

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE COOCH BEHAR STATE PRIOR TO THE ACCESSION OF MAHARAJA RAJ RAJENDRANARAYAN (1911 A.D.)

The origin of the Kingdom of Kamata-Koch can be traced since the days of Visvasimha, the founder of the dynasty during the early part of the sixteen century A.D. This kingdom survived as an independent State till 1772, but it went through certain stages of socio-political development viz. 'from clan village to chiefdom' and 'from chiefdom to kingdom'.¹ However, the Kingdom of Kamata-Koch Bihar became a native, tributary State under the British in 1773 A.D. in accordance with the provisions of Anglo-Koch treaty. Thereafter, Cooch Behar was not reduced into a Zamindari of Bengal but retained its status of a native state till 1949 A.D. when it was integrated with the Indian Dominion. It has been rightly said that "excepting some of the more important states in Rajputana, there are few states in India which can boast of a more remote antiquity than that of Cooch Behar"²

Although the territory of the Kamata-Koch Bihar originally formed part of the ancient kingdom of Kamarupa,³ its early history is shrouded in obscurity. The territory of ancient Assam was known as Pragjyotisha in Mahabharata and Kamarupa in the Puranas and the Tantras. Most of the authorities suggest that the Karatoya is the western boundary of Kamarupa.⁴ The river Karatoya unified in its beds 'the streams which now go to form the Tista, the Kosi and Mahanadi.'⁵ Hiuen Tsung (7th century A.D.) in his account mentioned that he arrived in Kamarupa going east from Pundravardhana (now in Bogura district of Bangladesh) after crossing the river Karatoya (Ka-lo-tu).⁶ The Yogini Tantra, a later work, tells us that the territory of ancient Kamarupa was bounded on the north by the mountain of Kanjagiri, on the east by the stream Dikshu, on the west by the Karatoya river, and on the south by the confluence of the Brahmaputra and Laksha river.⁷ The area included among others the Brahmaputra Valley, Bhutan, Rangpur, Cooch Behar, north-east of Mymensing and possibly, Garo Hills.⁸ The Yogini Tantra mentions that ancient Kamarupa was divided into four piths or portion, viz., Kamapith (extending from Karatoya to the Sankosh), Ratnapith, Subarnapith and Soumarapith.⁹ The territory of present Cooch Behar formed the part of Kamapith and bordered on Ratnapith.¹⁰ Some scholars opine that 'from the point of view of geography and culture the territory of Cooch-Bihar better known as Kamta-Cooch Behar continued to remain a part of the greater Kamarupa'.¹¹

The earliest recorded kings of Kamrupa belonged to Danava and Asura dynasties.¹² The appellations Danava and Asura suggest that they were non-Aryans.¹³ Later on we find that the Varman line of kings ruled Kamarupa. Bhaskarvarman was the greatest monarch of this line and made alliance with Harshavardhan of Thanesar.¹⁴ He was present at the disputation of Kanauj, and attended the sixth ' Field of happiness ' at Prayaga. He professed the Hindu religion and during his reign the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang visited Kamarupa in 639 A.D.¹⁵ The territory of Kamarupa

under the rule of Bhaskarvarman was about 166 miles in circuit (10,000 li). It must have included the whole valley of the Brahmaputra river, or modern Assam together with Cooch Behar and Bhutan. The capital was at Kamatapura.¹⁶ With the death of Bhaskaravarman, the rule of Varman line came to an end and its place was taken by a new line of kings headed by Salastambha. Salastambha was described as a great chief of the Mlechchhas "The copper plate inscriptions of Ratan Pala furnish the only clue as to the period when the kings of this family ruled. It is said that they ruled between C.664 A.D. and 1000 A.D. and twenty kings intervened between Salastambha and Brahma Pala.¹⁷ Brahma Pala was the first king of the next Pala line in Kamarupa and only called Maharajadhiraja. He was succeeded by his son Ratna Pala and two copper plates throw light on the reign of the latter. Ratna Pala was a strong and war-like ruler and described as "the mighty crusher of the enemies" in the land grant of his grand son Indra Pala.¹⁸ His capital was built on the bank of the Brahmaputra river. He was followed in succession by Purandar Pal, "Indra Pala, Gopala, Harsha Pala and Dharma Pala."¹⁹

With the fall of the Pala line of Kings towards the middle of the twelfth century A.D. the kingdom of Kamarupa disintegrated.²⁰ According to the official geneology of the Pala rulers of Kamarupa, Dharamapala was the last king²¹ who had left us three copper plates grants. Dharpala pushed the boundary of his kingdom to the west of Karatoya and shifted his capital from Pragiyotishpura to Kamrupanagara towards the end of his reign. The Pushpabhadra Copper plate of Dharamapala mentions Kamarupanagara as the seat of the King.²² Kamarupanagara has been differently located by different scholars. While K.L. Baruah and Gait locate it in north Gauhati, others hold the different opinion that it was most probably the same as Kamta or Kamatapura, whose ruins lie in the present district of Cooch Bihar at Gosanimari.²³ K.L. Baruah however argues that " it is extremely probable that north Gauhati continued to be the capital from the time of Dharma Pala till about 1260 A.D. when the seat of Government was transferred to Kamatapura."²⁴

After the death of the last Pala king the eastern part of Kamarupa witnessed the emergency of a number of independent principalities of the feudatory rulers and Mongoloid chiefs. The western part of Kamarupa, later known as Kamata extending as far as the river Karatoya in the west, is said to have been ruled by a powerful ruler²⁵ at about the middle of the Thirteenth century A.D., after which the Bhuyans gradually rose to power.²⁶ Assam Burunji²⁷ and 'Guru Charitas'²⁸ mention one Durlabhanarayana (c. 1330-1350 A.D) who ascended the throne of Kamata and came into clash with Dharmanarayana, a king ruling over a region bordering the river Mahanada in North West Bengal.²⁹ At last a peace treaty was concluded according to which the Kamata kingdom was divided between them- Durlabhanarayana taking the northern and eastern portion along with Kamatapura and Dharmanarayana retaining the territories³⁰ to the south including Rangpur and Mymensing. It appears that after the division of the kingdom Durlabhanarayan became the Kamateswara and Dharmanarayan styled himself as 'Gaudeswara',³¹ probably due to his occupation of certain portion of Guada.³² But Durlabhanarayana was the only king of Kamata who was acknowledged as the sovereign ruler

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of all Bhuyans of the eastern part of the kingdom. He drove the mountain tribes of Bhutan away from his kingdom, who made several raids in the north-eastern part of the kingdom. ³³

Durlabhanarayana was succeeded by his son Indranarayana in 1350 A.D.³⁴ R.D. Banerjee³⁵ and S.N. Bhattacharya³⁶ contended on the basis of a silver coin ³⁷ bearing the name of Sikandar Shah, the Bengal Sultan, dated 1759 A.H. (A.D. 1357-58) minted at 'Chawalistan' alias Kamru that he attacked in 1357 A.D. As regards the successor of Indranarayana, we are in darkness. ³⁸

The history of Kamata, after the middle of the fourteenth century is most uncertain.³⁹ The part of Kamarupa west of the Brahmaputra probably remained in a state of anarchy for some time and was overrun by several tribes of Koch, Mech, Garó, Kachari and Bhote. The period of disturbance and disintegration was most favourable for the rise of upstarts. ⁴⁰

In the first half of the fifteenth century A.D.⁴¹ the Khen Kings came to power in Kamata and we are in possession of a connected history of these kings.⁴² Kamruper Burunji states that after the line of Arimatta there emerged a new dynasty consisting of three kings, Niladhvaja, Chakradhvaja and Nilamvara who ruled over the tract extending from Singimari upto the bank of the Brahmaputra with their capital at Kamatapura ⁴³. As to the race of the Khens, it is possible that they were branch of the Indo-Mongoloids.⁴⁴ During this period the kingdom of Kamarupa upto Karatoya seems still to have formed a single kingdom but the name had been changed from Kamarupa to Kamata.⁴⁵

Niladhvaja (c. 1440-60 A.D.), the founder of the Khen dynasty and of the Kamata kingdom, was a person of humble birth. Having acquired power he proclaimed himself king of Kamarupa. ⁴⁶ He on ascending the throne brought many Brahmanas from Mithila and did much to re-establish the worship of the Vedic gods. He belonged to the Khen tribe and was raised to the dignity of pure Hindus for this meritorious act.⁴⁷ He built his capital at Kamatapura on the west bank of the river Dharla, about 14 miles south-west of modern Cooch Bihar, surrounded it on three sides with a gigantic rampart with an inner and an outer ditch, while the Dharla protected the east. ⁴⁸ According to Gait, Niladhvaja did not exercise control over more than a very small part of the old kingdom of Kamarupa. Buchanan Hamilton who visited the ruins of Kamatapur, estimated its circumference at nineteen miles, ⁴⁹ The palace, as in the case of Burmese and Chinese towns, stood in the centre.⁵⁰ In 1908 Claude Campbell mentions that "the remains of the city are visited and admired even now"⁵¹ The general titles of honour of this line of kings was 'Kantesvara' or 'Kamatesvara', the lord of Kamata.

Niladhvaja was succeeded by his son Chakradhvaja who ascended the throne of Kamata in c. 1460 A.D. A remarkable event during his reign was the attack of the Bengal Sultan Ruknuddin Barbak Shah ⁵² of Kamata. But the Sultan did not achieve any tangible gain in the campaign against the ruler of Kamata.⁵³ The reign of Chakradhvaja is

also said to have been associated with the discovery and establishment of the shrine of Gosani or Kameswari, the presiding deity of the dynasty.⁵⁴ The temple of Gosanimari or Kameswari is situated within Kamatapura, the capital of Kamata.

Chakradhvaja was succeeded by his son Nilamvara in circa 1480 A.D. who attained great power and extended his rule, eastwards to the Baranadi and westwards as far as Karatoya. He also included within his dominion the north eastern part of the tract which had formerly belonged to the Muslim ruler of Guada.⁵⁵ The dominion of Nilamvara is said to have included the greater part of Goalpara and Kamarupa, the whole of Rangpur and Cooch Bihar and portions of Jalpaiguri and Dinajpur.⁵⁶

During the reign of Nilamvara, the Kamata kingdom was invaded by a large army under Alauddin Hussain Shah (1493-1519), the Sultan of Gauda. The Sultan captured Kamatapur and its date is generally assigned to the year 1498 A.D.⁵⁷ It appears that after sacking Kamatapur, he reduced the kingdom as far east as the Baranadi and left his son Daniel at Hajo as governor of the conquered territory with the object to follow conquest further to the east or Assam. He celebrated his success by the erection of a Madrasah at Malda, the inscription of which bears a date corresponding to A.D. 1501-1502.⁵⁸ In addition, he issued coins in which he assumed the title as the conqueror of Kamata, Kamru, Jajnagar and Orissa.⁵⁹ Hence the defeat of last Khen king by Hussain Shah is a historic fact.

But the rule of the Muslim was short-lived. The war with the Ahoms led to the destruction of the Mohammedan army.⁶⁰ This encouraged the local Bhuiyans to make a united attack on Daniel's garrison as a result of which Daniel and his men were killed. The Muslim government introduced in Kamata was thus overthrown.⁶¹ There arose a number of petty principalities under local chiefs, commonly known as Baro Bhuiyans who gradually asserted their independence.⁶²

The state of anarchy in the Kamata kingdom following the overthrow of the Mohammedan rule could not continue for a long time. Ultimately a leader appeared and raised his head above all the other petty chiefs and gradually subjected all. This was Bishu, the son of Hariya Mandal, who subsequently became king and assumed the name Bisva Simha.⁶³ Bisva Simha was the founder of the Kamata-Koch kingdom which had played an important role in the north-eastern politics of the sixteenth century.⁶⁴

Bisva Simha's father belonged to the Mech tribe while his mother to the Koch tribe. Hence both were non-Aryan and No-Hinduised.⁶⁵ The story of divine origin ascribed by the Brahmanas to the founder of the Koch dynasty evinces a fictitious connection of the Koches with some mythological figures while they were Hinduised. Such a device, however, gave them an opportunity of their superiority and helped them to have allegiance from subject population.⁶⁶

Bisva Simha's father Hariya Mandal, a resident of Chikangram, a village in the Kuntaghat parganas of the Goalpara district, was recognised head of twelve's leading families of Meches (or Koches) living in that region.⁶⁷ With the election of Hariya Mech as the 'Chief' (Mandal), the tribal villages of Chikna Hill located in Lower Assam were transformed into a chiefdom. This chiefdom, a small tract bounded by the Manas river in the east and Sankosh river in the west and from Dhabalgiri in the north to the Brahmaputra in the south, became an autonomous entity under the leadership of Hariya Mandal. He succeeded in bringing the Koches and Meches in a common platform and transforming them as a resistant and aggressive force, which could be developed as a state under his son Bisva Simha.⁶⁷⁺

With this hereditary background Bisva Simha organized under his banner the different tribes of the region, launched a career and conquest⁶⁸ and extended his rule from the river Karatoya in the west and to the Badnadi in the east defeating the Bhuiyans one after another.⁶⁹ He made a treaty with the king of Bhutan and brought southern Bhutan under his control.⁷⁰ He invaded the Ahom country but ultimately he had to retreat.⁷¹ He is also said to have attacked Guada and succeeded in occupying some portions of that country. By means of 'aggressive warfare' Bisva Simha transformed the small chiefdom to a Koch State.⁷²

Bisva Simha transferred his capital from Chikna to Kamatapur and took the title Kamateswara or lord of Kamata.⁷³ Some scholars have suggested that Bisva Simha may have struck coins⁷⁴ but others opine that this seems very unlikely as none of them have survived.⁷⁵ For his military and administrative talents, Bisva Simha has been compared with his contemporary Babar, the founder of the Mughal Empire.⁷⁶

