruling house .”<sup>98</sup> For that reason the Government of India decided that “many of the Princely States had a very discontinuous territory , thus making

smooth administration difficult, (2) many of them had cultural and linguistic affiliations with the neighbouring states and provinces, which made their separateness anomalous; (3) it was an unnecessary ornamental expenditure to keep numerous units of administration.”<sup>99</sup> In the mean time the matter of merger of Cooch Behar with India was in the air. On 29<sup>th</sup> April, 1949 a telegram sent by Sharat Chandra Bose to Sardar Patel which was published in the news paper ‘Nation’. In this telegram Bose said that “The people of Cooch Behar are 99 percent Bengali – speaking and there was no single Assamese there. Apart from linguistic reasons, other reasons such as cultural, geographical, administrative etc., support West Bengal’s claim to Cooch Behar and completely negative Assam’s claim to it. As you are the minister – in – Charge, I consider it my duty to draw your attention to the situation in Cooch Behar and the demands of the people there.”<sup>100</sup>

For getting better facilities, Maharaja wanted to conclude the Cooch Behar Merger Agreement in 1949 with the government of India. Regarding the question of Merger would be decided according to the wish of the people of the state. On 18<sup>th</sup> July 1949 a news published by the ‘Hindustan Standard’ in which it was stated that “on behalf of the different organizations functioning in different parts of Cooch Behar State, a telegram was sent on 16<sup>th</sup> July to the Prime minister of India and the Congress President reiterating the unanimous decisions of all sections of the people of the state for Merger of Cooch Behar with West Bengal.”<sup>101</sup> At last on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1949, Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan signed an agreement with the Government of India which was known as Merger Agreement. According to the

treaty the princely state of Cooch Behar was transformed into a Chief Commission-ers province under the jurisdiction of Government of India.<sup>102</sup>

During the governance of the Chief Commissioner, that is, from 12<sup>th</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1949 the administration in Cooch Behar remained the same as before. On 1<sup>st</sup> January 1950 Cooch Behar was merged into West Bengal by a notification issued by the Government of India on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1949 entitled the States' Merger ( West Bengal ) Order, 1949.<sup>103</sup> A Deputy Commissioner and Administrator of Cooch Behar was appointed by the Government of West Bengal and from 1<sup>st</sup> January of 1950 Cooch Behar became a district of West Bengal. As Cooch Behar was a part of India and a part of West Bengal already on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1950, the date on which the Constitution of India was adopted, the Constitution applied to Cooch Behar from the very date.<sup>104</sup>

Thus the princely state of Cooch Behar entered into a new vision in Independent India.

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6. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1927 – 28 )*, p, 41 .

7. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1930 – 31 )* , p, 46 .
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9. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1932 – 33 )* , p, 8 .
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51. *T.C.B.G. (1926)*, P – I, p, 56 .
52. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. ( 1926 – 27 )*, p, 4 .
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‘Illustration :- (a) where the old Jama ( deposit ) was Rs. 100, the existing Jama is Rs. 85 and the Jama now settled is Rs. 200, the Jama payable in the first year of Re – settlement about to be concluded will be Rs. 175 ( i.e ., Rs. 100 plus Rs. 75 ) , the same amount in the second year , Rs. 187 – 8 in the third and forth years and Rs. 200 in the fifth year .

b) Where the old Jama was Rs. 1 – 8. The existing Jama is Rs. 2 and the Jama settled , was Rs. 6. according to the principle of illustration (a) , Rs. 2 plus Rs. 1 – 8 ( i.e. , 75 per cent of Rs. 2 ) or Rs. 3 – 8 would be payable annually in the first and second years , Rs. 4 – 12 ( i.e. , Rs. 3 – 8 plus Rs. 1 – 4 ) in the third and forth years and Rs. 6 in the fifth year but as the amount payable on this principle in the first year is less than Rs. 5, the latter amount (Rs. 5) should be paid in the first and second years , Rs. 5 in the third and forth years and Rs. 6 in the fifth year ’.

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## ***CONCLUSION***

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Cooch Behar, at present a district of West Bengal, is a picturesque town with its planned straightcut roads , innumerable ponds , beautiful temples , build -ings and above all the magnificent Royal Palace, which is now under the supervision of the Archeological Survey of India attracted the tourists from all over the world . This erstwhile princely state still bears the glory and fame because of the endeavour of the State during the time of the Maharajas , particularly from the second half of the nineteenth century till the merger of the State with Indian union in 1949 .

The history of Cooch Behar is a multiple dimensional picture which consists of social - cultural – political – economic history of the princely state. At the same time it represents the welfare activities of the Maharajas . The advanced modern ideas of the rulers set an example in British India.

In one side the history of Cooch Behar explains the Anglo – Cooch Behar relations since 1772 ; on the other side it explains Cooch Behar – Bhutanese relations . Thus we find a new chapter in the history of Cooch Behar . The weakness of the Koch ruler gave the Bhutias an opportunity to meddle into the internal affairs of Cooch Behar State ( practically Bhutan became the king – maker of Cooch Behar .

When Maharaja Dhairjendra Narayan ascended the throne of

Cooch Behar in 1765, the glory of the dynasty was already set in. Taking the opportunity of the weakness of the Koch ruler, the Bhutias captured and imprisoned the Maharaja.

The continuous interference of Bhutan in the Duars areas irritated the British Indian Government. Cooch Behar became strategically important to the British Government for a secure peaceful North - East frontier. A system of indirect rule was likely to be experienced from the model of administration they developed in many parts of the world and the case of Cooch Behar was a glaring example of such a design.

When the British came to India, their main objective was to develop a congenial position of trade and commerce. But from the second half of the Eighteenth Century, they created a Political Residency System. Such an attempt gradually shifted their interest from trading to political goal. As the British realized their new opportunities and needs, they began to transform their network of commercial representatives into a system of political agent. The Colonial Government had a soft corner for the State of Cooch Behar and they found their opportunity to fulfill their desires as the State experienced a political turmoil since the accession of Maharaja Dhairjendra Narayan. During this period Dewan Deo, Nazir Deo and Maharani played important roles to run the state. On the other hand Bhutias continued hostility against Cooch Behar and carried away Maharaja and Dewan Deo as prisoners. Then Nazir Deo applied for military help from the Colonial Government against Bhutan in 1772. They responded immediately as it gave them an opportunity to interfere in the affairs of Cooch Behar. This resulted in the signing of

the Treaty of 1773 between Cooch Behar and the Colonial Government . Since then the British Government tried to implement various clauses to fulfill their designs . Although from 1783 to 1839 they faced obstacles as Maharaja Harendra Narayan didnot cooperate with them . But after his death Company had free run in the state and the successors maintained good relations with them as they had a pro – British attitude since the period of Maharaja Shivendra Narayan ( 1839 – 47) .

After the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anglo – Bhutanese war ( 1864 – 65 ) , all the 18 Duars areas came under the authority of the British. For their proper security and maintenance the importance of Cooch Behar was also increased . To establish a well organised British Raj in the North - East frontier , the development and modernisation of Cooch Behar was very much essential .

So the period of Maharaja Narendra Narayan (1847 - 63) can be viewed as the beginning of development in Cooch Behar . His son Maharaja Nripendra Narayan also set a new dimension of modernization and development .

In 1863 after the death of Maharaja Narendra Narayan , Maharaja Nripendra Narayan succeeded him at an early age of ten months . But the state did not face any kind of problem due to the friendly relations with the British . Since his forefathers the state of Cooch Behar maintained friendly relation with the East India Company .<sup>1</sup>

A British Commissioner undertook the direct management of affairs on behalf of the Prince during his minority. Maharaja Nripendra Narayan was

first educated in the Ward's Institute at Venaras, and next in the Bankipure college , Patna and subsequently attended the law lectures at the Presidency College , Calcutta for three years .<sup>2</sup>

Among the many improvements effected during this period , was a complete survey of the State, although it started earlier . It is important to note that the state was connected with adjacent commercial centers by the construction of good roads and of bridges over rivers and water courses . An efficient system of postal and telegraphic communication was established ; the police administration was re – organized and an education department was constituted . The introduction of Cooch Behar State Railways was a distinct land mark from the economic point of view. It not only ushered a new avenue of communication with the out side of the state but also symbolized the modern means of import - export facilities of trade .

During the rule of the Maharaja industrial development was notable , specially introduction of artizan school . Now -a - days it is no important matter , but during those days it was a symbol of advanced modern activity of the ruler .<sup>3</sup>

The military achievement of the State was remarkable . For instance the good service rendered by the state in the Bhutan war , ten guns were presented to Maharaja Nripendra Narayan by the British Government, in 1866. At the Delhi Pro -clamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India in 1858, the Cooch Behar chief was present ed in 1877 with medal and sword along with other Princes of the same rank .<sup>4</sup>

Maharaja maintained a military force that included a cavalry

regiment – two hundred infantry and four guns and he was entitled to get a salute of thirteen guns.<sup>5</sup> The administration of the State was well organized.

