CHAPTER 1

GEO-POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Geographical Extent: At the beginning of the Nineteenth Century, Assam broadly meant the areas under the control of the Ahoms. But by the end of the said century larger areas found place under the administration of the Province of Assam. Thus, the Brahmaputra Valley Division, Surma Valley and Hill District Division and the Native State of Manipur were included in the geographical extent of Assam.

At the time of British annexation of Assam, the extreme length of Assam from west to east may be estimated at 360 miles; its breadth varies from 20 to 70 miles; and taking 45 as the average, we will find an area of 16,200 square miles. After annexation Assam was tagged to Eastern Bengal under the name of Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. But by the end of the Nineteenth Century or, more exactly, in 1905, when the new Province of Assam was constituted, the total area of the Province of Assam including Manipur with an area of 8,466 square miles, was 61,682 square miles. This made it amply clear that the geographical extent of Assam at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century was smaller by far than it had been at the end of the said century.

The following discussion briefly traces the evolution of the Province of Assam during the period under review.

Goalpara: At the beginning of the Sixteenth Century Goalpara

1. FA., p.75.
2. IG., p.16.
including Garo Hills but excluding the Eastern Duars was under the control of the Koch King Bisva Singha. His son Naranarayana at the time of his death offered Goalpara along with Kamrup and Darrang to his nephew Raghu Rai. Raghu Rai was succeeded by his son Parikshit from whom Goalpara was snatched away by the Moghuls in 1614. The British annexed it when they were allowed Dewani in Bengal by the Moghul Emperor's Firman of 12 August 1765. Goalpara was then placed under the administrative control of the Commissioner of Rangpore and Coach Behar till the formation of the Chief Commissionership for Assam in 1874 when it became one of the districts of Assam.

Kamrup and Darrang: The Mahommedans acquired Kamrup and Darrang along with Goalpara from Parikshit, the successor of Raghu Rai. But after the death of the Moghul General Mir Jumla on 30 March 1663 on his way to Dacca from Gargaon, the capital of the Ahoms, the regions were occupied by the Ahoms, albeit under feudatory chiefs with doubtful allegiance. The Treaty of Yandaboo, 1826, made for the collapse of the Ahom Raj and thus Kamrup and Darrang passed into the hands of the British along with the rest of the valley of the Brahmaputra, Nowgong, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. But the Duars at the foothills of the Himalayas remained under the possession of the Bhutias till 1841.

Nowgong: Nowgong of the Nineteenth Century was an integral part of the Ahom territory and was incorporated into the British dominion in 1826 by the Treaty of Yandaboo. Initially it came to be administered as a portion of Kamrup but in 1832 it was declared as an independent revenue unit comprising the Mikir Hills, and a part of North Cachar and Naga Hills. The Naga Hills and a large part of the Mikir Hills were formed into a separate district in 1866.
In 1898 a considerable portion of the Mikir Hills was again transferred to Nowgong and this position was maintained till the end of the century.

**Sibagar:** Sibsagar was the headquarters of the Ahom Power though on the eve of the Nineteenth Century the Ahoms had been driven out of their headquarters for a short period by the followers of a Vaishnavite Sect, the Moamarias, who were later on expelled and suppressed with the help of the British. Although the Ahoms became victorious against the Moamarias, they were riven with internecide feuds with the result that they fell a prey to the Burmese who ravaged the country. The result was that Sibsagar was brought under the control of the British in 1826.

**Lakhimpur:** The Ahoms occupied Lakhimpur in 1523 subjugating the Chutiyas after centuries of conflict. Thus Lakhimpur became a part of the territories of the Ahoms. Towards the close of the Eighteenth Century, when the Ahom kingdom was tottering to its fall, the Moamarias rose in rebellion against the Ahom Power. For a time, the rebels met with a measure of success. The Khamptis in the areas around Sadiya also asserted their independence. But the Moamarias were suppressed. The district was incorporated into the British dominion in 1826.

After the establishment of British dominion, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur, excluding Matak and Khampti areas as well as the remote and jungly tracts were first directly administered by the British.

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In 1833 these two districts under the name of Upper Assam were handed over to the Ahom king Purandar Singha who was recognised as a protected prince on payment of a stipulated tribute of Rs. 50,000 a year. But within a short period of three years the British found reasons to find fault with Purandar Singha and hence Upper Assam was again placed under the direct control of the British administration on 16 September 1838. Two Principal Assistants, Lieutenant Brodie and Vetch with headquarters at Jorhat and Lakhimpur respectively were placed in charge of the administration. With the deposition of Purandar Singha the authority of the Ahoms came to an end after a practically uninterrupted sway of 610 years from 1228 to 1838.

Matak Principality: Though the Moamarias were suppressed in various fronts, the traces of their rising could not be fully erased. In the Matak territory, a tract of land lying between the Brahputra and Buridihing, and bounded on the east by an imaginary line drawn due south of Sadiya, the Ahoms were compelled to grant quasi-independent status to the leader of the Moamarias with the title of 'Barsenapatl'. He was also confirmed in his fief by the British on their occupation of the region with condition that 300 men should be placed at their disposal for the service of the State. Later on the condition was reduced to a monetary one, i.e. payment of cash revenue of Rs. 1800/- but only for the term of his own life. With the death of the 'Barsenapatl' in 1842 the whole of the Matak territory was annexed to the British dominion.


Khampti Territory (Sadiya): In 1794 the Khamptis from the other bank of the Brahmaputra established themselves in the area around Sadiya expelling the Ahom Governor of Sadiya and compelled the Ahom king to acquiesce in this usurpation. Naturally enough, the Khampti Chief was accepted by the British on their occupation of Assam. But in 1835 the Khampti Chief was removed due to his seizure, rather contumaciously, of a portion of the Matak territory in defiance of orders of the British Officer. Thus the fief at Sadiya was placed under the direct administration of the British. In 1839 the Khampti revolted and killed the Political Agent, Colonial White and burnt the station. The rising was ultimately suppressed eventually.

The formal proclamation annexing Matak principality and the Khampti territory (Sadiya) to the British dominion was issued in 1842. Both the tracts were added to the District of Lakhimpur; the headquarters was then transferred to Dibrugarh in the Matak land. Since then the Principal Assistant at Dibrugarh performed the functions of the Political Agent with the help of an Assistant Political Officer stationed at Sadiya.

The Hilly Tracts of Brahmaputra Valley: There was a good number of hilly tribes on both sides of the river Brahmaputra. On the northern side bordering the Himalayas from west to east there were Bhutias, Akas, Daflas, Abors, Mishmis and Singphoes, and on the south the Mikirs and Miris. The Ahom rulers did never exercise any control over the tribes of the north of the Brahmaputra.

11. HA., p. 310.
some of the Northern tribes even used to collect 'Posa', blackmail from the Ahom subjects living in areas adjacent or near to their hilly territories while the tribes in the south maintained at terms of independence or semi-independence. The British rulers also took much time in establishing political relation with them over whom they exercised gradually increasing control for the defence of their frontiers.

On the annexation of Assam the British found the Duars of North Kamrup along with adjoining areas in the possession of the Bhutias for which the Bhutias used to pay a tribute to the Ahom rulers. The same arrangement was also continued by the British till 1841 when the British brought under their occupation the said Duars. A compensatory annual allowance of Rs. 10,000/- was granted to the Bhutias. But the result was not satisfactory. In the year 1864 the Bhutia war broke out after which the payment was stopped and the seven Assam Duars along with the Eastern Duars of Goalpara and the Western Duars of Coach Behar were finally annexed to the British territory. Under the terms of the Treaty the British Government agreed to pay Rs. 50,000 annually to the Bhutias as compensation.

The British came to an agreement with the Akas in 1842 granting pensions to their two main clans the 'Kapachors' and the 'Hazarikhowas' and some lands in the plains for cultivation. Owing to a dispute over lands and some acts of aggression on their part, an expedition was despatched against them in 1883-84 after which the chiefs made their submission.

12. HBR., pp. 37-38
13. Ibid., p.38
The Daflas were also collecting Posa blackmail or forced pensionary allowance from the Assamese subjects living in the Duars areas. The Britishers also continued this arrangement till 1835 when it was kept in abeyance for a period till 1844 following the outrage committed to one Madhu Saikia by a gang of Daflas. An agreement was made with the Daflas in April 1844 according to which the Daflas agreed to receive money payment in lieu of Posa. But the Posa question was finally settled with the Daflas only in 1852 and since then the Daflas had seldom given trouble.

The Abors were the most ruthless savages on the whole of the northern frontiers. They practically remained hostile to the British for whole century under review. Since the British occupation of Assam several expeditions were led against the Abors but with little effect. Only in 1911 a tightened political control was established over the Abors. In 1911 the Abors murdered the Assistant Political Officer of Sadiya and his followers. A strong expedition was despatched against them and this brought them under submission.

The Mishmis are divided into several tribes such as the Chulikata, Babias, Taroan or Digaru Mishmis and Miju Mishmis. On the occupation of Assam, the Britishers exercised a loose political control over these tribes from Sadiya. The loose control was tightened in 1852 following the murder of a French Missionary, Mr. Krick by Kai-l-sha, the Chief of the Miju Mishmis.

The Singphoes made their appearance on the outskirts of Assam during the Moamaria Rebellions. During the Burmese occupation they

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15. Ibid., p.41
16. Ibid.
had made constant raids on the helpless Assamese. Such raids were checked by Captain Neufville in 1825. But their resentment could not be fully suppressed till 1843. There were several Singphoe-risings the last of which took place in 1843. Their risings were suppressed eventually and the Singphoes were brought under complete submission. Since then they had shown no disposition to give trouble.

The Miris were found both in the plains and the hills. They were in the plains peaceable British subjects. In the hills also they were quiet and inoffensive. The hill Miris who were in receipt of an annual allowance gave little or no trouble to the British.

The Mikirs an unwarlike tribe gave little trouble either to the former Ahom rulers or the British.

Surma Valley and Hill District Division: The area grouped as the Surma Valley and Hill District Division were practically outside the Ahom control. But contiguous areas like the north parts of Cachar, Jayantia and north-west parts of the Naga Hills had experienced some Ahom expeditions. The result of such expeditions was occasional loss of independence by the rulers of Cachar and Jayantia for a short duration. The areas under this Division were brought into the administrative setup of Assam by the British.

Sylhet: Sylhet was never under the sway of the Ahoms though in the Seventh Century it formed a part of the kingdom of the famous Kamrup King Bhaskaravarman as proved by the discovery of a Copper Plate Grant of the said king at a place called Midhanpur in Sylhet.

17. HAC., pp.286, 324.
18. Ibid., 321; HBR., p.41.
19. HAC., HBR., p.29.
district. It records the grant of land. It was dug up in 1813 at Nidhanpur in the Panchakhand Pargana of Sylhet. The total plates were seven in number of which one is missing. It is stated in the last verse of the inscription that the original plates were damaged by fire and so fresh ones were prepared. The grant is but a confirmation of that issued by Bhutivarmanana about a century earlier. The Britishers acquired the district when they were granted the Dewani in Bengal. The area was incorporated into the administration of Assam in 1874 at the time of creation of Chief Commissionership for the Province.

Cachar: At the beginning of the Nineteenth Century Cachar was under the Kacharis, also called Dimasa. At the time of coming of the Ahoms the Kacharis had been inhabiting the western parts of Sibsagar and a considerable portion of Nowgong. They were gradually driven away by the Ahoms and thus the Kacharis finally took their capital to Khaspur in the plains of Cachar. The Kacharis maintained a sort of pragmatism in their relationship with the Ahoms. Thus they behaved alternately as friends as well as foes. In the last quarter of the Eighteenth Century Cachar, an independent state, maintained her status rather precariously because Manipur Prince Marjit and through him the Burmese began to interfere in the affairs of the Kachari State. The interventions of the Manipurs and the Burmese compelled the Kachari King Govinda Chandra to seek help from the Britishers. It was with the latter's help that Govinda Chandra was successful in driving out the Burmese and the Manipuris from his

State. But British help cost his independence and thus he was reduced to the status of a protected prince of the Britishers. His territory was formally annexed to the British dominion in 1832 by a proclamation, issued on the 14 August 1832 as Govinda Chandra died in 1830 without leaving any heir to his throne. But North Cachar remained under Tularam, son of one Kacha Din who by the year 1809 seized that portion and compelled the Kachari King to acquiesce in his usurpation. Tularam's territory was subsequently resumed by the British Government in 1854 in consequence of the misconduct and incapacity of Tularam and his descendants.

Lushai Hill District (Mizoram): The History of the Lushai Hills is the history of a backwash of the great wave of immigration that was generally believed to have started from the North-west China and spread over Assam and Southwards towards the sea. During the early part of the Nineteenth Century the Kukis were found inhabiting the hilly tracts to the South of Manipur and Cachar and east of Sylhet District. The Kukis were gradually driven northwards into the plains of Cachar by the Lushais. They, finding no safety in the plains of Cachar, settled in the hills to the north of the Surma Valley. The Lushais made their first appearance on the Chatachera range in 1840. They began to raid constantly the British territory in Cachar and Tripura since 1849. With a view to prevent the recurrence of raids, the British Government launched a number of punitive expeditions in which they lost a good number of officers and porters. In 1889 the region was incorporated into the British dominion. However Lushais of Aizawl areas rose in revolt in 1892 but in vain.

22. TB(E), p.211; DG(A), Vol.I.,p.27; IGz, pp. 441-42; FRz, pp. 198-99; ADCz, pp. 82-87; AXAz, pp. 123-42; HAz, pp. 256-57, 289-90, 303-05; RRBH, pp. 1, 27; HERz, pp. 13-15.

23. IGz, pp.441-42; AXAz, pp. 194-98; HERz, pp.13, 15.

24. IGz, p.458.
With its subjugation the administration of the southern portion was entrusted to the Bengal Government while the northern portion was placed under the Chief Commissioner of Assam. Thereafter, on 1 April 1898 both tracts were united and placed under the Assam administration.

Naga Hills (Nagaland): The Ahoms could not subjugate the hill tribes collectively known as the Nagas. The Nagas were in the habit of occasionally raiding the plains under the Ahom dominion. At times some strong Ahom princes were successful in keeping the Nagas in check and even utilizing them in their needs. The habit of raiding the plains areas brought the Nagas into contact with the Britishers. Between 1835 and 1851 the British despatched ten punitive expeditions to the Naga Hills. Then the British followed a policy of non-interference to pacify the Nagas which did not produce the desired result. The raids of the Nagas were on the increase. Thus in 1866 the Naga Territories were incorporated into the British dominion with the headquarters at Samaguting. The incorporation of the areas also produced little result. Oppositions by the Nagas continued as before till 1897. Since 1897 the history of the Nagaland had been a history of gradual extension and consolidation of the British rule. In 1898 the Valley of the Dhansiri and the Mikir Hills were transferred to Sibsagar and Nowgong districts respectively from the administrative control of the Naga Hills District.

