

CHAPTER- III
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SETTLEMENT OF
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Cachar is the southernmost district of the state of Assam. It covers an area of 3,786 square kilometers, and is bounded on the north by the North Cachar Hills District of Meghalaya, on the south by Mizoram and on the west by Hailakandi and Karimganj districts of Assam.¹ Cachar, or the picturesque valley of Barak is a natural extension of the Eastern Bengal. As a matter of fact, the tract was included in various kingdoms that had emerged during the pre-historic and early historic periods like Gauda, Vanga and Samata.² In ancient time, the tract Sylhet and Chittagong were colonized by the Aryans and the area was known as Pratyanta Desha.³

From seventh to tenth centuries, the area has been included in the Hairkela Kingdom which comprised Sylhet and the adjoining territories. In the 13th Century, the valley was under Tripuris, whose territory in addition to present Tripura, included a considerable portion of Modern Sylhet and Comilla district of Bangladesh, and the capital of the Kingdom was at Khalangsa, a glorified village in Cachar.⁴ From Khalangsa the Tripuris shifted their headquarters to Dharmanagar and then to Agartala, but continued to exercise their suzerainty over the area till the middle of the 16th century C.E.

Historical Background of Cachar:-

The epigraphic, numismatic and literary evidence shows that the Tripuri state formation in Cachar plains took place since the 5th century C.E. and gradually covered modern Sylhet or western part of the undivided Barak Valley and ultimately moved to modern Tripura region.⁵ According to a copper plate inscription,⁶ a Tripuri king donated a tract of land, which later on came to be known as Pancha-Khanda in Sylhet to five Brahmans from Mithila, one of whom was named Nidhipati. The Tripuri boundary was, however, pushed out of the Barak Valley in the 7th Century itself when the rulers of Samata, Harikela and Kamarupa ruled over portions of the Valley.⁷ In the meantime, the Tripuris ruled in the Tripura plains (Comilla) and slowly entered into Hill Tipperah (present Tripura state) where they established their capital at Udaypur. The rulers of Tripura could not reclaim their control in the Barak Valley till 12th century C.E. because of the powerful rulers of Samata and Vanga who continued to

rule over the tract and finally the sovereign Srihatta Kingdom. With the decline of the Srihatta Kingdom in the 12th Century C.E., the Raja of Tripura was able to regain his control over the areas of the valley adjoining his state.⁸ This fact is verified by the second land grant made by the Raja of Tripura, Maharaja Dharmadhara in 1195 C.E. According to it an extensive tract of land known as Itapargana, to a descendent of Nidhipati who was one of the Brahman donees in Panchakhanda in 7th century.⁹ The boundary of the Manukulapradesh, as mentioned in the original copper-plate was “on the east the Langla hills; on the south the river Manu; on the west the river Gopia; on the north the river Kosiyara.¹⁰ This Manukulapradesh, more popularly known as Ita, gained the status of a small state under the security of the Raja of Tripura when one Bhanu Narayan of the family of Nidhipati was given the title of Raja as a compensation for his service in the capture of a rebel. His name is associated with a large tank in Rajnagar and his son Subid Narayan built a fort, the ruins of which can be still seen in the same locality.¹¹ Two famous tanks, Balda Sagar and Sagar Dighi were also excavated under his orders.¹²

In the north eastern sector of the Valley, the Cachar plains also went under the Tripuris. This sector which included the present Hailakandi district, continued under the rule of the Tripura Raja almost till the 16th century C.E. when the Cachar plains was occupied by the Raja of Cooch Behar. The Kailasahar- Dharmanagar area, which formed a part of the Srihatta Kingdom according to the Bhatara copper-plate, might have become an integral part of Tripura since then.¹³ However, in the rest of the areas in Barak Valley, occupied after the decline of Srihatta Kingdom, the Tripura Rajas exercised their influence mainly through local rulers who acknowledged their suzerainty and paid them tributes. Magadh and Pratapgarh were two such important states.¹⁴ Pratapgarh, in the Patharkandi areas of the present Karimganj district, flourished for a long time.¹⁵ This state, originally known as Sonai- Kanchanpur, is said to have been founded by one Pratap Singh in the 12th century C.E.¹⁶ The ruins of the forts of Raja Pratap Singha and Raja Jagat Singha are still found in Patharkandi and Chargola areas.¹⁷ Magadh was possibly founded much earlier by a Brahman from North India. There still exists in Sylhet a hill named Magadh which found mention in the Kalika Purana.¹⁸ Several tales and fable on these two states are still popular in the locality. Another legendary ruler was Porha Raja of Deorali, who ruled in 13th – 14th century.¹⁹ In the Bhanugach area there is found the ruin of a fort which is attributed to

