CHAPTER - VI

CONCLUSION

Kangla, the ancient capital of Manipur and it is regarded the holiest place as well as the centre of pilgrimage for all Manipuris who are residing in different places of the world. Available manuscripts and sources materials suggest that Kangla was the seat of ruling personalities before the reign of Nongda Lairen Pakhangba, who ascended the throne in 33 A.D. up to the reign of Maharaja Kulachandra in 1891. In the heart of Imphal or Yumphal between the Nambul and Imphal rivers, located Kangla, the ancient royal seat of Manipur. Admist the crowds of Imphal valley, the ruins of Kangla and her mourning fort standing solemnly to narrate the by gone valour and pride of the ancient Manipuri Kings.

Mythological interpretation of history of the pre-Pakhangba period of the ruling clans or personalities, namely, 1) Tangja Leela Pakhangba, 2) Leinung Lonja Ariba (Pakhangba), 3) Lolang Pakhangba, 4) Kurumlen Meinaiba, 5) Kangba Ningthou, 6) Moriya
Phambalcha, 7) Sakakpa, 8) Wankakpa, 9) Kakshuba, 10) Tonkakpa, 11) Sentreng, 12) Kuptreng, 13) Chakpas, 14) Chengleis, 15) Khabas and etc., were ruled own the Kangla. Kangla is not only the seat of political power but also a holy place for religious worship and ceremonies. There are a number of ancient treatise and manuscripts available today which it has mentioned the holy places of Kangla. It has mentioned may be made of a few manuscripts, namely, Pakhangba Laihui, Pakhangba Phambal, Kangla Houba, Noonglon, Noonglon Achouba, Kangla Layat, Sakoklamlen, Chinglon Laihui, Nonglon Shakok, Kangla Thirel, so and so forth which laid down the rules for the construction, worship, ceremonies relating to Kangla.

The history of Kangla is intricately related to the evolution of Manipuri culture, religion and cosmogony. The traditions, both oral and written observed that in the beginning there was empty darkness. The Supreme God, Guru Shidaba, the Immortal Lord of the sky, created the Universe, the Gods and all the living beings. Guru Shidaba, the Lord of the Universe, then asked his three sons Ashiba, Atiya Shidaba and Konjin Tingthokpa (Pakhangba) to go around the Universe and said that whoever first completed the journey would be
made king of the earth. On the one hand it was proved that Kangla as regarded as a hill is found in the old manuscripts like Nighthourol Lambuba, Noonglol and Pombi Luwaoba. when the event of traveling around the Universe or Nongkhong Koiba was over, from what Guru Shidaba ordained, ‘My son, you (Pakhangba) shall rule alone over the world (worldly life) as the main hinge lying at the Royal hill, the central Thingkrumching where seven slopes / ranges join’. It is understand that this place what it called as Kangla, was a hill having seven slopes.

According to sacred puyas (manuscripts) Noonglol Kangla is called Tillikoktong, Laimakol Kangla Nongthou Phambirel. On the other hand, Kang - means heaven and La - means earth known as heaven and earth. Inside the earth beneath of Kangla, there were a python, a tortoise, a boar, an ox, an elephant, and a Laijao (in the form of a man) bearing a Paphal on the head, one above the other from the bottom upwards to the top. Hence, Kangla is also known as ‘Thon Taret Thonllangmei’. Meera Pongthoklam and Meereimana Tanphangdaba refer that the place of Kangla never found anywhere of the world except its and first place of the evolution of human spices.
The place where Ko-Sana Pakhangba, Lord of the world, used to sit on a throne encircles by Ashiba biting its tail taking the form of Taoroinai (serpent god) is called Kangla Konung (palace) is called so because seven streams flows surrounding it.

Kangla is located at the heart of Imphal city on the western bank of the Imphal River. Its latitude is very nearly 24° and its longitude is very nearly 94°E. It is 2619 feet above the sea level. Kangla is considered to be the holiest place of the Manipuris. It is also a center of pilgrimage for all Manipuris who live in outside and inside the state of Manipur. Indeed, it has believed that Pakhangba resides under ‘Kangla’ and ruled the kingdom of Manipur. Some of the important holy places at Kangla are Nungjeng Pukhri and other ponds, Nungoibi, Manglen, Kangla Mensurung, site of Wangbaren, site of Koubru, Manung Kangjeibung etc., It is a protected area under the Manipur Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1976 as it is one of the most important historical and archaeological sites of the state.
The Cheitharol Kumbaba the Royal Chronicle gives many references to the construction of Kangla by successive kings. The major landmarks in the growth of the Kangla Fort are the construction works taken up by king Khagemba (1597-1652 A.D.) and Garibniwaj (1709-1748 A.D.).