Khasi and Jayantia Hills District: The hilly tracts on the west of the Jayantia hills and on the east of the Garo hills were occupied by the Khasi. At the beginning of the Nineteenth Century the Khasis belonged to twenty-five small principalities over whom the Ahoms had no control. Moreover the Khasis were successful in establishing themselves gradually in the plains of the South Kamrup and in compelling the Ahom Viceroy at Gauhati to remain satisfied with only a formal acknowledgement of the Ahom supremacy. With the occupation of the Brahmaputra Valley the work of construction of a road from Rani, a place under Kamrup Sub-Division, to Sylhet was undertaken by the British through the areas of the Khasis for which an agreement was made in 1827 with the Khasis. But soon thereafter the Khasis rose in arms over a remark made by a Bengali employee that on the completion of the road, the Khasi states would be subjugated and the Khasi people would be taxed. On 4 April 1829 the revolting Khasis killed Lieutenants Badingfield and Burlton along with a number of their followers. A protected armed conflict ensued and it continued till 1833 when last Khasi Chief, U. Tirutt Singh surrendered. The British continued what they called their policy of general pacification. A large measure of semi-independence was allowed to the Khasi Chiefs as they had to submit to the general control of the Political Agent.

Jayantia Hills were never conquered by the Mahommedans. Of course on various occasions the Ahoms compelled the Jayantias to show allegiance to their power. The Jayantias retained independent status till 1833 when their territory was annexed by the British to their 

27. FR1, pp.230-43; HA2, p.302; DG(AK)2, pp.41-44; IG1, pp. 483-84; HBR1, pp. 11, 24.
dominion. The Jayantias kidnapped three British subjects and sacrificed them to the Goddess Kali. The failure on the part of the Chief of Jayantia to provide a satisfactory explanation regarding the murder of these three British subjects was taken as the pretext for such annexation.

Garo Hills: At the time of acquiring the Dewani of Bengal the Britishers acquired Garo Hills, excluding the Eastern Duars, along with Goalpara and administered it from the Rangpore headquarters. During the last quarter of the Eighteenth century the Garos, inhabiting the outranges, the areas flanking the southern plains, had been brought to some extent under the authority of the Zamindars of the large estates lying in the foothills. The Garos inhabiting the mountainious interior and the inaccessible thickets remained independent of any kind of external control. The independent Garos from interior areas used to raid constantly the plains and the areas under the British control. The Garos who were under the control of the Zamindars were also very irregular in the payment of their tributes. This offered the pretext to the British to take over the entire hills and in 1869 they were grouped into a district under the name of the Garo Hills with its headquarters at Tura. The entire Garo area was brought under total control in 1873.

Manipur: During the Ahom period the Manipur princes maintained friendly contact with the Ahoms and they even entered into matrimonial alliances. No wonder then that mutual assistance was offered and received as occasions so demanded. At the beginning of the

Nineteenth Century Manipur was an independent territory. But it had to withstand constant interference in its affairs by the Burmese. Repeated Burmese invasions compelled Prince Gambheer Singha of Manipur to seek help from the British and it was with such aids that he succeeded in driving out the Burmese from his State. On the conclusion of the peace by the Treaty of Yandaboo, which was concluded on 24 February 1826, Manipur was declared to be as independent State. But in 1835 a Political Agent was appointed to act as the medium of communication between Manipur and the British Government and as such the British kept the reins of power in their hands. Freedom-loving Manipuris resented this foreign interference and the logical result was number of armed uprisings in a subsequent period.

The above discussion shows that on the eve of the Nineteenth Century Assam signified the valley of the Brahmaputra, comprising the following districts—Kamrup, Darrang, Nowgong, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur and a portion of the Sadiya Frontier tract. Other districts viz., Goalpara, Garo Hills, Khasi and Jayantia Hills, Sylhet, Cachar, Lushai Hills and Naga Hills and to some extent Manipur, were added to Assam by the British in various stages of their occupation. Even when the areas last named were outside the geographical frontiers of Assam, their life and culture were influenced to some degree by the trends of evolution, political or otherwise of the people inhabiting the Brahmaputra Valley. Events in the Brahmaputra Valley or 'Assam proper' could not, however, exert any direct influence over the life of the people of the Lushai Hills. Be that as it might be, events in the Brahmaputra Valley naturally influenced the trends of developments in the districts that came to be added to 'Assam Proper' during the

period of our survey. The entire range of such developments will be covered in a series of chapters that follow within the framework of our study. Our discussion begins appropriately with a study of the politics of the Ahom Raj.

Political conditions in Assam on the eve of the Nineteenth Century:

The background to the political conditions in Assam on the eve of the Nineteenth Century was laid by the situation obtaining with the expiry of the Ahom king Rudra Singha (A.D. 1696-1741). Having entered Assam in 1228 A.D. the Ahoms gradually brought the entire Brahmaputra Valley under their control and ruled it for about six hundred years. Till the expiry of Rudra Singha, known also by his Ahom name of Sukhrangpha, the Ahom power was gradually in the ascendant. Rudra Singha, a man of great ability and ambition, succeeded in subjugating the neighbouring territories and planned to invade Bengal, a territory under the Moghuls. With this aim in view he tried to form a confederacy of the Hindu kings of Eastern India—the king of Tripura in East Bengal, of Vishnupur in West Bengal, and of Marong in South Mithil, besides some of the great feudal Lords of Bengal and Bihar like the House of Burdwan and Natur for challenging the Moghul Powers. He went down to Gauhati and camped near the ramparts of Raja Parikshitnarayana, a Koch king, who ruled from A.D. 1603-1613. Therein king Rudra Singha organised a grand army. The Kachari and the Jayantia kings joined his army with fourteen thousand and ten thousand soldiers respectively. Six hundred Daflas from the hills north of Darrang

31. HMA., p.275; RRBH., p.31; ETA., p.89.
32. ETA., p.6.
33. TE(A), p. 37; HMA., p.275.
district also joined his army. But Rudra Singha died in the midst of these preparations. The result was that all preparations for invading Bengal proved abortive. He died just a prahara before sunset on Sunday, the second day of the black moon on the thirteenth of Bhadra, 1636 (Mac) in the month of August 1714) after a reign of eighteen years six months.

After the exit of king Rudra Singha the history of the Ahoms proved to be one of internal strife and dissensions, downfall and disintegration. But the seeds of their downfall were sown during the reign of king Rudra Singha. As observed by a scholar the act of inviting Krishnanarayana Bhattacharjya, a Sakta Mahanta of Nadia, during the reign of Rudra Singha sowed the seeds of downfall of the Ahoms. King Rudra Singha wanted to have his religious Guru from outside his territories so that the latter might not be a subject of Rudra Singha. This would enable Rudra Singha to bow down to a Guru who was not his own subject. This wish prompted the searching of a Guru outside the Ahom territory and the selection fell on Krishnanarayana Bhattacharjya of Nadia district of Bengal. Krishnanarayana was an exponent of the Sakta cult. With his arrival Saktism began to flourish in Assam under royal patronage. Despite this, Saktism was challenged by the Vaishnavite Moamarias. The obvious result of that was the Moamaria Uprising which ultimately brought about the downfall of the Ahoms by making them too weak to control the internal administration.

34. HA., p.181.
35. TB(DR.), p.40.
36. RRBH., p.31; HA., p.275; HTA., p. 6
and resist the outside attacks. Thus the invitation to Krishnara-
yana was something like planting a time-bomb beneath the Ahom
throne. No wonder then that after the reign of Rudra Singha, the
Ahom kingdom practically became a battleground for two conflicting
religious forces, Saktism and Vaishnavism. This situation gave rise
to internecine strife and turmoil with their attendant consequences
of widespread suffering for the people at large. Taking advantage of
the distracted conditions of the kingdom, the Burmese invaded it in
1817 and they gained complete control over it by 1822. However the
British expelled the Burmese in 1824 and supplanted the latter as
masters of the country.

The ill-treatment meted out to the Vaishnavite Mahantas
gave birth to the Moamaria Uprisings. The uprising decisively weak-
ened the Ahom royal power. The entire administrative machinery had
to be deployed to suppress the revolt and this brought in its trail
immense hardship and suffering to the people. The distracted condi-
tions of the land invited the intruders to plunder the country on a
large scale. It was leamane violence against the people and having
been forced to the wall to defend themselves from administrative
violence, they replied by revolts and insurrections. The Dafias
revolted several times. There were also insurrections among the
people of Lakhimpur. The people of Bacha areas became disloyal on
several occasions. The people of Nowgong also protested against the
Ahom king Gaurinath Singha’s sojourn in their locality. Gaurinath
Singha fled to Gauhati when the Moamarias captured Rampur, the Ahom

38. Ibid.
Capital. Subsequently Gaurinath Singha advanced up to Nowgong and stayed there for some time. But King's followers misbehaved with the local people and hence their protest. The officers' misbehaviour took the forms of molestation of young girls and forcible taking of anything whatever they needed from the people. Taking advantage of the situation, many local chiefs assumed independent role. Pillage and plunder became regular occurrences and these were mainly committed by some Bairagis with the help of the Bengal Burkendians. Another consequential result of the Moamaria Uprising was the appearance of rivalry among the Ahom nobles.

Moamaria Uprising: King Rudra Singha's invitation to Krishnanarayana Bhattacharjya paved the way for the Moamaria uprising. The King's intention was to provide himself with a religious Guru from outside. But he died shortly after the arrival of Krishnanarayana and, as such, Rudra Singha could not take initiation from Krishnanarayana. After the death of Rudra Singha, his son Siva Singha (A.D. 1714 - 1744) became the king. Siva Singha became the first royal disciple of Krishnanarayana. Brahmin priests and astrologers had great influence over Siva Singha. Some brahmin priests and astrologers forecast that Siva Singha's rule would come to an end shortly. Their forecasts frightened Siva Singha greatly. He asked them to find out a means to avert the threatened calamity. The Brahmins advised him to handover the administration to his queen Phuleswari during the period of his evil days by way of averting the impending calamity. Accordingly Phuleswari became Queen. Phuleswari assumed the name of Pramatheswari and became the Bar Rajā. As far Siva Singha, he now gave more importance to religious rites and ceremonies. He totally
ignored the mundane affairs. Phuleswari also fell under the influence of the Brahmins and at their instance and prodings she ill-treated the Moamaria and other Vaishnavite Mahantas. This led to disastrous consequences.

The Ahoms succeeded in establishing their sway over Assam due largely to their liberal policy and a brilliant capacity to adjust themselves to circumstances. In the field of religion, they began with a policy which bore no trace of bigotry. At the time of their entry into Assam they were the adherents of the faith propagated by the Deodhai priests. They did never endeavour to force their religion on their conquered subjects. On the other hand, they warmly welcomed all men into their social life when such absorption was deemed necessary to increase their political strength. When the Ahoms entered Assam, they were only a few thousand in number. But they increased their strength gradually by the introduction of members of the subject-races into their fold. The new entrants gained all the facilities and privileges enjoyed by the Ahoms. But the "steel-frame of the (Ahom) administration was however confined to the descendants of the companions of Sukapha." Sukapha (A.D. 1228-1268) was the leader of the first batch of Ahoms that entered Assam with the aim of establishing their sway. They did not have caste prejudices. As the majority of their newly conquered subjects were Hindus, the Ahom rulers adopted Hindu manners and customs gradually. This, they thought, would ease the machinery of administration and indeed this had happened. There was no serious opposition among the conquered sub-

39. AAR, p. 18; HTA, p. 90.
40. HTA, p. 93.
jects to the acceptance of Ahom administration. The adoption of Hindu customs and manners by the Ahoms did not affect their respect towards their own Shan customs. A large number of Ahoms still adhered to their original Shan faith. The Ahom priests also commanded high reverence till the end of Ahom rule. The Ahom rulers were liberal enough to keep their eyes and ears open to new influences. They accepted things that were new ungrudgingly if these proved to be of practical value. In this matter their approach was indeed very pragmatic.

During the reign of king Sudāngphā Bāmuni Konwar (A.D. 1397 - 1407), who had been brought up in a Brahmin family, the influence of Hinduism, more particularly Brahmanism, penetrated the Ahom system. Such influence was more marked during the reign of Pratap Singha (A.D. 1603-1641) who was reportedly freed from a 'demon' by a Brahmin. The result was that the ruler remained personally grateful to the Brahmin priest. The Ahom name of Pratap Singha was Susemphā. He was also known as Burāh Rājā. Sutamlā Jayadhawj Singha (A.D.1642-1663) was the first Ahom ruler who accepted Hinduism. Jayadhawj Singha and his successors up to Sulikphā Lārā Rājā (A.D. 1679-1681) had been initiated in Vaishnavism, which was predominant faith in Assām at that time. But Gadādhar Singha (A.D. 1681-1696), who de-throned Lārā Rājā displayed leniency towards Saktism. Gadādhar Singha (known by his Ahom name as Suputphā), considered Vaishnavism as unsuitable to the ruling class which had to maintain its power by the force of arms and, as such, he had reasons to look down upon the wealth, grandeur and influence of the Vaishnava pontiffs. He considered Vaishnava pontiffs as a source of political danger.

41. HTA, p. 93.
capable of distorting the loyalty of subjects reducing thereby the
monarchs to comparative insignificance. Gadadhār Singha proved to
be right in his assessment as was evidenced by events in the subse-
quent reigns. The loyalty of the subjects practically shifted to the
Vaishnava leaders, although one of the causes of this change could be
attributed to the intolerance on the part of the rulers. King Rudra
Singha, son and successor of Gadadhār Singha, became an open supporter
of Saktism towards the end of his rule and he invited Krishnarāya
Bhattacharjya from Nadia as stated earlier.

At the same time, a majority of the Ahom rulers used to show
due respect and courtesy to the Vaishnava monks. They made grants and
endowments for the maintenance of Vaishnava Satras. They also patronised
Ahom priests and provided facilities to the Muslim priests to pray for their welfare at Pomecca, a principal Muslim shrine at
Hajo. The Ahom rulers tried to maintain a triarchy in religious matters
by adopting Sakta faith, supporting Vaishnava monks and Satras and by
maintaining orthodox Ahom rituals and ceremonies. But this laudable
policy of religious toleration produced a negative effect in rousing
the spirit of rivalry among the three groups.