one Raja Chandra Singha who 'belonged to the family of Tippera Rajas and is said to have moved from the hills into the Sylhet plains about the seventh century C.E.²⁰ It is possible that the Bhanugachi area became part of the Srihatta-mandala and Srihatta-rajya in the 10th – 12th century, but its earlier status as a principality was revived by a descendent of the family after the decline of Srihatta.²¹ Similarly, one Madan Raja, who ruled in the Katigorah area near Badarpur, was also possibly a tributary to the Raja of Tripura.²² The rule of one Raja Harishchandra in the Sakala area of Hailakandi is supported by archeological evidence which can be found even today.²³

The Tripuri sphere of influence in the Barak Valley came to an end in the 16th century due to two foremost historical developments. These are the occupation of the Cachar plains by the Raja of Cooch Behar, Naranarayan and the rise of the Afghan and Mughal authority in the western and central portion of the valley.²⁴ Manukulapradesh or Ita was occupied by a Pathan Chief from Murshidabad in the 14th Century.²⁵ Pratapgarh, Deorali and Bhanugach areas were also conquered in the 14th Century by one Mirza Malik Muhammad who came from Persia.²⁶ By the middle of the late medieval period, Cachar witnessed a number of migration and settlement of a number of communities. The Dheyans were one among them. Their migration and settlement in Cachar dates back to the 16th century C.E during the reign of Naranarayan, the most powerful ruler of the Koch dynasty. It was the reign of Naranarayan in which the Koch Empire expanded and reached its zenith. Under an expedition led by Chilarai the foundation of a small Koch principality was established in Barak Valley. The people of this principality were later known as Dheyans.

With the aid of his brother Sukhladhvaj, better known as Chilarai, who was also his Prime Minister, Naranarayan launched a number of conquests against the mighty Ahoms and then to other neighbouring regions.

Encouraged by their success against the Ahoms, Naranarayan sent an expedition under the command of his brother Chilarai towards conquering the neighbouring countries in the northeast. They first attacked the Kachari Kingdom. According to the Darrang Raj Vamsavali, the Koch Army in 1564 C.E., after their victory against the Ahoms marched along the south of the Brahmaputra, escorted parallel by naval forces. They then halted at Marangi in the present Golaghat district.²⁷ Chilarai was accompanied by General Kavindra, Rajendra Patra, Damodar

Karji and Megha Makdum.²⁸ According to the Darrang Raj Vamsavali, the king of Kachar submitted without any fight and sued for peace.²⁹

After the successful expedition to the Kachari Kingdom, Naranarayan and Chilarai turned their attention towards Manipur. The Manipur King submitted of his own accord and agreed to pay an annual tribute of 20,000 silver and 300 gold coins including two elephants.³⁰ Besides this he agreed to make an immediate payment of 20,000 silver and 1,000 gold coins and 40 elephants to buy peace from the Koch King.³¹ The Koch then proceeded towards the Jaintia Kingdom. The Jaintia ruler entered into an armed conflict with the Koch. In the battle, the Jaintia King was slain and the son of the deceased ruler was placed on the throne. The new King gave the Koch general 100 horses, 10,000 silver and 1000 gold coins including 100 special types of Jaintia swords called Kharga as compensation for the war.³² It was also agreed that the vanquished king would pay an annual tribute of 10,000 silver coins, 70 selected Ghotakas (horses) and 300 Nakoidaos (a special kind of knife).³³ The Jaintia ruler then asked for permission to mint coin in his name. But the Koch ruler permitted him to mint coin with the mention of his capital Jayantiyapur only on one side and the name of their deity Shiva on the other side.³⁴