Naranarayana, the son and successor of Bisva Simha, was the most powerful ruler of the Koch dynasty. During his reign Koch kingdom reached its zenith⁷⁷ and was comprised of almost the whole Northern Bengal, Bhutan and Assam, as well as the modern states of Kachar, Jaintia, Manipur and Tipperah and extended upto the coast of the Bay of Bengal.⁷⁸ On coins Naranarayana is given the title of 'Bhupalasya' or 'Master of the world', a very appropriate title for coins struck during and after the campaigns of 1562-1563.⁷⁹ Naranarayana appointed his brother Sukladvaja his commander-in-chief who was so skilled and swift in military operations that he was nick named Chilaray or the kite king.⁸⁰ It appears that the territory under Naranarayana direct administration was much smaller than the one noted above (the conquered one).⁸¹ It is probably due to that fact that Naranarayana allowed the defeated rulers to enjoy their autonomy by paying annual tribute.⁸²

It was during the times of Naranarayan that Koches played an important role in the contemporary Indian political scene. Naranarayana had friendly relations with the Mughal Emperor Akbar.⁸³ He himself did not wait upon Akbar. It was only his wakil who came. Many rarities of Koch kingdom along with fifty-four noted elephants were presented to Akbar. It is believed that the Mughal - Koch understanding was essentially a defensive one for both the

powers.⁸⁴ Naranarayana was called ' Vikramaditya ' of Kamrupa in recognition of his contribution in the arena of culture.⁸⁵ In the year 1581 Naranarayana gave the portion of his empire to the east of the Sankosh to his nephew Raghudeva, who agreed to pay tribute. The western portion was retained by Naranarayana and his successors.⁸⁶

After the death of Naranarayana, the Koch kingdom lost its pre-eminence and gradually declined under the rule of its successive kings. The internecine struggle within the Koch royal family facilitated the Mughal intrusion into the kingdom, which became a target of intermittent Mughal attacks during the subsequent period.⁸⁷ Lakshminarayan, the son and successor of Naranarayan, is said to be a weak king⁸⁸ and Raghudeva refused to acknowledge the supremacy of Lakshminarayan. Thus the partition of the empire in 1581 gave rise to conflict between eastern and western Koch kingdom and war started between Lakshminarayan and Raghudeva.⁸⁹ Raghudeva made alliance with Isa Khan, the Afghan chief of Eastern Bengal.⁹⁰ While Lakshminarayan sought the protection by declaring himself a vassal of the Mughal Emperor Akbar in the year 1596, he also fostered friendship with Man Singh, the Mughal Subadar of Bengal, by giving his sister in marriage to him.⁹¹

On the death of Raghudev, his son and successor Parikshit also followed his father's policy⁹² as a result of which the conflict between the two rival Koch houses continued un-abated. In order to meet Parikshit's attack, Lakshminarayan sought help from Islam Khan, the Mughal Subadar of Benagal and accepted formally the imperial vassalage agreeing to pay tribute.⁹³ With the Subadar's military help the Maharaja campaigned against Parikshit and defeated him.⁹⁴ However, the new Subadar of Bengal Kashem Khan called Lakshminarayan to Dacca and practically made him a captive.⁹⁵ During the reign of Emperor Jahangir Kashem Khan was replaced by Ibrahim Khan as Subadar of Bengal and Lakshinarayan was set free.⁹⁶ But the Maharaja had to stay in Hajo and engage on the Emperor's behalf upto 1626 A.D.⁹⁷ The Mughals occupied the western Assam Valley in 1612 upto the Barnadi, or Koch Hajo with the help of the Koch armies. The Koch ruler became a Mughal vassal.⁹⁸

In 1657 when the old Mughal Emperor Shahjahan lay ill,⁹⁹ there appeared a sort of anarchy in the Mughal Empire owing to fratricidal war for the throne for more than two years.¹⁰⁰ The Koch raja Prannarayan, the grandson of Lakshminarayan, seized the opportunity, openly bade defiance to the Mughals, stopped payment of tribute and set himself as an independent ruler.¹⁰¹ He even grabbed the greater portion of Kamarupa which belonged to the Mughal Empire. He is also said to have attacked Ghoraghat.¹⁰²

Aurangzeb was seated on the imperial throne after the end of the fratricidal war.¹⁰³ Mirjumla who had been appointed Subadar of Bengal by Aurangzeb, wanted to make his mark by bringing Cooch Behar and entire Assam under Mughal rule.¹⁰⁴ Mirjumla, directed by the Emperor, invaded Cooch Behar which had repudiated Mughal suzerainty (13th Dec, 1661 A.D).¹⁰⁵ Hearing the news of Mirjumla's advent, Prannarayan fled and sought refuge in

Bhutan hills. Cooch Behar was annexed to the Mughal Empire without resistance.¹⁰⁶ Coins were struck in Aurangzeb's name and the name of capital city was changed to Alamgirnagar.¹⁰⁷ Mirjumla, after conquering Cooch Behar, settled its revenue at 10 lakhs of Narayan rupees.¹⁰⁸ Having left an army under the command of Isfunder Beg, he next proceeded to conquer Assam.¹⁰⁹

During Mirjumla's absence, the peasants of Cooch Behar rose in revolt in 1662 against the Mughal revenue system introduced by Mirjumla. The reason behind the revolt was the new rules and regulations imposed by the Mughal officers for the collection of revenue.¹¹⁰ The Mughal revenue administration also demanded revenue in cash from the paik allotments in lieu of the traditional military service to the state.¹¹¹ The demand of revenue in cash might have antagonised the peasants of Cooch Behar against the Mughal rule. Moreover, there was some sort of slackness prevailing in the collection of revenue under the weak Koch rule. As a result, the peasants joined hands with the dethroned ruler Prannarayan when he came down the plains and with their help the Koch raja succeeded in recovering the throne of Cooch Behar.¹¹²

Following Mirjumla's death in 1663, Shaista Khan was appointed Subadar (Governor) of Bengal. Shaista Khan modified Mirjumla's forward policy.¹¹³ When he reached Rajmahal in March 1664, the Koch raja Prannarayan submitted to him.¹¹⁴ He patched up an agreement with the Koch ruler. The raja reaffirmed his submission to the Mughal Emperor, and agreed to pay an indemnity of five and half lakhs of rupees.¹¹⁵ The tribute of the Koch raja reached the imperial court on the 6th Dec, 1665, and thus Cooch Behar became once again a vassal kingdom.¹¹⁶

During the reign of the minor Maharaja Mahindranarayan, great grandson of Prannarayan,¹¹⁷ there appeared a sort of anarchy in the Koch kingdom due to the ambitions of the sons of Nazir Deo Mahinarayan.¹¹⁸ The young Maharaja practically became helpless. Officers of the distant territories of the kingdom assumed independence. The Mughals, commanded by Ibadat Khan invaded the kingdom from Ghoraghat and the districts one after another fell into their hands.¹¹⁹ Chhatra Nazir Yajnanarayan opposed the Mughals but in vain. The Mughals occupied the central chaklas of Fatepur, Kazirhat and Kakina. The officers in charge of Tapa, Monthona, Jhori and some other parganas became traitors and paid tributes to the Mughal Subadar of Bengal, and became Zamindars by obtaining sanads in their own names. Panga and Baikunthapur also changed their allegiance to the Mughals and paid tribute to them.¹²⁰ However, the attempt of the Mohammedans to occupy the chaklas of Boda, Patgram and Purvabhag was not successful.¹²¹ It should be mentioned here that with the death of Mahindranarayan the main line of kings had become extinct, and the next Maharaja Rupnarayan became the founder of the next line of kings, who were descended from the first Nazir Mahinnarayan's family.¹²²

The Koch kingdom regained its independence during the time of Maharaja Rupnarayan¹²³ After a long and

intense struggle with the Mughals centering the chaklas of Boda, Patgram and Purvabhag, a treaty was concluded between the Maharaja and the Mughals in 1711 A.D. By this treaty these chaklas were nominally ceded to the Mohommedans. Bu these were taken in ijara (farm) in the name of Nazir Shantanarayan on behalf of the Maharaja as it was thought to be derogatory for an independent king to be a vassal of the Mughals.¹²⁴ These chaklas are called ' Moglan', for these were in the possession of the Mughals.¹²⁵

Henceforth, friendly relations was established between Cooch Behar and the Nawab of Bengal. The Koch Raja sent an Ukil(ambassador) to the Durbar of Nawab Murshiid Kuli Khan ' with Nuzzir and Peish kush'. Possibly Rupnarayan held three chaklas, i.e. Boda , Patgram and Putvabhag as a Zamindar under the Mughals, hence a Nuzzir and peshkush were presented to the Nawab.¹²⁶ Rupnarayan was the last king of the Koch kingdom who held sway over western Kamarupa. After his reign the extent of this kingdom was confined practically to the boundaries of the modern Cooch Behar State.¹²⁷

During the reign of Upendranaraan, the son and sucessor of Rupnarayan,¹²⁸ the Mughal Fouzdar of Rangpur invaded Cooch Behar at the instigation of the Maharaja's adopted son Dinararaan . A battle was ensued between the Mughals and the Maharaja's army, in which the latter was defeated. Cooch Behar fell to the Mughal fouzdar who installed Dinarayan in the throne in 1736.¹²⁹ Upendranarayan went underground and sought the military help of the Devraja of Bhutan to regain his kingdom. He succeeded in doing this two years later in 1738, with a combined force of Bhutanese and Koch armies by defeating the Mughals¹³⁰ who fled towards Rangpur. Dinarayan died in exile. The Bhutanese assistance in the war with the Mughals strengthened their connection with, and enhanced their influence in the Koch kingdom.¹³¹

As has been noticed in the 17th century, the Koch kingdom became weak due to the successive Mughal intrusions. The highest authorities in the kingdom were the king, the Nazir and the Dewan Deo. The rivalry between the Nazir Deo and the Dewan Deo in the 18th century, internal disorder, incapacity and weakness of the ruler to maintain his position, all these contributed towards weakening the royal authority and let loose the forces of disruption in the kingdom.¹³² During this period of turmoil some ambitious personalities wanted to put forward their respective claim as the actual ruler of Cooch Behar, and with this aim in view they also issued coins in their respective names. Even Raikats of Baikunthapur became virtually independent and even tried to capture power in Cooch Behar.¹³³ Owing to the weakness of the kingdom, the neighbouring State Bhutan was anxious to establish her supremacy over Cooch Behar. Bhutan's sustained interest in the affairs of Cooch Behar centred on ensuring her hold on the western Duars.¹³⁴ we learn from Pemberton that there were total eleven Bhutan Duars on the Bengal Frontier. There were struggles between Cooch Behar and Bhutan¹³⁵ spreading over about three or four hundred years ago for supremacy in the Duars.¹³⁵

Territorial expansion convinced the Bhutanese that their hold over the Duars could not be retained without extending their political hegemony over Cooch Behar. As has been noticed above, the Bhutanese made their political influence supreme in Cooch Behar from the time of Upendranarayan.¹³⁷ A representative of the Dev Raja of Bhutan along with an armed contingent resided at the capital of Cooch Behar. All important decisions of the kingdom had to be taken with the concurrence of the Bhutanese representative.¹³⁸ Bhutanese interference in the internal matters of Cooch Behar became a permanent feature.¹³⁹

It is during the reign of the minor Devendranarayan, the son and successor of Upendranarayan that the Subadar of Bengal lost their authority and the Diwani of Bengal, Behar and Orissa was conferred on the East India Company by Shah Alam, the Mughal Emperor of Delhi on the 12th August, 1765 A.D. The revenue for the chaklas, hitherto paid to the Subadar, was henceforth transferred to the Company.¹⁴⁰

Devendranarayan was assassinated in 1765 at the instigation of Ramananda Goswami, the royal priest of Cooch Behar. On hearing this news Dev Raja caused Ramananda Goswami to be seized and dragged him to Punakha, the capital of Bhutan, where he was put to death.¹⁴¹ Penu Toma was appointed as the Bhutanese representative and sent to the Cooch Behar court with a company of soldiers. He began to interfere unnecessarily in the affairs of the kingdom.¹⁴²

Devendranarayan was succeeded by Dhairyendranarayan, a cousin of the deceased king.¹⁴³ But with the support of the Bhutanese, the leading man in the kingdom was the Dewan Deo Ramnarayan. The king and his officers gradually became apprehensive of the Dewan Deo's growing power. The animosity between them reached to such a point that the Dewan Deo was treacherously murdered by the king in 1769.¹⁴⁴ The murder of the Dewan Deo was considered an affront to the authority of Bhutan, who by turn seized Dhairyendranarayan and the new Dewan Deo under a plot¹⁴⁵ during the annual feast at Chechakhata in 1770 and carried them first to Buxa and then to Punakha and kept them in confinement.¹⁴⁶ The Bhutanese raised Dhairyendranarayan's brother Rajendranarayan to the throne, during whose reign Penu Toma became all powerful in the affairs of Cooch Behar, and the Bhutanese rule was practically introduced in the kingdom.¹⁴⁷ When Rajendranarayan died a premature death in 1772 after a nominal reign of two years, The problem of succession became acute.¹⁴⁸

The Bhutanese made a fresh attempt to put Bijendranarayan, the son of late Dewan Ramnarayan on the throne of Cooch Behar. But Nazir Deo Khagendranarayan installed Dharendranarayan, the son of captive king Dhairjendranarayan, in the throne against the wishes of the Bhutanese authorities.¹⁴⁹ Devraja took the matter as a serious breach of authority by the Nazir Deo¹⁵⁰ and as an immediate measure sent a strong contingent of Bhutanese army under the command of Jimpe to invade Cooch Behar. A battle ensued, in which the Nazir Deo was defeated and

driven out of the country. The Bhutanese captured the entire country, and there was little chance of salvaging the seized kingdom.¹⁵¹