The Ahom rulers generally adopted a definite policy of non-inter-
ference in the matter of cultivation of religious faiths. They displayed a catholicity of outlook in their social and religious policy and
were tolerant of the views of others. Whenever there was deviation from this policy of non-interference and tolerance, there arose social
disharmony as evidenced first during the time of king Udāyāditya
(A.D. 1669-1673), also known by his Ahom name Sunyutphā. King

42. HAg, pp.168-69; AAAS, p.66; AR(G), pp.30; TR(E), pp.28-30;
AAR, p.18.
43. AAR, p.19.
Udayaditya Singha tried to force the people to become the disciples of an up-country Sannyāsi, Paramānanda Bairāgi, who was from Gakulpur of Brahmavan. The people were not in favour of this and in the revolt that followed the king and the Sannyāsi lost their lives. Similarly queen Phuleswari's humiliating treatment to some Vaishnava monks resulted in disastrous consequences for the Ahom Power. Queen Phuleswari became increasingly intolerant of Vaishnavism. She did not hesitate to humiliate some Vaishnava monks by compelling them to bow down before the image of the Durgā. She particularly disliked Suira Mahāntas of the Vaishnava sect. On their refusal to worship the Durgā, Pramatheswari ordered several Sannyāsins including the Meāmāri Mahānta to come to a Sakta shrine and had caused their foreheads to be marked with the blood of the sacrificed animals. This insult to their religious leaders was neither forgotten nor forgiven by the Moamarias. There was simmering discontent against the Ahom rule and within fifty years the Moamarias openly revolted. The rebellion gradually gained strength and force, and received even wider popular support. It has been rightly observed that "as it widened and swept, the creaky joints of the state machinery exhibited symptom of rapid decay and disintegration."

The Moamarias turned out to be the first to inflict a decisive blow on the Ahom Government. The Moamarias were the followers of the Māyāmāri Satra. Sri Aniruddha-deva established it at the instance of Sri Gopaladeva around 1601 A.D. The Māyāmāri Satra was one of

44. AAB,,P.19; TB(E),p.4. 
45. HAA,,p.183-84; AAA,,p.65; AFB,,p.51; TB(E),p.41; AAR,,p.203; AB(G),p.203. 
46. RREH,,p.31.
the twelve Satras belonging to the episcopal leadership of Sri Gopaladeva. Six of the Satras were presided over by the Brahmans while the rest accepted the Sudra Mahantas or pontiffs. These twelve Satras and their branches and offshoots were known as Kala-Samhati following the name of Gopaladeva's own monastery at Kaliga.

At the same time, Purusattama Thakur, a grandson of Sri Sankaradeva, established twelve Satras. Twelve other Satras were also founded by Chaturbhuj Thakur, another grandson of Sri Sankaradeva. These twenty-four Satras came to be known as Purusha-Samhati, as these were founded by preachers belonging to Sri Sankaradeva's line or Purusa.

The Kala-Samhati Satras claimed superiority over the Purusha-Samhati as they were associated with Sri Gopaladeva who was the head of the Vaishnava Satras in Assam after the expiry of Sri Madhavadeva, the successor of Sri Sankaradeva in religious matters. But the other Satras specially of the Purusha-Samhati category did not accept their claims to superiority made by Kala-Samhati. Further Kala-Samhati Satras were plagued by separatist tendencies in respect of religious practices although they were also adherents of the teachings of Sri Sankaradeva and Sri Madhavadeva. Sri Gopaladeva's influence had much to do with the rise of separatist tendencies. But all Satras recited the hymns composed by Sri Sankaradeva and Sri Madhavadeva. But there were accusations as well from their own religious Gurus with the result that there were arose opposition from the side of Purusha Samhati and common rivalry with the Satras of the Brahmanical order. The difference became more noticeable in the case of the Mayamata Satra.
The Mayimara Satra was a powerful and prosperous Satra. Other Satras became jealous of it and the Ahom Government also became suspicious of its activities. In such a situation, the Mayimara Mahantas had to find for themselves. The Moamarias had suffered for centuries at the hands of the Saktas and the ruling power. Their Gurus were subjected to humiliation by the powers that be the wounded pride of the Moamarias made them desperate and there came the rebellion.

A brief discussion on the foundation of Vaishnava movement in Assam seem pertinent by way of understanding the reasons leading to the Moamara uprising. Vaishnavism was a challenge to Tantricism. The Kamakhya temple at Gauhati, the Kochakhati temple at Sadiya, the Mahadeva temple at Dergoan and the existence of several Saka temples in the North Lakhimpur area go to show that Assam was at one time the home of Tantricism. Till the revival of the Vaishnavism with crusading zeal by Sri Sankaradeva, Tantricism was practised in Assam in its debased forms with such practices like sacrifice of ducks, pigeons, goats, buffaloes and even men to the goddess of Sakti or Durga. Magic rites, wine-drinking and divination by ripping open the entrails of pregnant women were other revolting features of it. In Assam Tantricism was known as Buddhachara. Against this Buddhachara, Sri Sankaradeva (A.D.1449-1568), the famous Vaishnava reformer of Assam waged a life-long crusade. He propagated the worship of only Vishnu and discarded the worship of

47. AAR., p.190.
48. Ibid.
49. AAR., p.191; MEM., p.30.
images and forbade the religious ceremonies connected with sacrifice of men or animals. His teachings were based on the Bhāgavata Purāṇa and accordingly his creed is known as Bhāgavata Dharma. He himself established several Satras or monasteries and thereby propagated his faith. But he attracted intense opposition from the Brahmins because of the fact that his practices dispensed with the rites and ceremonies and the worship of images. Brahmanical opposition was also roused by the Vaishnavite practice of the translation of sacred scriptures into the vernacular to be read by the common people. It may be noted that study of the scriptures was hitherto the monopoly of the Brahmins. The Brahmins became so hostile that they insulted the followers of Sri Sankaradeva on every conceivable occasion. They even reportedly poisoned the ears of the Ahom king Suhungmung Diarninga Raja (A.D. 1497-1539 against Sri Sankaradeva, so much so that eventually he was compelled to leave the Ahom kingdom. Thereafter he lived at Coach Behar under the patronage of the Koch king Nararamayana (A.D. 1540-1589).

After the death of Sri Sankaradeva in A.D. 1668 Sri Madhavadeva (A.D. 1489-1695) became the leader of the Vaishnava Mission in Assam. Hitherto the teachings of Sri Sankaradeva had been confined to Lower Assam. Sri Madhavadeva, on assuming the leadership of the Vaishnava missions, deputed some of his followers including Sri Gopaladeva of Bhabanipur to Upper Assam which was under the Ahoms. Sri Gopaladeva in addition to the Brahmins, Kayasthas and Kalitas spread the Bhāgavata Dharma of Sri Sankaradeva among the Ahoms, Mores,

50. AAR, p.193; DBY, p.117.
51. AAR, p.193; MSM, p.83.
Kacharis and Chutiyas. Under his auspices twelve Satras were established. Six of these Satras were presided over by the Brahmins Mahantas and the rest by the Sudra Mahantas. On the death of Sri Madhavadeva, difference of opinion arose between the followers of the Brahmanical and the Sudra orders.

Among six Satras of Sudra order the Dihing Satra (which was first known as Babbari Satra and later as Silikhatali Satra after its successive headquarters,) and the Mayamara Satra gained prominence.

Sri Aniruddhadeva, son of Gandagiri Bhuyan and Ajalidevi, the daughter of Sri Sankaradeva's paternal uncle, was the founder of the Mayamara Satra. Once Sukhampha Khora Raja (A.D. 1582-1603) invited Sri Aniruddhadeva to his court. In the court Sri Aniruddhadeva had exhibited some magical feats. A covered pitcher, filled with some other articles, was produced before Sri Aniruddhadeva who was asked to say what the pitcher contained without uncovering it. Sri Aniruddhadeva's answer was that there was a cobra in the pitcher. On removal of the cover actually a cobra was found inside the pitcher. At the king's instance Sri Aniruddhadeva killed the serpent which was a creation of Maya or magic. From that day Sri Aniruddhadeva's Satra came to be known as Mayamara Satra as its founder killed the cobra, a creation of Maya. There is another version in respect of the name of Mayamara; it was that the disciples of the said Satra were taught to give up the attraction (Maya) towards worldly things. The name subsequently acquired its corrupted form of Moamara or Moamaria after the name of a lake full of Moa fish, on the bank of which the second headquarters of the Mayamara Satra was established.

The bitterness between the disciples of the Nārvāmarā Satra and the monarch of the land first started when the Ahom king Pratap Singha (A.D. 1603-1641) came to know that the disciples of the said Satra were unwilling to bow down their heads even before the monarch. A disciple of Nārvāmarā Satra seeing the spacious hall of the king remarked that the big hall of the king would make a commodious place of religious prayer and recital. This irritated king Pratap Singha and he executed that disciple on the charge of making offensive remarks. Subsequently, to that execution, the said king had occasion to know that even the Barāṭra Gohain and Neog Phukan, who were the disciples of Nārvāmarā Satra, followed the principle of not bowing down before anybody, not even before the king, although they dutifully bowed to their religious Guru. The king burst into anger and summoned Barāṭra Gohain, Neog Phukan and two other disciples of Nārvāmarā Satra. On their refusal to bow down before the king, the king asked them to gallop their horses under a sword fixed horizontally between two posts at the height of a mounted man's neck just to test them. Neog Phukan was the first who galloped his horse under the sword. As he did not lower his head, the sword severed it. Seeing this the king refrained from subjecting the other three to such tests. The incident proved that the Moamarias were of one mind in respect of their refusal to prostrate before anyone else except their Guru. The next incident of a like nature took place during the reign of Surampha Jayāditya Singha who was also known as Bhagā Raja (A.D. 1641-1644). He was so called that because he was deposed from the throne by the nobles. They placed his brother Sty Suṭyinphā, also known as

54. AAR 1,p.200.
Maria Raj (A.D. 1644-1648). On the occasion of the annual Shraddha ceremony of his father king Jayaditya invited the Mahantas including Mayamara Mahanta Nityananda Thakur. Nityananda Thakur attended the Shraddha ceremony with a vast retinue. In that ceremony Nityananda Thakur earned the king's displeasures and even anger for making a remark that in respect of the vastness of his retinue, the Mayamara Mahanta was equal to the Ahom king. His remark was undoubtedly irritating to the Ahom king. On his return journey at night from Shraddha ceremony to his camp, the Mayamara Mahanta Nityananda Thakur used 120 torch-bearers. The use of 120 torch-bearers was in excess of the customary number accompanying the Ahom king. Both his acts, viz., his remarks at the Shraddha ceremony and the pompous display of torch-bearers, were more than sufficient to infuriate the king. King Jayaditya Singha thus caused the death of the said Mayamara Mahanta. The slaughter of their religious heads or disciples at once made the Moamarias take a vow to avenge the murders. But they could not take any immediate step in this respect in the absence of a leader for a period of four years after the execution of Nityananda Mahanta. Apprehending the king's wrath, Jairam, the brother of Nityananda, went underground and led a self-exiled life for about four years. Jairam became the Mahanta of Mayamara Satra four years after the above incident through the intercession of the mother of the king Jayadhwaj Singha (A.D. 1644 - 1663).

The penetration of Sakta influence in the Ahom court during the reign of king Gadadhhar Singha, confiscation of property of the

55. AB(G), p.81.
56. AAR, p.201; ADMS, p.43.
Moamaria Mahantas by the said king, arrival of Krishnanarayana Bhattacharjya during the reign of Rudra Singha, initiation of King Siva Singha to Saktism and the insults hurled at the Moamaria and their Mahantas by the royalists and Saktas, prepared the minds of the Moamaria for an armed uprising against the Ahom Government.

Immediate Cause of Moamaria Uprisings: The king Siva Singha (A.D. 1714-1744) was succeeded by his brother Pramatta Singha (A.D. 1744-1751). By this time Kirtichandra Barbarua turned out to be the most powerful and high-handed official in the Ahom court. Being the disciple of the Dihing Satra, Kirtichandra always favoured his own Satra and seized every opportunity to ridicule the Moamarias. He ill-treated and deprecated the Moamaria in season and out of season. Kirtichandra's atrocities to be detailed out later were largely responsible for the uprising of the Moamaria.

King Pramatta Singha was succeeded by his brother Rajeswar Singha (A.D. 1751-1769). Rajeswar Singha was the fourth son of the late king Rudra Singha. At the time of his death king Rudra Singha had intended that all his sons would become king one after another. King Rudra Singha had four sons, viz., Siva Singha, Pramatta Singha, Mohamala Gohain and Rajeswar Singha. The succession of Rajeswar Singha was an act of superseding the claim of Mohamala Gohain who was the third son of Rudra Singha. Supersession of Mohamala's claim gave rise to a rift in the royal family. The advantages offered by such rift were fully utilised by the Moamaria in a later period, i.e., during their uprising. Mohamala Gohain along with other members of his family was deported to Namrup to live in exile.

57. AIR, p.204.
there. Due to Kirtichandra Barbarua's craftiness Mohamala lost his claim of succession and as such Mohamala Cobain did never forgive Kirtichandra Barbarua.

In many respects Kirtichandra was highly efficient. But he was not at all popular with the Ahom nobles because he was not a scion of any leading Ahom family. Further his manipulation in the matter of succession as well as in administration earned for him enough unpopularity and enmity. Kirtichandra Barbarua caused to burn all those historical literature which, he suspected, contained records of his plebeian origin. This act of book-burning caused widespread discontent in view of the Ahoms' national pride with their historical literature, the Buranāis. Kirtichandra's design was to upgrade his social status by eliminating the records of his low origin. But this was viewed very seriously because it tended to break the existing social orders. The act of burning records made Kirtichandra Barbarua so unpopular that an attempt was made on his life at the instance of some of the nobles and one of the late king's sen. Kirtichandra narrowly escaped but with severe injury on his neck.

