PREFACE

The investigation is a study of the history of “Cachar Under Raja Govinda Chandra 1813-1830”. It presents an analytical narrative on political, social, cultural, religious and economic condition of Cachar during the reign of Raja Govinda Chandra Narayana, the last king of the Kachari Kingdom. The history of the Kachari king Govinda Chandra Narayana is characterised by various significant incidents which are still not properly explored and focused. As such, an attempt has been made in the present study to unfold the various events of success and failure of the last Kachari king Govinda Chandra Narayana. It has been my endeavour to give proper justice to the topic by avoiding anything far from proper historical facts.

The study is based on records —— primary, secondary, and field studies. Primary source exploration has been done in Khaspur, the then capital of the Kachari kings, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Kolkata; The Carey Library, Serampore College, Serampore; The Asiatic Society, Kolkata; Archaeological Survey of India, Guwahati Circle, Guwahati; Assam State Museum, Guwahati; West Bengal State Archives, Kolkata etc. The study on secondary source is based on relevant books and journals preserved in National Library, Kolkata; Calcutta University Central Library,
Kolkata; Presidency College Library, Kolkata; Indian Council for Historical Research, North-East Regional Centre, Guwahati; Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Guwahati; State District Library, Guwahati; Kamrup Anusandhan Samiti, Guwahati; Assam University Central Library besides District Library, Silchar and Deputy Commissioner’s Record Room and Library, Silchar. Data gathered from the books and journals, have been checked and cross-checked through field studies for objective appraisal of the history of Cachar under Raja Govinda Chandra.

To give due justice to the topic under study it was felt indispensable to refer to some of the original and outstanding historical works on the relevant topic published so far. Various erudite scholars and historians have contributed a lot in throwing light on various aspects of the history of Cachar and the Kacharies. To name a few, they are:

1. J. B. Bhattacharjee (Cachar Under British Rule in North East India, New Delhi, 1977); (2) W. W. Hunter, (A Statistical Account of Assam, Delhi, 1998 (Reprint); (3) Capt. R. B. Pemberton (Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India, Gauhati, 1966 (Reprint); (4) S. Endle (The Kachari, New Delhi, 1975 (Reprint); (5) C. A. Soppitt (A Historical and Descriptive Account of the Kachari Tribes in North Cachar Hills, Shillong, 1885); (6) Edward Tuite Dalton (Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal, Calcutta, 1872); (7) Edward Gait (A
History of Assam, Gauhati, 1926); (8) H. K. Barpujari (Assam In the Days of Company 1826-1858), Gauhati, 1980); (9) Padmanath Bhattacharjee Vidyavinod, ed.) (Herombo Rajyer Dandabidhi, Gauhati, 1920); (10) Amalendu Bhattacharjee ed.) (Heramba Rajyer Dandabidhi Ebong Heramba Rajyer Rinadanbidhi, Silchar, 2003); (11) U. C. Guha (Cacharer Itibritta, ed. by Amalendu Bhattacharjee and Sanjib Deb Laskar, Agartala, 2006); (12) N. K. Barman (The Queens of Cachar or Herambo and The History of the Kachchhari, Barkhala, Bijoypur, Cachar, 2007 (Reprint); (13) R. M. Lahiri (The Annexation of Assam, Calcutta, 1994 (Reprint); (14) Debabrata Datta (Cachar District Records, Kolkata, 2007) (15) N. G. Rhodes and S. K. Bose (A History of the Dimasa-Kacharis, As Seen Through Coinage, Kolkata, 2006).

The present study has been divided into five chapters. The study has been opened with a brief sketch of the geographical features of Cachar, the historical background of the Dimasa-Kacharis till the period of Raja Govinda Chandra Narayana, and the reasons for transfer of their capital from Dimapur to Khaspur through Maibong. The second chapter deals with political condition and administrative system of Cachar during the period of Raja Govinda Chandra Narayana. In the third chapter, an in-depth study has been made on the socio-religious and cultural condition of Cachar under various Kachari Kings
with special reference to Raja Govinda Chandra Narayana. The study incorporates the socio-religious customs and traditions like family system, marriage system, caste system, food habits, social status of women, system of worshipping Gods and Goddesses and other socio-religious functions and ceremonies of the Dimasa society. Language, literature, art, music and other cultural activities of the Kachari people have also been dealt in their proper perspective.

The economic condition of Cachar during the regime of Govinda Chandra has been dealt in the fourth chapter. In the conclusion, the entire study has been summarised to unfold the various facets of the history of Cachar under Raja Govinda Chandra Narayana with the suggestion for formulating appropriate policy for socio-economic transformation of the Kacharis keeping in mind their rich historical background.

I shall deem this research work of mine amply rewarding if the suggestion offered herein for adopting appropriate measures for socio-economic transformation of the Dimasa-Kacharis is found pragmatic and implementable.

Dated Silchar, July 30, 2009.

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