Development of education in the State of Cooch Behar was a top priority for the Maharaja. He made sufficient grants for the infrastructural development of the Jenkins School, which was formed in 1861. This school had a long history of its own. In 1857 a Bengali medium school was established in the State of Cooch Behar under the instruction of prince and kinsmen of the royal family, in 1859, English began to be taught at this school.<sup>6</sup> In course of time it took the shape of Jenkins School. In commemoration of the jubilee, Maharaja founded the Victoria College, which taught up to the standards of the Calcutta University examination, and was an absolutely free institution. In addition to this, he helped a wide circle of poor but intelligent boys from his own purse. His enlightened views on education and on the necessity of physical training expressed his advanced modern ideas for the state.<sup>7</sup> He held that the Calcutta University should approve the suggestion that physical education should be made compulsory and should be introduced for the benefit of the student (at that time Calcutta University controlled the educational department of Cooch Behar).<sup>8</sup>

The establishment of a library namely Maharaja Library which later on was renamed as North Bengal State Library shows the reading interest of the Maharaja. Such an attempt was an instance of the welfare thought of the ruler. Mr. J. W. Trotten, in his book “India under Victoria”, writes: ‘The little state of Cooch Behar on the Assam border can boast of a library richer

than any outside Calcutta.”<sup>9</sup> In 1897 the appointment of Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal as the Principal of Victoria College was an important step. His philosophical ideas moulded Maharaja to take benevolent measures for the people of Cooch Behar. All these measures indicated that Maharaja was out and out modern in outlook.

It was he who felt the urgency of registration of birth and death, because such kind of calculation helped the state to understand what was its population and what was the condition of the health of the general people.<sup>10</sup> In 1901 and in 1911 Census operations were organized in the State.

It is gradually held that the old rajas were very careless as regards the preservation of records. Maharaja Nripendra Narayan was the first ruler of Cooch Behar, who introduced the work of copying from old records, which in course of time helped the successors to run the state of Cooch Behar successfully.<sup>11</sup> Keeping Records in printed form was nothing but the farsightedness of the Maharaja. The two volume of Select Records containing day to day correspondence with the British Government is a valuable primary source for the history of Cooch Behar. Researchers who are now investigating the different aspects of the history of Cooch Behar during the Maharajas, the Select Records are the valuable source of information to them. In fact he had brought the state to the present satisfactory condition.

In the place of what was an uninteresting tract of land (selected apparently on account of its natural defence), a picturesque town with flourishing business centres, prospered due to his endeavour.<sup>12</sup>

The construction of various buildings shows the artistic taste of the

Maharaja . The arrangement was neat and orderly . Domes, spires , minarets , public buildings and palatial residences were established in the town of Cooch Behar , although the rural areas and the sub – divisions of Cooch Behar was not far from the developmental works of the ruler . During his rule medical system of the state of Cooch Behar was on the whole on satisfactory condition . A significant measure was taken by the state authority during his rule in the settlement operations . From the earlier mistakes the authority got a major experience and introduced a system of survey and settlement work in the town and in the sub - divisional areas .<sup>13</sup> Maharaja maintained a well formulated finance department , through which the state could be able to know what measures were appropriate to the situation and what was the income and expenditure of the state . In the cultural sphere he created a new avenue which was full of sporting arrangements, khedda operations for taking elephants under control .

After Maharaja Nripendra Narayan , his successors Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan ( 21<sup>st</sup> ) and Maharaja Jitendra Narayan ( 22<sup>nd</sup> ) continued the developmental works in the State . They were engaged in the implementation of benevolent works as their father did for the state . For his benevolent activities Maharaja Jitendra Narayan is known as ‘ Prajabatsal Maharaja ’ . During his reign Cooch Behar had a rich literary tradition . Maharaja also himself was a great literary person . His poem “Hello Darjeeling” is pleasant to read.<sup>14</sup> Maharaja Jitendra Narayan was also aware of environmental pollution . For saving the state, he followed in the foot steps of his father ( through the work of plantation of saplings in

the State ).

The 23<sup>rd</sup> and the last ruler of the Princely State of Cooch Behar, Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan deserved an amount of popularity for his innovative activities in the State of Cooch Behar .<sup>15</sup> He maintained the royal tradition (welfare works ) and invented one after another advanced schemes like introduction of income tax act , public health department , Cooch Behar State Transport for travel through bus , air – craft act of 1946, cultivation of commercial crops , motor spirit - rationing order , ancient monument preservation act of 1947 etc.

The modernisation cum development of the State of Cooch Behar , can be compared with the same of the developed princely States of Western , Southern and Northern India . It would not be irrelevant to point out that the mental make up of the Maharajas of Cooch Behar was moulded according to the taste of the English . The general policy of the Raj towards the native princely state during 1890's was that the system of princely rule , stripped of its dead wood , could be made an instrument of progress and modernisation, there by ensuing that the darbars continued to play an effective role in the governance of the subcontinent.<sup>16</sup> But according to Ian Copland this civil mission began to fatter. There was criticism of the slow pace of modernization in many states, and disillusionment with the impact of modernization on the life style of the ruling prince.<sup>17</sup> Cooch Behar may be set an exception to this end . Reference may be made of Prince Gayatri Devi s' statement , “ a few princely states of the time enjoyed all sorts of privilege ”.<sup>18</sup> The Maharajas of Cooch Behar by their developmental policy

and benevolent works succeeded in achieving the loyalty of their subjects .

It can be concluded by saying that during the long run of the State of Cooch Behar , the period from 1847 to 1949 was an golden and modern era of development under the Maharajas and thus the study of their work on social – cultural – economic sphere on the whole historically significant .

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3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*, p, 37.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *S.J.S ( 2011)*, p, 9 .
7. Jehangir , Sorabji , *op. cit*, p, 37 .
8. *Ibid.* , P – 39 .
9. Campbell, Aurther Claude , *Glimpses of Bengal* ,Vol. – I ,London, 1907, p, 306 .
10. *T.C.B.G. (1896)* , p, 70

“ In 1910 regarding registration of birth and death in the Municipal town in Cooch Behar State , it is here by enacted as follows –

- a) The father or mother of every child born in the a municipal town, or in case of

the death , illness , or inability of the father or mother , the occupation of the house in which each child is born shall within eight days after the day of the birth , give information to the municipal office of the town , according to the best of his or her knowledge and belief , of the several particulars prescribed in schedule hereto annexed .

b) The nearest relative present at the death of any person dying in a Municipal Town , or in case of the death , illness , absence , or inability of such relative the occupier of, or some person living in, the house , shall within eight days after the death, give information to the Municipal Office of the town , according to the best of his knowledge and belief of several particulars prescribed in schedule II here to annex -ed –

i) If the death occurs in a hospital in the Municipal town , such information shall be given by the Medical Officer in charge of the hospital .

ii) If the death occurs in a jail or lock up, such information shall be given by the officer in charge of the local police station to give information of such death.

iii) Omission to give such information as is laid down in this act, shall be punishable with fine a fine which may extend to Rs. 5 .

iv) Whoever gives any information under this act , which he knows, or has reason to believe , to be false , shall be punishable with a fine not exceeding to Rs. 50 .

v) The shall be read with , and form part of the Cooch Behar Town Act iv of 1903 .

vi) This act come in to operation from the date of its publication in the Cooch Behar Gazette . ”

11. *A.A.R. of the C.B.S. (1878 – 79)*, p, 80 .

“ Colonel Haughton the first Commissioner of Cooch Behar with the object of preserving important state papers, procured at the expense of the State copies all the letters and reports that had passed between the Maharaja of Cooch Behar and the officers of the British Government from the year 1777 to 1864 , with a object of publishing those papers which were interesting and important .”

12. Campbell, Aurther Claude , *op. cit.* ,p, 303 .

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17. *Ibid.* , pp, 184 – 185 .

“ Among princes of weak character Anglicisation invariably had the effect of sharpening old vices and adding new ones . Extravagance was as much an oriental as a western trait , but westernisation gave it new outlets , motor cars and foreign travel featuring prominently among them . As early as 1874 Alfred Lyall had predicted that ‘ the next generation ( of princes ) will be seen squandering their revenues in the great hotels of Paris and London , ..... demoralising England rather than improving India .”