As noted earlier Kirtichandra used to inflict humiliation on Mahantas of the Mayāmarā Satra whenever any opportunity came his way. On the occasion of the King's journey from Dergaon to Rangpur Kirtichandra inflicted the greatest insult on the Mayāmarā Mahanta. Here are the facts. Kirtichandra followed the king at some distance. Mayāmarā Mahanta's eldest son Gagini Dekā-Mahanta, also known as Santabhūja, greeted the king with 200 trays of presents as he reached

58. AAR., p.204.
59. TB(E)., p.51.
the gate of the Satra. The usual procedure was that whenever one proposed to greet the king with presents, previous sanction from the Barbarua had to be obtained. But Gāgini Deka-Mahanta (also known as Rāvan Deka) could not follow the practice due to lack of time as the king would pass the gate of the monastery. Still the Deka Mahanta obtained permission of the Baruas and Phukans who were king's bodyguards. On the arrival of the Barbarua he was also greeted with 80 trays of presents. Hearing that the king had been greeted without his previous permission, Kirtichandra became so wild that he caused four blows to be delivered on Deka-Mahanta. Thus Gāgini Deka-Mahanta was subjected to a humiliating treatment. This incident provides a classic instance of Kirtichandra's style of functioning vis-a-vis the Mośmāri Mahantas. It was a humiliation intolerable for the Deka-Mahanta to endure. He at once summoned his followers in the Satra and expressed his determination to avenge the insult by exterminating Kirtichandra and the Ahom regime to the point of occupying the throne himself. To have an idea of the numerical strength of his disciples the Deka-Mahanta asked each disciple to throw a clod of earth on a site at Malawather to raise the plinth for erecting a prayer hall. After five days of ceaseless work the plinth was completed. The Deka-Mahanta was supremely satisfied with the numerical strength of his disciples. He now tried to prepare his plans for avenging the insult he suffered at the hands of Kirtichandra. But the Chief Mahanta Astabhuja, father of Gagini Deka Mahanta, warned his son against hasty precipitation and counselled patience till better days came for timely action.

60. TANC., p112.
61. AER., p.205.
62. BYR., pp.211-212.
63. AER., p.205.
King Rajeswar Singha was succeeded by his brother Kalsilia Gohain (A.D. 1769-1780). He assumed the Hindu name Lakshmi Singha while ascending the throne. The succession of Lakshmi Singha was another act of Kirtichandra Barbarua's machination and this had further widened the rift in the royal family. King Rajeswar Singha died in 1769 A.D. leaving three sons, viz., Charusingha, Maju Gohain and Patkowrn. Charusingha had been made juvaka, heir-apparent to the throne, during the life time of Rajeswar Singha and, as such, he had his legitimate claim to the throne. But due to the machinations of Kirtichandra Barbarua he was deprived of his claim, and Lakshmi Singha, the youngest son of king Rudra Singha, was made the king. He was dark in complexion and did not possess the dignity of a sovereign, for which Parvatia Gossain had refused to initiate him into the Sakta fold. The stigma of illegitimacy was also fastened on Kalsilia Gohain. Kirtichandra by his machinations set aside the claim of Charusingha and enthroned Kalsilia Gohain who assumed the name Lakshmi Singha. The succession of Lakshmi Singha was an accretion of strength of Kirtichandra. This was seriously viewed in the camp of the Moamarias. They apprehended further troubles, may, complete destruction due to the increased power and influence of Kirtichandra.

As noted earlier an attempt had been made on the life of Kirtichandra Barbarua during the life time of King Rajeswar Singha. Almost all the conspirators were duly punished except the king's sons who were allegedly involved in the said conspiracy. During the inquiry nothing came out against the king's sons. After the demise

64. AMR., p. 206.
65. TB(E), pp. 52-53.
of king Rajeswar Singha, Kirtichandra mutilated his sons and caused their banishment to the wilds of Namrup for alleged complicity in the attempt to murder Kirtichandra Barbarua during their father's life time. Even Rajeswar Singha's wives, numbering twenty-four, also could not escape torture at the hands of Kirtichandra. After snatching away all their ornaments they were exiled to Barkala, another penal ele colony. They were sent to Barkala on a boat with inadequate provisions and two maids only to attend to them. The boat was pilotted by a disciple of the Mayamara Satra. In their journey to Barkala the boat was stopped near the Mayamara Satra. The Mahanta of the Mayamara Satra, seeing the miserable conditions of the ex-queens, supplied sufficient food provisions to them and appointed his own men to escort the royal ladies to Barkala. But Kirtichandra Barbarua on hearing about the details of the hospitality accorded to the widows of king Rajeswar Singha became extremely infuriated. He twisted the facts and painted the hospitality accorded to the widows in an unfavourable light and blamed on these of the Mayamara Mahanta and his son.

The next insult administered to the Astabhuja Mahanta of Mayamara Satra by Kirtichandra Barbarua lay in the return of the monthly Nirmali sent by the Mayamara Mahanta to the king. Sending of monthly Nirmali was a usual practice. The Mahantas of Satras had to send in every month presents of flowers with good-wishes to the king. But the bearers of the Nirmali from Mayamara Mahanta were punished by Kirtichandra on the charge that they brought presents from an unholy Mahanta. This insult broke the tolerance of the Mahanta, who hitherto kept his followers in check from taking any action for 66. AAR., p. 206.
avenging the insult. He at once asked his son Dekha-Mahanta to summon all their disciples to cease with whatever weapons they had for a revolt to be launched. The summoning of the disciples took place in the month of July 1769. During the month of August and September preparations continued for an open rebellion. In the month of October there occurred another incident which in which the Mahanta received an additional dose of insult at the hands of the Barbarua. King Laksmiti Singha, accompanied by Kirtichandra Barbarua, halted for a few minutes at the landing ghat (approach) of the Mayamara Satra in the course of a boat journey. The Mahanta of the Mayamara Satra saluted the king and blessed him. But the Mahanta ignored the Barbarua. This infuriated the Barbarua and he severely censured the Mahanta publicly on the charge of ignoring him.

The final provocation for the revolt came from the punishment inflicted on Ragha Neog, a leading disciple of the Mayamara Satra, by Kirtichandra Barbarua. It was customary for the Marans to pay revenue to the royal household in kind. As usual in the month of September 1769, Ragha Neog and Nahar Khora, another leading disciple of the Mayamara Satra, supplied elephants to Kirtichandra Barbarua. Though they supplied the best available elephants to the Barbarua, yet the latter alleged that the supplies were defective, and flogged Ragha Neog with 20 lashes. When Ragha Neog under heavy bandage was produced before the Mahanta and the Dekha Mahanta, the latter at once sent massages to all their disciples to come forward along with their followers for revolt. But the Chief Mahanta issued instructions that there should

67. AAR., p. 206.
68. Ibid.
be asking from the Tungkhungia Family only and that the Gohainship should be confined to the respective seven houses of the Ahoms who were adherents of the Mayamara Satras. His repeated instructions to his son, the Deka-Mahanta were that he (the Deka-Mahanta) should never try to become the sovereign of the country; at best he might become a Phukan, Barua or a Saikia.

In the meantime the Moamarias induced three exiled princes, Mohammala Gohain, Charusinha and Ratneswar to co-operate with them on the promise that one of them would be made the king in time. This silenced the opposition of those loyal subjects who regarded the banishment of these princes as an act of injustice and high-handedness committed by the hated Kirtichandra Barbarua. Gaining their support the Moamarias raised the standard of revolt in the month of November 1769 after having collected an army of 7,000 including

* The Tungkhungia dynasty wielded the Ahom sceptre for 145 years from 1681 to 1826. The first king of this family was one Gobar Gohain, the son of Sarang Gohain. Gobar Gohain became king in January 1675 but very soon he was deposed and then there were some kings from other royal families. The next Tungkhungia king was Gadadhar Singha, who was the son of Gobar Gohain. Gadadhar Singha became the king in 1681 putting an end to the rule of Sulikpha Lora Raja and the de facto ruling of Laluksha Barphukan, the father-in-law of Sulikpha. From 1681 to 1826 it was the unbroken ruling period of Tungkhungia family in Assam. The Tungkhungia dynasty derived its name from the village Tungkhung or Tinkhung in Upper Assam where they had their ancestral residence. King Suhungmung (1497-1539) established his sons at Different places, and the different Ahom royal houses, viz., Dihingia, Charingia, Tipamia, Namrupia, Parbatia and Tungkhungia sprang up from these princely establishments. Sutang, son of King Suhungmung, was the first prince to settle at Tungkhung. Sutang has a son named Sarang Gohain who was the father of Gobar Gohain who incidentally became the first king of the Tungkhungia family. Gobar Gohain was the father of King Gadadhar Singha with whom continued ruling of the Tungkhungia family began.

69. A.A.R., p. 207a
3,000 effective. Nocturnal rites were performed to ensure the success of their uprising. Bhatuki and Bhabulâ, the two wives of Nahar Khora, were renamed Radha and Rukmini, and made to undergo ceremonies for investing them with supernatural powers. The Moran army pitched their first camp at Secha and waited for action under the command of Ragha.

Fall of The Ahom Monarchy: The first royal force, under Tekala Bora, named Bez, numbering 2,000, which was despatched to have an encounter with the revolutionists did not fare well and were put to flight with heavy losses. Next a force of 8,000 men was despatched under the command of Haranath Senapati Phukan, the father of ill-famed Badan Chandra Barphukan who was responsible for Burmese invasions at a later period. This time the Moamarías effected their advance by placing Mohanmala Gohaindeo, Charusingha and Ratnae, the three exiled princes, on elephants' back in front of their (Moamarías) army. Mohanmala Gohain tried to gain Haranath Senapati Phukan's submission by convincing him that the aim of the Uprising was against Kirtichandra Barbarua only and, as such, other nobles would remain in their respective positions undisturbed. But Haranath did not submit and eventually he was imprisoned by the Morans along with a large number of captives. A majority of the captives were admitted to the contingent of the Gohains.

Next the Morans formed the Government of their own declaring Ramakanta, the son of Nahar Khora, as their king and Ragha Nqog as their Barbarua. Then they secretly poisoned Charusingha and Ratna-
swar, the two exiled princes, to death. But the Moamarias proclaimed to the people as a make-believe that the son of Mohammala Gohain, also known as Batgharia Gohain, became the king. This also effected an increase in the number of Moamarias adherents.

The fall of Haranath Senapati Phukan proved that quite a good number of the Ahom force was sympathetic to the exiled princes who were with the Morans. Thereupon the Ahom king asked the Barphukan, stationed at Gauhati, to send an army. The Barphukan was further instructed to raise the army from Rani, Luki and Topakuchi. These were Ahom vassal states. As such the army from these principalities were not expected to be sympathetic towards the exiled princes as the subjects of vassal states were not directly connected with the Ahom royal houses. But in the encounter with the Morans the forces, sent by the Barphukan, were completely routed by Raga Moran. The defeat of the combined army of Rani, Luki and Topakuchi pushed the decision in the royal court that king Laksmin Singha should go down to Gauhati or at least to Kaliabar for averting the impending danger of being seized by the Morans. By this time the Morans were also planning to invade the Capital city of Rangpur. But as the boatmen were the disciples of the Havamara Satra it posed a great and risky problem for the king's officers to find out loyal boatmen for the king's proposed journey. Besides this, there was every possibility of being detected by the Morans boatmen who were likely to inform the Moamaria leaders about the king's escape to Gauhati or Kaliabar. At this stage before the king's officials succeeded in giving any practical shape to their plans to send the king away, the Moamarias

72. TB(S)., p. 64.
attacked the Capital, occupied it and made the king a prisoner. This took place on the midnight of 21 November 1769. Before this, King Lakshmi Singha made the attempt to leave Rangpur with Kirtichandra Barbarua, Bhogi Burahgohai, the Duara Phukan and a number of leading nobles. They were to halt for the night at Chintanamani garh on the bank of the river Sonal due to non-availability of boatmen. At night the king's officers were engaged in arguments and counter-arguments about leaving the capital. Just when Lakshmi Singha and his nobles were discussing the counter-proposals the Morans attacked the attack on the capital. King Lakshmi Singha was confined at the Jaysagar Temple by the Moamarias. The Barbarua along with his sons were chained with iron fetters and subsequently executed along with other principal Ahom officials including Bhogi Burahgohai and Madurai Bargohai. The execution of Kirtichandra Barbarua and of his son Magha Singha took place on 22 January 1779. Raghya Moran, now the Barbarua of the Moamarias, occupied the residence of Kirtichandra Barbarua and his seraglio consisted of one hundred ladies who were the daughters of Ahom Baruas and Phukans. Raghya also took as his wife Kuranganayani, the Manipuri princess, who was the widow of late king Rajeswar Singha.

After the occupation of Rangpur, the Ahom Capital, the Morans placed Ramakanta son of Nahar Khora on the throne. The reins of administration, however, were in the hands of Raghya Barbarua who appointed a new set of officers mainly from the Morans. Even the Barphukan of Gauhati and other leading officers were all from Morans. Raghya also wanted that all the Vaishnavas should acc-

73. ABs, pp. 209-10.
74. Ibid., p. 211 - cited as footnote.
75. ABs, p. 210; TB(E), p. 70.
kept the Mayamara Mahanta as their Guru, but the Mahanta refrained from initiating anybody who was earlier initiated by any other Gossain. The Moran king Ramakanta summoned the Mahantas of Aumiati, Dhakinpat, Garamuria and Kuruabahi Satras and other Bahumuria and Thakuria Mahanta and realised a large sum from them. He even punished the Aumiati Mahanta, Bagish Bapu, mutilating his nose, ears and eyes. In the mean time the exiled prince Mohammala Gohain was executed by the Morans on the allegation that he sympathised with the Ahom king Lakshmi Singha.

Tremendous had been the success of the Morans. But they became dizzy with success and the usual result in such cases was seen. The rebel camp showed signs of dissension and an open rift ensued. Ragha claimed the royal insignias like Kekara-Dola or royal Sedan and the mace as he thought the success of the Morans was due to his initiative and enterprise. Similar claims were also made by Gagini Deka-Mahanta. But Ramakanta was unwilling to hand over the honours conferred on him to anybody.

Fall Of The Moamarias: For a few months since their occupation of Rangpur, the Moamarias got no opposition from the surviving royal officers. With the passing of time, however, these officers came to know that the present king was not the son of exiled prince Mohammala but a Moran scion. The usurpation stood revealed. King Lakshmi Singha had already been imprisoned, Mahantas were subjected to pay money, and many royal officers were either murdered or expelled. It became clear to them that the Morans set up an independent sway.