In 1886, Captain E.W. Dun in his book ‘Gazetter of Manipur’ depicted a pen picture of Kangla in the following way: “In the centre is Raja’s enclosure or it is called ‘Pat’. Every road converges upon it, and it is in every sense the heart of the city and of the country............

It is surrounded by a moat 20 yards broad and 6 feet deep at the deepest part, near the western gate. During the cold weather this moat only, contains water round the south eastern and south western corners. It is divided into sections by the bunds over which the roads pass as they enter the four gates. The water round the south-western angle can drawn off by a culvert (now closed up) and partially filled up, cutting across the main road which runs along the edge of the most outside it”.

136
In 1891, Mrs. Ethel Grimwood, the wife of Mr. Frank Grimwood the British Political Agent of Manipur, described the Kangla as shown below: “The whole Palace was fortified by five walls surrounding the Maharaja’s enclosure. The outer of these was broken, and of no great height, but the inner one was very strong, built of bricks and supplied with bastion, and surrounded the inner Palace on all four sides. On three sides of the outer wall was a canal, very deep and wide. It was here that the great boat race took place every year, and water was always kept weeded and cleaned for these events. The whole citadel was built with a view to resisting attack in the time before Burma was annexed, when armies of raiders used to come down upon Manipur with a hostile intent and it was a place which could easily be held against an attacking force, provided big guns were not brought to bear upon it”.

The historical development of Kangla can be divided into five important periods:

1. 33-1709 A.D. up to the accession of Garibniwaz
2. 1709-1819 A.D. up to the Burmese invasion of 1819
3. 1819-1891 A.D. up to the Anglo-Manipur war
4. 1891-1949 A.D. up to the Manipur Merger Agreement
5. 1949-2004 A.D. up to the handing over of Kangla on 20-11-2004 to the people of Manipur by Assam Rifles
6. 2011 till date.

The reign of Nongda Lairen Pakhangba from 33 A.D. is an important historical event in the evolution of the kingdom of Manipur. At that time Manipur was divided into several principalities. They were engaged in warfare against one another for supremacy. Pakhangba consolidated the kingdom and laid the foundation of the social, political, cultural and religious systems of Manipur. His reign was a landmark in the history of Manipur. He was succeeded by his son Khuiyoi Tompok in 154 A.D.
During the reign of Naophangba (428-518 A.D.) the treatise on the construction of Kangla, 'Kangla Houba' is believed to be written by Ashangbam Laiba. He was succeeded by his son Sameirang in 518 A.D. The period from 518 to 1512 A.D. during this period the kingdom of Manipur was further consolidated and the all principalities were integrated under the Ningthoujas. The rulers after Lam Kiyamba like Kabomba, Chalamba and Mungyamba were great conquerors. Kabomba defeated the Tripuri invaders in 1533 A.D. and dug the Takhel Khong in the capital of commemorate the victory.

Khagembba (1597-1652) was one of the greatest kings of Manipur. The development of Kangla began at his time with art of brick making in Manipur. He was succeeded by his son Khunjaoba in 1652 A.D. He developed the capital as a centre of commerce. He was engaged in the fortification of Kangla and excavated the moat in front of the brick gateway constructed by Khagembba. After Paikhomba, Garibniwaz (Pamheiba) ascended the throne in 1709. He was also the greatest king of Manipur. During his reign, Kangla was well fortified with the excavation of the outer moat and construction of a brick wall.
around the bank of the moat. He constructed a number of buildings at Kangla including one five storied palatial building.

After Gourashyam, Bhagyachandra (Jai Singh) regained the throne of Manipur in 1768. He however did not occupy Kangla. Labyana Chandra succeeded his father and ascended the throne of Manipur in 1798. He restored the important religious palaces of Kangla and occupied the ancient seat of power in 1799. He then organised the death anniversary of Bhgyachandra at Kangla. Modhuchandra succeeded his brother in 1800. According to Cheitharol Kumbaba (Royal Chronicle) he completed the construction works of the temple and the mandap of Shri Shri Govindajee which was left unfinished by his predecessor at Kangla, then he dedicated the temple and the mandap to Shri Shri Govindajee.

Chourjit ascended the throne in 1803. He introduced grand schemes for the beautification of Kangla and constructed two huge status of Kangla Sha in front of the Uttra in 1804, a religious hall with eighty four pillars known as Chourasi Khamba in 1805 and Madapa of Govindajee Temple. Then Marjit succeeded in 1813 and he
constructed a royal residence with teakwood from the Kabow Valley in 1819. The building was roofed with gilded planks.