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## ***APPENDICES***

## APPENDIX – A

### Micheal Madhusudan Dutta's Application for the post of Magistrate at Cooch Behar .

In 1860 during the reign of Maharaja Narendra Narayan , an advertisement for fulfilling the vacant post of magistrate at Cooch Behar was published in an English daily . In response of which Micheal Madhusudan Dutta , the epic writer of Bengal applied before the Maharaja Narendra Narayan . He wrote the following letter –

My dear Raja Saheb ,

I see an advertisement in the 'Englishman' in which Your Highness wants a Magistrate . Allow me to offer my service to you . Your Highness knows that I have been for several years connected with the Calcutta police and understand criminal matters pretty well . If the salary be worth accepting that is to say, if it be worthy of a prince like Your Highness to offer and a gentleman like myself to accept , pray, write to me and I shall go up . Your Highness must know that I shall have to sacrifice my prospects here if I go up to your country and the offer must be tempting enough to induce me to do so . I shall under take to give you such a Police Establishment throughout your principality in one year that Your Highness will win praise of the British Government. Your Highness must also appraise me on your Princely word that I am not to be turned out at a moment's notice to gratify the hatred of some unprincipled court – intrigues . Your Highness no doubt knows that such an important post must not be given to any but a gentleman of education

and principle and that no gentleman of education and principal will accept such a situation but on very liberal terms .

With kind wishes .

Micheal M .S. Dutt

27<sup>th</sup> January , 1860

A candidate for the Vacant Magistracy

Your Highness's very sincerely,

Micheal M .S. Dutt

## **APPENDIX – B**

The Regency Council Cooch Behar .  
( General and Executive Department )  
Notification , 2<sup>nd</sup> September ,1932  
(Municipal)

It is hereby notified for the information of those whom it may concern that the Regency Council , in exercise of the power conferred by Section 108 of Act IV of 1903 ( The Cooch Behar Town Committee Act ) , are pleased to approve and confirm the following bye – laws framed by the Mekhligunj Town Committee under Section 107 of the aforesaid Act . These bye – laws shall come into force from the date on which they are first published in the Cooch Behar Gazette .

1. (i) Whenever any land or premises being private property or within private enclosure appears to the members of the Town Committee to be by reason of their being overgrown with thick bamboo topes in a State likely to interfere with the free ventilation of air , it shall be lawful for the members of the Town Committee to require , by notice in writing , the owner or occupier of the premises to clear and remove such bamboo topes and if he do not within a week after such notice begin to cut, clear and remove such bamboo topes and not complete such work with due diligence , the members of the Town Committee their officers and workmen may ,

after forty – eight hours’ notice, enter into same premises and do all necessary acts for the purpose aforesaid, as they shall think fit and the expense incurred there by shall be paid by the owner or occupier of such premises and shall be recoverable as a debt due to the members of the Town Committee .

(ii) The owner or occupier as aforesaid shall also be liable to a fine not exceeding Rs. 20/- if he disobeys the requisition of the Town Committee to clear and remove the bamboo topes as referred to in clause (i) of this Section and to a fine not exceeding Rs. 2/- for every day after conviction for such offence during which the offence is continued .

2. Whoever being the owner or occupier of any land within the limits of the Municipal town of Mekhligunj cultivates jute shall be liable to a fine not exceeding Rs. 20/- .

3. Whoever without the written permission of the Town Committee previously obtained digs or makes or causes or suffers to be dug or made any excavation , cess pool, tank or pit and whoever fails to comply with a requisition issued by the Town Committee requiring him within one month to fill up such excavation , cess pool, tank or pit , shall be on conviction before a Magistrate liable to a fine not exceeding Rs. 20/- .

5. Whoever exposes for sale to the public sweets and confectionery without proper protection against filth , fly and dust shall on conviction before a Magistrate be liable to pay a fine not exceeding Rs. 5/- .

By order ,

Mahim Chandra Mukherjee ,

Registrar, Regency Council , Cooch Behar .

## APPENDIX – C

### Regulations for the management of the State Library of Cooch Behar .

1. The object and reason for revising the existing regulations are to widen the usefulness of the State Library by extending its facilities to all members of the general public residing in the town of Cooch Behar who duly deposit the usual Rs.5 as security . At present the State Library is a moribund institution with a few state officers as subscribers .

2. The revised rules which have been approved by His Highness The Maharaja Bhup Bahadur , will come into force from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1938 .

3. Constitution – The library is a State Library for reading and reference and is directly under the vice – President, State Council , general department . It was established in the year 1870.

4. Management – The management of the Library will be vested in a committee consisting of the following members –

The vice – president , State Council , General Dept. , President

The Fouzdari Ahilkar of the State , Secretary .

The Private Secretary to His Highness ----- } members

The Superintendent of Police ----- } ”

The State Engineer ----- } ”

The vice – President , State Council , General Dept. , shall decide the purchase of books with the money placed at his disposal for that purpose .

a) The Librarian , under orders of the vice – President , State Council, General Dept., shall keep a record of all books borrowed from the Library and returned to it , together with the names of borrowers, the dates of borrowing and return , and such other particulars as he may deem necessary .

b) The Librarian is responsible that improper do not gain admittance .

5. Privileges of authorised borrowers – The Library is for the use of the public reading in the town of Cooch Behar and they alone have the privilege to use it, subject to the following regulations and such further rules and orders as may here after be prescribed by the vice – President , State Council , General Dept.

a) It having come to the notice of His Highness that valuable books of the State Library have been damaged by the carelessness of readers , it is notified , under orders from His Highness , that all persons , having the privilege of taking book out of the Library, will be required to deposit Rs. 5/- as a safeguard against such damage . In case of serious mutilation , the librarian shall have power, with the approval of the vice – President , State Council , General Dept. , to replenish such books out of this deposit . In the event of the deposit being found in particular cases , inadequate to replace the missing book the depositor shall be bound to make good the difference .

b) Every privileged person shall deposit Rs. 5/- in the office of the vice – president , State Council , General Dept. , for which a receipt will be granted in the prescribed form . On presentation of this receipt to the Librarian he shall register the name of such person and issue books to him .

---

N.B. – Their His Highness personal staff , Principal , Victoria College , and the

Resident Minister , N.D. Church , as exempted from the operation of the above rule .

c) If the deposit is exhausted in recouping any damage which may be done by any individual the same amount of deposit will be required to be made before fresh books are allowed to be taken out by him .

d) In case of any depositor wishing to withdraw his name the deposit money shall be refunded on his presenting an application to the vice – President, State Council ,General Dept., together with the receipt , referred to in rule 3(b) . The Librarian shall certify that the holder of the receipt has no books in his possession belonging to the library .

#### 6. Admission of non – authorised borrowers –

Persons other than authorised borrowers, may consult the Library for Library research without removing books from the Library, but only under the special order of the vice – President , State Council , General Dept.

a) School students shall be allowed to use the Library books on the recommendation of their Headmaster and Headmistress .

b) When a book is required for reference within the Library, the person requiring it , must give a receipt for it before it is issued to him .

c) Readers are not entitled to remove books from the shelves; they shall apply to the Librarian for such books as they may desire to refer to .

d) Readers, desirous of consulting costly works of Art, must make official application to the vice – president , State Council ,General Dept.

e) Smoking in the Library is strictly prohibited .

#### 7. Condition of borrowing and returning books – subject to the exceptions , specified

in Regulation 5, authorised borrowers and other persons, permitted to use the Library under Regulation 6 may borrow or temporarily remove such book as they may require, provided that no person shall, at any time have more than two books in his possession .

a) No illustrated papers shall be allowed to go out of the Library building .

b) No books shall be issued without proper entry in the Library Day – book . On return it shall be examined and it shall be the duty of the borrower to use that ‘Return Column’ in the responsible for the same in cases of loss .

c) No books shall be retained more than a fortnight from the date of issue from the Library . In case of any borrower fails to return any book within the period a notice shall be sent to him by the vice – President, State Council ,General Dept. , calling for its return .

d) If, any book, called for under the above clause, is not returned within one week after the receipt of the above notice, the borrower shall forfeit the privilege of borrowing further books from the library .

e) A book returned to the Library, may be renewed provided no other persons, entitled to use library, has applied for the same, in which case the latter shall have the preference .

8. Suspension of privileges – The privilege of any person to use the Library shall be suspended so long as he retains any book which, under these Regulations, he is not entitled to retain .

9. Books not to be issued from the Library –

Books which are valuable on account of their rarity, rich binding, or which being out of print it may be difficult or impossible to replace or books of reference, shall not be issued.

a) A list of such books shall be drawn up by the Librarian with the approval of the vice – President, State Council, General Dept.

#### 10. Mutilation and disfigurement of books –

To avoid any serious injury to the Library by whom books and in order to ascertain when and by whom books are injured it is ruled that in future, whoever first comes to know of any mutilation or disfigurement in any way of any Library book must at once return the book to the Library and inform the Librarian about it otherwise he will be held responsible for such injuries.

a) The Librarian shall report to the vice – President, State Council, General Dept., all cases in which books have been mutilated or disfigured by writing on the margin while in the possession of any borrower.

b) Any person infringing the above rule shall pay the value of the book or books injured or disfigured by him.

#### 11. Annual Inspection of the Library –

A general inspection of the Library and of the record of the books returned shall be made annually in the first week of April. For the above purpose all books must be returned by the 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.