76. TB(E), p.70.
77. AAR., p.211; TB(E), p. 71.
By the end of March 1770 such royal officers secretly met and decided to put an end to the Morans' authority and restore the captive king Lakshmi Singha to the throne. All preparations were made with great secrecy. They also contacted the Manipuri Princess Kuranganayani and made her agree to help them in time. As per their plan and programme, a band of royalists in the disguise of a Huchari party, entered the residence of Ragha Barbarum on the occasion of Babag Bihu. They entered at the dead of night on 11 April 1770. All the royalists took their swords with them but concealed them under their clothes. Ragha could not suspect them. He came out to show his respect to the party by kneeling down before them as was customary. Ragha used to keep a sword always with him. Kuranganayani trickily convinced him that it would be a disrespect to the Huchari party to bow before them with a sword in hand. She induced him to hand over the sword to her at the time of kneeling down before the party. An unsuspecting Ragha did so. As soon as he knelt down before the party Kuranganayani struck on Ragha's calf with Ragha's own sword. Ragha fall down facing the ground. At once the royalists who were in disguise as singers attacked Ragha and his guards. It was one Ramkrisnai who severed Ragha's head. At that time Ragha's guards were very few in number because Ragha allowed the majority of them to visit their families on the occasion of Babag Bihu. Ragha with all of his guards lost their lives at the hands of the Huchari party. All the ladies whom Ragha forcibly kept in his harem took part in attacking the Morans.

Simultaneous attacks were made on Ramakanta and his father by the royalists. Attacks were also made on the Deka-Mahanta who

78. TB(E1), p. 72.
79. Ibid., p. 73.
80. AAB , p. 212.
assumed sovereign power at Morrup. All of them along with their followers were massacred and the king, Lakshmi Singha, was released from his confinement.

After his release, king Lakshmi Singha issued an order for a general slaughter of the Moamarias. The order stated that whenever and wherever anyone got any one of the Moamarias, he should be killed. A massacre of the Moamarias followed and this continued for a long time. This had a severe effect on the political life of the people. It was a terrible kind of civil war and divisions seemed irreparable. The people formed veritable warring camps, never to be unite. There remained only Moamarias and Non-Moamarias. It was this that made them allergic to fight jointly against outside aggressors at a later date. The life of the people began to march in two separate directions, one hating the other with menacing ferocity. This had its effects on social life as well. The social life of the Moamarias was greatly disturbed due to the large scale massacre of the male population. Astabhuja Mahanta of the Mayamata Satra was also killed. The Satra remained without a head for a long fourteen years from 1770 to 1784. The Moran Barphukan and other Moran officers at Gauhati were captured and killed. As the former high officers had already been killed by the Morans restored king Lakshmi Singha appointed a new set of high officials, selected mainly from the sons or kinsmen of the older set of officials. However, the new officers were without any practical experience in state political policies and they were found wanting in meeting the situation arising out of the uprising. On the other hand their high-handed policy of repressing the Moamarias, who were not a minor faction of population, dragged
the political life of not only of the Moamarias but also of entire population into a state of uncertainty.

Causes Of The Marans' Fall; Effects Of The First Moamaria Uprising On The Life Of The People: The Morans were in power for only five months, from 21 November 1769 to 11 April 1770. Their failure was mainly due to their unfamiliarity with ordinary principles of administration, their love for vulgar enjoyments and the rift among the self-seeking Moran leaders. To this was added the realization by the royalists of the big lie that the son of Mohanmala Gohain was on the throne. As it is evident from the acts of Raghba Barbarua, who kept by force one hundred ladies in his apartment, how degraded was the Moran leadership. Moreover the Morans lacked experience in the organisation of a stable administration. In this respect the Moamaria Mahanta and his son, Deka-Mahanta, had better experience in organisational matters. The Mahanta and the Deka-Mahanta had to look after the organisation of the Satra and they had rich experience in the act of commanding and exacting the obedience of the people. But they were ignored. Besides these, the treatment meted out by the Moamarias to the exiled princes who sided with them had seriously antagonised the people having sympathy with those princes. The people were alienated from their new rulers. The uprising was confined to Moran areas only. The exiled princes were settled within the Moran country and they were within the easy reach of the Morans. These princes were usually found to be harbouring ill-feelings towards the administration since they had been maimed and disqualified for the throne. Thus due to the presence of the exiled princes in the Moran areas and of the rise of popular grievances arising out of administrative
orthodoxy transformed the Morans' country easily into a hot-bed of disaffection and "all the revolutionary activities were hatched in that quarter".

On the other hand internecine feuds bedevilled relationship among the Ahom nobles. The high-handed policy of Kirtichandra Bar­barua had much to do with such a situation. A large number of the nobles was ever jealous of Kirtichandra's overwhelming power and they waited for the downfall of Kirtichandra Barbarua. The dissatisfied nobles connived at the conspiracy of the Morans at the early stage of the uprising because of their declared aim of punishing the Barbarua only. Moreover, due to lack of discipline among the rank and file of the royal army, no distinction could be made easily between the 'standing power' in the country and the 'would-be power'. Sympathies oscillated between 'standing power' and the 'would-be power' and for a time there was its gravitation move towards the latter. It was taken for granted that one of the exiled princes would be king of the country in terms of the declaration of the Morans.

Though the Moamarla uprising was short-lived it delivered a heavy blow to the structure of the Ahom rule. Since the coming of the Ahoms no plebeian could sit on the throne before. Ramakanta made a violent breach with the tradition. The dethronement of king Lakshmi Singha shattered the popular belief that the Ahom monarch was inviolable. This encouraged the exiled princes to make common cause with the rebels.

81. AAR., p. 213.
The repressive policy followed by the restored Ahom monarchy also proved to be suicidal. The suppression of Ramakanta and other Moran leaders was followed by a policy of general massacre of the Moamarias. This made the Moamarias desperate to the extent of resolving on avenging the deaths of their brethren who fell victims to this genocide. It has been rightly observed that the Morans "in their desperation sought vengeance, till a kind of blood feud was installed between the Morans and the royalists." As a result of this indiscriminate massacre the stakes which tied the Moamarias to civil life were destroyed. This repressive policy was also responsible for subsequent civil wars in Assam which eventually dragged the country to "degenerate and comparatively impoverished state". The king, Lakshmi Singh, was not destined to rule in peace. The remaining years of his reign were full of revolts and conspiracies.

In 1773 Bhudhar Singh, son of exiled prince Charusinha, conspired with one Bhadrasen Barbarua to capture the throne. The conspiracy was quickly detected by Kekeru Kalita Phukan. The conspirators were put to death. Malou Tipamiya Gohain, son of Pramatta Singh, also attempted to capture the throne. Kekeru Kalita Phukan frustrated his attempt also. Another attempt of conspiracy was made by some Mohammadans under the leadership of one Hazari Dewan, but in vain. In 1775 several exiled princes including Bijay Barmanwah Gohain took up the cause of Malou Tipamiya Gohain but their attempt also proved abortive.

82. AAR., p. 214.
83. Hannay, Capt. S.O., A Short Account of the Moamarah Sect. JASE, August 1838.
Many exiled princes had taken their shelter in a number of Satras. The princes were given shelter in the hope that some time their favourite prince may capture the Ahom throne. But these hopes were belied due to the timely actions of the royal officers. Though the royalists were successful in the task of suppressing revolts and keeping alive the Ahom rule, they were simultaneously engaged in dealing with divisive activities among their disaffected kinmen.

As for Kekeru Kalita Phukan, his success in frustrating the attempts on the Ahom throne enabled him to exercise a great influence over Lakshmi Singha. Having secured royal favour, Kalita Phukan now wanted to undo some of the king’s officers whom he despised. Kalita Phukan managed to secure the king’s consent to the execution of Baranath Phukan Senapati. But he was saved due to the timely intervention of the king’s mother and of the senior Pahumaria Na-Gossal. Kekeru Kalita Phukan even poisoned the king’s mind against the Burahgohain. However, the Bailung Bargohain in consultation with the Kuoigoyan Burahgohain and the Barpatra Gohain complained to the king against the conduct of Kalita Phukan and requested the king to hand over Kalita Phukan to them. Sensing danger to his life, Kalita Phukan took shelter in the Barbarua’s residence. An isolated Kalita Phukan now lost his Phukanship and the king was persuaded to banish him to Tamuli bari.

It was then Kalita Phukan’s turn to take to revolts. He collected a large number of men in collaboration with several deposed Baruas and Phukans and their henchmen with a view to strike at the Raj. Taking time by the forelock the king despatched an army with Kowara

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Senapati at the head against the Kalita Phukan. With the advance of the royal forces, Kalita Phukan's forces were panicked into deserting him. Kalita Phukan and his son were arrested and both of them were killed by the assassins on their way to the capital. Many suspected some foul play on the part of Kowarn Senapati in this matter and so he was put in chains for a period of four months for violating the king's instruction to arrest Kalita Phukan and not to kill him.

The Sadiya region also witnessed disturbances. The Sadiya Khowa Gohain was murdered by the Nakhams. An expedition was sent against them and a new Sadiya-Khowa Gohain was appointed.

The conversion of the Ahom monarchs to Saktism was looked upon with disfavour both by the Ahom priests and the Vaishnava Mahantas. King Lakshmi Singh was initiated by Ramananda, an Assamese Gossain. The successors of Ramananda were known as Na-Gossains. This created divisions in the Sakti camp between the followers of the Parbatia Gossains and those of the Na-Gossains. The Parbatia Gossain was expelled on the charge that he supported the designs of Bnukhar Singha and Malou Tipamiya Gohain. An order was promulgated to the effect that anybody found taking initiation from the Parbatia Gossain would be punished. The expulsion order on the Parbatia Gossain was, however, withdrawn subsequently. The king Lakshmi Singha died in the month of Puha, Saka 1702 corresponding to Christian year A.D. 1780. Under his rule there was a steady deterioration of the law and order situation in the country and with his departure there was a further worsening of the situation.

85. TR(E), pp. 80-86.
86. Ibid., p. 88.
Subsequent Moamaria Uprisings: On the death of king Lakshmi Singha, his son Loknath Gohain, became king at the tender age of fifteen. Loknath assumed the name of Gaurinath Singha. Even when Lakshmi Singha was alive, several conspiracies were hatched to assassinate him and his son. Therefore, after his accession to the throne, Gaurinath took steps to fortify his position by arranging for the mutilation of other princes who might conspire against him. The young king had not had time enough to secure the right kind of instruction and education to shoulder the heavy responsibility of the Government and thus he soon became a puppet in the hands of Adabaria Sibram Barbarua of the Sandiqui family. Adabaria Sibram was also known as Bakera Barbarua. It was through Bakera Barbarua's instrumentality that Bailung Bargohain came to be executed. But very soon Gaurinath realised that important matters of State were disposed of by the Adabaria Barbarua without consulting him. Therefore, the Barbarua and his sons were dismissed from their offices. The dismissal of Adabaria Barbarua deprived the king of the services of a most tactful and powerful officer.

Though the first Moamaria uprising was suppressed, the Moamarlas did not give up the idea of rising again against the Ahom Monarchy. They were just waiting for a favourable opportunity. They had had it on 12 April 1783 when the king went out of the capital and amused himself on playing boat games. When king's party was returning at night a good number of the Moamarlas mingled with the king's torchbearers and thus entered the capital. There they burnt the Gaurdhouse and attacked the royal sedan. The king somehow escaped to a

87. TB(E), pp. 88-89.
88. Ibid., pp. 89-90.
brick-built shelter of the Gargaon Palace. Next the Moamarias set
fire to the houses of Bargohain and Barpatra Gohain and to the coro-
nation Hall (Singari Ghar) of the king. In the confusion caused by
the night attack the Moamarias believed that the king could not esca-
pe. With this belief they left Gargaon and proceeded to Rangpur and
occupied it killing the Guards. In the mean time Ghanashyam Burahgokain
and Haranath Senapati Phukan traced out the king and then the royalis-
ts proceeded to Rangpur. They succeeded in defeating the rebels.
On the next morning the king returned to the Capital.

The king found out that the Moamarias' attack on Gargaon was
instigated by the sons of deposed Adabaria Barbarua. They had even
accompanied the Moamarias in their attack. This led the king to punis
the four sons of Adabaria Barparua by having their eyes extracted.
This was followed by a rigorous policy of repression and general ma-
ssacre of the Moamarias. On the advice of Ghanashyam Burahgokain,
the king promulgated an order "that the Moamarias should be killed
with their sons and friends by whomever and at whatever place they
were met". Acting on the royal command, the king's forces captured
and killed the Moamarias in many villages with their sons and wives.
Some of them, however, succeeded in escaping to the territories of
the Daflas, the Bhuts (Bhutias), the Kacharis and the Jayentias.
The massacre continued for one and a half month and, according to
an estimate, seven lakhs of Moamarias lost their lives in this massac-
cre. A vivid picture of this carnage was given in the writings of
Maniram Dewan. He writes, "the waters of the rivers could not be &

89. TR(E), pp. 90-94.
90. AAR, pp. 220-21.
91. Ibid.
92. Goswami, Hridayananda, Head of the Mayamara Dinjaj Satra, 1890-
1934, in the Assamese Magazine Banbi, Vol. XIX.
drunk and the people could not walk along the roads. Even the water and the fish of the Brahmaputra became tainted with the sticking smell of corpses. Half of the country was depopulated. Thus was vengeance wreaked upon the Moamarlas for burning the Singari Ghar (Coronation Hall) and attempting to kill the king. From that period the kingdom became thinned and light. The paiks or servitors attached to different khals or units became reduced. If a Matak (Moamaria) was captured he would shout to his friends 'Oh! My Comrades! I have been arrested!' Having heard this his other friends would come forward and offer themselves to be apprehended and killed. The massacre was stopped after one a half a months on an appeal made by Bargoahin and Barbaruna and other high officials seeing the plight of the people and because in majority of cases innocent people were killed ruthlessly along with the allegedly guilty ones. Ghanashyam Burahgobain reluctantly consented to it. Shortly after that he died and his son Purnananda became the Premier. Purnananda Burahgobain like his father favoured the policy of repression towards the Morans. For the next two years the Moamarlas remained silent though they were preparing for a greater assault on the royal power.

The Moamarlas and the Dafla-Bahatias united under the leadership of one Tati of Japaribhita and began to attack the villages inhabited by the royal subjects. To meet this challenge, Marangi-Khama Gobain and Dihingia Phukan were sent at the head of a large army. But the rebels crushed them. Pitambar, the Moamaria Mahanta, also

93. BVR., p.253.
94. AAB., p.222.
95. TB(E)., pp. 97-99.
joined the rebels and then they attacked the Brahmana Monastery at Garamur. A contingent of soldiers, recruited from Rani, Luki and Topakuchi, was despatched against them. The Moamarias succeeded in defeating them as well. Next the rebels crossed the Brahmaputra and encircled the capital city of Rangpur from all sides. Resistance by the royalists under several leaders including Puranananda Burahgohain, Aka Bailung Bargohain, Barpatra Gohain, Mahanta of Dihing Satra and some Decodhais and Bailungs (Ahom priests) proved in vain and, finally, the rebels began to knock at the doors of the capital. When the rebel advance proved menacing, king Gaurinath Singha was compelled to leave the capital for Gaumati on the midnight of 19 January 1788. The king's example of leaving the capital was followed by the queens and other high officials with the result that Rangpur became a deserted city. This was taken advantage of by the king's slaves and servants who plundered the royal treasury. The rebels did the same on a still greater scale when they occupied the city on 20 January 1788. For some time after their occupation of Rangpur the Moamaria leaders Tati, Howa and Prasad managed the affairs. Then Tati and Howa left Rangpur for their localities on the North bank where they assumed an independent role. One Bharath Singha was placed on the throne at Rangpur by the rebels.