At this stage Nazir Deo in consultation with other dignitaries of the state approached the English East India Company on behalf of the minor king for its help to drive out the Bhutanese forces.¹⁵² The Governor-General Warren Hastings responded promptly and the Company was involved in the affairs of Cooch Behar.¹⁵³ By interfering in the affairs of the kingdom, the Company wanted to secure the northern boundary which was hitherto confined to Rangpur. The disturbance in Cooch Behar posed a great menace to the Company's possession in the north. This consideration compelled Hastings to involve in the affairs of Cooch Behar.¹⁵⁴ Accordingly the Anglo-Koch treaty was concluded on the 5th April, 1773 A.D.¹⁵⁵ By this treaty Cooch Behar acknowledged the suzerainty of the East India Company and agreed to pay the Company one-half of its annual revenues.¹⁵⁶

After the signing of the Anglo-Koch treaty four companies of British army under Captain Jones were sent to Cooch Behar. In the battle that followed Bhutan was defeated and Devraja sought the good office of Teshoo lama of Tibet and through his mediation the war with Bhutan came to an end by the Anglo-Bhutanese treaty which was concluded on the 25th April 1774 AD.¹⁵⁷ By this treaty the Bhutanese agreed to pay the Company an annual tribute of five Tangan horses, to deliver up the captive Raja Dhairyendranarayan, and never to make any incursion into British territory.¹⁵⁸ As a result of the Anglo-Bhutanese treaty of 1774 A.D. The supremacy of Bhutan in the internal affairs of Cooch Behar came to an end.¹⁵⁹

Being situated at the north-eastern part of Bengal Cooch Behar was strategically important as it seemed to perform the role of a buffer state between Bhutan and the Company's administered Bengal.¹⁶⁰ Within a few years after obtaining the Dewani of Bengal in 1765, the Company's interference in the internal affairs of Cooch Behar had some obvious reasons. In the first instance, as mentioned earlier, it was guided by political interest of the British, i.e. the protection of the northern flank of the Company's expanding empire in Bengal.¹⁶¹ The control over the administration and exertion of influence over this little kingdom became one of the objectives of the British Imperialism.¹⁶²

The Political interest was further strengthened with the commercial interest of the Company.¹⁶³ During this period the political turmoil in Nepal forced the Company to open trade routes to Tibet through Bhutan, Assam and Cooch Behar.¹⁶⁴ Naturally the annexation of Cooch Behar by Bhutan would have been hindrance to the commercial interest of the Company. Hence, to obtain free access of trade-routes with Bhutan became necessary.¹⁶⁵ Besides, the East India Company was also embarrassed by the activities of the Sannyasis who were posing a threat to the peace and security of the neighbouring areas of Cooch Behar. The problem to subdue the Sannyasi rebellion became a concern of the British. Thus we notice that when the treaty with Bhutan was concluded in 1774 a condition regarding

the Sannyasis was included.¹⁶⁶

As has been noticed earlier, political relation between Cooch Behar and East India Company began with the conclusion of the Anglo-Koch treaty of 1773¹⁶⁷ and by virtue of this treaty Cooch Behar became a tributary state. W.W. Hunter observed that " It is noteworthy that the half of the revenue to be paid to the English Government, is clearly marked out as a tribute and not as tax,"¹⁶⁸ It was also admitted that although Cooch Behar made a partial surrender of its right, the kingdom maintained its independence unimpaired in its domestic administration.¹⁶⁹ Its ruler was left in possession of the two great marks of sovereignty, the right of coining money and the administration of justice.¹⁷⁰

At the beginning of the Company's relation with Cooch Behar, the third article of the treaty of 1773 which envisaged the complete subjection of Cooch Behar under the Company's domination in India was not properly implemented. Because the Company was entirely engaged at this stage in extending their sphere of influence in other parts of India.¹⁷¹ Apart from this, the ruler of Cooch Behar exhibited loyalty to the Company and fulfilled the conditions of the said treaty, particularly the payment of tribute with which the Company was mainly concerned.¹⁷²

After having been released in 1774 from confinement Dhairyendranarayan returned to Cooch Behar and in a state of melancholy declined to ascend the throne.¹⁷³ He was bitter with the Nazir Deo on hearing the terms of Anglo-Koch treaty whereby the sovereignty of the kingdom had been suffered. He relinquished the throne in favour of his son Dharendranarayan who had already been on it during his confinement in Bhutan.¹⁷⁴ But sudden death of Dharendranarayan compelled the reluctant, old Maharaja to assume the royalty for a second term in 1775 A.D.¹⁷⁵ But he was preoccupied with religion¹⁷⁶ and appeared to be the dejure ruler.¹⁷⁷ The administration of the kingdom ultimately passed into the hands of the Maharani Kamateswari Devi and her agent Sarbananda Goswami, who gradually held the authority in the administration.¹⁷⁸

During the year 1780 the money payment agreed on under the treaty of 1773, was changed to a fixed annual tribute of Rs. 67,700 -15-9 on the strength of the 'Hastabund' of the revenue prepared by Mr. Charles Purling, the collector of Rangur.¹⁷⁹ In the meantime the boundaries of Cooch Behar were fixed by a treaty (1777 A.D.) by which the area of the territory forming the state of modern Cooch Behar was whittled down to 1317 square miles.¹⁸⁰

Dhairyendranarayan died in 1783 leaving his son Harendranarayan still infant, as heir to the royal throne.¹⁸¹ During the period from 1783 to 1789, Cooch Behar fell into prolonged political trouble arising out of the rivalry between two parties one led by the Rajguru Sarbananda Goswami and another by the Nazir Deo Khagendra Narayan.¹⁸² The Rajguru conspired to deprive the Nazir Deo of his traditional right to nine anna share to the state revenue which he would enjoy for maintaining an army for the protection of the kingdom.¹⁸³ On the other hand, the Nazir Deo on behalf

of whom the Anglo-Koch treaty was concluded himself wanted to control the state affairs, and tried to oppose the Rajguru from enjoying unlimited powers.¹⁸⁴ He seized the 'royal seal' and proclaimed his son 'Yuvaraj'.¹⁸⁵ At the exigency of the situation, the Collector of Rangpur intervened and finally restored the 'Royal seal' to the Maharaja. But the trouble did not come to an end and the palace conspiracy continued in an unabated manner.¹⁸⁶

As has been mentioned earlier, during this period Cooch Behar and the neighbouring districts witnessed Sannyasi and Fakir rebellion.¹⁸⁷ which, according to some scholars, was the first peasant upsurge of India against the foreign rule. The Sannyasis and Fakirs were none other than the impoverished and exploited peasantry who rose in revolt to save themselves from the oppression of the English East India Company.¹⁸⁸ The general economic distress and political instability drove homeless and uprooted people in large numbers to join Hindu and Muslim groups of religious Mendicants – Sannyasis or Fakirs – who formed large communities and lived from beggary.¹⁸⁹ Atis Dasgupta has shown their (the Sannyasis and the Fakirs) recalcitrance in coming to terms with the new, alien ruling class after the violent social fluxes following the "chhiyattarer Manvantar" were over. The Sannyasis were once distributed widely over the north bank of the lower Gangetic plain as an autonomous force, acting as points of alternative authority in local society.¹⁹⁰ Stephen Fuchs has remarked that 'The Sannyasi rebellion prepared this people of Bengal mentally for the messianic movements which were to arise in near future in Bengal in great numbers.¹⁹¹ It explains also why this movements became so violent in Bengal, and took such a decisive aversion to the British.

The origin of the Sannyasi rebellion can be traced to the introduction of colonial rule in Bengal in 1757 and British acquisition of Diwani Bengal, Bihar and Orissa by the East India Company, the introduction of the dual administration in Bengal and the consequent exploitation by the servants of the Company. All these events paved the way for the severe famine that visited Bengal and Bihar in the year 1770.¹⁹² The main thrust of the East India Company, particularly after the assumption of 'Diwani' in 1765, was to increase the land revenue of the province (in fact, between 1765-66 and 1768-69 collections of land revenue increased by 53.8 percent) and to enhance the company's investment in India. Thus the drain of bullion along with one-way export of materials by the Company affected badly the traditional world of trade and manufacture of cotton, silk and other items of commerce in Bengal. Then colonial inroads into the economic base of Bengal, coupled with natural disaster and crop failure, resulted in the devastating famine of 1769–70, which wiped out one third of the population of the province. These desperate events provided a natural base for the insurgency.¹⁹³ N.K. Sinha has mentioned that the famine of 1770 was an appalling spectre on the thresh-hold of British rule in Bengal.¹⁹⁴ A tragic picture of this severe famine was presented by W.W. Hunter in his book 'Annals of Rural Bengal'.¹⁹⁵ Although the British had made responsible for famine of 1770 for the uncommon drought in Bengal and Bihar. But the plunder and exaction by the British were no less responsible for this famine. It may be noted that in spite of the severity of the famine, the collection of revenue had increased during this period.¹⁹⁶ During the

famine when almost 35 percent of the whole population and 50 percent of the cultivators perished, not even 5 percent of the land revenue was remitted, and 10 percent was added to it for the ensuing year(1770-1771).¹⁹⁷

Cooch Behar and few other adjoining areas were not affected by the famine.¹⁹⁸ But like other parts of Bengal, the people of Cooch Behar greatly suffered from the oppression of Devi Singh who employed the sazawals for collection of revenue from Cooch Behar and of the Maharaja who also used to collect revenue for himself from the same peasants. The collecting officers of the Maharaja were skilled in oppressing the ryots.¹⁹⁹ Another class of collectors known as farmers also used to oppress the peasants.²⁰⁰ Large portions of lands had been alienated, a variety of new taxes introduced, and every species of abuse committed in the collection of the revenues.²⁰¹ Besides, money-sending business of sepoy and officers of the company with an exorbitant rate of interest had worsened the economic condition of the peasantry.²⁰²

The peasants of Rangpur and Cooch Behar like other parts of Bengal rose in revolt against the oppressive rule. In 1783 A.D., the rebellious peasants of Kazirhat, Kakina, Tapa, and Fatehpur chaklas proclaimed Nuruddin as their Nawab and Dayasil as his dewan. They appealed to the peasants of Dinajpur and Cooch Behar to rise in revolt and accept Nuruddin as their Nawab.²⁰³ During this period Cooch Behar was raided by the Bhutanese and further was weakened by internal feuds and dissensions in the royal family. Owing to political instability and external intrusions the upsurge of the peasants took a different shape. In Cooch Behar the Sannyasis along with the peasants having taken the side of Nazir Deo Khagendranarayan, attempted to seize the political power of the state. It is to be noted that the Nazir Deo employed the Sannyasis in his struggle against the Maharaja²⁰⁴

Mercenary features of the Sannyasis came into focus during their involvement in the internal affairs of Cooch Behar and Assam. As has been noticed earlier, the murder of Maharaja Devendranarayan in 1765 gave birth to quarrels over the royal succession in Cooch Behar which were aggravated by the conflicts between two hereditary high officials, the Nazir Deo and the Dewan Deo. Both the parties had initially taken help from the Sannyasis till Khagendra Narayan, the Nazir Deo, sought assistance from the Collector of Rangpur. The Cooch Behar State became a tributary to the Company by a treaty in 1773 and the Sannyasis employed by Khagendra Narayan were dismissed, while those in the pay of the Dewan Deo were defeated by the English. Peace was concluded at the intervention of the Tashu Lama with the Raja of Bhutan who agreed not to interfere in the internal affairs of Cooch Behar. When the imprisoned Maharaja Dhairyendranarayan was reinstated, the administration was, in fact, placed in hands of Maharani Kanteswari and Sarbananda, her spiritual guide. The Nazir Deo Khagendra was opposed to them. When minor Harendranarayan succeeded to the throne after the death of old Maharaja, the Nazir Deo seized the opportunity to regain his powers. The Maharani sought the aid from the Collector of Rangpur to set aside the Nazir Deo's claims. The Nazir Deo was temporally driven out with the help of the Company's sepoy.²⁰⁵

At this time Moamaria, a Vaisnava sect of people arose in revolt against the Ahom ruler and the rebellious groups had connection with the Nazir Deo.²⁰⁶ The Nazir Deo also collected some Sannyasi troops under one Ganesh Giri from Rangamati region of Assam.²⁰⁷ Thus Nazir Deo had strengthened his position by maintaining good relations not only with the Sannyasis but also with the rebellious peasants in the garb of Moamaria of the Brahmaputra Valley

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The Nazir Deo however bided his times, and in 1787, broke in out in revolt with support of mercenary Sannyasis who were now led by Ganesh Giri. Sarbananda, spritual guide wrote to Mc Dowell, the Collector of Rangpur, in June, 1787, "How shall I represent the alarms created by Khagendra Narayan?" The Nazir Deo "has procured three thousand rupees in ready money and bullion which has been given to Ganesh Giri Sannyasi . I have learnt that the said Giri has collected between five and seven hundred men at Balarampur with evil intention against my principal (Maharani).²⁰⁹ In the same month the Sannyasis led by Ganesh Giri and the Barkandazes headed by Dangur Deo, the elder brother of Khagendra Narayan, entered Cooch Behar and seized the Raja, the Rani and Maharani in the palace, looted the properties of the palace and then carried the members of the royal family to Balarampur, a place where the Nazir Deo had a permanent residence ²¹⁰ and kept them under the charge of Sannyasis who exacted various terms on the threats of violence.²¹¹ Even the Sajawals were driven out of Tufanganj by the Sannyasis.²¹²

In this crisis the Rajguru Sarbananda Goswami on behalf of the Raja sought the aid of the British Government which responded to this appeal by sending a detachment of troops to Balarampur.²¹³ In July 1787, the Collector of Rangpur requested Lt. Hill, commanding a detachment of sepoy, to proceed immediately to Cooch Behar to ensure safety of royal family.²¹⁴ Duncanson joined the advancing army in August, 1787 and ultimately defeated the Sannyasis at Tufangunj,²¹⁵ and from Rampur Captain Rotton advanced to Cooch Behar and on 27th august , 1787 informed the Collector that he had " got the pocession of the person of the Raja and Rani " In communicating the news to the Governor-General, the Collector of Rangpur wrote, " the Head Sannyasi Ganesh Giri who is taken prisoner ought to be punished in the most exemplary manner as a warning , to the whole drive of Fakirs from whom Nazir Deo derived principal support" .²¹⁶ After the suppression of the Sannyasi and Fakir rebellion, Maharani Kameswari having returned to power confiscated all the lands belonging to the Nazir Deo and the Dewan Deo.²¹⁷

It should be noted that the special role of the Sannyasis as mercenary soldiers did not diminish easily. They might have suffered setback in Bengal after the defeat in the battles of royal succession in Cooch Behar, but the armed Sannyasis continued to flourish in other provinces of India till the early decades of the 19th century.²¹⁸

The political disturbances in Cooch Behar not only disrupted the state administration but also affected

adversely its revenue collection. "The harassed and oppressed riots were obliged to leave their native country and the revenue fell to a low ebb in consequence of this."²¹⁹ So both the questions of political disturbances and the fall of the revenue in the subsequent years provided the background for the Company's intervention into the affairs of the state. Taking account of the distracted state of Cooch Behar and the claims of both the rival parties.²²⁰ the Government of Lord Cornwallis in a resolution dated the 2nd April 1788 appointed a commission with Messers Lawrence Mercer and John Lewis Chauvet to " report on the pretensions of the rival parties and on various other subjects connected with the state of the country and on the mode in which the British influence should be exercised for its better management in future."²²¹ The commissioners submitted their report on the 10th December, 1788 recommending full sovereignty in favour of the King, setting aside the claims of the Nazir Deo and the Dewan Deo share in the Raj as well as the claims of the Zamindars of the chaklas but guaranting small concession to them. The Commissioners also recommended for the appointment of a Commissioner or Resident at Cooch Behar for superintending the affairs of the state during the minority of the Maharaja. The English Government accepted the recommendations of the Commissioners and accordingly appointed Henry Douglas as the commissioner of Cooch Behar in 1789.²²² Thus a new chapter began in the history of the Cooch Behar State.