#### 12. Days of Opening and Closing –

The Library shall ordinarily be closed on Sundays and

all public holidays . It shall be open on other days between the hours of 7.30 and 9.30 A.M and 4 .00 and 8 .00 P.M (local time) all the year round .

Cooch Behar  
The January , 1938 }

L.G. WALLIS ,  
Vice – President , State Council,  
Cooch Behar .

## **APPENDIX – D**

V.P.Menon , Ministry of States letter to  
Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan .

D.O.No. F.15(19)-P/49

MINISTRY OF STATE

NEW DELHI

The 30<sup>th</sup> August, 1949.

MY DEAR MAHARAJA SAHIB,

In connection with the Agreement concluded between the Governor – General of India and Your Highness for the integration of Cooch Behar State Your Highness raised certain points for clarification ; the Government of India have considered them and accept the following arrangements :-

- (1) It is the intention of the Government of India to administer for the present the territories of Cooch Behar State as a Centrally – administered area under a Chief Commissioner .
- (2) All contracts and agreements entered into by Your Highness before the date on which the administration is made over to the Government of India will be honoured except in so far as any of these contracts or agreements is either repugnant to the provisions of any law made applicable to the State or inconsistent with the general policy of the Government .
- (3) The allowances at present drawn by Her highness Rajmata will be continued for her lifetime and will be paid out of the revenues of the State . Your Highness'

brother and other members of the Ruling family will also be paid allowance from the revenues of the State as per list attached .

(4) The responsibility for the Cooch Behar State Forces will be taken over by the Government of India from 12<sup>th</sup> September 1949 . If these forces are disbanded or any of the men discharged they will receive the pension or gratuity or compensation to which they may be entitled under the rules of the State .

(5) Adequate guards will be provided for the protection of Your Highness' person and Palace .

(6) No land or building being Your Highness' private property shall be requisitioned or acquired without your consent and without payment of full compensation .

(7) Electricity from the State Power House for the main residence of Your Highness and family within the State will be provided at the fixed rate in existence immediately before the transfer of administration to the Government of India . Water supply will be provided free of charge to the main Palace of Your Highness and family within the State .

(8) The management of the temples and Debuttar properties in the State may be entrusted to a Trust which shall consist of Your Highness as President , 3 nominees of Your Highness and 2 nominees of Government . This Trust will be in charge of all temples in the State and will also administer the properties of the temples both inside and outside the State . In the event of the abolition of the zemindaries which are Debuttar property Government will ensure that the Trust has adequate resources to fulfill its objects .

- (9) Your Highness may create a Trust for the marriage of the son and daughter of Isharani of Cooch Behar with a corpus of Rs. 1 lakh . The Trustees will be besides Your Highness , Their Highness of Jaipur and Dewas Junior .
- (10) The Civil List Reserve Fund of Rs. 10,60,900 shall be Your Highness' private property and shall be held by Your Highness in Trust for meeting expenditure in connection with Your Highness' marriage or special repairs to the Palace and any unforeseen expenditure .
- (11) The administration of the Maharajkumar Trust Fund with a corpus of Rs. 4,86,900 shall be formally vested in a Trust of which Your highness and Their Highnesses of Jaipur and Dewas Junior shall be Trustees .
- (12) Your Highness will be entitled to hold customary Darbars and troops present at the capital will take part in the Dusserah and other celebrations .
- (13) Your Highness will retain your present rank in the Indian Army .
- (14) Government will endeavour to associate the name 'Narayan' with the Cooch Behar State Forces even after their absorption in the Indian Army .

The Ministry of States has issued a Memorandum on the privileges and dignities which has been finalised in consultation with the Rajpramukhs of Unions and other States . Your Highness will see that the Memorendum deals adequately with the various suggestions made by the Rulers from time regarding their rights and privileges .

With kind regards.

Your Sincerely,

V.P.MENON.

Lieutenant – Colonel His Highness  
Maharaja Sri Jagaddipendra Narayan  
Bhup Bahadur, K.C.I.E  
Maharaja of Cooch Behar,  
Cooch Behar, (Bengal).

## **APPENDIX – E**

### Cooch Behar Merger Agreement (1949)

AGREEMENT MADE this twenty – eighth day of August 1949 between the Governor – General of India and His Highness the Maharaja of Cooch Behar .

WHEREAS in the best interests of the State of Cooch Behar as well as Dominion of India it is desirable to provide for the administration of the said State by or under the authority of the Dominion Government :

IT IS HEREBY AGREED as follows –

**Article - I**

His Highness the Maharaja of Cooch Behar here by cedes to the Dominion Government full and exclusive authority, jurisdiction and powers for and in relation to the governance of the State and agrees to transfer the administration of the State to the Dominion Government on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of September 1949 ( here in after referred to as the “ the said day ” ) .

**Article – II**

His Highness the Maharaja shall continue to enjoy the same personal rights, privileges , dignities and titles which he would have enjoyed had this agreement not been made .

**Article – III**

His Highness the Maharaja with effect from the said day be entitled to receive for his life – time from the revenues of the State annually for his privy purse the sum of Rupees eight lakhs fifty thousand free of all taxes . After him the privy purse

will be fixed at Rupees seven lakhs only . This amount is intended to cover all the expenses of the Ruler and his family , including expenses on account of his personal staff, maintenance of his residence , marriages and other ceremonies, etc., and will neither be increased nor reduced for any reason whatsoever .

The Government of India undertakes that said sum of Rupees Eight lakhs fifty thousand shall be paid to His Highness the Maharaja in four equal installments in advance at the beginning of each quarter from the State Treasury or at such Treasury as may be specified by the Government of India .

**Article – IV**

His Highness the Maharaja shall be entitled to the full ownership , use and enjoyment of all private properties ( as distinct from State properties ) belonging to him on the date of this agreement .

His Highness the Maharaja will furnish to the Dominion Government before the 15<sup>th</sup> September 1949 , an inventory of all the immovable property , securities and cash balances held by him as such private property .

If any dispute arises as to whether any item of property is the private property of His Highness the Maharaja or State property , it shall be referred to a judicial officer qualified to be appointed as High Court Judge, and the decision of that officer shall be final and binding on both parties.

**Article - V**

All the members of His Highness' family shall be entitled to all the personal privileges, dignities , and titles , enjoyed by them whether within or outside the territories of the State, immediately before the 15<sup>th</sup> day of August 1947 .

**Article - VI**

The Dominion Government guarantees the succession, according to law and custom, to the Gaddi of the State and to His Highness the Maharaja's personal rights, privileges, dignities and titles.

**Article – VII**

No enquiry shall be made by or under the authority of the Government of India, and no proceedings shall lie in any court in Cooch Behar against His Highness the Maharaja, whether in a personal capacity or otherwise, in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by him or under his authority during the period of his administration of that State.

**Article - VIII**

(1) The Government of India hereby guarantees either the continuance in service of the permanent members of the Public Services of Cooch Behar on conditions which will be not less advantageous than those on which they were serving before the date on which the administration of Cooch Behar is made over to the Government of India or the payment of reasonable compensation.

(2) The Government of India further guarantees the continuance of pensions and leave salaries sanctioned by His Highness the Maharaja to servants of the State who have retired or proceeded on leave preparatory to retirement, before the date on which the administration of Cooch Behar is made over to the Government of India.

**Article – IX**

Except with the previous sanction of the Government of India no proceedings, Civil and Criminal, shall be instituted against any person in respect of any act done or purporting to be done in the execution of his duties as a servant of the State before the day on which the administration is made over to the Government of India.

In confirmation where of Mr. Vapal Pangunni Menon, Advisor to the Government of India in the Ministry of States , has appended his signature on behalf and with the authority of the Governor – General of India and Lieutenant Colonel His Highness the Maharaja Jagadipendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur , Maharaja of Cooch Behar, has appended his signature on behalf of himself, his heirs and successors .

Jagaddipendra Narayan

Maharaja of Cooch Behar

V.P. Menon

Advisor to the Govt. of India

Ministry of States

## *APPENDIX – F*

Fare well notes of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan on 12<sup>th</sup> September, 1949 and the notification of Government of India on 31<sup>st</sup> December , 1949 .

On the 12<sup>th</sup> September ,1949 the Princely State of Cooch Behar transferred as a Chief Commissioners Province . Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan bade farewell to his beloved people in the following way –

“ On this solemn occasion which marks the end of long and happy association, my mother and I send our very best wishes,my beloved people .

“ Wherever we may be, we shall never forget you, your loyalty,and your devotion . We hope, you will always maintain the peace , good will and harmony which has been our common heritage.

“ We shall always watch with keen interest your moral and material welfare and always prey for your happiness and prosperity .

“ May God Almighty bless you all .

Jagaddipendra Narayan.”