After the departure of king Gaurinath Singha, the task of opposing the rebels was taken up by leaders and officers on both individual and collective basis. A few concerted encounters were undertaken by Manjay Barbarua, Bhugai Senapati, Merkai, Neog Phukan, Tamuli Phukan, Khangia Phukan and the Burahgohain himself against the rebels
with varying results. But the Moamarias got the better of them. In these encounters deposed Naobaisha Phukan and Bhugai Senapati lost their lives. But the Burahgohain continued his endeavours to repulse the rebels. The king sent a large number of soldiers from Gauhati under the leadership of Pani Phukan and Dhekial Phukan to aid the Burahgohain. But matters did not improve for the king even with such endeavours.

The next important expedition against the Moamarias was launched under the leadership of Patkowrn, the fourth son of late king Rajeswar Singha. He was living a life of exile at Namrup from the time of his father's death. He obtained the support of other Ahom Princes including Dighala Gohain and Barmura Gohain and of some Ahom nobles and began to assault the rebels and advanced up to Sibsagar. At this juncture a rift occurred among his followers leading to their defeat at the hands of the Moamarias. Due to initial successes gained by the anti-Moamaria forces, the prince Patkowrn nursed ambitions to become the ruling monarch. When this was revealed to Gaurinath Singha and to Burahgohain Purnananda, they did much to undo the Prince's designs. Ultimately, the prince fell a victim to the rebel forces.

Purnananda Burahgohain continued his operations against the Moamarias from his camp at Jorhat. The king was at Gauhati from 1788 to 1794. He tried to secure help from the Kacharis, Jayantias and the Manipuris. Only Jai Singha Karta Raja, the king of Manipur, responded to his request and sent an army under the leadership of

97. TB(E), pp. 107-08.
98. AAR, pp. 228-29; TB(E), p. 112.
Pharmadhi, the high priest of the Manipur king, to Assam. But the
Manipuris instead of facing the Moamarias suddenly left Assam after
plundering some Assamese villages on the Assam-Cachar frontiers.

It became increasingly difficult for Purnanand Burangohain
to continue the operations against the Moamarias unaided. The betray-
al of the Manipuri priest finally compelled Gaurinath Singha to se-
cure help from Bengal. Roush Baillie, Resident of the East India
Company at Goalpara, had sent from Goalpara at the king's request a
large number of Burpandazes under one Chait Singh Subedar to aid the
king's forces. Under the escort of Raush's troops Gaurinath Singha
advanced up to Nowgong as he thought that it was not expedient to stay
for a long period at Gauhati far from his capital city.

Gaurinath Singha again requested the king of Manipur for help
and this time Jai Singha, the old king of Manipur, came personally at
the head of his forces to help Gaurinath Singha. The Manipuri king
chased the rebels nearly up to Gaurisagar and encountered the Moamari-
as in a fierce battle in their way to Rangpur. But he could not stand
his ground for long against the Moamarias who forced him to retreat.
Meanwhile, because of local opposition Gaurinath Singha had to leave
Nowgong for Gauhati. On his arrival at Gauhati king Gaurinath Singha
sought help from the East India Company through Roush Baillie. In
response to his request Captain Welsh was sent by the Company with an
army to help Gaurinath Singha in suppressing the rebels.

Before taking up the course of success against the rebels
with foreign help, it seems pertinent to make some reference to the

100. AAR, p. 233.
102. Causes of local opposition have already been referred
in page 18 ante.
unsettled conditions of the land and its people caused by the Moamaria uprisings.

Self styled Potentates: During the Moamaria's occupation of Rangpur and king Gaurinath Singha's sojourns at Gauhati, Nowgong and then again at Gauhati there, in the country, some local chiefs made bold attempts to assert for themselves an independent status. They did so taking advantage of the anarchical conditions created by the Moran uprisings. On the North Bank at Japaribhita a Moamaria leader Tati thus declared his independence over the entire territory as far as the Lihit river. Howa, another leader of the Moamarias, asserted independent power at Majuli. Bharath Singha became the king at Rangpur and Sarbanand at Bengmara. Bharath Singha and Sarbananda even struck coins in their names. The Khamptis began to rule over the Sadiya tract independently under Bar-raja (Chief king) and Deka-raja (Young king). Thus independent rulers of varied importance sprang up at various localities.

Risings at Kamrupa and Darrang: When the Ahom rule appeared to totter to its fall due to the Moamaria uprisings, a number of local chieftains and princes entered into a conspiracy against the Ahom Raj. They were the Deka-raja (Young king) Hangamarayana of Darrang, Phati, a prince of Bhutan, Hara Datta and his brother Bira Datta of Kamrupa. 104

The discontent at Darrang arose due to several causes. First, there had been growing discontent over a long period against the

104. TH(E), p. 121.
seizure by the Ahoms of areas that lay under the control of the Rajas of Darrang. Secondly, the transfer of 6000 naiks from Darrang to the control of the Barphukan at Gauhati caused losses to the Darrang Raja in terms of man power. Further, Darrang king had to supply to the Ahoms a large quantity of salt-petre and had to attend on the Ahom king and the Barphukan personally whenever he was called upon to do so. Thus the Darrang king was unhappy and felt humiliated at the treatment usually meted out to him by the Ahom rulers. If the king himself felt aggrieved the people at large had more solid reasons to get exasperated. Since 1707 Darrang had been surveyed on several occasions by the Ahom officials and on every occasion these invariably resulted in a rise in the rates of taxes imposed. The rising incidence of higher taxes produced widespread discontent among the inhabitants of Darrang. They could not raise their voice of protest during the heyday of the Ahom rule. But during the reign of Lakshmi Singha when sedition became the order of the day, some 4000 subjects of Darrang in a body advanced to Rangpur, the capital of the Ahoms, to place their grievances before the king. This protest demonstration was evidence enough of the exploitation to which the people were subjected. The demonstrators were, however, intercepted at the royal gates and there followed a skirmish. Following this, the settlement proceedings at Darrang were suspended and this led to a temporary pacification.

During the troubled conditions in the wake of the Moamaria uprisings, many people from Upper Assam left their hearths and home and began to settle in territories of the Darrang Raja. The new settlers

105. AAR,p.269.
106. Ibid.,p.270.
had for their living nothing else than plundering the local people. This added to the discontent of the mass of the people. The Darrang inhabitants resolved upon resisting the marauding practices of the Upper Assam refugees and, therefore, they called back their 6000 paiks from Gauhati. Even their Rajas, Hangsnarayana I and Hangsnarayana II were called upon to come back from Ghiladhari whither they had gone earlier to meet the Moamarias in accordance with directions from the Ahom king Gaurinath Singha. The call from their subjects placed the two Rajas in great predicament. They hesitated as to whether they should fight the Moamarias or accept the latter's offer of being left undisturbed in their regions on condition of the Moamarias retaining control over Upper Assam only. Ultimately, the two Rajas decided to respond to the call of their subjects and so they left the Ghiladhari camp. It was a rare occasion of popular opinion prevailing over the hesitation of their rulers. It appears that at that time there was greater rapport between the Darrang Rajas and their people than that subsisting between the Ahom monarchy and its subjects.

Disturbances in Kamrup: Manifestations of disaffection were also noticed in Kamrup. Due to their habit of being ruled by the Khoches and the Khans for a fairly long period, the people of Kamrup appeared to regard the Ahoms not as their natural overlords but outside usurpers. Sensing the reaction of their new subjects, the Ahoms on their part suspected and even distrusted them. Moreover the people of both Darrang and Kamrup were practically barred from entering into the Ahom capital. The same prohibition was more strictly followed at

107. AAR, p. 271.
Gauhati, the Viceregal headquarters, where no Kamrupi people was allowed to spend the night at Gauhati. This was viewed by the people of Kamrup as humiliation. There was enough popular discontent coupled with administrative weaknesses of the regime. Hara Datta, an influential Choudhury (revenue collector) of Jikeri, took advantage of the situation of general dissatisfaction and organised sections from both the Kamrupi and Darrangi people against the Ahom rule. He also instigated the Rajas of Darrang to become hostile to the Ahom rule. It was suspected that the rising was secretly aided by the Rajas of Coach Behar and Bijnī who wanted to regain Kamrup for one of their races utilising the services of the two brothers, Hara Datta and Bira Datta. There was a hint from Hara Datta that Kamrup should be offered to the Darrangi Rajas. Thus Hara Datta won them over to commence hostilities against the Ahoms. Hara Datta raised a contingent and declared independence after having occupied nearly the whole of North Kamrup. The Kamrupi rebels were nicknamed as Dumdumiyas. At that time Kalia Bhumura was the Barphukan at Gauhati. He was unable to secure any help from Upper Assam where the Burahgohain was heavily engaged with the task of continuing the operations against the Moamarias. Therefore, he raised a force of Hindustanis and some local levies which he managed to obtain from the Rajas of Beltola and Dimoroa. With this force the Barphukan advanced against the Dumdumiyas and defeated them in several encounters. Their leaders, Hara Datta and Bira Datta, were compelled to flee northwards but eventually they

109. HAL, p.218.

* Hara Datta's mercenaries mainly consisted of Sikhs who had their headquarters at the Gurudwar Dumdum at Dhubri and probably that was why Hara Datta's followers were called Dumdumiyas or Dumdias. See AAR.,p.431.
were caught and put to death. This was a remarkable achievement for the Barphukan and he was rewarded with the title of Pratap-Ballava. The fate of Hara Datta and Bira Datta also befall the endeavours of the Darrangi Princes. In an encounter with the Ahoms, Darrang prince Hangsnarayana II's forces were defeated and the Prince fled to Kalimpani at the foot of the Bhutan Hills. He was subsequently seized by one Bolai Barbara and put to death. One Bishnunarayana was appointed by the Ahoms as Deka Raja of Darrang and Krishnanarayana, the son of Hangsnarayana II, was dismissed. This dismissal was regarded as unjust by Krishnanarayana. He now began chalking out plans to expel the Ahom nominee Bishnunarayana and capture power for himself at Darrang.

Krishnanarayana \\* approached Raush for aid. Raush responded favourably and invited Krishnanarayana to Goalpara. Raush maintained Krishnanarayana for about four months and led him to Coach Behar. Koch king Marendra Narayana was a kinsman of Krishnanarayana and he readily agreed to help Krishnanarayana. Fortified with Koch support Krishnanarayana now sought help from the English East India Company. But this was refused since the Supreme Board of the Company decided not to interfere in the dispute between Krishnanarayana, Bishnunarayana and the king of Assam. Thereupon, Krishnanarayana directed his attention to recruiting the Burkandazes, Sannyasis, Fakirs and a large number of freebooters totalling about 3000 men in the Company's Provinces specially Rangpore and Coach.

111. AAR., p. 273.

* Raush became the principal English merchant at Goalpara after Bogh Baillie.
Behar and from the upper parts of India. After the necessary preparations were over, Krishnanarayana crossed Coach Behar into Assam, occupied Darrang and advanced towards Kamrup. The advancing force of Krishnanarayana was also helped by 500 Bhutias, sent by the Dev Raja of Bhutan. At this stage the Ahom Government tried to make an amicable settlement with Krishnanarayana but in vain. Krishnanarayana occupied North Gauhati, plundered the villages including the residence of the Pani Phukan and victoriously encamped at Aswakram. Feudal leaders had no lofty cause to fight for and thus the Burkan-dazes who accompanied Krishnanarayana committed outrages on the defenceless people in their first flush of victory.

Popular Uprisings At Nowgong: It has been pointed out elsewhere that during king Gaurinath Singha's sojourn at Nowgong the people of that area were subjected to various forms of harrassment by the king's followers. The result of these oppressions by the king's officers made the people of Nowgong extremely resentful and they decided to fight it out. They accepted the leadership of one Sindhura Bazarika and surrounded the king's camp with weapons in hands and demanded king's departure from their locality. They were pacified by the appointment of a new set of officers. But these officers also proved to be old wine in a new bottle. The new officers were far more oppressive than the ones they replaced. So the king had to replace these new officers by the old set on appeals from the people. Still then there was no improvement in the situation. Under such circumstances, the people continued to voice their original demand that the king should leave their localities. From that time the people of Nowgong

112. AAB.,p.279.
113. See page 18 ante.
114. TB(E),p.123.
received the appellation of Raja-Kheda Nogayana, i.e. king-expelling people of Nowgong.

A few months later the camp of the king at Nowgong was besieged by one Bairagi Raja. But Gaurinath Singh somehow managed to escape. The king finally left Nowgong on 11 June 1792 for Gauhati. One Nathu Singh Jamadar succeeded in repulsing the followers of the Bairagi but not before the rebels plundered the king's residence. Escape from Nowgong did not, however, mean any end to the troubles for the king. At Gauhati he had to face the risings organised by Hara Datta and Bira Datta as well as those led by Hanganarayana II and his son Krishnanarayana of Darrang.

Situation At Lakhimpur: Insurrection of Bachas: During king Gaurinath Singh's first stay at Gauhati two Lakhimpuria brothers, adopting unapproved religious rites began depredations in the royal force at Janji. At times they compelled the royal force to take to their heels. But ultimately the Lakhimpuria brothers were suppressed by the forces deputed by the Burahgohain, although they managed to escape unhurt. This rising was followed by another led by one Jabar Saikia in collaboration with Japara Gohain. This rising took place when Burahgohain Purnananda tried to recruit three regiments from the Bachas. Some Bachas did join the forces of the Burahgohain, but the majority led by Jabar Saikia stood against the recruitment. Jabar Saikia with his Bacha followers supported Japara Gohain to

115. The Bairagi raised a force at Panisangal near Biswanath and managed to secure the support of the Kharangi whom the king sent earlier to check the Bairagi.
116. AAR., p.275.
117. Their actual names could not be traced out.
118. TB(E), pp.113-14.
assert his independence which he did. But the Burahgohain trickily arrested Japara Gohain, and had his remaining eye extracted. Japara Gohain lost his other eye earlier. Further, most of his followers including Jabar Saikia were put to death.