After the conquest of Jaintia, Chilarai at the order of Naranarayan marched towards the Tippera (present Tripura Kingdom) which at that time included the plains of Cachar. A fierce battle was fought at Longai, a place in Karimganj district. A river by name of it also flows at this place. General Bhimvalla fought against the king of Tripura and defeated and killed its ruler and installed the brother of the deceased on the throne on condition of payment of a tribute of ten thousand rupees, one hundred gold mohars and thirty horses. The battle was believed to have fought at Longai which is at present Karimganj district in the bordering area with Tripura state. Longai is situated in a place called Chandkhira at present. After that Chilarai placed a sword at Longai to demarcate the boundary between the Koch and Tripuri territories.³⁵

Thus we see that though the plains of Cachar (which at that period include Karimganj and Hailakandi districts also) was at the outset under the rule of the Tripura Kingdom but with the successful expedition of Naranarayan it came under the Koch. But even after the successful expedition of Chilarai against the Tipperas, the hold of the Tripura rule was not altogether moved out. A considerable portion of

Barak Valley remained under the Tripuri rule. The Hailakandi area referred to as Purvakul in the Rajmala was under them and their territory extended upto Rungrang (Jirighat) in the Manipur border.³⁶ The Tripura 'Buranji', an Assamese chronicle, informs that the two envoys who were sent by Rudra Singh (1696 - 1714), the Ahom Monarch, to Tripura reached Rungrang in the Tripura territory from Udharband by boat through the Madhura river. Rungrang was a big market in the Manipur, Cachar and Tripura border.³⁷ The Hailakandi area was brought under domination of the Dimasa Rajas in the 18th century.³⁸

A linking to the extent of the state can also be found in the pattern of Dheyans settlement which is limited to just nine villages in the present Cachar district. According to their own traditions, Dheyans originally settled in Khaspur and then in later period branched off into these villages. They are not found anywhere in the present Karimganj or Hailakandi district.³⁹

After the defeat of the Tippera kingdom Chilarai returned back. On his way back he defeated the rulers of Khyriem, Dimarua and Sylhet.

However, the Tripura Kingdom was not treated in the similar manner with other defeated states. In the case of other defeated state they were left to their rulers on the condition of annual payment. But in the case of Tripura, Longai was demarcated as the Koch- Tripura boundary, i.e. the hold of the Raja of Tripura over their earlier area of Cachar was no more. It ended the long rule of Tripura over Cachar and a contingent of soldiers was left behind by Chilarai at Brahmapur. This is a deviation from earlier policies of Naranarayan because he did not annex most of the conquered territories and allowed the defeated rulers to enjoy their autonomy by paying annual tributes. However, when he conquered the north eastern states, he in order to maintain the allegiance of the defeated ruler and to maintain diplomatic relations, considered it necessary to leave behind a group of his army. The defeated states being far off from the mainland area, Naranarayan and Chilarai might have understood the difficulty in keeping a watch over the ruler of these states. So, he left behind his own people for supervision. But the interesting question is why Cachar? It is highly probable that of all the defeated states Cachar formed the central area from where all the other states of Jaintia, Kyriem, Sylhet, Tripura, Manipur and Dimarua were easily accessible. The tract between the North Cachar Hills and Longai, which

was overrun by the Koch Army, occupied the central position among the subjugated states. This dominant position of the tract, therefore made the Koch authorities not to restore the area to the ruler of Tripura, but to convert it into a crown colony under a Governor, who would be responsible for maintaining diplomatic relations with the adjoining subsidiary states and for the collection of tribute. Thus Brahmapur became a centre of Koch power in Cachar which later came to be known as Kochpur and finally Khaspur. The tract was initially left under the supervision of a chief.⁴⁰ But within a few years another brother of Naranarayan known as Kamalnarayan (Gohain Kamal) was sent as the Governor, Prime Minister or Dewan of Khaspur.

The Koch principality in Cachar that originated out of Chilarai's expedition in 1562 C.E remained in existence till 1745 C.E.⁴¹ But the extent of its territory underwent considerable changes during this period mainly because of the ravages of the neighbouring hill tribes.⁴² Originally the state extended from the borders of the North Cachar Hills to Longai with headquarters at Khaspur but gradually the area was reduced in later years mainly because of the attack made by the neighbouring hill tribes and encroachment into their territory.