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF LAW  
NOTIFICATION  
New Delhi, the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1949

No.S.O.28 – The following Order made by the Governor  
– General  
is published for general information –

**THE STATES MERGER (WEST Bengal) ORDER 1949.**

WHEREAS full and exclusive authority, jurisdiction and powers for and relation to the governance of the Indian State of Cooch Behar are exercisable by the Dominion Government .

AND WHEREAS it is expedient to provide by Order made under Section 290A of the Government of India Act , 1935 for the administration of the said State in all respects as if it formed part of the Province of West Bengal ;

AND WHEREAS for the aforesaid purpose it is expedient further to amend the State' Merger ( Governor's Provinces) Order 1949;

AND WHEREAS the views of the Government of West Bengal have been ascertained both with respect to the proposal to make such an order and with respect to the provisions to be inserted therein ;

NOW, THEREFORE, in exercise of the powers conferred by the said Section 290A

and of all other powers enabling him in this behalf the Governor – General is pleased to make the following Order:-

1. This Order may be cited as the States' Merger (West Bengal) Order, 1949.
2. In clause ( b ) of Article 2 of the States' Merger ( Governor's Provinces ) Order, 1949 ( hereinafter referred to as the Principal Order ) , after the words and figures " December , 1949 " the words and figures "and in relation to the State specified in Schedule VIII, the first day of January , 1950" shall be inserted .
3. In clause ( a ) of paragraph 1 of Article 11 of the Principal Order, after the entry relating to the United Provinces, the following entry shall be inserted, namely :-

“ West Bengal .....92”

4. After Article 12 of the Principal Order, the following Article shall be inserted namely:-

“13” As from the appointed day. –

(a) the jurisdiction of the High Court at Calcutta shall extend to the whole of the merged State of Cooch Behar ( hereinafter referred to as Cooch Behar ) as it extends to the Province of West Bengal ;

(b) the Bengal, Agra and Assam Civil Courts Act , 1887 shall extend to , and be in force in, Cooch Behar as it extends to , and is in force in, the Province of West Bengal ;

(c) the High Court of Cooch Behar and the other Civil Courts in Cooch Behar ( hereinafter referred to as “existing Civil Courts”) shall stand transferred –

(i) if it is an appeal from a decree or Order in a civil case where the amount or value of the subject matter of the suit or other proceeding is not more than five thousand rupees, to the Court of the District Judge, Cooch Behar ;

(ii) if it is an appeal in a criminal proceeding and the sentence appealed against is a sentence of fine only or is a sentence of imprisonment for a period not exceeding four days, whether with or without fine, to the Court of the Sessions Judge, Cooch Behar; and

(iii) in any other case, to the High Court at Calcutta;

(e) every civil appeal, suit or other proceeding pending immediately before the appointed day, before any of the existing Civil Courts shall stand transferred to the lowest Court, established under the Bengal, Agra and Assam Civil Courts Act, 1887, as extended to Cooch Behar, which would have jurisdiction to try or dispose of such appeal, suit or proceeding;

(f) every criminal appeal, case or other proceeding pending immediately before the appointed day, before the Civil and Session Judge, Cooch Behar, shall stand transferred to the Session Judge, Cooch Behar.

(g) every decree passed or Order made before the appointed day by the High Court of Cooch Behar or by any of the existing Civil Courts, and every sentence or Order passed in the exercise of criminal jurisdiction by the High Court of Cooch Behar or by the Civil and Session Judge, Cooch Behar, shall be deemed, for the purpose of execution to have been passed or made by the corresponding Court – established order and in accordance with the provisions of this Article;

(h) where any existing Civil Court, by reason of its abolition under clause (c) of this Article, ceases to have jurisdiction with respect to any suit or proceeding, any proce

—ding in relation to that suit or proceeding, which, if that Court had not ceased to have jurisdiction, might have been had therein, may be had in the Court to which the business of the former Court has been transferred under this Article;

(i) an appeal from a decree or Order passed by an existing Civil Court but not appealed against before the appointed day, shall –

(a) where such appeal would, before that day, have lain under the law in force in Cooch Behar to the High Court of Cooch Behar and the amount or value of the subject - matter of the suit or other proceeding is more than five thousand rupees, lie to the high Court at Calcutta; and

(b) where such appeal would, before that day, have lain under the law in force in Cooch Behar to the High Court of Cooch Behar or to the Court of Civil and Session Judge, Cooch Behar, and an amount or value of the subject matter of the suit or other proceeding is not more than five thousand rupees, to the Court of the District Judge, Cooch Behar ;

(j) an appeal from an order passed by a Magistrate in a criminal case but not appealed against before the appointed day, shall, if the appeal would, before such day, have lain under the law in force in Cooch Behar to the High Court of Cooch Behar, lie to the Session Judge, Cooch Behar ;

(k) an application for revision of an Order passed by a Magistrate in a criminal case shall, if such application would under the law in force in Cooch Behar before the appointed day, have lain, but was not made, to the High Court of Cooch Behar, lie to the High Court at Calcutta ;

(l) nothing contained in clause (g) to (k) shall be constructed to extend the period of limitation to which any such appeal, application or other proceeding may be subject on the day immediately before the appointed day;

(m) the abolition of the High Court of Cooch Behar or the existing Civil Courts under clause (c) of the Article shall not prejudice or affect the continued operation of any notice served, injunction issued, direction made or proceedings taken before the appointed day by such High Court or Civil Court under the powers then conferred upon it ;

(n) no proceedings taken, or jurisdiction exercised, by a single – Judge of the High Court of Cooch Behar during the period from 31<sup>st</sup> day of October, 1949 to the 31<sup>st</sup> day of December, 1949, shall be called in question on the ground that the Court was not properly constituted or that such proceedings could have been taken or jurisdiction exercised, only by a bench of two Judges; and

(o) in so far as this article makes no provision or insufficient provision, the High Court at Calcutta, may make such order for the transfer of suits, cases or proceedings pending before the High Court of Cooch Behar or an existing Civil Court to itself or to any Court in Cooch Behar subordinate to it ; and where any case, suit or proceeding is so transferred, the Court to which it is transferred shall hear and dispose of the same as if it had been case, suit or proceeding transferred to it in accordance with the law for the time being in force .

Explanation.– In clause (g) the expression “corresponding Court” means a Court in which the case “proceeding in which the sentence or order was passed would have lain if the case or proceeding had been instituted after the appointed day”.

5. In the Schedules to the Principal Order, the following Schedule shall be added at the end, namely :-

“ SCHEDULE VIII

State merged in the Province of West Bengal

Name of State

Number of seats in the  
Legislative Assembly

2”

Cooch Behar

C.RAJAGOPALACHARI,

Governor- General.

K.V.K.SUNDARAM

Secretary .

## APPENDIX – G

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL  
HOME DEPARTMENT  
Constitution & Elections  
NOTIFICATION

No. 164 AR

RIR. 4 – 49.

Calcutta, the 25<sup>th</sup> January , 1950

The following order , dated the 25<sup>th</sup> January , 1950 , by the  
Governor – General , is published for general information : -

ORDER

New Delhi , the 25<sup>th</sup> January , 1950

In pursuance of Paragaph (4) of Article 11 of the States' Merger ( Govrnor  
Provinces) Order, 1949, I Chakravarti Rajagopalachariya , Governor – General of India,  
here by nominate the following persons to fill the additional seats in the West Bengal  
Provincial Legislative Assembly created by Article 3 of the States' Merger (West Bengal  
) Order , 1949 , and represent the people of Cooch Behar .

Name of State	Name of persons .
Cooch Behar	Sri. Satish Chandra Roy Singh Sarkar Sri. Umesh Chandra Mandal

**APPENDIX – H**  
Pictures



ROYAL FLAG OF THE PRINCELY STATE OF COOCH BEHAR



HISTORICAL MAP OF COOCH BEHAR



MAHARAJA NRIPENDRA NARAYAN ( YOUNG AGE) ( 1863 – 1911)  
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MAHARAJA NRIPENDRA NARAYAN ( MATURE AGE) (1863 – 1911 )



MAHARANI SUNITY DEVI WIFE OF MAHARAJA NRIPENDRA NARAYAN  
(1878- 1932 )



MAHARAJA RAJ RAJENDRA NARAYAN ( 1911 – 13 )



MAHARAJA JITENDRA NARAYAN ( 1913 – 1922 )



बाये महाराज जगदीपेन्द्र नारायण, माबे राजमाता इन्दिरा देवी, डहिने कुमार इन्द्रजित् नारायण ।

COOCH BEHAR STATE REGENCY COUNCIL AT WORK (1922 -1936)

ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE PICTURE : MAHARAJA JAGADDIPENDRA NARAYAN ( YOUNG AGE) , ON THE MIDDLE , MAHARANI INDIRA DEVI AND ON THE RIGHT , KUMAR INDRAJIT NARAYAN ( BROTHER OF MAHARAJA JAGADDIPENDRA NARAYAN )