The seven years period from 1819-1826 of Burmese rule is known as the Seven Years Devastation (Chahi Taret Khuntakpa) in the history of Manipur. Gambhir Singh (1819-1826) with the help of the 500 strong Manipur Levy, and the British East India Company expelled the Burmese from Manipur. Nara Singh as desired by the people of Manipur ascended the throne in 1844. Nara Singh shifted his capital from Langthabal to Kangla in 1844. He reconstructed the two statues of the Kangla Sha at Uttra as that Burmese had dismantled or destroyed the statues made by Chourjit. He planted saplings of Keli-Kadam trees (Anthocephalus Cadamba) on both sides of the road in front of the Kangla Sha to the western gate. In 1850, Shri Shri Govindaji constructed with bricks brought from Langthabal.

Chandrakirti came from Cachar and regained the throne of Manipur in 1850. The structure of Beithab in front of the Govindajee Temple was constructed in 1855. In 1860, a very powerful earthquake
rocked Manipur and destroyed many brick structures including the temple of Govindaji. A temporary temple was reconstructed and inaugurated in the same year. All the sacred and holy places inside Kangla were developed and maintained.

After the death of king Chandrakirti Singh, Surchandra ascended the throne in 1886. In 1890, princes Zila Ngamba and Angousana with the support of Senapati Tikendrajit revolted against Surchandra. Surchandra abdicated the throne and Kulachandra Dhaja ascended in 1890 and Tikendrajit became the Yubraj. Surchandra requested the Government of British India, yet British refused his request and decided to recognise Kulachandra as king of Manipur and to arrest Yubraj Tikendrajit. The Chief Commissioner of Assam, Mr. James Wallace Quinton, came to Manipur to execute the order of the Government of India with a 400 strong escort under the command of Colonel Charles Mac Donald Skene, D.S.O. This event led to the Anglo-Manipur war of 1891.

The British effort to arrest Tekendrajit resulted in complete failure as the Manipuris responded with strength. The Political Agent,
Mr. Grimwood was speared to death. Subsequently, Mr. Quinton, Col. Skene, Mr. Cossins, Lieutenant Simpson and a Bugler were beheaded by the public executioner in front of the Kangla Sha. As soon as the news of the failure of the plan to arrest Tekendrajit and the execution of the British Officer reached the Government of India, three columns of troops were sent to Manipur from Kohima, Silchar and Tammu under the command of Major General H. Collett, Colonel Rennick and Brigadier General T. Graham respectively. Thus the defeat of the Manipuris at 'the Last Battle of Anglo-Manipur War 1891' at Khongjom, Manipur came under British paramountcy.

After the defeat of the Manipuris at the Battle of Khongjom, Manipur came under British domination in 1891. The British then destroyed the fabulous statues of the Kangla Sha, important buildings inside Kangla as punitive action against the Manipuris. The British Government selected Churchand, a minor son of Rajkumar Chaobiyaima as Raja of Manipur. A new palace was also constructed at Wangkhei and Kangla was kept under British occupation. During British Colonial period, Kangla was known as Manipur Fort and a battalion of Assam Rifle was station there. The British developed
Kangla as a cantonment and barracks quarters and bungalows like the General Slim's Cottage were constructed at Kangla. The British left Manipur in 1947, but the ancient Royal seat of Manipur remained under the control of the Assam Rifles.

**HISTORICAL MONUMENTS AND INSCRIPTIONS OF KANGLA CITADEL (ROYAL ENCLOSURE)**

The citadel is the innermost and the last defensive wall of Kangla Fort. It surrounds the palace buildings, the Royal arsenals and other important places and structures related to the royalty. The citadel is about twenty feet high and built of well-burnt bricks. It has three main gates. The southern gate was connected by a passage leading to the temple of Shri Shri Govindajee. The king used to come out from this gate for prayer to Govindajee. According to the Royal Chronicle, the citadel was reenacted by Chandrakirti in 1873 covering an area of 200 square yards.
It is said that Govindaji temple and Beithab is a rectangular late medieval bricks and Burmese teak rafter temple with an open portico and a sanctum with covered circumbulatatory passage all round the sanctum. The temple facing east was elaborately decorated with floral designs in stucco. In 1844 king Nara Singh built a brick temple to Shri Govindajee. But a part of it came tumbling down in March 1868 in a severe earthquake. In the great earthquake of 1869 the Beithab building crumbled. Chandrakirti built a new temple to Shri Govindaji in 1869. The Beithab standing to the east of the temple of Govindaji was dedicated to Shri Govinda by Chandrakirti in 1855.