Henry Douglas supplanted the authority of the Rani and her minister Sarbananda Goswami.²²³ and conducted the state affairs in the name of the minor Maharaja.²²⁴ He made efforts chiefly in reforming the land revenue administration of the state. Douglas was succeeded by Mr. Charles Andrew Bruce in 1791, and the latter by Mr. W.T. Smith in 1795, who made over to Mr. Richard Ahmuty in 1797.²²⁵ During the period from 1789 to 1800 under the British Commissioners no remarkable improvement was visible in any sphere other than that of revenue administration in Cooch Behar. Thus the condition of the kingdom remained as it was before the advent of the British Commissioners.²²⁶

Anglo- Koch relations entered a new phase in 1801 when Harendranarayan attained maturity and assumed the reins of Government.²²⁷ Harendranarayan wanted to rule according to customary fashion and with powers as exercised by his ancestors before. Accordingly, he demanded the withdrawal of the Commissioner from the state as it was settled in 1773.²²⁸ Consequently the Commissioner was removed from the state.²²⁹ With the coming of the Governor general Lord Wellesley, the Government pursued an aggressive policy towards Cooch Behar. The Government of Wellesley adopted a new interpretation of the Anglo-Koch treaty and mentioned in 1802 A.D. that " terms of the third article of the treaty concluded between this Government and the late Rajah in the year 1773 would warrant the 'conclusions, that it was the intention of the contracting parties that the country of Cooch Behar should be ceded in complete sovereignty to the Hon'ble Company. It appears, however, that a much more limited interpretation has been annexed to the conditions of the treaty."²³⁰ As a result there arose conflict on several occasions regarding the nature of relation between the Maharaja and the English Government .²³¹

In January 1803, Francis Pierard was appointed a Commissioner in order to make in concert with the Raja the necessary arrangements for the collection of the revenue and the administration of justice and for the adoption of an efficient system of police in the state of Cooch Behar.²³² But it was due to the Raja's strong resentment to the appointment of the said Commissioner, the latter was removed.²³³

The presence of the Commissioner at Cooch Behar had restrained the authority of the Raja. With the withdrawal of the commissioner all checks were removed and the works of the administration had all along been performed by the native officers, as a result of which many of the old abuses crept into the Government of the Kingdom.²³⁴ Due to the chaotic condition prevailing in the Kingdom, the administration became loose and the revenue collection fell to an alarming state.²³⁵

As a remedial measure the English Government made a fresh attempt to intervene in the internal administration of Cooch Behar when they appointed John French as Commissioner in 1805 with a view to introducing tribunals on the British mode. Once again the attempt was unsuccessful due to the opposition of the Maharaja.²³⁶ In the same year the English Government abolished the separate office of a Resident Commissioner in Cooch Behar and the duty of executing British Policy in the native state was vested in the Collector of Rangur.²³⁷ During the period between 1805 and 1813 three successive Collectors of Rangur, Archibald Montgomery, James Morgan and John Digby were ex-officio Commissioners of Cooch Behar who carried on their duties connected with the state from Rangur.²³⁸

As consequence of the criminal charges lodged by the Dewan Deo against the Raja, Mr. Digby, the Collector of Rangur, was sent to Cooch Behar with a view to investigating into the charges and putting an end to the disputes between the contending parties. Digby accompanied by his Dewan Rammohan Roy (later well known as Raja Rammohan Roy) came to meet the Raja in 1812 at the new capital near Bhetaguri. But the Raja did not meet Digby who in turn complained against the former to the higher authority.²³⁹ This incident made the English Government furious. It led the English Government to assert its paramount rights to interfere in the internal administration of Cooch Behar.²⁴⁰

Accordingly the post of the Resident Commissioner was revived and Norman MacLeod was appointed the Commissioner of Cooch Behar in August 1813.²⁴¹ The initial co-operation between Macleod and the Raja did not last long. In 1815 Macleod accused the Raja of having involved in secret conspiracy with the Soubah of Buxa and Chamurchi in Bhutan Duars against the Company.²⁴² But the accusations against the Raja were proved baseless and the Government took the Commissioner to task for allowing himself to be carried away by false reports and rumours.²⁴³ Henceforth the English Government withdrew their policy of interfering in the internal affairs of Cooch Behar and resolved in 1816 " to abstain from all interference except in the form of advice and representation, in the unlimited management

of the affairs of Cooch Behar , and to restrict the power of the commissioner to the exercise of diplomatic functions."²⁴⁴

The British Government felt the need to appoint a new Commissioner in the changed situation following their liberal policy towards Cooch Behar.²⁴⁵ Mac Leod was shortly after recalled and made over charge of his office to David Scott in 1816 , Scott was appointed Agent to the Governor-General , on the North-East Frontier in 1822 and Cooch Behar affairs came under the jurisdiction of his office.²⁴⁶ Since then the post of Resident Commissioner was abolished,²⁴⁷ The Governor-General's Agent had his office at Goalpara and rarely visited Cooch Behar. Scott was succeeded by T.C. Robertson in 1830, who in his turn made over charge to Captain Jenkins in 1834. Jenkins made his first report on Cooch Behar after visiting the state in 1838. His conciliatory approach towards Cooch Behar was so much appreciated by the Raja and his officials that he did much to eradicate the ill-feeling which was existed between the Raja and the Company's Government. ²⁴⁸

The issue over the right of coining of Narayani rupees became a bone of conflict between the Raja and the East India Company. The Company's government decided to stop the coining of Narayani mudra in Cooch Behar²⁴⁹ in order to introduce Sicca and Farukkabad coins which was the chief medium of exchange in the areas directly governed by the Company.²⁵⁰ In stopping the Narayani coin, the Company put forward their argument on the basis of the treaty (1773) in which the right of coinge was not acknowledged.²⁵¹ Though the coining of Narayani mudra continued at intervals under several of the Commissioners appointed during the Raja's minority, but it was discontinued in 1800 by order of the Company's Government, apparently as a temporary measure.²⁵²

On the other hand the Raja was firm in reviving the right of minting the Narayani money. He made two attempts to revive this right first in 1805 and then in 1821. In 1821 he wrote to the Company's authority that "the stopping of Narayani coin would be derogatory to his dignity and injurious to the state's agricultural and commercial interests. At the same time this would lead the trade with Bhutan to a halt, as the coin was the main medium of exchange".²⁵³ But the attempts of the Raja were not only unheeded by the Company, at the same time the Company informed the Collector of Rangpur to ask the Raja not to make further request in this respect. The Collector of Rangpur who had been in charge of Cooch Behar reported that " with regard to the effects of an altered currency upon the inhabitants of Cooch Behar, it would not be injurious to the interests of Cooch Behar." ²⁵⁴

But as long as the Raja was alive, the Company's Government could not make Farukkabad and Company's currencies as legal tenders in Cooch Behar. The Raja also paid the state's tribute to Rangpur in Narayani coins.²⁵⁵ The Company's Government tolerated the insolvent attitude of the Raja in consideration of his age and the request of Colonel Jenkins the Company's Agent in North East Frontier.²⁵⁶ It took some few more years when the Cooch Behar mint was finally stopped in 1845.²⁵⁷ The Company played a more active role over the succession issue which had

developed towards the closing years of Raja Harendranarayan. The Company's intention was to break the internal harmony among the inheritors to the throne. This is revealed from the fact that while Harendranarayan wanted his son Brojendranarayan to inherit throne,²⁵⁸ the Company favoured the claim of Shivendranarayan over the throne of Cooch Behar.²⁵⁹ Thus over the question of succession the Raja's will was thwarted by the intervention of the Company.²⁶⁰

Hence the reign of Raja Harendranarayan was marked by the clash of interests between the authority of the Raja and the paramount power of the British Government. Neither the British Government did give up in exercising the paramount authority over this small state nor the Maharaja did yield to the British Government. The real cause of the Raja's opposition to the interference of the Company in the internal affairs of Cooch Behar in the name of introducing reforms was to keep his independent status before his subjects. This has been clearly expressed in the letter of the Raja to the Governor-General dated the 8th August 1803.²⁶¹ The Raja wrote that "My Lord, when my relation, dependents, servants and subjects shall be amenable to civil and criminal courts established by the company, where will be my dignity and authority?"²⁶²

It was during the reign of Raja Harendranarayan that ' the question whether Cooch Behar should gradually pass into a zamindari of Bengal arose more than once. It was greatly due to the representation of the Raja that it was still a feudatory state, uncontrolled in its internal administration, and having a constitution independent of foreign interference'.²⁶³ The glamour of Anglo-Koch relation ended with the passing away of Raja Harendranarayan in 1839.²⁶⁴ Thereafter Cooch Behar became a friendly state to the British Government. At the same time the kingdom was gradually brought under the complete subjugation of the company during this period.

Shivendranarayan succeeded to the throne and the succession was recognized by the British Government on 28th August, 1839.²⁶⁵ However at the very beginning of his reign, Cooch Behar was plagued with the succession problem. Shivendranarayan's succession was challenged by his younger brothers particularly Brojendranarayan and Yogendranarayan. They took clue from their late father Harendranarayan, who never liked his eldest son to become his successor.²⁶⁶ and wished to supersede him by his third son Brojendranarayan.²⁶⁷ Macleod, Scott, and Jenkins informed the British Government at different times about the unfavourable attitude of Harendranarayan to Shivendranarayan.²⁶⁸ The two princes Brojendranarayan and Yogendranarayan accused Raja Shivendranarayan of being an illegitimate offspring of Harendranarayan and thereby he forfeited any claim to the throne.²⁶⁹ Prince Yogendranarayan raised his claim to the throne with the support of the influential persons of the palace and sent a representation to the Governor-General. But the British Government did not give ear to their allegations and acknowledged Shivendranarayan as the rightful successor to the throne.²⁷⁰

This rivalry over the issue of succession offered a scope to the Company to interfere directly into the affair

of the state and resolve the issue in favour of Shivendranarayan.²⁷¹ For the first time the question of succession over the throne of Cooch Behar had been settled by a foreign Company's Government. The British colonial policy to bring Cooch Behar under complete subordination had been successful on two basic grounds: (i) The Raja had been a nominee of the Company who had proved to be man liked by the Company, (ii) The internal crisis and the discontent among the nobility on the issue of succession helped the Company to interfere into the whole affairs of Cooch Behar under the active patronage of Raja Shivendranarayan who wanted to strengthen his throne with the Company's support.²⁷² Shivendranarayan after assuming the ruling power devoted his attention to the internal administration of the kingdom and established a Dharma Sabha for the discussion of the affairs of the kingdom.²⁷³

Shivendranarayan inherited a deplorable economy from his late father whose extravagance engendered a heavy financial crisis and the state treasury suffered in consequence of it.²⁷⁴ By a careful observance of the conduct of the revenue officers and a regulation of his expenses, he succeeded in clearing off all the arrears of tribute payable to the British and freed himself entirely from the private debts that his father bequeathed him.²⁷⁵ Shivendranarayan introduced innovative reforms in the judiciary by establishing two courts of the Naib Ahilkar and the Sudder Amin for the purpose of deciding criminal and civil cases. In 1840 the Rajshabha the highest court of Justice for the final adjudication of civil, revenue and criminal cases was intitated.²⁷⁶ W.W Hunter has remarked that "the cases were tried in much the same manner as in our provinces, and the Amlas were not inferior in capacity to the same officers like the courts, elsewhere."²⁷⁷ Shivendranarayan's personal interest in the prohibition of 'sati' evoked a favorable response from the British Government which in a letter to Jenkins, the political agent, dated the 15th March, 1841 admitted that '.... It is gratifying to the Government to find the Rajah so well disposed to conform in this respect to the benevolent intention of the British Government for the general abolition of this inhuman rite." As a result the prohibition of sati came into effect in the kingdom in 1849,²⁷⁸ just two years after the Raja's death

The issue of coining Narayani rupees arose once again in Shivendranarayan's reign. But the English Government categorically denied this right to the Raja. In this connection the English Government informed Jenkins, the Political Agent that "the government entirely approves of your having discouraged the desire of the Rajas of Cooch Behar to be allowed to issue any currency of his own, as that is a privilege which the Government cannot concede to him"²⁷⁹ A boundary dispute with Bhutan arose in Shivendranarayan's reign.²⁸⁰ The demarcation of the boundary between Bhutan and the Koch Kingdom settled in 1844. The dispute in Ksheti arose again when the Bhutanese had began to oppress the people of the kingdom.²⁸¹ Mr Campbell, Superintendent of Darjeeling on deputation in the Bhutan frontier, on whom the settlement of the dispute devolved, adjudged the disputed land as belonging to Cooch Behar and made it over to the kingdom in 1845.²⁸²

The Court of Directors of the Company have made the following remark about the reign of Shivendranarayan.