MAHARANI INDIRA DEVI (1911- 68) WIFE OF MAHARAJA  
JITENDRA NARAYAN



ACCESSION MEDAL : INSTITUTED BY MAHARAJA JITENDRA NARAYAN  
TO COMMEMORATE HIS INSTALLATION ON THE 17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 1913



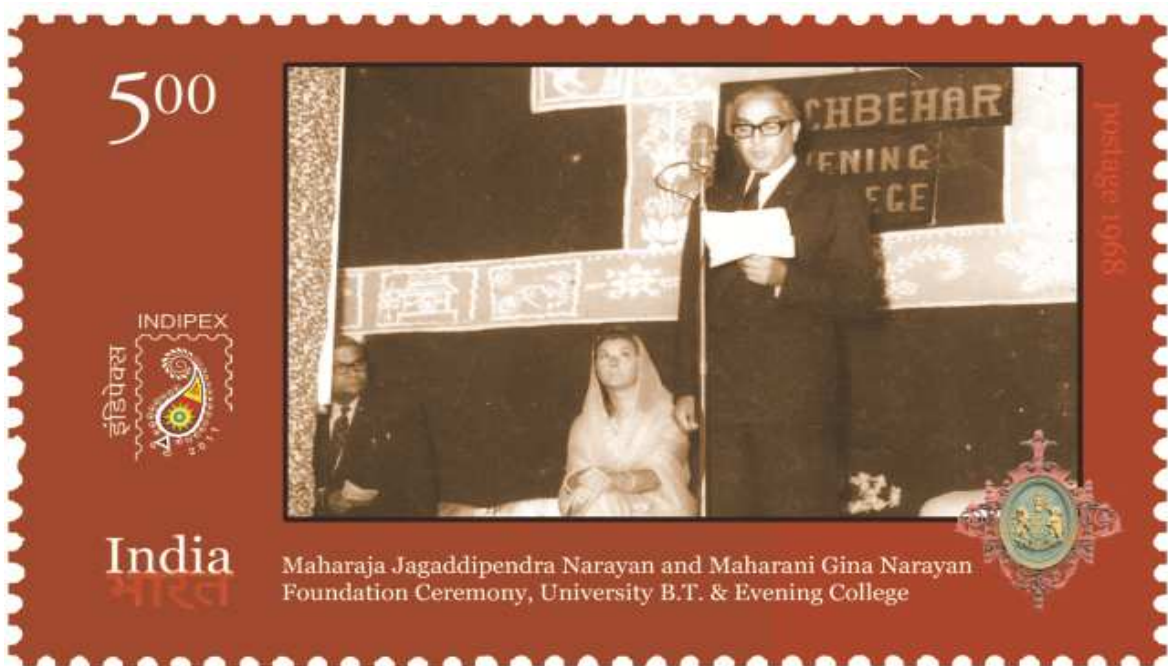
INSTALLATION MEDAL : INSTITUTED BY MAHARAJA JAGADDIPENDRA NARAYAN TO COMMEMORATE THE TERMINATION OF THE REGENCY AND HIS ASSUMPTION OF FULL RULING POWERS ON 6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 1936 .



SILVER JUBILEE MEDAL : INSTITUTED BY MAHARAJA JAGADDIPENDRA NARAYAN TO COMMEMORATE THE SILVER JUBILEE OF HIS ACCESSION TO THE THRONE ON 20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 1947.



ON THE RIGHT SIDE MAHARAJA JAGADDIPENDRA NARAYAN AND ON THE LEFT MAHARAI GINA NARAYAN



STAMP OF MAHARAJA JAGADDIPENDRA NARAYAN AND MAHARANI GINA NARAYAN , FOUNDATION CEREMONY OF UNIVERSITY B.T. & EVENING COLLEGE ON 25<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST , 1968.



JENKINS SCHOOL



MAHARAJA JAGADDIPENDRA NARAYAN ( 1922 – 70)



THE COOCH BEHAR PALACE



ROYAL DARBAR AT COOCH BEHAR



THE GATE OF COOCH BEHAR PALACE



THE MADAN MOHAN THAKUR BARI



THE GATEWAY ( NAHABUTKHANAH) OF MADAN MOHAN THAKUR BARI  
( VIEW FROM BAIRAGI DIGHI , SITUATED INFRONT OF THE MADAN  
MOHAN THAKUR BARI )



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VICTORIA COLLEGE



HEAD POST OFFICE AT COOCH BEHAR



MAHARAJA JITENDRA NARAYAN PRAJABATSAL CHIKITSALAYA  
278



PORTRAIT OF COOCH BEHAR RAJ DARBAR



MOTOR VEHICLES OFFICE OF THE COOCH BEHAR STATE



LANSDOWNE HALL



THE REVENUE DEPARTMENT OF THE COOCH BEHAR STATE



SUNITY COLLEGE (SUNITY ACADEMY)



THE COOCH BEHAR STATE RAILWAY STATION



CIRCUIT HOUSE AT COOCH BEHAR



THE ROYAL VETERINARY DEPARTMENT AT COOCH BEHAR



DYNAMO HOUSE ( FRONT SIDE ) AT COOCH BEHAR



ENTRANCE GATEWAY OF DYNAMO HOUSE AT COOCH BEHAR



TOP SIDE POSITION OF DYNAMO HOUSE

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## APPROACH OF THE MAHARAJAS OF COOCH BEHAR STATE TOWARDS ENVIRONMENT ( 1878 – 1949)

Joydeep Pal\*

Before initiating a discussion on the subject matter the researcher should unambiguously map the contours of what constitutes environmental pollution and how we can overcome it to save our earth from global warming and to maintain ecological balance .

Environment or environmentalism is a broad subject which is related with social, ideological and philosophical peripheries. It is generally regarded as a phenomenon which has gained a momentum in the recent past and it advocates preservation, restoration and improvement of natural environment. In other words we can say that to protect the environment is an attempt to balance the relationship between human and various natural systems on which both depend in such a way that all the components are accorded a proper degree of sustainability .<sup>1</sup>

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Joydeep Pal\*, Department of History, Sukanta Mahavidyalaya, Dhupguri, Jalpaiguri and Research Scholar , Dept. of History, University of North Bengal

Let us now explain when exactly environmentalism first came into discussion. The term first appeared in 1922. The basic concepts related to environmental perspectives according to Botkin and Kellar (1982) were as follows :<sup>2</sup>

- a) The sole suitable habitat for living beings is the earth whose resource is limited .
- b) A proper understanding of the systems and rate of changes in the earth is a prerequisite for solution to environmental problem;
- c) Living beings extensively alter and modify different components of the earth: lithosphere , hydrosphere and atmosphere. These alterations and modifications are entirely different from those of a planet where there is no life;
- d) The main character of the ecosystem is the sustenance of life on earth but not of any individual organism or population of organism;
- e) Rapid exponential growth of individual pollution is rare in nature and control of population is a normal feature;
- f) Natural process (physical and biological) that are operating today have operated throughout the geological time but not with the same intensity and form as at present;
- e) Many natural processes of the earth are hazardous to living beings but to maintain ecological balance these hazardous process should not only be recognized and the resultant hazards at least minimized but also, if possible, the occurrence of these hazards should be avoided;
- f) Human activities starting from primitive farming to the present day technological innovations cause multifarious changes in the environment;
- g) Use of land has cumulative effects. To maintain a proper balance in the environmental set up , negative effects of land

use should be minimum and this, in fact, is an obligation to the future generations;

- h) Environmental problems – their understanding and solution need a multi – disciplinary approach;
- i) Since every human society has a set of beliefs about nature, its effects are reflected on the natural surroundings;
- j) A view of environment in totality substantiates the fact that every action has more than one effect;
- k) Environmental ethics is of prime importance in ascertaining different aspects of environmental education.

Environmental protection took a definite shape in England during the rule of king Edward I. He issued an order regarding the ban and the burning of sea – coal in 1272, when its smoke became an ecological problem. It can be stated that the origin of environmental movement lies in the response to increasing levels of smoke pollution in the atmosphere during the Industrial Revolution. It is true that industrialization in Europe was a tremendous phenomenon at that time and due to industrialization big factories were set up. But the concomitant immense growth in coal consumption gave rise to an unprecedented level of air pollution in industrial areas. In the beginning of the nineteenth century a wide range of industrial chemical discharges were added to the growing load of untreated human waste.

The proposed work is a study of the approaches of the Cooch Behar Maharajas ( 1878 – 1949) towards environment. It is true that now -a - days global awareness is a tentative issue and as a part of it environmental awareness is also important. It now appears a natural issue, but during the Nineteenth Century such kind of thinking was hardly found. If any one looks into the history of Environmental problem, he will find that this is a problem which accelerates with the advent of new avenues in industrial, power

plant, and transport sector, etc. This is why much more attempts had been taken in the recent past namely, environmental legislation (Britain's Alkali Acts of 1863), environmental movements, free market environmentalism, Evangelical environmentalism and different organizations and conferences to protect the Nature, to save the environment and to protect the human beings. Let us now focus on the approach of the Cooch Behar Maharajas who were educated in England and were well aware of the environmental problems and who took different measures to protect the tiny Princely State of Cooch Behar from environmental pollution.