The source material on the Dheyan is very inadequate. It is the Darrang Raj Vamsavali which is the main source of information regarding Chilarai's campaign to the north-east wherein mention has been made how the Ahom and the Dimasa states were subdued. It also narrates how the Koch general sent his messengers to the Raja of Manipur and the latter came in person to make submission. Chilarai then marched against Jaintia and subdued its rulers. After that he invaded the Tripura Kingdom, killed its ruler and installed the brother of the deceased on the throne on condition of payment of a tribute of ten thousand rupees, one hundred gold mohars and thirty horses.⁴³ The Vamsavali then describes the subjugation of Sylhet by Chilarai and states that thereafter the Koch heroes returned to Gauhati (Nilachal).⁴⁴ The historicity of the information about the subjugation of the Tripura Raja has been disputed by some historians.⁴⁵ N.R. Roy Choudhury, a historian of Tripura, for example, rejects the account on the ground that Vijay Manikya (1532 C.E. – 1563 C.E.), Raja of Tripura, who was the contemporary of Naranarayan was a powerful ruler.⁴⁶

According to Roy Choudhury "Vijay Manikya was a very powerful ruler and it is difficult for us to conclude that he was defeated by Naranarayan's Army.

Moreover there is no other evidence to support the account of Darrang Raj Vamsavali. The Rajmala also didn't mention this incident".⁴⁷ Edward Gait is also of the same opinion. He writes, "There is no mention of the war in the Tripura chronicle, and the only corroboration of the Darrang Raj Vamsavali is found in an Assamese Buranji of uncertain date. This is not sufficient to establish it as a historical fact".⁴⁸

Roy Choudhury, however, is of the opinion that the incident might have taken place after the death of Vijay Manikya when Tripura was ruled by weak rulers.⁴⁹ Sir Edward Gait also in the Census operations of 1891, found a community in Cachar, called Dheyans, and stated that they were the descendents of those Koches who accompanied Gohain Kamal during his invasion of Cachar.⁵⁰

Guha⁵¹ and Ahmad⁵² however confidently narrate the story of Chilarai's war with the Raja of Tripura and the peace made by the brother of the Raja agreeing to pay tribute but they are silent regarding who the ruler was at that point of time. However these historians are able to tell the place where the battle took place which is known as Longai as Chilarai had put a sword (Longai) there as the boundary between the Koch and Tripuri territories.⁵³ However D. Nath identifies the Tripura King as Ananta Manikya, son of Vijay Manikya. He states that Vijay Manikya was a powerful ruler and therefore couldn't have suffered such a miserable defeat or if he had at all, then he wouldn't have been eulogized as a man of prowess in their official chronicles. It was therefore his son and successor Ananta Manikya.⁵⁴

Brief History of the Dheyans in Cachar :-

The Koch who stayed back in Cachar in due course of time came to be known as Dheyans. They were the people of Chilarai who were also the Prime Minister or Dewan of the Koch King Naranarayan. So, the local people called them the first people of Dewan Chilarai and in later time only Dewan which later was changed to Dheyans. With the establishment of the Koch headquarters at Khaspur, efforts were also made to give a civil character to it. The expedition to Cachar was entirely a military one but soon it was given a civil character as with the coming of Kamalnayan as the Governor of the province more people were also brought along with him in order to help him in administration. With the settlement of this group of people in Cachar the Dheyans also became one of the inhabitants of the region. Since then they have been in Cachar and at present we find them forming as one of the

communities of Cachar. Kamal Narayan was basically interested with the task of maintaining diplomatic relations with the defeated states who had accepted their suzerainty. But with the gradual decline of the Koch power and the adverses that they faced against the Mughals in later days, these tributaries also began to assert their independence.

Kamalnarayan also couldn't make any effort to bring them under his control as the empire itself which had to support him was facing adverses and declining. Moreover, he didn't have a force strong enough at Khaspur to take up any action against these tributaries. Rather Kamalnarayan also severed all relation from the mainland and appeared as the independent ruler of the Koch principality in Cachar. This act of Kamalnarayan further enhanced the formation of all Dheyman community in Cachar which was at that time concentrated in and around Khaspur.