Situation in the North Banks: Royalists control over the people of the North bank was traditionally slender. Effective authority was exercised by Baskata Barua who commanded a large force of the Miris, Daflas and others. On several occasions they disobeyed the directions of the Burahgohain Purnananda and acted independently.

These circumstances of risings and insurrections everywhere conspired to threaten king Gaurinath Singha in his new asylum at Gauhati also with the result that he was forced to seek help of the English East India Company. Before assessing its outcome it is essential to make an appraisement of the Moamaria uprisings.

An Estimate of the Moamaria Disturbances: The Moamaria Mahantas took good care to spread their vaishnavite gospel among the uninitiated Kacharis with due regard to latter's temper and ethics. The first Moamaria Mahanta taught the Kacharis to regard their guru as superior or even to the greatest of gods, not to speak of the kings who were mortal beings only like all other men. In course of time, this guru became more than a spiritual head. He virtually became the sovereign of the Moran people who represented the warlike elements of the Assamese population. This facilitated the transition of the Mayamara Mahantas from the level of spiritual leaders to that of political leaders as well. The rising strength of the disciples of the Mayamara

119. TE[1], pp.115-16.
120. Ibid., p.127.
121. AA[1], p.331.
Mahantas naturally aroused the jealousy of the other Gossains. They charged the Mayamara Mahantas with deviation from Sri Sankara-ga-deva's teachings and propoting instead the degraded Tantric rituals among their followers. Such charges apart, there was also the rivalry between the Brahmin Gossains and Sudra Mahantas, the latter including the Mahantas of the Mayamara Satra. This rivalry manifested itself more severely against the Satras of the Kala-Sambati order, because their creed was more democratic, less class-ridden and was opposed to orthodoxy.

The rise of the Mayamara Mahantas in prosperity and influence was also viewed with suspicion by the Ahom Government. The Mahantas were the descendants of the Bhuyans whom the Ahoms subjugated in order to establish their power in the region of the middle Assam and, as such, the Ahoms always kept a watchful eye over the Bhuyans so that the latter might not succeed in challenging the suzerainty of the Ahoms. On the other hand, the Bhuyans rebelled on several occasions till they were finally subjugated by Suhungmung Dihingia Raja. He settled them in the Bardowa area so that they remained busy dealing with the Kachari intruders. It was the classic policy of 'divide et impera'.

The execution of the Mayamara Mahanta, Nityananda, was the precursor to a series of atrocities committed against the Mayamara Mahantas and their disciples. This was followed by several others of the same nature culminating in the insult inflicted on the Mayamara Mahanta and his son by Kirtichandra Barbarua. It was this that provoked the Mahanta and his son to summon their disciples who were call-

122. AAR, p. 239.
ed upon to devise plans of action against the oppressors. And the rebellion broke out when the influential Moran leader Ragh Nog was subjected to gross indignities by Kirtichandra Barbarua. At the beginning the uprising was directed against Kirtichandra but it soon crossed the limits and expanded into a struggle against Ahom rule itself.

Division in ruling camp and factionalism among the nobility proved to be a boon to the Moamaras. Popular sympathies with the exiled and mutilated princes were cleverly exploited by the Morans by declaring that they were going to establish MoahmalaGohain, one of the exiled princes, as the king. Such a strategy not only scotched the possibility of popular opposition to the uprising but also paved the way for winning over many royalists to the rebel camp. The Moamaria uprising created a climate of general popular resistance whenever the people had reason to feel aggrieved. Thus, even after the restoration of Lakshmi Singha in 1770, the practice of upholding the cause of a claimant to the throne was continued with the attendant preparations of recruitment of adherents to a cause in imitation of the Morans. Several Mahantas used to provide shelter to princes in their monasteries with the same aim. The restored king, Lakshmi Singha, succeeded in putting down fresh attempts at dislodging him. But Gaurinath Singha who succeeded Lakshmi Singha lacked the latter's promptness and astuteness with the result that he was unable to meet effectively the destabilising situation.

The initiation of the Ahom rulers into Saktism was disliked alike by the Vaishnava Mahantas and the Ahom priests. Gadadhar Singha and Queen Phuleswari Devi gave enough evidence of the pursuit of an illiberal policy in religious matters. The Ahom priests, who were
still the chief counsels of the kings and claimed to be the repository of the Ahom language and traditions, resented the conversion of their rulers to Saktism. They believed that disorders visited the country due to the departures made by the rulers from Ahom customs.

The Saktas, however, did not form a united camp. Siva Singha, Pramatta Singha and Rajeswar Singha were the disciples of Bengali Sakta Gurus known as Parbatia Gossains. They, however, refused to initiate Lakshmi Singha alias Kalsila Gohain on the ground of his having black complexion and alleged illegitimacy. After he became king, Lakshmi Singha bestowed honours and wealth on his Guru who came to be known as Pahumaria Gossain or Na-Gossain. But the disciples of the Parbatia Gossain regarded the Na-Gossain as an usurper. This rivalry between the Sakta Gossains produced needless acrimony. The followers of the Parbatia Gossain blamed the disorders prevailing in the country on the dethronement of the Parbatia Gossain from his Guruship.

The mass people had no positive political opinion. Their views were best expressed in the aphorism that "whoever might be the Raja, we are his subjects". Such were the views of the average Assamese subjects who considered Ahom rule to be a tolerable one. The Ahoms did maintain the old social structure without introducing any drastic reform therein and they adjusted their rule to the traditions of the people of the land. Moreover, the Ahoms got themselves assimilated to the language, manners and customs of the land.

123. AAR,p.245.
But the people had reasons to regard the Ahom Government as inhuman and cruel in matters of the penal law. Heavy punishments were inflicted for minor offences. The mode of executions were also inhuman—such as sawing offenders asunder between two planks, beating them to death with hammers, cutting their throats and like other methods. The penalty of death was meted out to a whole family of rebels. This made the common people believe that the downfall of the Ahoms was due to their cruel treatment of alleged offenders indiscriminately. So long as the Ahom rule offered protection to the common mass, they tolerated it. But when such protection proved infructuous due to the growing civil strife, the old respect for the Raj gave way to habitual insubordination at the dictates of ad hoc leaders.

Loyalty to the State as an abstract entity was unknown among Ahom nobles and the governing bureaucracy. Political sympathies centered round personalities able to command loyalty in their personal capacity. There were of course isolated instances of steadfast loyalty to the king till the last, but in a majority of cases the nobles were guided by personal considerations only. They were more interested in seeing the ruin of their rivals. They would not mind it anything if such ruin could be brought about by attacks of the kind made by the Morans. Sometimes they even used independent means to effect the downfall of their rivals through intrigues. If the ruling monarch was not firm in his judgement there was every possibility of being induced to act according to the wishes of the intriguing nobles. The Moamaria uprising could have been nipped in the bud if the Ahom

124 AA(II), pp. 49-50; EI, p. 673.
125 AAR, p. 246.
nobles wanted to do so. But personal rivalry made them blind as to their duties. They duly received advance information of the preparations by the Moamarias. But they remained inactive just to see the destruction of Kirtichandra Barbafluwa whom they despised. Even the restoration of Lakshmi Singha was mainly due to the initiative of Kalita Phukan who was a non-Ahom official. The Ahom nobles did not rise to the occasion in right earnest. A good many of the Ahom nobles looked upon disturbances as opportunities for satisfying their personal ambitions.

The role of the Ahom elite soldiers, who at times repulsed attacks on Assam made by outside powers including the formidable Moghuls, was most disappointing compared to what they had achieved in the seventeenth century. A reverse in the war at once demoralised and unnerved them. And they completely surrendered to the hands of fate. The demoralisation of the commanders proved infectious. As the common soldiers were recruited from the ranks of the peasants, they naturally responded to the ebb and flow of their leaders' attitudes. After the reign of King Rudra Singha the Ahom nobles became ease-loving and were reluctant to take to any military operation which involved arduous labour. Thus it came about that by the time of the Moamaria uprising the Ahoms lost their war-like qualities.

The Ahom administrative system was also responsible to a great extent for the reverses the Ahoms suffered in the hands of the Moamarias. After their occupation of Assam the Ahoms based their

126. LBt., pp.52-58, 78-83.
127. TB(E), pp.110-11.
128. AB(G), p.138; EI., p.604; AAR., p. 249.
administration on the khel system which followed the feudal pattern elsewhere. Khels were the occupational groups of people. The entire population was divided into several Khels, each of which was under one headman known as Kheldar. The attachment of the subjects to their Kheldar, who was their immediate overlord, was greater than that to their distant Government. Therefore, a Kheldar could divert as will the loyalty of the members of his Khel. The possibilities of defying the authority of the Government by the Kheldar were also present in the cases of provincial Governors, frontier wardens and tributary princes. Lack of a sufficient strong standing army was another drawback of the Ahom system of administration. The Ahom standing army was just sufficient for guarding the establishments at the capital. When necessity arose in the event of emergency the monarch had to depend on the support of the Kheldars with his militia. This system was profitable to the extent it limited the expenditures on maintaining a large army. But it could prove dangerous should the Kheldars choose to be recalcitrant. The Ahom monarch had no direct control over the army which owed loyalty to particular officers, i.e., the Kheldars. In the case of action against outside attack, the standing army usually received the support of the local levies. But in actions against their own countrymen, often enough there were cases of treachery and collusion among the soldiers. To all these added corruption and personal rivalry which struck at the vitals of an effective army.

On the other hand, the Moamarias acted with greater cohesion. Instances of treachery or wilful desertion at the battle field were rare among them. Further, even their womenfolk participated in

129. AAR\textsuperscript{4}, p.253.
battles. This unity enabled them to expel Lakshmi Singha and his successor Gaurinath Singha from the capital and establish an independent State of their own covering Rangpur, Japaribhita, Majuli and Bengmara. United under the banner of one Satra, The Gurus and their Satirthas (followers of same faith) developed all the characteristics of one solid group of people by the name of 'Moamarias'. In fact there was never a single tribe called the Moamarias. Yet they included various tribes and communities, namely the Hoamans, Chutiyas, Kacharis Bhitas, Ahoms, Kaibartas and Brittials. It was not rare to find many Brahmins, Kalitas and Kayasthas among the Moamarias. The disciples of the Mayamara Satra or its branches were scattered all over the Assam as far as Goalpara. "The word Matak by which the Morans and loosely the Moamarias are known is also applied to a robust and sturdy man lacking in refinement and not easily amenable to reason."

(These are the main characteristics of Mongoloid or Non-Aryan people. The Moamarias consisted largely of these ethnic groups of people).

"The Moamarias derive the term Matak from two words -Mó, opinion, will or creed, and AK, one; and they believe the epithet is justly applied to them as they pride themselves in being of one persuasion, will and mind."

The Moamarias regarded Nityananda Mahanta and Balkunthanath Deva as my martyrs and took a vow to avenge their death and that is how they fought when the opportunity came. Primarily the motive of the Morans was to avenge the injustices done to their Gurus but subsequently they developed political ambitions. Once they got the taste

130. AAR., pp. 254-55.
131. Ibid., p.255.

* King Gadadhar Singha, in his endeavour to cripple the Vaishnavite Mahantas, caused the death of Balkunthanath Deva. See Dr. S.K. Bhuyan's Swargadeo Rageswar Singha, p.142.
of exercising independent authority, it became their principal motive in
their subsequent risings. The prediction of Kirtichandra Barbarua that
"if they once taste the prestige of sovereign authority, they will never
stoop to paly the role of subjects" proved correct." Aniruddhadeva, the
first Mahanta of the Mayamara Satra, organised it on a democratic and po­
pular basis. Nityananda and Baikunthanath suffered martyrdom while Chatu­
rbhuja and Astabhuj took to arms. All of them had contributions to make
for the Moamarias to be converted from a religious to a politico-mili­
tary organisation which proved most effective in 1769 when the Ahom king
Lakshmi Singha was dethroned by them.

Tentative Intervention of The English: After the king Gaurinath
Singha's virtual expulsion from Nowgong he came to Gauhati, rather south
Gauhati which served as the temporary headquarters of the Ahom Government.
By this time the Darrang prince Krishnanarayana came to exercise his sway
practically over the North Gauhati and encamped at Asvakranta, a hillock
just opposite to the temporary headquarters of Gaurinath Singha. Krishna­
narayana's associates, if the Bengal Burkandazes, then proved most formida­
able to the Ahoms on the south bank of the Brahmaputra river. This compe­
tled the Ahom king and his officers to seek the help of the English East
India Company. Thenceforth seeking help from the said Company became a
second nature with the Ahom Government. Inherent weaknesses of the Ahom
administration compelled the king to seek foreign help to deal with the
Burkandazes and the Moamarias. But simultaneously the Assam Government
endeavoured to effect an amicable settlement with Krishnanarayana by re­
instating him on the throne of Darrang with all the privileges what his
father and grand-father had enjoyed. But such endeavour bore no fruit.

The Government of Assam requested Danial Raush to exert his influen­
ce on Krishnanarayana for reaching a settlement. It was expected that Raush
on the strength of his past services to Krishnanarayana, would succeed
in persuading the Darrang prince Krishnanarayana to give up

182. AAR., p. 209.
his enmity with the Ahom monarch. Raush utilised the king's request for help to avail himself of the opportunity to realise the outstanding dues from the Assam merchants. He came to Gauhati and met Krishnanarayana in the vicinity of North Gauhati on 27 April 1792. Raush was successful in persuading Krishnanarayana to accept the offer made by the Ahom king. But the Bengal Burkandazes stood in the way. Krishnanarayana was in fact a virtual puppet in the hands of such leaders of the Burkandazes as Hari Singh Hakari, Durjan Singh and other influential JamadaAs. They prevented him from coming to terms with the Ahom monarchy by raising claims that Krishnanarayana was in arrears in the payment of salaries to them for more than five months. Their demand was that Krishnanarayana should pay their dues before entering into any terms with the Ahom monarchy. They also argued that they would go back to Bengal, if only they got a Parwana to that effect from the Government of Bengal. The basis of their demand lay in the fact that Krishnanarayana recruited and brought them with the permission of the Company Government.

On the other hand, the Government of Assam repeatedly deputed its men to the Company's officers at Rangpore, Coach Behar and some times even to Calcutta. They sought help from the Company Government on the ground that the Darrang prince, Krishnanarayana, had recruited his mercenaries within the Company's territory and, as such, the Bengal Government had some degree of responsibility either to recall the Burkandazes who were Company's subjects or to help the Assam king in suppressing the Burkandazes as well as to suppress the Moamarias. The Bengal Government instructed the Collector of Rangpore "that no open levies of the kind in question are to be
allowed within the district under his charge." But it was without any effect. The mischief had already been done in that Krishnanarayana's army had already begun supplementing their precarious wages by pillage and plunder and became a threat to the Ahom king Gaurinath Singha. It became apparent that at any moment the king might be attacked by the Burkandazes quartered at Asvakranta.