At first it is important to mention the identity of the State. The name of Cooch Behar is a compound of two words Cooch and Behar i.e land of the koches. This State geographically forms part of the lower provinces of Bengal and occupies a place in the north-east corner. It is about 20 miles south of the Bhutan ranges of the Himalayas, the tract of land lying between the foot of the hills and its northern frontier being the Western Duars which now form the eastern part of the District Jalpaiguri. The river, Brahmaputra just as it turns south from its westerly course a short way below Dhubri (Assam), is at about the same distance from its eastern boundaries. It lies between  $25^{\circ}57'40''$  and  $26^{\circ}32'20''$ , north latitude and between  $88^{\circ}47'40''$  and  $89^{\circ}54'35''$ , east longitude.<sup>3</sup>

Here it is pertinent to know what kind of atmosphere prevailed in the State during (1878 – 1898). The climate of Cooch Behar, damp and malarious and to some extent enervating. The east-wind which blows during the greater part of the year full of moisture and is unhygienic for health. The dry west-wind which sets in with spring and prevails from March to May was the best current of air available in this State. The cool refreshing southern breeze of lower Bengal was very rare here. According to the records (during the monarchical period) of the State, the average rainfall for the last 20 years since 1890 was 133 – 53 mm. With the exception of the year 1891 – 92 and 1896 – 97

when it was 90-71 and 85.44 mm respectively. The rainfall had always been above 105 mm and it was only in two years that the quantity was confined even to that figure.<sup>4</sup> It had been above the average in nine years, two of which mark the end of the eighth, five fall within the ninth and the remaining two mark the beginning of the tenth decade of the present century. The heaviest rain-falls took place in the years, 1878-79, 1890-91 and 1892-93 when the quantity registered amounted to 194.13, 187.41, and 179.17 mm. respectively. The normal rain fall of the different months being the average for the last 20 years (1878-1898) given below in mm. :-<sup>5</sup>

January .....	0.37
February .....	0.46
March .....	1.95
April .....	5.90
May .....	16.13
June .....	31.83
July .....	26.98
August .....	22.04
September .....	22.26
October .....	4.96
November .....	0.21
December .....	0.09

Although the averages shows rain-fall in every month, there had been actual fall of rain every month from April to October in the course of the last 20 years. The chance of the falling of showers in November is as 6.50 :20 and in the preceding months of January, February and March as 12:20, 16:20 and 17:20 respectively. Roughly speaking there were only two well - defined seasons in Cooch Behar, as in fact in all the neighbouring British districts; winter and summer.<sup>6</sup>

Winter sets in fairly in November and summer in April, the months of March and October marking the fag-ends of the two seasons. The severity of cold begins to die out in February and that of heat in September and these months partake more of the nature of the season preceding than of that following them and may be fairly included within the former. The months which mark the state of transition from cold to heat and from heat to cold were March and October and may be called the spring and autumn of Cooch Behar. Of the twelve months of the year four mark the cold weather and six the hot weather, the remaining two indicating a weather of a milder form. The rains set in by the middle of May and the last till the middle of September. They thus extended over the greater portion of summer and form no independent season themselves. It was hot during the rains; only the atmosphere slightly cools down after a good shower of rain, which however, had no permanent effect upon the heat of the season.

The rainy season in Cooch Behar is proverbially long and persistent. In June and July and sometimes even in August it rains almost continually day and night for days and sometimes for weeks together. During these outbursts of foul weather the low lands and the fields are submerged, the rivers are flooded, the roads come under water at places and communication becomes difficult if not impossible. The prices of food grains go up and the suffering of men and cattle becomes great. Formerly the duration of the rainy days was inconveniently long. It has become shorter now days.

The climate of Cooch Behar cannot be said to be mild and certainly of a severer form than that of the greater portion of lower Bengal. The highest heat recorded by the barometer in the shades in the day time between 92 and 93 degrees, which generally happens in June or July and the lowest 49 degree ordinarily in January. These months therefore mark the mid-

summer and mid-winter respectively.<sup>7</sup> The heat in the morning of the winter months reaches a maximum varying from 75 to 85 degrees and that in the hot weather months from 86 to 92 degrees. The difference between the maximum and the minimum temperatures or the range as it is technically called varies from 23 to 30 degrees from November to February and from 14 to 22 degrees during the remainder of the year. The generation of dew begins in the autumn and continues throughout the spring and indeed in all seasons when there is no rain.<sup>8</sup> Exposure in the early morning and late in the evening is thus unhygienic for health. Never the less such an atmosphere is still alive in Cooch Behar.

Regarding natural calamity, the State of Cooch Behar cannot be said to be exceptionally liable to blight, flood or drought although these calamities does occur some times. About the middle of November 1863, a flight of locusts passed over the State, caused a great deal of mischief to tobacco and mustered seed crops, but as they left the rice untouched the injury inflicted was not deeply felt. They came from the west and traveled eastwards. Although the instance of blight were rare, the same cannot be said of flood. The State is intersected by numerous rivers and streams and when there were heavy rains in the Bhutan hills, these overflow causes problem for the state. Here it can be stated that floods were not due to excessive local rain fall. The State suffered from heavy floods in 1787, 1822 and 1842.<sup>9</sup> In 1870 there was also a slight flood. The heaviest flood remembered in the State occurred in July 1878, the like of which had not been seen for 40 years. During this time the whole of the State with adjoining Dhubri saw the vastness of flood. Dalton, the British officer made a valuable report on the matter.<sup>10</sup> Apart from flood the State of Cooch Behar witnessed a heavy drought in 1854, which seriously affected the prosperity of the people. It resulted in the general failure of the

rice crops and a partial famine. The Maharaja of the State at that time was minor, in the court of Wards Institution at Calcutta, but the chief minister of the State procured large quantities of grain from the neighbouring place of Sirajgunj (Bangladesh) and sold it at cost price to the people. For about three months boats were continually coming in with rice which was distributed over the State.<sup>11</sup> The State of Cooch Behar also felt the heat of earthquakes in 1885 and 1897. Among them, the earthquake of 1897 was a terrible one. It occurred on 12 June 1897 at about 5 P.M.<sup>12</sup> The seismic disturbance lasted for over 3 minutes. The main wave was from north-east to south-west with oscillating and rotator movements. Happily it was the day of Muharram festival and people were out of their homes. There was not much loss of human life, but the loss to property was numerous. All the buildings were more or less severely effected, roads were badly fissured, bridges damaged and drains - wells choked and filled up. The damages done to the Palace and public buildings in the town amounted to about ten lakhs of rupees and that to private buildings about seventy five thousand.<sup>13</sup>

Apart from the above discussion it is important to mention the role of the Maharajas towards environment. The rulers' of the State took positive efforts for the welfare of their subjects *i.e.*, for the people of the State. The implementation of measures regarding environment was an indirect part of that. The work of protecting the environment of Cooch Behar took the shape of royal responsibility during the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan (1863 - 1911). Educated in England he came back with new initiatives and ideas. In 1878 he attained maturity of age and all sorts of modern means were introduced in the State since 1878. One of his initial effort was found in the work on plantations throughout the kingdom. The Maharaja wanted to protect the Nature *i.e.* to protect the environment. 'A tree is a life' - that was his

vision. His attention towards protecting Nature may be summarized in the following way:

Plantation Work at Cooch Behar during his rule was a Remarkable achievement for maintaining the ecological balance of the State. In plantation work a good deal has been done during the year 1878. In this year one thousand Sal trees were imported from Bhutan forests and planted in the Nilkuty area. Along with that 800 Sissoo trees have also been planted near the Stock Yard.<sup>14</sup> A good number of saplings of different kinds were planted along the Rungpur Road. About a mile of the Emigration Road, young trees had also been lined. Existing plantation had been maintained.<sup>15</sup> Thus the work of Plantation received an impetus, in Cooch Behar.

From the above analysis it is clear that the Maharaja was well aware of the eco- balance system. At the same time he was an ardent adorer of English culture. It was he who felt the necessity for introduction of English with passion in his State.