Kamalnarayan was a quiet, and peace loving ruler. He made no effort to expand his territories in Cachar nor could he take up any actions against any encroachment on his territory because of poor military power. Therefore his territories reduced in size as they were encroached upon by raiding hill tribes.⁵⁵ He was a very highly religious ruler and had established a number of settlement of the Brahmins on the bank of river Tikal, and extended royal patronage to them.⁵⁶ He also built two two Kali shrines- the Kachakanti (**Plate - 1**) in Udharband and the Shyama Mandir (**Plate - 2**) in Thaligram which have survived till date. The peculiarity of the Shyama Mandir is that no women are allowed to enter this temple. The women of the neighbouring areas are not allowed to visit the Mandir even at present times. The temple is situated on top of a hill amidst thick forest. He appointed the Brahmins as hereditary Sebayats and the priestly families of Kachakanti even today claim their descent from those appointed by Kamalnarayan.⁵⁷

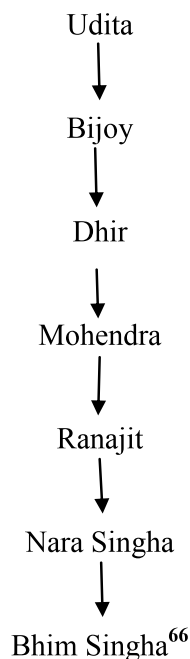
Two Rajas ruled in succession to Kamalnarayan. The third ruler was an oppressive one. So, the noble and the aristocrats of the states conspired against him and assassinated him. There are stories about his tyranny.⁵⁸ The cultivator who had encroached in a portion of the paddy field belonging to another would be beheaded in the occupied portion of the land.⁵⁹ As a result he earned the displeasure of the influential people in the state. The elites of the state hatched a conspiracy in a Jhum field near Thaligram and killed the ruler by burning him.⁶⁰ With the assassination of

the Dheyana Raja the nobles and the aristocrats of the states made Udit, the Senapati or Commander in Chief of the states as the new ruler.

Guha quotes a tradition current in Cachar to suggest that the tract had since then passed under Tamradhwaja, the Dimasa Raja of Maibong.⁶¹ He however, states that Udit and his successors continued to rule in Khaspur.⁶² (presumably as the feudatory of Dimasa Raja) Ahmad also believes that with the assassination of the Dheyana Raja the Koch hold in Cachar came to an end and Uditnarayan, the Senapati of the last Raja was appointed as the Governor of Khaspur.⁶³

The Gopichandra Panchali⁶⁴ an unpublished chronicle of Cachar gives us a different story about Udit. According to it, when the Tripuri control on Cachar was on its wane there emerged a number of Raj or Chieftaincies. Khaspur was the most prominent among these Chieftaincies and its ruler, Udit belonged to the Koch race. Udit's son, Bijoy was a powerful ruler. He integrated other Chieftaincies into his state and established ten or dash-raj in Cachar. (Incidentally, these ten revenue divisions were retained by the later Dimasa rulers of the Valley and Cachar is traditionally known as the land of dash-raj). The Panchali also tells that the successors of Udit ruled for seven generations.⁶⁵

Guha and Ahmad have mentioned about those seven generations. They put the geneology as follows:-



Not much is known regarding the rulers who ruled in Khaspur after Uditā. The last ruler Bhim Singh's rule is of great political importance due to the marriage of his only daughter Kanchani with Laxmi Chandra who belonged to the ruling family of the Dimasa which ultimately led to the unification of Cachar with the North Cachar Hills. The marriage resulted into the merging of the two states and the Dimasa capital was shifted to Khaspur from Maibong.⁶⁷ The Gopichandra Panchali also gives us the same information. Sarat Chandra Ghoshal and K.C.A. Ahmad suggest that this merger took place in 1745 C.E.⁶⁸

Laxmichandra actually succeeded to the reign in Khaspur after Bhim Singha⁶⁹ and he was the founder of the township called Lakhipur which was named after him⁷⁰ and which exist till date in Cachar. The Dheyans are also found in neighbouring areas of Lakhipur at present times.

Immediately after his marriage, Laxmichandra was appointed as the Governor of a division, the headquarter of which later came to be known as Lakhipur. After the death of Bhim Singha, he became the legal successor of the Koch territory of Cachar and this occasioned the unification of Cachar with North Cachar Hills. With this unification, the Koch rule in Cachar came to an end.

Social structure of the Dheyans in Cachar:-

The information regarding the Dheyans is very meager. Therefore there is practically no information regarding the social structure and the system of administration.⁷¹ Through the accounts available we come to know of how the Koch under Chilarai came to Cachar in the course of an expedition and how a group of them settled under the rule of Kamalnayan. Apart from this we get to know of the rule of Uditā and his generation and how the successors ruled for seven generations in hereditary line.