"It is highly probable that (as observed by Major Matthie and by Major Jenkins) the occasional visit of a British officer to Cooch Behar to exercise the customary right of inspecting the proceedings of the courts, and receiving complaints (which are referred to the Rajah) has a beneficial effect upon the administration of this petty principality. Although the Maharaja is said to be personally inattentive to business, 'the great increase of population and extension of cultivation', stated by Major Jenkins "to have taken place of late years in Cooch Behar, are conclusive proofs that there cannot be any considerable mis-government".²⁸³

As Raja Shivendranarayan had no male issue, he adopted with the sanction of the Governor-General Kumar Kabindranarayan, a grandson of late Nazir Khagendranarayan.²⁸⁴ But an untimely death of Kabindranarayan compelled the Raja to adopt Chandranarayan, son of his brother Brojendranarayan, who was renamed as Narendranarayan.²⁸⁵ After the death of Raja Shivendranarayan, Narendranarayan, still a lad, five or six years of age was installed on the throne on 23rd August, 1847.²⁸⁶ He was placed under the tutorship of Mr. Ralph More in accordance with the dying wish of the late Maharaja that his son should be educated in the English language under the care of the English government.²⁸⁷ But the Dewan and the Maharani were averse to the English Education of the young Raja.²⁸⁸ In spite of their opposition, the young Raja was first sent to Krishnanagar in 1853 to receive education in the collegiate school²⁸⁹ and finally sent to the Court of Wards Institution in Calcutta where he received education under the guardianship of Babu (afterwards Raja) Rajendra Lal Mitra, an anglicized intellectual of Calcutta. The Raja studied in Calcutta until he attained his majority at the age of eighteen in 1859.²⁹⁰

During the minority of Narendranarayan his natural father Brajendranarayan was the Sarbarakar of the kingdom and after his death in 1857, the Raja's adoptive mothers Kameswari and Brindeswari managed the affairs of the kingdom as regents.²⁹¹ It is during the minority of Narendranarayan that the Government of India placed the management of Cooch Behar under the jurisdiction of the Bengal Government in 1848.²⁹² The Agent to the Governor-General, North East Frontier, henceforth, came under the authority of the Bengal Government.²⁹³ However, all questions of an important political bearing had been referred to the Supreme Government.²⁹⁴ Narendranarayan after attaining majority in 1859 resumed the reins of the Government in his own hands and set himself in improving the state administration by the principles laid down by the Company.²⁹⁵

The Raja was influenced and guided by the British government to constitute a Sabha (council) known as 'Desh Hitaishini Sabha' to assist him.²⁹⁶ The nature of the composition of the 'sabha' reflects an oligarchic character. The personalities of different traits were nominated as members of the sabha such as landlords, leading aristocrats, intellectuals and businessmen of high standard. But this sabha was ultimately abolished even before the Raja's death.²⁹⁷ The intention of the British government was to streamline the Raja to the British control and supervision both from within and without. The internal control was exercised through loyal aristocrats and the external control was

through the constant vigilance of the British official.²⁹⁸

The boundary dispute with Bhutan flared up again. Bhutanese fresh aggression into the territory of Cooch Behar resulted in another enquiry made by Campbell who confirmed his previous decision in February, 1849.²⁹⁹ Besides a survey of the boundary between Cooch Behar and Bhutan was taken in hand by Captain Mathew under the orders of the government and the Deputy collector Mr. Bedford laid the boundary in 1851, But Bhutan did not respect this settlement of the boundary as before.³⁰⁰ As a result of which a series of Bhutanese incursions into Koch kingdom occurred in the following years.³⁰¹ Owing to the disturbances on the Bhutan frontier, trade and commerce with that country had stopped. When the Bhutanese ceased to commit frontier aggressions and their king Devraja extended friendship to the Koch king, trade and intercourse between the two kingdoms again reopened in 1863.³⁰²

A boundary dispute with Rangpur arose in 1850³⁰³ and the British government finally appointed Mr. Macdonald, Collector of Rangpur as Special Commissioner in July, 1859 to decide the disputed boundary between Cooch Behar and Rangpur, and to determine what lands constitute a portion of the district of Rangpur and what lands belong to Cooch Behar. Raja Narendranarayan was made acquainted with this appointment of a special commissioner.³⁰⁴ The award of Mr. Macdonald deciding the dispute was confirmed by the Government on the 8th May 1861. However, the objections raised by the Raja that his representations were ignored and the boundary was settled arbitrarily by the special commissioner were overruled by the British Government.³⁰⁵

During the reign of Raja Narendranarayana, a topographical survey was made in 1859 under J.G. Pemberton, Revenue Surveyor, whose map is considered as the first regular map of the state.³⁰⁶ In 1861, the Raja established an English school in the town of Cooch Behar, which he named 'Jenkins School' after Colonel Jenkins, Agent to the Governor-General, North -East Frontier, who was a great friend to the Raja and a great benefactor of the state.³⁰⁷ It is well-known that the human practice of 'Sati' was prohibited in British India in 1829. But the prohibition of 'Sati' came into effect in Cooch Behar in 1849 by orders of the British Government.³⁰⁸

The reign of Narendranarayan was marked by the Great Revolt of 1857-59 which "was the first great and direct challenge to the British rule in India on an extensive scale"³⁰⁹ After the suppression of this revolt, the control of the Indian government was finally transferred from the Company to the Crown.³¹⁰ Henceforth the Indian states had to recognize the Paramountcy of the British Crown and were to be considered, as parts of a 'single charge'.³¹¹ Raja Narendranarayan had unquestionable allegiance to the British Government and rendered friendly help to the latter by taking stringent measures against the participants of the Great Revolt.³¹² In return for this assistance the British government granted a sanad to the Raja in 1862 "conferring on him and his successors in perpetuity the right of adoption, on failure of natural heirs on the condition of their remaining loyal to the Crown, faithful to their engagement

with the British Government.³¹³ In the same year the Government formally recognized the title of "Maharaja (Bhup) Bahadur" and granted Narendranarayan a sanad conferring upon him that distinction.³¹⁴ It has been said that during the reign of Narendranarayan "the general administration, though marked by occasional abuses, appears, on the whole, a fair specimen of native rule, and the great increase of the ryots are indicative of progress and well-being."³¹⁵

Accession of Nripendranarayan to the throne of Cooch Behar marked the beginning of an era of anglicization of the royal family in a full-fledged manner, which in turn signalled the era of the close collaboration between the Koch kings and the British Government.³¹⁶ Nripendranarayan, the son and successor of Narendranarayan, still a child of only six months,^{316*} was installed in the throne in 1863 by the Maharanis with the support of the chief officers of the state.³¹⁷ The succession was recognised by the British Government³¹⁸ on condition that the title 'Maharaja' would be conferred upon him when he attains majority.³¹⁹

Dissensions in the royal family and the fear of evil result arising therefrom provided an excuse to the British government to assume charge of the state during the minority of the Raja. The Government deputed Col. J.C. Haughton, Governor-General's Agent, North- East Frontier, to Cooch Behar as Commissioner in charge of the administration in 1864.³²⁰ Such a step was considered by the Government as the only means of effectually providing for the education of the young Raja, for the security of the tribute, and for the defense of the Bhutan frontier, for which the Government was responsible.³²¹ The Commissioner was vested with the full authority of the ruler of the state excepting some specified points. He exercised his duties in direct communication with the government and was not subjected to the control of the Governor - General's Agent for the North-East Frontier.³²² The British wanted to bring change in the affairs of the kingdom under the control of the Commissioner.³²³ When the Second Bhutan war broke out Col. Haughton was pre-occupied with this war and a Deputy Commissioner was appointed to assist Col. Haughton on the 14th November, 1864.³²⁴ Officers of both the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner continued till the year 1883 when the Raja resumed the ruling power of the kingdom in his own hands. The names of the successive Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners and their working periods have been given below.³²⁵

The Commissioners

1. Col. Haughton (1864 -73)
2. Sir W. Herschel (1874 -75)
3. F.R. Cockerell (1875 -76)
4. Lord Ulick Browne (1876 -83)

The Deputy Commissioners

1. Mr. H. Beveridge C. S. (1864 -66)
2. Mr. T. Smith (1866 - 75)
3. Captain Lewin (1875 -76)
4. J.G.B.T. Dalton (1876- 83)

The British Government had taken a plan to educate the minor Raja according to modern line of thought. The motive behind this was to project the Raja as the symbol of loyalty and allegiance.³²⁶ This policy had been pursued in relation to other princely states also, which enabled the British to hold over the princes in a single line of control and command.³²⁷ In accordance with the plan the young Raja was removed from Cooch Behar to the Wards of Institute at Benares where he remained till April 1872, when Mr. John Kneller was appointed his Tutor. The Raja afterwards joined the Patna Collegiate School where he prosecuted his studies for six years. Each winter the Raja visited Cooch Behar and associated there with his ministers, thereby gained a glimpse into the working of his state.³²⁸ When Nripendra narayan was sixteen years of age, troubles arose centering his higher education in London.³²⁹ The British Government confronted tremendous opposition from the ladies of the palace due to the fear of social ostracisation by the orthodox Hindus if Nripendra narayan would cross the black water.³³⁰

The British however persuaded the ladies of the palace after making promise that Nripendranarayan should be married before his visit to England.³³¹ Accordingly on the 6th March, 1878 he was married at Cooch Behar to Sunity Devi, the eldest daughter of Keshab Chandra Sen, the celebrated Brahmo reformer and founder of the New Dispensation Church.³³² Some scholars have suggested that the British acted as a catalyst to make Nripendranarayan marry Sunity Devi with the objective that the infusion of Brahma ideas through the mission of Keshab Chandra Sen in the palace of Cooch Behar would make the people of the state grateful to the British culture and loyal to the crown.³³³ and thus ensure the safe continuation of the British influence in the state.³³⁴

Immediately after the marriage Nripendranarayan proceeded to Europe and completed his education in England under the joint guardianship of Sir Benjamin Simpson, and Mr John Kneller.³³⁵ While in England he had the honour of being presented to the British Queen Victoria and the then Prince of Wales. Thus began an acquaintance which through successive visits had depended the loyalty and attachment to the throne of the British monarch.³³⁶ After having returned to Cooch Behar on the 3rd March 1879,³³⁷ the Raja joined the Presidency College as a law student and continued his study there until he attained majority.³³⁸ After the completion of his twenty first year Nripendranarayan was installed in the throne on the 8th November, 1883.³³⁹ The charge of the state was formally made over to the Raja by Sir Rivers Thompson, the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.³⁴⁰ The coronation ceremony had its mixed repercussion. The contemporary Indian newspapers while hailing the assumption of ruling power by Nripendranarayan criti-

cized the British policy of appointing Mr. Gordon as the Superintendent of the State, on the plea that they wanted to make the Raja a puppet ruler.³⁴¹)

Nripendranarayan did not make any fundamental changes in the arrangements of administration that were introduced by the British administrators during his minority, though the division of authority and system of control underwent considerable changes.³⁴² Under a Memorandum of Administration framed by the Commissioner and adopted by the Raja on the 9th November, 1883 a Council of State was established. The Council consisted of the Raja as a President and three members namely the Superintendent of the State, the Dewan and a Judicial Officers who were to be heads of the three departments of general administration, the administration of revenue and that of civil Justice respectively. In the absence of the Raja the Superintendent would act as Vice-President of the Council.³⁴³

As a result of the adoption of the Memorandum of Administration the position hitherto occupied by the British Government regarding the State was assumed by the Raja. The functions of the Commissioner were delegated to the State Council and those of the Deputy Commissioner divided among three officers, viz, the Superintendent of the State, the Dewan and the Civil Judge.³⁴⁴ Henceforth three degrees of authorities were created in the state: first, the Raja the ruler of the state; secondly, the State Council, the main deliberative and controlling body and head of the judiciary and the Executive and thirdly, the Departmental Heads, the actual workers of the administration.³⁴⁵

In 1909, Nripendranarayan founded the State Legislative Council, ³⁴⁶ the members of which were nominated to represent different social, professional and business interests. It continued for nearly three decades to perform in defining a body of statute law adopted 'mutatis mutandis' from British Indian law.³⁴⁷ Absence of the populist style of functioning in the administration was the feature of the princely states at that time. Cooch Behar was also no exception. Although the State Council and the Legislative Council had been established during Nripendranarayan's reign, they lacked popular participatory character.³⁴⁸

As a loyal native chief, Nripendranarayan was ever ready to render military service to the British Government. When disturbances arose at Jalalabad Black Mountain or Chitral on the North Western Frontier, the Raja was the first to offer his personal services. Not only did he do this on the occasion of threatened outbreak of war with Russia in 1885, but also he expressed his desire to place one thousand troops at the disposal of the Government for garrisoning the Buxa Duars on the Bhutan Frontier.³⁴⁹ In acknowledging his offers Rivers Thompson, then Lt. Governor of Bengal wrote, "I am sure there is no native chief in the whole country upon whose loyal devotion to the British Government we could more certainly rely than yourself."³⁵⁰

Nripendranarayan took part in the Tirah campaign in 1897. In recognition of his services rendered in this expedition the Queen Victoria was pleased to create for the Raja a Companion of Bath.³⁵¹ Lord Elgin, the then Viceroy

also wrote "I express, on behalf of the Government of India, our appreciation of Your Highness' zeal and loyalty in these troubled times."³⁵² In 1899 the Raja again offered for military service in the Boer war but for political reasons the offer was not accepted.³⁵³ Though it was much appreciated.³⁵⁴ During Nripendranarayan's minority the state rendered considerable assistance in the Bhutan war of 1863 – 65, for which two guns were presented to the Raja by the British government.³⁵⁵