Maharaja was in favour of introducing British culture of shooting as sports and making necessary arrangements for the same. For this purpose he maintained reserve forests in Garodhat and Patlakhawa area.<sup>16</sup> In 1897- 98 under the order of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, lands aggregating 10,418 bighas in taluk Bakshirbosh Putimari and also in taluk Baro shalbari, Chengtimari, Atea Mochar, Takoamari, Rampore – Garbhanga, Paglir -kuti, Rashikbil, Khgribari, Jaldhoa and Pholimari, at Tufangunj, aggregating 19,980 bighas, 1 cotta and 5 dhurs were resumed and were being kept as reserve forest for Maharaja's shooting purpose and suitable compensation were being given to ryots in this regard.<sup>17</sup>

The following table shows the amount of shooting expenditure from 1900 - 1905 –<sup>18</sup>

Year	Rs.	A. P.
1900 – 01	16,361	0 0
1901 – 02	20,037	0 0
1902 – 03	32,375	0 0
1903 – 04	31,251	0 0
1904 – 05	8, 623	10 11

Apart from that in 1906 at Chilapeta, in 1907 at Kolabari and at Bholka shooting camps were organized for big game shooting.<sup>19</sup> In 1908 Maharaja wrote a memoir on shooting namely, "Thirty Seven years of Big Game Shooting in Cooch Behar and Assam" in which he vividly described his shooting arrangements.<sup>20</sup> He also mentioned that in 1907–08 the zamindars of Lakhimpur, Bijni, Gouripur rendered much help in making the necessary arrangements.<sup>21</sup>

In this way Maharaja created an example of its own. Broadly speaking in the name of shooting he actually helped the state to preserve its natural wealth. Due to short life from 1911-13 Maharaja Raj Rajendra Narayan could not contribute much in this end. During the reign of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan (1913 - 1922) another measure was taken to protect the Nature and Environment. This effort was as follows -

Preservation of trees was a passion of the Maharaja Jitendra Narayan and for it a number of forests were regularly maintained by the Public Works Department. All the Forests were maintained according to the particular needs. The following chart of 1917 shows how many trees and forests were maintained in this regard –<sup>22</sup>

Sl. No.	Locality	Class of Forests	Natural or Cultural	Areas.		
				B	K	Ch.
1.	Nilkuty	Sisoo	Cultural	125	0	0
2.	Do.	Do.	Do.	121	0	0
3.	Do.	Do.	Do.	2	15	0
4.	Peelkhana	Do.	Do.	0	13	0
5.	Charakerkuty	Do.	Do.	585	6	12
6.	Ghegirghat Naturarpar	Do.	Do.	300	1	18
7.	Nababgunj Balasi Torsa	Do.	Do.	178	13	7
8.	Char Forest	Do.	Natural	17	0	4
9.	Kholta	Do.	Cultural	8	0	0
10.	Bogribari	Do.	Do.	10	0	0
11.	Gossanimari	Sal	Natural	67	0	0
12.	Jigabari	Do.	Do.	1	15	5
13.	Natabari (charaljani)	Do.	Do.	57	0	0
14.	Charan Sathalee	Do.	Do.	67	0	0
15.	Chota Salbari	Do.	Do.	2	15	0
16.	Bara Salbari	Do.	Do.	50	0	0
17.	Nilkuty	Do.	Cultural	1	0	0
18.	Do.	Do.	Do.	7	0	0
19.	Mathabhanga Balarhat	Do.	Natural	38	15	0
20.	Teldhar Bodeswary	Do.	Do.	261	2	0
21.	Garati	Do.	Do.	124	0	0
22.	Nilkuty	Teak	Cultural	3	0	0
23.	Peelkhana	Do.	Do.	2	5	0
24.	Dowaguri	Do.	Do.	3	0	0
25.	Nilkuty	Do.	Do.	8	2	0
26.	Talliguri	Do.	Do.	3	0	0
27.	Kholta	Do.	Do.	6	0	0
			<b>Total</b>	<b>2050</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>

Source: Annual Administration Report of Cooch Behar State (1917-18), P-28

During the rule of Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan, an effort was taken in this field. The effort is of no importance in today, but in the mid twentieth century such a measure was notable one.

Water is a natural resource, in other words it can be identified as a part of environment. However, before using it for drinking purposes we need to purify it. During the period of 1926-27 the Cooch Behar State Regency Council took an important step on this matter. A scheme namely, water supply scheme was planned with an estimated cost of Rs. 2.5 lakhs. It was decided to spread the expenditure over two years - Rs. 1.25 lakhs being provided in 1926-27 and Rs. 1.25 lakhs in 1927-28.<sup>23</sup> It was also decided that sum of Rs. 45,000 would be appropriated from the accumulated surplus of the pound fund towards the capital cost of the scheme and that a sum of Rs. 80,000 would be provided for the scheme in the budget for 1926-27, thus making up the total sum of Rs. 1,25,000 sanctioned for the expenditure during 1926-27. The north-west portion of Narendra Narayan Park, which was in the center of the town, was selected for the location of the water works and a power house. A provision of Rs. 25,000 has been made in the Public Works Department budget, 1926-27 for the construction of the new power house.<sup>24</sup> The whole scheme will be carried out under the supervision and direction of the chief engineer, public health department, Bengal. The proposal of the chief engineer, public health department, Bengal, in connection with rural water supply were also approved by the Cooch Behar State Regency Council. An experiment was carried out in the shape of sinking tube wells in 25 taluks (villages) close to Cooch Behar town with a view to seeing, after the experiment had been given a proper trial, whether it would be feasible to introduce a tube well scheme on a large scale throughout the State with a view to providing the population in the rural areas

with a good water supply so far as may be possible.<sup>25</sup> Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan followed in the foot steps of his forefathers, but he took a different kind of measure in favour of environment. In 1945 he issued motor spirit rationing order. Through this order he tried to stop air pollution. The researcher can note the following points in this connection—<sup>26</sup>

First: License number (In respect of motor spirit to be used other than in motor vehicles and motor boats)

Secondly: (Name and address of licensee) Mr. / Mrs.

Thirdly: Is / are hereby licensed to acquire motor spirit to the extent of— (in words or figures) upto \_\_\_\_\_ 194, subject to the following conditions:

- a) The maximum quantity to be acquired in any one calendar month shall not exceed gallons (in words or figures).
- b) The motor spirit acquired under the license shall be used for no purpose other than that the purpose mentioned.
- c) Motor spirit shall be acquired from a authorized supplier or a dealer.
- d) The license is not transferable and both the license and the book of receipt forms shall remain in the custody of the licensee.
- e) On expiry of the license both the license form and the cover of receipt book together with unused receipt forms shall be returned to the office of issue along with if necessary, an application in another form 'M' for renewal.

In general terms such an order may be classified as a formal rule of the authority, but if any one tries to investigate why did Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan issue such an order? they can find out that the Maharaja introduced such regulations to stop air

pollution which is generated through the burning of fuel, more importantly from expired engines. The Princely State of Cooch Behar was fortunate that it got modern rulers' like Maharaja Nripendra Narayan. None of them encouraged industrial or chemical investments in order to save the State from environmental pollution. Though modernized the State was identified as an agricultural based area. It, however, did not signify that rulers were mentally handicapped, rather it showed that they were very much concerned about the natural resources of the State and they utilized it. As far as the effort of the Maharajas are concerned it is to be submitted that some the work had a passionate approach but the contribution or achievement can not be negotiated.

In conclusion it must be added that this Princely State *inter-alia* also nourished Ayurvedic plants for medical treatment over the years. Regarding Ayurvedic plants, a garden was maintained in the town of Cooch Behar under the royal patronage. If any researcher seriously investigates the medical facilities available in the State, a picture of Ayurvedic treatment would be clearly visible. Along with this it can be stated that the maintenance of such an Ayurvedic garden was indication of the reliability of the rulers towards natural medicine. This garden is still in existence at Cooch Behar and now under the guidance of the Debottar trust of Cooch Behar. Here it can be mentioned that such an effort indicated that Maharajas believed in natural treatment rather than scientific treatment which had side effects. During the reign of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, modern means of medical treatment was available in the State and side by side Ayurvedic medicines were also used for medical treatment.

In conclusion it is to be noted that environmental issues were bestowed with immense importance during those days of native rule and this reflects on the education and environmental concerns of the ruling classes.

**Notes and References:**

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3. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri, *The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlement*, Cooch Behar, 1903,p.46.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
6. *Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch Behar State (1898 – 99)*, Cooch Behar 1900, p. 11.
7. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, p.77.
10. *Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch Behar State (1878 – 79)*,Cooch Behar 1880, p.11 “There was some talk of the possibility of Sir Ashley Eden going from Rangpur to Dhubri , I ( Mr. Dalton) believed just at that time and Mr. Campbell the Deputy Commissioner of Dhubri , thinking the Lieutenant - governor might wish to return *via* Cooch Behar, come over here from Dhubri in a steam launch to test the practical ability of coming by water and I returned with him to Dhubri the same day passing in the launch over miles of cultivated land and actually crossing from one river to another. The flood subsided quickly from the high lands, leaving the low lands submerged for many days.”
11. *Ibid.*
12. *The Cooch Behar Gazette Part – I* Cooch Behar(1897), p. 59.

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