The succession was in all probability according to the law of primogeniture since when the last Raja had no male successor and his only daughter was married to Laxmichandra, it was the son in law and not the daughter who was named the successor, and in the process, the state merged with Heramba state to the ruling family of which the prince belonged.⁷²

Since the Koch rulers had very few people in Cachar to support them in functioning of the state, they were divided into 18 groups to perform their duty. These are

1. Barpatra.
2. Dekapatra.
3. Senapati.
4. Uzir.
5. Rajkazi
6. Shyamabhandary.
7. Karibhuyan.
8. Dolo.
9. Deuri.
10. Purkait.
11. Singadar.
12. Chanadar.
13. Bagdar.
14. Kumarlaskar.
15. Bherualaskar.
16. Dhulialaskar.
17. Senapatra.
18. Bharipatra.⁷³

The position of Barpatra (Prime Minister), Dekapatra (Junior Minister), Senapati (General), Uzir (civil or judicial officer), Rajkazi (Judge), Shyam Bhandari (in charge of the state assigned to Shyama temple) etc.⁷⁴ became hereditary to the particular families. The rest of the groups were artisans and professionals. For example, the Karibhuyans were musicians, Dolo were spiritual guide, Deuri were temple assistant, Purkait were writer, Singadar were fluteman, Dhulialaskar were drummer, Sunapatra were goldsmith, Bharipatra were gold and silver trader etc.⁷⁵ Besides these group of people there were the Brahmins and other high castes which included the nobles and aristocrats.

At present also among the Dheyans in Cachar we still find some of these groups although many of them no longer exist. The groups which are prevalent at

present times are very few in number and the services associated with them are no longer there. They are just passed down through generation leading to the formation of group of families within the Dheyman society. These groups are known as vansh to the Dheyans and on the basis of these groups social division takes place in the dheyman society. For example in the Dheyman society there are ten gotras and taking into account their personal gotra marriages and other rituals are performed. However, people of the same gotra and same vansh do not intermarry and observe ritual impurity at the time of death and birth. The groups which we find at present times with some modifications are as follows:

- 1) Barpatra.
- 2) Dekapatra.
- 3) Senapati.
- 4) Dhulialaskar.
- 5) Singadar.
- 6) Sunapatra.
- 7) Jugtipatra.
- 8) Shutarpatra.
- 9) Shikari.
- 10) Rakhapatra.
- 11) Lalung. Etc.

Another interesting feature noted in the Dheyman society at present is the absence of a priestly class or the Brahmins. Initially when their rulers were in existence the Brahmins were very much there performing the rites and rituals. But with the end of the ruling family, the Brahmins no longer received royal patronage. So, it is highly probable that since they failed to receive royal patronage they found it difficult to sustain and therefore these group of people gradually disappeared with a very few of them who stayed back being associated with the duties of some temples like the Kachakanti temple at Udharband and Shyama Mandir at Thaligram.

The Dheyans in Cachar was the product of military expedition of Chilarai. The reign of Naranarayan saw a great territorial expansion with the support of his brother Chilarai who subjugated a host of organized monarchies and principalities.⁷⁷ But deterioration soon set in and the huge empire was segmented and in few years a

number of divisions was formed. The Koch Kingdom was separated into Koch Behar and Koch Hajo. The undivided Koch Kingdom was ruled by Biswa Singha and Naranarayan. After the division of Koch Kingdom into Koch Behar and Koch Hajo, Koch Behar was ruled from Lakshmi Narayan till Jagaddipendra Narayan after which it was merged with Independent India and finally as a district of West Bengal. On the other hand Koch Hajo was occupied by the Mughals during the rule of Parikshit Narayan. However, his brother Balinarayan took shelter under the Ahoms and with the assistance of the Ahom king Pratap Singha, Balinarayan was established as a vassal in the region between Barnadi and Barnali rivers and called it Darrang. His descendents continued to rule the region till it was annexed by the British in 1826 C.E. Balinarayan was succeeded by Mahendra Narayan, Chandra Narayan and then Surya Narayan. Another brother of Balinarayan known as Gaj Narayan also ruled over Beltola whose descendents are found till date. The Bijni state was established by the aid of the Mughals. The rulers reigned between the Sankosh and Manas rivers, the region immediately to the east of Koch Behar. The rulers were Chandra Narayan, son of Parikshit Narayan, Joy Narayan, Shiv Narayan, Bijoy Narayan, Mukunda Narayan, Haridev Narayan, Indra Narayan, Amrit Narayan, Kumud Narayan and Bhairabendra Narayan, and then we have the principality of Khaspur.