It is during the reign of Nripendranarayan that the Queen Victoria assumed the title of "Empress of India" with effect from the 1st January 1877 by the Act, 1876.³⁵⁶ This Act made the sovereign of England as the sovereign of Indian states as well. This brought the Indian states within the British empire and the rulers of the states were henceforth to be classed as vassals of the British sovereign.³⁵⁷ During the course of his study Nripendranarayan under the guidance of Lord Browne went to the Imperial Assemblage in Delhi 1877 on the occasion of the proclamation of the queen Victoria as Empress of India. On this occasion he was presented with a flag and medal.³⁵⁸ The Viceroy Lord Lytton whom Nripendranarayan met there also presented him a precious sword.³⁵⁹

As has been noticed earlier, the Rulers of Cooch Behar have borne the title of 'Maharaja (Bhup) Bahadur' and this was recognized as hereditary by the British Government in 1883.³⁶⁰ Nripendranarayan was appointed Honorary Major in the British army in 1883 and was attached to the 6th Bengal Cavalry.³⁶¹ In 1887 the Raja visited England on the occasion of the Jubilee of the reign of the Empress Victoria, with the Maharani and children. He was invested with the Insignia of the Knight Grand Commander of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire by the British Queen herself in 1888. When conferring this honour the Queen Empress wrote to the Maharani Sunity Devi, "I am going to invest him (Maharaja) with the Grand Cross of the Indian Empire, and am much pleased to award thereby my respect and friendship for him"³⁶² On this occasion Sunity Devi was invested with the imperial order of the Crown of India.³⁶³

The Queen Victoria also agreed to offer herself as the God-mother of Prince Nityendranarayan, the son of Raja Nripendranarayan. Owing to this bond with the Queen Empress the young prince was named Victor Nityendranarayan.³⁶⁴ The Raja was appointed honorary Aide-di-camp to the then Prince of Wales and was invested with the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the British Army in 1887.³⁶⁵

Raja Nripendranarayan was present with the Maharani Sunity Devi at the Coronation of the King Emperor in 1902 and appointed Aide-di-camp to the King Emperor Edward VII with the rank of Colonel in the army. The Raja was one of most conspicuous figures as he rode in the procession to Westminster Abbey as A.D.C. to the King Emperor.³⁶⁶ He also occupied a position of honour as a Bengal Ruling Chief at the Delhi Darbar on January first, 1903.³⁶⁷

(In the meantime, the Indian National Congress was established in 1885. The leadership of the Congress

consisted, in its early stages, of liberal intelligentsia. The liberals were friendly to the princes and wanted to preserve the princely order. The Congress or its leaders felt that the British Government did not treat the princes in a proper way. They felt that it was their duty to defend the princes on the Congress platform.³⁶⁸ The Congress Leaders began to approach the Indian rulers to join the Indian National Congress and to subscribe to its funds. The response of the Indian rulers as regards the giving of subscription to the Congress was very enthusiastic. But the response of the Indian rulers as regards their personal attendance at the meetings of the Indian National Congress was not so encouraging as compared with the giving of subscription to the Congress funds. The main reason was that the Government of India was taking sufficient steps to stop this alignment between the Indian National Congress and the Indian states. Their political officers, who were stationed in the Indian states, were asked to tell the Indian rulers that it was "not desirable for native chiefs to be connected in any way with political agitation amongst Her Majesty's subjects outside their own territories."³⁶⁹

In the very beginning, the Indian National Congress was an "organization in strict accordance alike with the policy of the British Government and British Constitution. Thus it was not "viewed with disfavour by the most eminent British statesmen in India – Lords Dufferin, Reay and Connemara."³⁷⁰ But in spite of all this, after two years of its existence, the Congress met with a strong opposition from the Government of India. When the Congress leaders began to approach the Indian princes to join it and to subscribe to its fund, the Government of India was simply alarmed. As regard the Indian States, the policy of the Government of India had always been to keep them away from any political development that was taking place. Not only this, the Government of India had always discouraged the princes from spending money on philanthropic schemes outside their own territories.³⁷¹

In spite of the fact 'that as regards Indian states, the Congress was working within the constitutional limits', the Government of India did its best to stifle their activities in the Indian states by "surreptitious means." The policy of the Government of India formulated during these years as regards the participation of Indian princes in the activities of the Congress movement prevented a large section of the population from taking part in the national development of the country for many years to come.³⁷²

Maharaja Nripendranarayan had developed contacts with the Indian National Congress since its inception. It is learnt from the Congress report of 1886 that the Maharaja had contributed to the Congress fund.³⁷³ When the Congress session for the year 1886 was held in Calcutta a reception party was arranged by the India Club which was attended by the delegates of different regions. Maharaja Nripendranarayan, President of India Club, provided the Cooch Behar Band for the occasion.³⁷⁴ But when the Indian National Congress gradually began to launch anti-British nationalist movement, the British government took a stern attitude towards the Congress and did not want the rulers of the native states to contribute to the Congress fund. For this reason the Indian Princes began to distance them-

selves from the Congress and stopped their financial contribution to the Congress.³⁷⁵ The Maharaja of Cooch Behar followed the suit.

In 1905, the anti-partition agitation was launched in Bengal. Lord Curzon while touring certain areas of Eastern Bengal had talked about a draft proposal of the partition of Bengal in which Cooch Behar was proposed to be included in the newly created Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. Nripendranarayan, however, did not comment on the matter.³⁷⁶

Having shown his unbinding loyalty to the British throne,³⁷⁷ Nripendranarayan played the role of collaborator with the British Government not only in the field of war but also in the arena of politics. Nripendranarayan held the view that British government was for the good of India.³⁷⁸ He refrained himself from being associated with any nationalist movement in British India.³⁷⁹ Having expressed his strong dissatisfaction with the middle class-led nationalist movement in India, he made it clear that he would pursue drastic measures against any nationalist activities in Cooch Behar.³⁸⁰ This pro-British and anti-nationalist stand of Raja Nripendranarayan was actively pursued by the successive Koch Rajas at a time when the nationalist movement made its presence felt in Cooch Behar.

Nripendranarayan was greatly influenced by his father-in-law, Keshab Chandra Sen's religious and political ideas³⁸¹ that played a big factor in modelling the pro-British mentality of the Raja. The Brahmo faith, according to Sunity Devi, "teaches one to be loyal to the throne".³⁸² Besides, politically Keshab Chandra Sen was loyal to the British Crown. He looked upon the British Empire in India as a gift of divine dispensation.³⁸³ and advocated European system of education and highlighted Christianity.³⁸⁴ Nripendranarayan had mixed freely with the elite of the English society, both in India and England. His European training had made him an accomplished prince with English ideas and characteristics.³⁸⁵

Nripendranarayan, while staying in England breathed his last on the 18th September, 1911 at Bex-hill-on-sea.³⁸⁶ A military funeral was accorded to the late Raja on the 21st September both in Bex-hill-on-sea and in London under the instruction of the British King-Emperor.³⁸⁷ Nripendranarayan was succeeded by his eldest son Raj Rajendranarayan.³⁸⁸

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73. Ahmed, Khan Choudhuri A : Koch Bihar Itihas ' (In Bengali) , First Volume , 1342 B.E.,p-89
74. Ghosal, S.C: History of Cooch Behar (tr) , p.111. N.N.Vasu , The Social History of Kamarupa , Vol. II Reprint , New Delhi , 1983, p-48. J.N. Sarkar : History of Bengal , Vol II , Patna , 1973 , p.189. P.K. Bhattacharyya , The coins of Visva Simha and Suhangmung , J.N.S.I., 1977 , pp. 40-45
75. Rhodes, N.G and Bose ,S.K: The Coinage of Cooch Behar , 1999 , p.2
76. "Likes his Mughal contemporary Babar , he (Visva Simha) was born-leader unrivalled genius for administrative organization."-S.N. Bhattacharyya , "A History of Mughal North --East Frontier Policy " ,p.74.
77. Acharyya , N.N.: 'Kamata-Koch Behar as Observed by the Foreign Travellers', in 'The Kingdom of Kamata – Koch Behar in Historical Perspective ' , edited by P.K. Bhattacharyya , 2000 , p.3
78. Choudhuri , H.N. op.cit ,p-232
79. Rhodes, N.G and Bose , S.K: op.cit .,p-15
80. Gait, S.E. op.cit.,p-52
81. Nath, D. op.cit.,p-75
82. Ahmed, Khan Choudhuri A. op.cit .,p-116
83. Saikia, Mohini Kumar, op.cit.,p.107-08; Khan Choudhuri ,A.Ahmed, op.cit .,p-116
84. Acharyya, N.N.: 'Kamata-Koch Behar as Observed by the Foreign Travellers' , op.cit .,p-3; Barman, Rup Kumar : op. cit., p. 88.
85. "Assam Sahitya Sabhar Navam Adhibesaner Sabhapatir Abhibhasan" p.40, quoted in S.C. Ghosal , op.cit .,p-165
86. Gait , S.E. op.cit .,p-55
87. Sen , Partha Kumar: op.cit .,p.2 Confer als S.N. Sen , op.cit., p.3
88. Choudhuri , H.N. op.cit .,p-1234
89. Bhuyan, S.K.(edi.) , Kamarupa Buranji , p.14; Khan Choudhuri A. Ahmed, , op.cit .,p-136137
90. Bhattyacharyya , S.N. op.cit .,p-118
91. Fazl, Abul : Akbarnama. (English tr. by H. Beveridge), Vol. III, New Delhi, First Indian Reprint, 1973, pp.1068, 1081
92. Gait ,S.E. op.cit .,p-65
93. Bhuyan, S.K(edi) : Baharistan-I-Gheybi, Vol.I, p, 40, the evidence is taken from Guha Roy, Shyamal Chandra : Study of Some Aspects of the History of Kamata- Koch Bihar, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, NBU, 1985, p.43. The Ain- I-Akbari, Vol. 1, translated by Blockman, p. 362, The Tuzuk-I-Jahangiri translated by A. Rogers, edited by H. Beveridge, Vol. I, 2nd Edn., New Delhi, 1968, p-443. This event, as according to S.N. Bhattacharya, is of immense significance in the annales of Mughal North-East Frontier Policy. It symbolized the completion of the process which had begun with the political subjugation of Koch Behar in the winter of 1596 A.D. and which was soon to affect the States of Kamarupa and Assam, as well. – S.N. Bhattacharyya, op.cit., pp. 126-127
94. Majumdar, R.C: History of Bengal, Medieval Period, p. 150; Khan Choudhuri A. Ahmed, op. cit., p.141
95. Bhuyan (edi), Baharistan-I-Ghyebi, Vol.1, p. 290, this is quoted in Guha Roy, Shyamal Ch. :op. cit., p.45
96. *ibid*, Vol. II, p-521
97. Loc, cit.

98. Chandra, Satish: Medieval India, Part Two, Mughal Empire (1526-1748), New Delhi, Reprint Second Edition, 2003. p. 287
99. *ibid.* p.268
100. *ibid.*, p. 273
101. Bhattacharya, S. N. *op. cit.*, p. 299; B. Das, *op. cit.*, p. 30
102. Ghosal, S.C.(translated), *op. cit.*, p.197
103. Satish,Chandra: *op. cit.*, p. 273
104. *ibid.*, p.287
105. *ibid.* Confer also Sarkar, J.N.: The life of Mirjumla, 2nd edition, Delhi, 1979,
106. Ahmed Khan Choudhury A: *op. cit.*, p.159
107. Khan, Kafi: Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, in the History of India, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, First Edition, 1964, p. 265; J.N. Sarkar, *op. cit.*, p.289
108. Choudhury, H.N., *op. cit.*, p. 237
109. Ahmed, Khan Choudhury Amanatulla: *op. cit.*, p. 159. Mirjumla occupied Ahom capital Garhgaon. Then he advanced up to the limit of the Ahom kingdom, finally forcing the Ahom king to make a humiliating treaty (1663). Mirjumla died soon after his brilliant victory. Satish Chandra, *op. cit.* p. 287 We learn from Akbarnama of Abul Fazal that Laksminarayan possessed 4000 horses (cavalry), 2,00,000 infantry, 700 elephant, and one thousand war-boats. It is also mentioned that Cooch Behar was populous country. Its length was 200 kros and its breadth 40 to 100 kros. On the East is the River Brahmaputra, on the North is lower Tibet and Assam, and on the South Ghoraghat and on the West is Tirhut. N.N. Acharya, 'Kamata-Koch-Bihar as Observed by the Foreign Travellers', in the Kingdom of Kamata Koch Bihar in Historical perspectives, edited by P.K. Bhattacharya, 2000,p.3
110. Bhadra, Gautam : 'Mughal Yuge Krishi Arthonity O Krishak Bidroha' (in Bengali), Calcutta , 1983, p. 165
111. Guha, Amalendu: 'The Medieval Economy of Assam', in the Cambridge Economic History of India, edited by Tapan Roy Choudhuri and Irfan Habib, Vol. I, New Delhi, Reprinted, 1984, p. 485
112. Bhadra, Gautam: *op. cit.* p. 165. It may be noted here that following Mirjumla's death in 1663, all the gains achieved by him were rapidly lost. The Mughals had not only been expelled from Cooch Behar, but they had also been forced to give up the areas ceded to them by the Ahoms. It was found that the back of the Ahom's power had not been broken. In 1667 the Ahoms renewed the contest. Although a long , desultory warfare with the Ahoms lasting a decade and a half followed , the Mughals could not make any headway in the region. Finally, in 1681 the Ahoms forced the Mughals to give up Koch-Hajo and accept the river Manas as the boundary. By that time, Aurangzeb was fully involved in wars in the Deccan. He was not inclined to consider the holding on of a remote and difficult frontier with little financial return as a matter of priority- Satish Chandra, *op.cit* ,pp 287-288.
113. Chandra, Satish,: *op. cit*, pp. 288-289.
114. Fathiya, Continuation, P-110, as quoted by S.N. Bhattacharya,*op .cit* , pp. 309 ff.
115. Chandra, Satish,: *op.cit.*, p. 289.
116. Ahmed, Khan Choudhury Amanatulla: *op. cit*, p-159; Durgadas Majumdar, W.B. District Gazetteers, Koch Bihar, 1972, p.32.
117. Choudhuri, H.N. *op. cit.*, pp. 239-240.
118. Ahmed, Khan Choudhory A, *op. cit*, p.175.
119. Choudhuri, H.N. p. 240.
120. Munshi, Joynath: *op. cit.*p.36.
121. Choudhuri, H.N. *op. cit*, p 240.Confer also Bandyopadhyay, Bhagabati Charan: Koch Biharer Itihas (in Bengali), edited by N. N. Paul, Calcutta, 1987, *op. cit*, p-69.
122. Choudhuri, H.N., *op. cit.*, p-241.
123. Sen, Partha Kumar: *op.cit.*, p.3.