The Brindaban Chandra temple is popularly known as the temple of Yubaraj Tikendrajit. This is a late medieval brick temple, rectangular in shape and built on a high plinth with double hexagonal projections, erected over decorative and architectural round pillars finishing with a round classic capital. The structural style of the temple is composed of the main sanctum and an ambulatory passage all around. The temple is faces in the east.
The Royal Chronicle (Cheitharol Kumbaba) records the construction of the Uttra Shanglen in 1629 (Shaka Era, 1551) during the reign of Khagemba. The latest Uttra constructed by Chandrakirti in 1873 was destroyed in World War-II. Eleven brick steps are the only remnants of the destroyed Uttra Shanglen presently.

The Kangla Sha were constructed by Chourjit in Shaka Era 1726 (1804 A.D.). These huge status is the imagine shape heavenly lions were destroyed by the Burmese invaders during the Chahi Taret Khuntakpa (Seven Years Devastation 1819-1826 A.D.). Later on, Nara Singh Maharaja began the construction of the two Kangla Sha on 1844 A.D. Just at the end of the Anglo-Manipur war, 1891 the two Kangla Sha had blown up by the British.

The Outer Moat is known as Thangapat in Manipur. It was developed as a defensive barrier to protect Kangla from invaders. This moat is about 20 yards wide and 6 feet deep at the deepest part, according to the report of Captain E.W. Dun. The Inner Moat also known as Manung Thangapat. It was also developed as a defensive
measure against invaders, Kangla, thus became a well-fortified surrounded by moats and defensive walls.

Nungjeng Achouba is a sacred pond, the water of which is essential for the ‘Apokpa Khurumba’ of Mangang clans’ (ancestor worship of Mangang clan). It is also known as ‘Nongdam Khong’, one of the nine rivulets in Kangla. In the religious festivals of Pakhangba Chenghongba and Sanamahi Chenghongba (worship of rice offering festival to the Pakhang and Sanamahi), the ‘Khayom Lakpa’ – a religious rite in which eggs, uncooked rice and coins were put in plantain leaves, folded and tied together with bamboo (mostly uttang bamboo) strips and ultimately immersed into the holy water of Nungjeng Pukhri.

Pandit N. Khelchandra and many scholars of Manipur has suggested that the Eastern Gate (Kangla Nongpok Thong) was the main entrance of Kangla since immemorial times. It is also supported and refering by many manuscripts available today. However this Eastern Gate is not yet found any evident for existing history expect installation of one foundation stone for construction by one of the
Chief Minister of the state. On the other hand during the reigned of king Marjit rebuilt the Western Gate and it was becoming the main entrance to Kangla Palace. It is a strong brick gate having a door with two leaves. They were closed like the flat of the theatre scene by means of horizontal beams attached to them at the back by female screws.

The Slim's Cottage was built in 1901. Its style is British type bungalow. During World War II, it was the residence of Field Marshal W.J. Slim, M.C. Commandant Allied Forces. Later it was the residence of IG, AR (North) and thereafter it housed G.O.C. Mike Sector and still later it housed the Officers' Club of H.Q. Manipur Range (9 Sector) till A.R. vacate Kangla. It is now the Office of the Kangla Fort Board.

The inscription of Marjit is in the compound of the General Slim's Cottage on the northern part of the Kangla. This stone inscription was declared protected under the Durbar Resolution No. 43 dated 24th October 1930 issued by the Vice-President Manipur State Durbar. And this stone inscribed of Maharaja's Marjit 1815
A.D. describes the construction of a brick wall of nine (9) cubit feet in height and the outer wall of the palace.

RESTORATION OF KANGLA

After the handover of Kangla to the people of Manipur on 20\textsuperscript{th} November 2004 by the Director General of Assam Rifles, Lieutenant General Bhupinder Singh, through the Hon’ble Chief Minister, Shri Okram Ibobi Singh, in presence of the Hon’ble Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohon Singh, at a historic function held at Kangla during his visit to the state, and the state cabinet approved the Kangla Fort Bill, 2004. It was promulgated as an Ordinance by the State Government. The said bill was introduced in the Manipur Legislative Assembly on 21\textsuperscript{st} December 2004 and it was passed unanimously. The Kangla Fort Act was notified in the Official Gazette on 14\textsuperscript{th} January, 2005.

It has been the long cherishematic dream of the people of Manipur pertaining the ‘Sacred Kangla’ and restore to its pristine glory. To fulfill this dream, the Government of Manipur has been
made a Concept Development Plan (CDP) of ‘Kangla Fort’ prepared by the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi. The objective of ‘Kangla Development Project’ is the preservation of the state heritage and to restore Kangla to its pristine glory. The vital project are the development, conservation and beautification of the ancient historical ruins and sacred and holy places inside Kangla. So now, the mission of the Concept of Development Plan (CDP) of Kangla is taking up under the Government of Manipur would be keen assessment and extend logical support from the public is need of the hour. Because, it is assumed that without history of Kangla the history of Manipur might be incomplete.