The Khaspur Principality in Cachar had a different story from other Koch states. It was a conquered territory, distant from the mainland Cooch Behar and separated by other states and territories.⁷⁸ The purpose behind the formation of the principality itself was also different. Its exclusive aim initially was to act as a garrison of soldiers to serve as a standing Army against the feudatories. But soon it became more or less like a state as a governor was posted from the royal family for maintaining diplomatic relations with the defeated state. It was just that when the Koch power reduced, that the principality also cut off all its ties with the central authority and styled himself as the Raja. Cooch Behar then also might have lost interest in maintaining this petty province when the empire itself was breaking down. Since then the colony had to depend on its own resources for sustenance. But this couldn't continue for long because without any strong military power and without any additional production which could be a source of additional strength to the political structure. Before the Dheyman Rajas could consolidate their position, the Dimasas from the north emerged stronger and gradually extended their boundary southwards by

absorbing Dheyman territories.⁷⁹ In this context, the hand of the Dimasa Raja in the rebellion that brought Uditia to power cannot be ruled out, and it is not impossible that Khaspur had since then a feudatory status in relation to Maibong.⁸⁰ The marriage of Kanchani with Laxmichandra of ruling family of the Dimasas finally put an end to the rule of the Dheyans in Cachar.

The Koch expedition of Naranarayan under Chilarai is of great importance in the history of Cachar. Firstly, it brought an end to the Tripuri authority in Cachar as Longai came to be recognized as the boundary between the Koch and Tripuri territories. Moreover, with the expedition of Chilarai and with the placement of Kamalnayan as the governor at Khaspur, a group of people known as Dheyans appeared on the social scene of Cachar which later constituted a part of its population. It also led to the stronghold of the Dimasas in Cachar in later period as with the marriage of Kanchani and Laxmichandra political unification of the Dheyans and Dimasas took place finally leading to the end of the Dheyman Rajas rule in Cachar.

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- 9) Allen, B.C., 1905, Assam District Gazetteers, Calcutta, Vol. I (Cachar), p.22.
- 10) Copper-plates of Sylhet, p.60. In the words of Kamalakanta Gupta :

“The second grant was a grant of a very big tract of land called Manukulapradesh i.e., the territory on the bank of the Manu river (of Sylhet district) , to a learned Brahmana Nidhipati (of Vatsya gotra) of their group, towards the close of the 12th century C.E. The aforesaid Nidhipati, the then leader of this group of Brahmanas, settled in Ita area of Sylhet District, himself retained a large portion of Manukulapradesh amongst other Brahmanas of his group. From these facts it can be naturally inferred that the pattaka (i.e., the title of Manukulapradesh area) must have remained in the custody of the leader who retained a large portion of the donated land, and settled in Ita area and to our expectation we are getting a copper-plate viz., the Paschimbhag copper-plate of Suichandra of the 10th century C.E., relating to the grant of a big territory of land to a large number of Brahmanas of the same group (i.e., of

the same group of the donees of Nidhanpur copper-plate grant), recently discovered in Ita area.”

- 11) Bhattacharjee, J.B.: op.cit. p. 66.
- 12) Allen, B.C.: op.cit. p. 23.
- 13) Bhattacharjee, J.B.: op.cit. p. 66.
- 14) Ibid.
- 15) Ibid.
- 16) Choudhury, A.C.: op.cit. pp. 194-195.
- 17) Allen, B.C.: op.cit. p. 23.
- 18) Guha, U.C.: op.cit. p. 6.
- 19) Choudhury, A.C.: op.cit. pp. 196-197.
- 20) Allen, B.C.: op.cit. p. 62.
- 21) Bhattacharjee, J.B.: op.cit. p. 67.
- 22) Guha, U.C.: op.cit. p. 141.
- 23) Nath, R.M., 1981, Antiquities of Cachar, Silchar, p. 8.
- 24) Bhattacharjee, J.B.: op.cit. p. 67.
- 25) Allen, B.C.: op.cit. p. 62.
- 26) Choudhury, A.C.: op.cit. pp. 197-198.
- 27) Sharma, N.C., 1973, Darrang Raj Vamsavali, (ed), Gauhati, p. 400.
- 28) Ghoshal, Sarat Chandra, 2005, A History of Cooch Behar, Siliguri, p. 122.
- 29) Nath, D., 1989, History of the Koch Kingdom. 1515-1615, Delhi, pp.61-62.
- 30) Ibid. p. 416.
- 31) Sharma, N.C.: op.cit. pp. 412-413.