124. Ahmed , Khan Choudhuri A. op. cit., p.180
125. Bandopadhyay, Bhagabati Charan: op.cit., p-70
126. Sen, Partha Kumar, op.cit. ,p-3
127. Chowdhury, H.N. op.cit. ,p-24
128. ibid.,p-242
129. Ahmed, Khan Chowdhury A: op.cit.,p-184
130. Das,B & Majumder,S : Princely Cooch Behar: Documentary Study on Letters(1790-1863) , Calcutta ,1990, p. 2.
131. Ahmed,Khan Chowdhury A: op.cit.,p-185
132. Roy,Smt. Ratna , 'Background of British intervention in Cooch Behar, 1772 –1773' in Early Historical Perspective of North Bengal, edi. By B.N. Mukherjee and P.K. Bhattacharyya, North Bengal University 1987, p.145.
133. Loc,cit.
134. Dev, A: Bhutan and India:A Study In Frontier Political Relations (1772-1865), Calcutta –1976, p.74; Banerjee , A.C:Eastern Frontier of British India, Calcutta, 4th edition , 1986, p-4.
135. Pemberton, A,K.B. : Report on Bhutan , Calcutta, 1839,p.29,quoted in Guha Roy, Shyamal Chandra :op. cit., p.75
136. Dalton, E.T. Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal , Calcutta 1872 p.96. This is quoted in Guha Roy, Shyamal Chandra : op. cit., p.25
137. Ahmed,Khan Choudhuri A: op cit. p-185.
138. ibid.,p. 188.
139. Rhodes, N. G. and Bose, S.K: op. cit., p.22. Confer also Das, B. and Majumdar, S.(eds): op.cit., p.2.
140. Choudhur, H. N: op . cit., p. 243.
141. Das, B. & Majumdar, S: op cit. , P-2.
142. Ahmed , Khan Choundouri A op. cit. , p. 194.
143. Das, B. & Majumdar, S., op cit., p. 2.
144. Ahmed , Khan Choundouri Aop. cit. , pp. 195-200; Munshi, Joynath., Rajopakhyan , op. cit. , p. 46.
145. Das, B. & Majumdar, S.: op cit. , P. 2.
146. Choudhuri , H. N. op . cit, p. 244.
147. Ghosal , S. C. (tr.), op. cit., pp. 248-249
148. Sen, S. N., "Prachin Bangla Patra Sankalan" Introduction. op. cit.
149. Choudhuri , H. N. op. cit., pp. 244-245; Durga Das Majumdar, op. cit., p. 36.
150. Das, B. & Majumdar, S. op cit. , p-3.
151. Ahmed , Khan Choundouri A : op. cit. , p. 206.
152. Choudhuri , H. N. op. cit., p. 245.
153. The reason for the Company's involvement in the affairs of Cooch Behar has been expressed by Hastings himself in his letter to Sir John Colebrooke on the 15th January , 1773. "we have largely engaged in an expedition in the country of Cooch Behar , a province lying between Rangpur and the Mountain of Bhutan, against the Bhutanese who had possession of it. I shall sedulously promote every undertaking which can complete the line of our possession or add to its security – G. R. George , Memories of Warren Hastings , Vol. 2, London, 1841, p.279.
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155. Choudhuri , H. N. op. cit., p. 245. See also Durga Das Majumdar, op. cit., p. 37.
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165. Ahmed, Khan Choundouri A. op. cit., pp. 344-345.
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168. Hunter, W. W. A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol. X, Delhi, Reprint, 1974, p. 416.
169. *ibid.*, p. 416.
170. *ibid.*, p. 419.
171. Das, K. C. op. cit., p. 20.
172. Hunter, W. W. op. cit., p. 416. Confer also Bhagabati Charan Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., p-79. However it has been pointed out that the Anglo-Koch treaty eventually established the British control over the Cooch Behar State, and the English Company reduced the status of the State from a weak yet sovereign kingdom to that of a 'tribute paying state'.-- Barman, Rup Kumar: op.cit., p103
173. Ahmed, Khan Choudhury A. op. cit. pp. 211-212.
174. Munshi, Joynath: Rajopakhyan, op. cit., p. 57.
175. *Loc. cit.*
176. *Loc. cit.*
177. Long, J. The Selections from The Unpublished Records of Government from 1748-1767 inclusive First Edition edited by M. Saha, Firma K.L.M. Cal, 1973, p.716.
178. Long, J. op. cit., p-716 and also confer S.C. Ghosal, op. cit., p-266.
179. Choudhri, H. N. op. cit., p. 248; Mercer and Chauvet, op. cit., p. 203; Khan Choudhuri A. Ahmed, op. cit., pp. 212-214.
180. Ghosal, S. C., op. cit., p. 268.
181. Choudhuri, H. N. op. cit., p. 249.
182. Sen, S. N. op. cit., In the introduction. Confer also B. Das and S. Majumdar, op. cit., p. 4.
183. Das, B and Majumdar, S. op. cit., p. 4.
184. Sen, S. N. op. cit., in the introduction.
185. H. N. Choudhuri, op. cit., pp. 250-251; K. C. Das, op. cit. p-22.
186. Das, K. C. op. cit. p. 23.
187. Warren Hastings mentioned the uprising as "Sannyasi rebellion" and has labelled the Sannyasi Fakirs as "Gypsies of Hindostan – a roving bandity." This is quoted from B. P. Misra's "The Sannyasi Rebellion." Occasional Paper 1, North Bengal University, 1985, p – 3.
188. Roy, Suprakash : Bharater Krishak Vidroha O Ganatantrik Sangram, (in Bengali), Calcutta, 3rd Edition, 1980, pp. 20,44. Some scholars like Gautam Bhadra have shown that there was an earlier peasant movement that had broken out during the time of Raja Prannarayan. See Bhadra, Gautam : Mughal Yuge Krishi Arthaniti O Krishak Bidroha, First Published 1983, Third Edition, 2003, Calcutta, p.133
189. Fuchs, Stephen : Rebellious Prophets, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1965. p.110
190. Dasgupta, Atis Kumar : The Fakir and Sannyasi Uprising, K.P. Bagchi and Company, Calcutta, First Published 1992, Foreword by Prof. Barun Dey, p.iii
191. Fuchs, Stephen.: Rebellious Prophets, Calcutta, 1968, p. 111. It may be noted here that the activities of the two robber-Sannyasis Viz., Bhavani Pathak and Devi Chaudhurani have, in fact, been immortalized by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in his famous novel, Devi Chaudhurani"- Fuchs, op. cit., p. 111.
192. Roy, Suprakash Bidrohi Bharat, (in Bengali) p. 3.
193. Dasgupta, Atis Kumar: op.cit, pp.6-7

194. Sinha ,N. K. The Economic History of Bengal, Vol. II, Calcutta, 1962, p. 48. As a result of the famine at least one-third of the population of Bengal perished. N. K. Sinha. op. cit. ,p-59.
195. Hunter,W. W. Annales of Rural Bengal , New Delhi, Reprinted, 1975, pp. 21-22.
196. Sinha, N. K. op. cit.,p-54.
197. Dasgupta, Atis Kumar: op.cit, p-7
198. Banerjee, _A. C.: The Agrarian System of Bengal, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1980, pp. 129-130.
199. Ahmed, Khan Choudhury A. History of Cooch Behar (in Bengali), Cooch Behar, 1936, p. 227.
200. Ghosal, S. C. (tr.), op. cit., p. 281.
201. Commissioner H. Douglas' letter to Governor-General Lord Cornwallis, dated the 9th May, 1970, quoted from B. Das and S. Majumdar, op. cit., p. 24.
202. Ghosal, S. C. op. cit., pp 280-281.
203. The Struggle between the Nazir Deo Khagendranarayan and the Maharaja continued from the years 1765 to 1970 A. D. and in this struggle the Sannyasis were on the side of the Nazir Deo Khagendranarayan. – David N. Lorenzen, 'Warrior Ascetics in Indian History' in the Journal of the American Oriental Society, Vol. 98, No.1, January–March, 1978.
204. Ghose, J. M: Sannyasi and Fakir Raiders in Bengal, Calcutta, 1930, p-76. It may be noted here that after the conclusion of the Anglo-Koch treaty the Sannyasis employed by Nazir Deo Khagendranarayan were dismissed and those in the pay of the other party were totally routed by the English. Loc. cit.
205. Dasgupta, Atis Kumar , op.cit
206. Ghosal, S. C. op. cit., p. 380. M. Neogi, Socio-Political Events in Assam leading to Militancy of the Moamaria Vaishnava, Calcutta, 1982, p.52
207. Ahmed, Khan Choudhuri A. op. cit., p. 315; A Mitra, West Bengal District Handbooks. Cooch Behar, op.cit., p. 259.
208. Ghosal, S. C. op. cit., p. 380.
209. Rangpur District Records, Vol I,p.187
210. Mercer and Chauvet's Report ,op.cit,pp.118-124; Chowdhury H.N., op.cit p.251
211. Cooch Behar Select Records, Vol. II ,pp.118-124
212. Ghosh, J.M. op.cit, p-82
213. Ahmed ,Khan Chowdhury A. op.cit, p321
214. Revenue Department , Original Consultation No.6,dated 13th August 1787. the evidence is quoted in Atish Kumar Dasgupta , op.cit,p.79
215. Ghosh. J.M. op.cit,p-82
216. Rangpur District Records, Vol. VI , p-237 It should be noted that in official records 'Fakirs and Sannyasis have often been used synonymously.
217. Chowdhury, H.N. op.cit,p-251; Ghosh, J.M:op.cit., p-82.
218. Dasgupta, Atis Kumar: op.cit p-112
219. Sen, S. N. (edi.), Prachin Bangla Patra Sankalan, op. cit., p. 36.
220. Choudhuri, H.N:op. cit., p – 251.
221. Proceedings of the Governor-General In Council, Revenue Department, Vol.- 129, pp. 83-96.
222. Choudhuri H. N., op. cit., p-253.
223. Hunter, W. W. op. cit., p. 420.
224. Choudhuri, H. N. op. cit., p-268 ff.
225. ibid, p. 254.
226. Sanyal,R. R.L.:' Indirect Rule in a Princely State', in the Kingdom of Kamta-Koch Bihar in Historical Perspectives, op. cit., p.12
227. Choudhuri,H. N. pp. 254 - 255.
228. Mercer and Chauvet's Report, op. cit., p. 205.

229. Proceedings of the Government of Bengal, General, (Political Dept.), December, 1861, No. 51 p. 38; H. N. Choudhuri, op. cit., pp. 254-255.
230. The C. B. S. R., Vol. I, p. 133.
231. Prul, in the Revenue Dept., dated the 26th August, 1802, quoted from B. Das and S. Majumdar, op. cit., p. 35; H. N. Choudhuri, op. cit., pp. 254-255.
232. Choudhuri, H. N. op. cit., pp. 255.
233. Das, K. C. op. cit., p-36.
234. Choudhuri, H. N. op. cit., p-256.
235. Das, K. C. op. cit., p-36.
236. Choudhuri H. N., op. cit., pp. 255.
237. Loc. cit.
238. ibid, p. 256.
239. Munshi, Joynath :Rajopakhyan, op.cit., pp.111-112
240. Chif Secretary to the Government' letter to J. Digby, Commissioner of Coch Behar, dated the 25th April, 1805, quoted from B. Das and S. Majumdar, op. cit., p.45.
241. Das, B and Majumda, S., op. cit., p. 12.
242. Sen, S. N. Prachin Bangla Patra Sankalan, Part – I, pp. 42-43.
243. Choudhuri H. N., op. cit., p. 257.
244. Loc. cit.
245. Das, B and Majumdar, S. op. cit., p. 13.
246. Choudhuri, H. N. op. cit., pp. 257-258.
247. Das, B. and Majumdar S., op. cit., p. 13.
248. Loc. cit.
249. Proceedings of the Government of Bengal, General, (Political Dept.) August, 1864, No.11B, p.137.
250. Proceedings of the Government of Bengal, General, (Political Dept.), July, 1835, No. 6, pp.151 –152.
251. Proceedings of the Government of Bengal, General, (Political Dept.) August, 1864, No. 11B, p. 137.
252. Loc. cit.; Choudhuri, H.N: op. cit., p. 268.
253. Proceedings of the Government of Bengal, General, (Political Dept.), July, 1835, No. 6, pp.151 –152.
254. Loc. cit.
255. Choudhuri, H. N. op. cit., p. 268.
256. Letter from Jenkins, Governor-General's Agent to North-East Frontier, to the Accountant-General, 16th November, 1837, C.B.S.R., Vol. II., pp.-75-76.
257. Loc. cit. Confer also Khan Choudhuri A. Ahmed, op. cit., p. 296.
258. Letter of Jenkins, Governor-General's Agent to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, 3rd October, 1838, No. 10, C. B.S.R. Vol. II, p. 82.
259. Foreign Consultations (political), 25th March, 1834, No.64(N. A. I.).
260. Letter of Mr. Swinton, Secretary to the Government, to Mr. Scott, Governor-General's Agent on the North-East Frontier, 22nd October, 1824.
261. It is to be noted here that most of the relatives and influential courtiers of the Raja were opposed to the Anglo-Koch Treaty and British interference in the day-to-day administration of the state – Campbell, Glimpses of Bengal, Vol. 1, Bengali translation by N. N. Paul, Calcutta, 1979, pp 21-22. The reason behind their opposition possibly lies in the fact that they used to enjoy a large number of revenue-free lands. The introduction of the British land-revenue administration had deprived them of those lands and converted most of the land into revenue-paying. Moreover, with the coming of the Company the Bengali Amlas from South Bengal were appointed to the post of high officials and this might have been disliked by the native officials of the State. Some scholars have suggested that it is under the pressure of this lobby the Raja had opposed the introduction of new reforms.- Partha Kumar Sen, op. cit., p. 21.

262. C.B.S.R. Vol , pp. 148-149.
263. Choudhuri.H.N. op. cit.,p-258.
264. ibid p. 276.
265. Munshi, Joynath, Rajopakhyan, pp.124-125.
266. Das, B & Majumder, S.: op. cit. p.15
267. Letter of Jenkins, Governor-General's Agent, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Political Dept, Fort William, Dated the 26 th April, 1836. quoted from B. Das & S. Majumdar. op.cit. p. 61.
268. Das, B. & Majumdar S. op. cit. p. 15.
269. Letter of Jogendranarayan,. Benares, to Auckland, the Governor-General of India, dated the 4th October. 1839, quoted from B.Das & S. Majumdar. op. cit. p. 64.
270. Choudouri, H.N. p . 278.
271. Hunter, W.W. op. cit. p. 424.
272. Das, K.C. : op. cit. p 65
273. Choudhuri H.N. op. cit. p. 279.
274. ibid. pp. 278-279.
275. Loc. cit.
276. Loc. cit.; Robinson, History of Cooch Behar. Cooch Behar. 1874. pp. 232-233.
277. Hunter,W.W. op. cit. p.424
278. Letter No. 747 from T.W. Maddock, Secreary to the Government of India to Captain F. Jenkins, Governor-General's Agent, North-East Frontier, Dated the 15th March. 1841. C.B.S.R. Vol. II. p-97.
279. Loc. cit.
280. Majumdar,Durgadas: W.B. District Gazetteers : Koch Behar. 1977. p. 39.
281. Letter from A. Campbell. Superintendent of Darjeeling to T.H. Maddock, Secretary to the Government of India, 5th February, 1842, No. 14, C.B.S.R., Vol. II. p.104
282. Ahmed, Khan Choudhuri A. op. cit. pp.364-365.
283. Extract from a Despatch from the Court of Directors. No.12. dated the 19th March, 1845, C.B.S.R., Vol. II. 1884. p. 121.
284. Choudhuri H.N. op. cit. p.280.
285. Letter No .294 of F. Currie, Secretary to the Government of India to Major Fenkins, Agent to the Governor-General, North- East Frontier, dated the 1st February 1945. C.B.S.R., Vol. II. p.116.
286. Letter No.82 of F. Jenkins, Governor-General's Agent to Offg. Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Dept., Fort William, Dated 12th September. 1847. C.B.S.R. Vol. II. p-128.
287. Letter No. 156 from Offg. Secretary, The Govt . of Bengal, to the Offg. Secretary, the Govt. of India, Foreign Dept., dated the 14th December 1848. C.B.S.R. Vol. II. pp.143-144.
288. Loc. cit. Also confer Shashi Bhusan Haldar ."Lectures on Maharaja Narendranarayan Bhup Bahadur Jiban Charit." at the meeting of Cooch Behar Hitaishini Sabha. 7th issue. 1272. B.S. p. 124.
289. Choudhuri. H.N. op. cit. pp. 181-182.
290. Majumdar, Durgadas, op. cit. p.39. A.C. Campbell,op. cit. p.297.
291. Campbell, A.C. op. cit. p. 297. Letter No. 156 from Offg. Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal to the Offg. Secretary to the Govt. of India, Foreign Dept., dated 14th December.1848. C.B.S.R., op. cit. p. 147.
292. Cambell. A.C. op.cit, p.297
293. Das, B and Majumdar, S: op,cit p-20
294. Letter No. 399 from the Offg. Under-secretary to the Govt. of India to the Agent to the Governor-General, N.E. Frontier, ,C.B.S.R,Vol,II, p. 158
295. Halder, Sashi Bhusan: op,cit , pp.132-33
296. Leaflet issued by the Secretary , Sashi Bhusan Halder , Hitaishini Sabha , Cooch Behar ,1272,B.S.
297. Loc. cit.

298. Loc, cit.
299. Choudhury, H.N, op,cit , pp. 283-284
300. Loc, cit.
301. Mitra .A, W.B. District Census Handbooks : Cooch Behar , 1951 p. XXV
302. Letter from Maharaja of Cooch Behar to Major W. Agnew , Offg. Governor-General's Agent, North East Frontier, 10 Assar, 354 Cooch Behar Shak , quoted from B.Das and S. Majumdar , p.107.
303. Choudhuri , H.N: op. cit., p.285
304. Letter from Offg. Junior-Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal to the Agent to the Governor-General , N.E. Frontier dated the 30th July , 1862, quoted from B.Das , S.Majumder , op. cit. pp. 104-105
305. Loc. cit.
306. Choudhuri H.N. op. cit p.286
307. Loc. cit.
308. Letter from the Under-Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal to Major F. Jenkins, Agent to the Governor-General , N.E.Forntier, dated the 20th September , 1849, C.B.S.R., Vol. II ,p. 160.
309. Majumdar, . R.C., Roychoudhuri, H.C. and Dutta, K.K.: An Advanced History of India, 4th Edition, 1978, reprint, 1990, p.774.
310. ibid , p. 775.
311. ibid, p. 776. It is evident from the following declaration of Lord Canning in 1858, "the Crown of England stands forth the unquestioned ruler and paramount power in India. There is a reality in the suzerainty of England which has never existed before and which is not felt but eagerly acknowledged by the Chiefs ".- Andrian Sever: Documents and Speeches of the Indian Princely States. Vol.I and II, New Delhi .1958 .
312. Das .B. and Majumdar .S:op. cit., pp. 22-23. Maharaja is said to have refused to provide any help to a person who introduced himself to Maharaja as a young brother of Nana Saheb, who was later arrested owing to Narendranarayan's effort-Letter from Narendranarayan, Maharaja of Cooch Behar to the Magistrate of Rangpur. dated the 16th August. 1861.-ibid. p.102.
313. Letter No. 166 from Under-Secretary to the Govt .of Bengal to the Agent to the Governor-General, North-East Frontier. dated the 17th April. 1862,C.B.S.R.,Vol .II.p.248.
314. Letter No. 105 from from Offg. Agent to the Governor-General, to the Under-Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal, Dated 9th December 1862,C B.S.R.,Vol II. p. 257.
315. Letter (No.1 of 1850) from the Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal to the Agent to the Governor-General, N.E.Frontier. dated the 24th December. 1849. C.B.S.R. Vol. II.p.162.
316. Nripendranayan's reign has also been termed as the period of modernisation since the Raja with the active assistance and support of the British administration. brought about important changes in the fields of general civil administration, agriculture and land reform, judicial system and especially in the field of education,-K.C. Das, op cit, pp. 90-91,121-191.
- 316*. Bhattacharya, Nibaran Chandra: Koch Biharer Shankhipta Bibaran (in Bengali), 2nd Edition, 1927,p.7.It should be mentioned that Nripenodranarayan's succession right was being questioned by Maharani Nistarini Devi on the ground that he was the son of a lady whom Raja Narendranarayan married through the Gandharva system of marriage. Nistarini Devi wanted his nephew Kumar Jogedranarayan to ascend the throne instead of Nripendranarayan- Extract from the letter Maharani Nistarini Devi to the Lt.-Governor of Bengal, 23rd Bhadur,1270 B.S. Proceedings of the Govt . of Bengal, General (political) Dept. February,1864,No.53.p.27 and Proceedings of the Government of Bengal, General (political) Dept, Feb,1864, No50, p23.
317. Letter from Maharanies of Cooch Behar to Offg. Agent, N.E. Frontier. dated the 16th August, 1863 , Cooch Behar Select Records , Vol . II.p.268; H.N.Choudhuri, op cit, p.287.
318. Proceedings of the Government of Bengal, General (political) Dept, March, 1864,No.3,p.2.
319. Letter from Offg . Agent to the Governor-General, North East Frontier, 15th january, 1864, To the Maharanies of Cooch Behar ,C.B.S.R. Vol. II, P. 275.
320. Bandyopadhyay, Bhagabati Charan: Koch Biharer Itihas, edi.by N.N. Paul.,op cit ,93; H.N. Choudhuri, op cit, p-

287.

321. Letter from Offg. Agent to the Governor-General, N.E. Frontier, Dated 15th January, 1864, to the Maharanies of Cooch Behar, C.B.S.R.. Vol-II, p-287.
322. Letter No : 456 of Bengal Government, dated the 26th January, 1864 to Col J.C. Haughton, C.B.S.R., Vol.-II. p-276.
323. Letter from Lt. Col. J.C. Haughton, Governor-General's Agent to North East Frontier, to the Offg. Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal, 10th. November, 1863. Proceedings of the Govt. of Bengal, General (Political) Dept., February 1864, No. : 55-57 (Appendix), pp. 5-7
324. Choudhuri, H.N, op-cit, pp. 288-289
325. Loc. cit ; Nibaran Chandra Bhattacharaya, op.cit, p.21.
326. Das, K.C. op.cit p.89.
327. Neogi, A.K, The Paramount Power and Princely States of India, Calcutta, 1979, p.26
328. Cambell, A.C. op.cit, p-42
329. Devi, Gayatri of Jaipur and Rau, Santha Rama: A Princess Remembers, 1st. edition 1976, Reprint 1988, p-40.
330. Loc.cit
331. Loc. cit.
332. Proceedings of the Govt. of Bengal, Judicial (political) Dept., August 1878, No. : 132, p-77. Brahma Public Opinion, Vol-I, August 8, 1878, p-228, B.C. Bandyopadhyaya, op. cit., p-102
333. Borthwick, M. op-cit, p-187
334. Debnath, S. 'Cultural Imperialism in British India : Case Study of the Cooch Behar Marriage in 1878,' in the Kingdom of Kamata – Koch Bihar in Historical Perspectives, edited by P.K. Bhattacharyya, op.cit, p-423.
335. Cambell, A.C. op-cit, p-43.
336. Choudhury, H.N. op-cit, p-423
337. Loc. cit
338. Campbell, A.C.. op-cit, p.43
339. Bandyopadhyaya, B.C. op-cit, p-106
340. Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch Behar State, 1911-1912 Cooch behar, 1912, pp.4-5; H.N. Chodhuri, op-cit, p424.
341. The Indian Messenger, 11th November, 1883. Prabhati, 17th. Nov., 1883, Bangabasi, 24th November 1883.
342. Choudhuri, H.N. op-cit, p-290
343. ibid, p.291
344. ibid, p-300
345. Campbell, A.C, op.cit, p-298
346. Cooch Behar Annual Administration Report, 1909-1910, p-2.
347. Brochure of the Cooch Behar State (1936-1939), The State Council, Cooch Behar, 1939.
348. Das, K. C. op. cit., p. 255.
349. Campbell, A. C., op. cit., pp. 298, 43-44.
350. Loc.cit.
351. Choudhuri, H. N. op. cit., p. 435.
352. ibid, p. 436.
353. Campbell, A. C. op. cit., p. 44.
354. Choudhuri, H. N., op. cit., p. 436.
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357. Loc. cit
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363. Campbell, A. C. op. cit.
364. Ghosh , A. G and Bhattacharya, M. S.: 'Indian Nationalist Movement and the Maharajas of Cooch Behar State' in the North Bengal University Review (Humanities and Social sciences), Vol.VII, No.1, 1986,pp.63-72
365. Loc. cit.
366. Choudhuri , H. N. op. cit., p. 437.
367. Campbell, A. C. op. cit., p. 44.
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371. Foreign departement S.I. March,1890 , Nos. 5,12 quoted in Sareen P.R.,op.cit.
372. ibid , p.117
373. Singh , Hiralal : Problems and Policies of the British in India , 1858 to 1898,p.242
374. Majumder , Niranjana : The Statesman and Anthology , 1875-1975, p.99
375. Singh ,Hiralal, op.cit,p-242.
376. Ghosh , Ananda Gopal and Bhattyacharyya , Malay Shankar: 'Indian Nationalist Movement and the Maharajas of the Cooch-Behar State,op.cit. p-65
377. Annual Administrative Report of Cooch Behar State for the year of 1909-1910, p-2.
378. Loc.cit.
379. Das, K. C., op. cit., p. 255 - 256.
380. Annual Administrative Report of Cooch Behar State for the year of 1909-1910, p-2. Regarding the emerging Indian Nationalist Movement, Maharaja Nipendranarayan declared , "and I regret to observe there is a marked feeling of disloyalty amongst a portion of those (middle class) who have gained so considerable from British rule in India. I would ask you, gentlemen, to tell people with whom you may come in contact, that British Govt. is good for India. Foreign domination under the existing conditions of things is absolutely a necessity for India and its people for the next hundred years or so. Occurrences have taken place outside the State of Cooch Behar which are very much to be regretted. Such occurrences, I trust, will never happen in my State . If there be anything approaching lawlessness in the State I assure you I shall pursue drastic measures to suppress it" – Extract from Maharaja Nripendranarayan's inaugural speech delivered on the occasion of the opening session of the State Legislative Council on the 8th May , 1909. - loc cit.
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384. Debnath , S: 'Cultural Imperialism in British India',op. cit, p-27.
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387. Devi, Sunity : op.cit p-175
388. Bhattacharya, Nibaran Chandra, op.cit., p-29 and Confer also Mitra, A: op.cit, p-XXXV.