- 32) Ibid. p. 416.
- 33) Ibid. p. 417.
- 34) Ibid. pp. 419- 420.
- 35) Guha, U.C., Kachar Itibritta: op.cit. p.30; Ahmad, K.C.A., 1926, Koch-Behar Itihas, Cooch Behar, p.111.
- 36) Bhattacharjee, J.B., 1982, The Koch Principality in Cachar: A study of Medieval Polity Formation in North East India, p.110.
- 37) Bhuyan, S.K., (ed), 1936, Tripura Buranji, Gauhati, pp. 21-22.
- 38) Nath, R.M., 1948, The Background of Assamese Culture, Shillong, p. 72.
- 39) Bhattacharjee, J.B., 1982, The Koch Principality in Cachar: A study of Medieval Polity Formation in North East India, Proceedings of the North East India History Association, p.111.
- 40) Ibid. p. 109.
- 41) Ghoshal, Sarat Chandra,: op.cit. p. 172.
- 42) Ahmad, K.C.A.: op. cit. p. 237.
- 43) Sharma, N.C.: op. cit. pp. 72-94.
- 44) Ibid., p. 101.
- 45) Bhattacharjee, J.B.: op.cit. p. 105.
- 46) Choudhury, N.R. Roy, 1977, Tripura Through Ages, Agartala, p. 33.
- 47) Ibid.
- 48) Gait, E.A., 1963, A History of Assam, (ed), Calcutta, p. 94.
- 49) Choudhury, N.R. Roy.: op. cit. p. 33.
- 50) Gaitd, E.A., (ed), 1892, Census of India, 1891, Vol. I (Assam), Shillong, p. 235.

- 51) Guha, U.C.: op. cit. pp. 30-39.
- 52) Ahmad, K.C.A.: op. cit. p. 237.
- 53) Guha, U.C.: op. cit. p. 30; Ahmad, K.C.A.: op. cit. p. 111.
- 54) Nath, D.: op. cit. p. 63.
- 55) Bhattacharjee, J.B.: op.cit. p. 112.
- 56) Ibid. p. 111.
- 57) Ibid. p. 112.
- 58) Ibid.
- 59) Guha, U.C.: op. cit. p. 32.
- 60) Interview with Chandra Rajbanshi of Larsingpar on 10/05/2011.
- 61) Guha, U.C.: op. cit. pp. 81-82.
- 62) Ibid. p. 33.
- 63) Ahmad, K.C.A. : op. cit. p. 237.
- 64) Composed by Kavi Krishnamohan of Swarnapur, Cachar in 1670 Saka (1748 A.D.)
- 65) Bhattacharjee, J.B.: op. cit. p. 113.
- 66) Guha, U.C.: op. cit. p. 33; Ahmad, K.C.A.: op. cit. p. 237.
- 67) Guha, U.C.: op. cit. p. 33.
- 68) Ghoshal, Sarat Chandra: op. cit. p. 172; Ahmad, K.C.A.: op. cit. p. 237.
- 69) Guha, U.C.: op. cit. p. 33.
- 70) Ibid. p. 82.
- 71) Bhattacharjee, J.B.: op. cit. p. 115.
- 72) Ibid. p. 116.

- 73) Guha, U.C.: op. cit. pp. 34-35.
- 74) Bhattacharjee, J.B.: op. cit. p. 116.
- 75) Ibid.
- 76) Interview with Narasingh Rajbanshi and Kunjababu Rajbanshi of Dewan on 20/02/2015.
- 77) Bhattacharjee, J.B.: op. cit. p. 118.
- 78) Ibid.
- 79) Ibid. p. 119.
- 80) Ibid.