On Raush failure in his first attempt to persuade Krishnanarayana to come to terms with the Ahom king, Medhi Barphukan sent a letter to the Collector of Rangpore informing him of the unwillingness of the Burkandazes to leave Assam for Bengal unless they received any order on that effect from the Bengal Government. Raush also sent a letter to the same officer along with that of the Medhi Barphukan stating that further continuance of the depredations, caused by the Burkandazes, would ruin the Assam trade to such an extent that it would be "to the great detriment of Bengal and every individual concerned in it." Lumsden, the Collector of Rangpore, immediately forwarded the letter of the Medhi Barphukan to the Government at Calcutta confirming the facts stated therein. The Board of Directors in their meeting of 8 June 1792 resolved to instruct the Collector of Rangpore to issue a Parwana calling back the Burkandazes to Bengal on pain of being declared outlaws. The Collector did it, but the Burkandazes demurred. The Burkandazes misbehaved with the Assamese messengers who carried the Parwana, issued by the Collector of Rangpore. Jam Singh, a Jamadar who was in the service of Raush, was also ill-treated by the Burkandazes as Jam Singh accompanied the Assamese...

133. BPC, March 16, 1792 as cited in AIR, p.283.
134. AIR, p.284.
135. Ibid.
messengers. As Raush supported the cause of the Ahom monarchy, he incurred the enmity of his former protege Krishnanarayana and his followers. The Burkandazes struck on 30 June 1792. They attacked the boats carrying Raush and the Assamese messengers. They, however, escaped unhurt.

This attack on Raush and Assamese officials showed that the Burkandazes were not at all willing to return to Bengal. As Burkandazes paid no heed to the Parwana the Medhi Barphukan despatched another letter to the Collector of Rangpore requesting to despatch a force to deal with both the Burkandazes and the Moamarias. The letter immediately was forwarded by the Collector of Rangpore to the Bengal Government. The Board of Directors instead of sending a force directed the Collector of Rangpore in pursuance of their resolution of 18 July 1792 to attach the properties of the Parwana-disobeying leaders of the Burkandazes situated within the Company's territories. Accordingly the Collector of Rangpore did attach the properties of Hari Singh Hazari, Baug Roy, Durjan Singh, Matto Singh, Hurdy Roy, the leaders of the Burkandazes. This action did not produce any result as the properties attached by the Collector of Rangpore were of small value. The refractory Burkandazes were in no mood to quit Assam. They were more interested in accumulating plunders in Assam than the meagre property they left in Bengal. Their fortunes attracted more Burkandazes from Bengal to come to Assam. This influx of Burkandazes could not be checked by any authority in Assam. It was reported by the Darrang prince Krishnanarayana to the Collector.

136. AAR., p.288.
of Rangpore that there were in his service about 2500 Burkamdaes\(^\text{\textsuperscript{137}}\) including Jamadars also. In fact many more mercenaries were there.

The following letter to the Company Government of Bengal from the Ahom monarch Gaurinath Singha to Governor-General Lord Cornwallis, 9 August 1792; from Henry Douglas, Commissioner of Cutch Behar, 14 July 1792; from John Lumsden, Collector of Rangpore, 10 September 1792; from Raush, 17 September 1792 underlined the seriousness of the situation. Thereupon the Government of Bengal decided to take positive steps in the matters of sending aid to Gaurinath Singha. The reasons for this were twofold: assistance to the Ahom monarchy and protection of the Company's trade. Lumsden, Collector of Rangpore, was informed on 19 September 1792 by Lord Cornwallish that Thomas Welsh would be deputed to Assam to ascertained the nature of help required by the Ahom monarch. Captain Welsh was to be accompanied by a common escort as his personal bodyguard. Accordingly on 29 September 1792 Lord Cornwallish issued necessary orders for the despatch of six Companies of soldiers under Captain Welsh to Assam. Each Company consisted of sixty Sepoys including Sergent Major, Sarkar, Doctor and the usual number of smiths, firemans, armourers, carpenters, Sicklegures, Sailmakers, Chucklers, bilders, Lascars and doolies. Lt. Robert MacGregor as Adjutant, Ensign Thomas wood as surveyor and Dr. John Peter Wade as Assistant Surgeon were also ordered to accompany the detachment.

On his arrival at Goalpara on 8 November 1792 Captain Welsh obtained detailed information from Raush and Bishnumarayana, who was

\(^{137}\) Krishnamarayana to Lumsden, Sept. 16, BPC., Oct. 26, 1792, No.17 as cited in AAR., p.290.
\(^{138}\) AAR., p.292; AAA., p.78.
\(^{139}\) AAR., p.301; DPC., p.6.
\(^{140}\) Members of Council to Lumsden, Sept.19, BPC., Sept.19, 1792, No.17, as cited in AAR., p.301.
\(^{141}\) AAR., p.301.
expelled by Krishnanarayana from Darrang. Welsh was convinced that
the assistance to the Assam king was an immediate necessity and he
decided to proceed at once for Gaurinath's help. Captain Welsh started
up stream on 16 November 1792 and met the king Gaurinath Singha
at a distance of three miles from Nagarbera on 19 November 1792. Cap-
tain Welsh took the Ahom king back to Gauhati whence he fled earlier.
Captain Welsh left Gaurinath Singha at a distance of eight miles from
Gauhati under the protection of one Company of Sepoys and with remain-
ing five Companies he made a nightly attack on the followers of the
Bairagi on the night of 24 November 1792. This Bairagi earlier organ-
mised an attack on the entourage of Gaurinath Singha. Welsh's expedi-
tion cleared Gauhati of the rebels and then the Assam king made a
triumphant entry to it to be received by the Sepoys.

Negotiations with Krishnanarayana and the leaders of the Burkandazes
were started very soon. A Parwana was sent by the Captain Welsh
on 27 November 1792 to the Jamadars of the Burkandazes asking them
to come to Gauhati. The response to the Parwana of the Burkandazes
was evasive. Krishnanarayana was also called upon to come to Gauha-
iti. Krishnanarayana responded similarly. Captain Welsh realised that
Krishnanarayana and the mercenaries were humouring him with false
promises. He decided to take action against them. He was, however,
"convinced that Kissan Narain had the strongest intention to put
himself under my" (Welsh's) "protection, but was prevented by the
Jamadars, who had him entirely in their power, and obliged him to a
act in the manner they conceived would best promote their interested
views." Accordingly Captain Welsh resolved to attack the Burkandazes

142. HA., p.203; AAR., p.310; AAA., p.79.
143. Welsh to Cornwallish, Jan. 1. BPC., Jan. 14, 1792, No.21, as
cited in AAR., p.3129.
who were in possession of the whole of North Gauhati. They had several strongholds in the area, the strongest being at Asvakranta. On the morning of 6 December 1792 Welsh's troops numbering 208 Sepoys crossed the Brahmaputra in the Sukreswar Ghat and at day break landed at Asvakranta without being noticed till they reached the shore. At Asvakranta there were three thousand men loyal to Krishnanarayana. But they could not withstand disciplined Sepoys having superior arms. Thus, Krishnanarayana's force were easily dispersed, and several of them were killed. Then Krishnanarayana rallied his men some distance away from Gauhati. Lt. Williams was sent against them. He worsted the Burkandazes at Khatikuchi. Some of the Burkandazes fled even into the Bhutan area.

Fortified with foreign help, Gaurinath Singha pursued a vindictive policy towards his erstwhile rebel subjects. Therefore, Captain Welsh had to take some strong measures to stop the atrocities of the Ahom king and his officers. Thus, the Barbarua and Soladhara Phukan were placed under arrest, the Barphukan was dismissed and the king himself was severely rebuked and temporarily deprived of all authority. In addition to this following measures were also taken, viz.

- proclamation of General amnesty, abolition of punishments extending to death or mutilation, except after a regular trial;
- convocation of all chiefs and nobles at Gauhati for the purpose of framing measures for re-establishing the king's authority.

The Bengal mercenaries who were in Gaurinath's service were also found to be oppressive. They furnished information about Welsh's movements to their freinds who were in the service of the Darrangi prince.
Krishnanarayana. Welsh caused their deportation to Rangpore. A new Barphukan was appointed. After having dismissed the selfish and oppressive ministers of Gaurinath Singha and compelled Gaurinath Singha to co-operate, Welsh turned his attention towards Krishnanarayana. He was induced to come to Gauhati on 30 May 1793. Krishnanarayana was accompanied to Gauhati by a son of Haradatta and his remaining 400 mercenaries. They were ultimately sent to Rangpore and Krishnanarayana was forced to accept it. Krishnanarayana was made the customary oath of allegiance to Gaurinath Singha and was installed as Raja of Darrang. He agreed to pay an annual tribute of Fifty-eight thousand of rupees in lieu of the feudal obligation of supplying soldiers and labourers. The Raja of Darrang turned out to be a landlord since his political powers were vested in the Barphukan. Some of his mercenaries who earlier fled to Bhutan reappeared shortly afterwards but were easily dispersed.

Forced by the necessity of taking foreign help to suppress the Moamarias, Gaurinath Singha now placed himself completely under the protection of the British. His petition was referred to the Governor-General and was recommended by Captain Welsh with a request to two more battalions with necessary war provisions in case he was to bring the Moamarias to submission. As a result, six more Companies of Sepoys were sent from Bengal.

Captain Welsh decided to spend the rainy season at Gauhati and utilise the intervening period to consolidate the king's authority. The dismissed Barbarua and Soladhara Phukan began to create mischief.
and so they were arrested and deported to Rangpore. The settlement with Krishnanarayana, suppression of the Burkandasses and dismissal of hated officers of the king Gaurinath Singha proved helpful in obtaining the adherence of the three great Gossains, and of many officials and feudatory chiefs. "Towards the end of October" (1793) "an advance gaurd under Lt. MacGregor was sent up the river to Kaliabar, and great exertions were made to send supplies with a view to making the place a base for the comming operations in Upper Assam. The pacification of Nowgong was also effected, and the banditti who infested the river and interrupted communications between Gauhati and Goalpara were suppressed." Now everything was ready for the expedition. But it was very difficult to persuade king Gaurinath Singha to leave Gauhati. He was given to lethargy due to excessive opium-eating. Further, he had doubt about the ability of the troops of Welsh to accomplish the task of the expedition in view of their small number. Anyway, in January 1794 the whole expedition advanced to Kaliabar. Captain Welsh was entrusted with the responsibility of restoring order in the disturbed areas. The king empowered Welsh to employ troops under his command in any way that might seem necessary in the expedition against the Mommarias. Accordingly Welsh proceeded with the task of consolidating the administration and appointed Pani Silia Gohain as the Barbarua after consultation with the Bargohain, Barpatragohain and the Solal Gohain.

Welsh then directed Lt. MacGregor to proceed further ahead. Accordingly he advanced as far as Jorhat. There he met the Burahgohain on 14 February 1794 when he was still maintaining his struggles.

146. HA, p. 208.
against the Moamarias. After three days MacGregor returned to Debar-gaon (Dergaon) from Jorhat but very soon he got an urgent appeal for help from the Burahgohain who was in the mean time approached by a large number of the Moamarias. Lt. MacGregor immediately deputed 24 Sepoys under a Subedar out of his contingent of forty six. And on the following evening Lt. MacGregor followed them in person. He was accompanied by Ensign Wood, a havildar and fourteen Sepoys. They reached Jorhat the following morning at about 8 A.M. The Morans had also advanced quite close to Jorhat. Without waiting for the arrival of the rest of his contingent MacGregor mustered the party of twenty men under the Subedar on reaching Jorhat. These were the men who reached Jorhat earlier. Lt. MacGregor led them out in support of the Burahgohain. Two thousand Moamarias had attacked the Sepoys with cheer as they were confident that the Sepoys would be easily defeated in view of their small number. But the well-equipped Sepoys succeeded in inflicting heavy losses on the Moamarias who were forced to retreat. Four soldiers only were wounded on MacGregor's side. The news of the defeat of the Moamarias reached Captain Welsh on 23 February 1794. He started from Kaliabar leaving only one Company there for gaurding the king and stores. In the course of the advance, Lt. Irwin was sent ahead with two Companies. When these forces reached a place some 12 miles away from Rangpur, they were attacked by the Moamarias. The attackers were easily dispersed and Irwin occupied a strong position on a brick bridge over the river Namdang. Captain Welsh hastened to join the advance-guard and on 18 March 1794 the whole party proceeded to Rangpur which had just been evacuated by the Moamarias. A

large booty was acquired at Rangpur and was sold. The sale-proceeds amounting Rs. 1,17,334 were distributed among the troops as prize money with the 'approval' of Gaurinath Singh. This action afterwards brought down upon Captain Welsh severe rebuke from the Governor-General. Gaurinath's 'approval' of everything proposed by Captain Welsh was immaterial as Gaurinath was practically deprived of all his power and authority. It was presumed that Gaurinath had given his 'approval' under compulsion because when the Royal treasury was practically exhausted. It was possible that Gaurinath might have wished to have a large body in the royal treasury. It was also possible that Captain Welsh took the king's 'approval' for his high handed activities. Be that as it may, on 19 March 1794 Captain Welsh detached a Company to escort Gaurinath Singh to Rangpur. The Raja entered Rangpur two days thereafter. He was accompanied by Bumahgobain, Bargobain, Barphukan and the newly appointed Barbarua.

A Durbar was held on 21 March 1794 where Captain Welsh asked the Raja whether his (Captain) stay in Assam was still necessary whereupon king ma and his ministers answered in the affirmative. At the instance of Captain Welsh the king and his officers promised to pardon the rebels if they returned to their allegiance to the king.

The majority of the Meamarias retreated to their stronghold at Bengmara. On 26 March 1794 Gaurinath Singh and his ministers sent a letter to the Governor-General informing him of the occupation of the Rangpur with the help of Captain Welsh and requested him to allow Welsh and his troops to continue to stay in Assam.

149. HA, p. 211.
150. Ibid.
151. AAR, p. 385.
Very soon the necessity of such continuance was justified. One day after the occupation of Rangpur, about three thousand Burkandazes consisting of Sannyasis and Fakirs entered Assam. They were under the command of Pah Phatik Barua, Hazari Singh and Jagongiri and Cherag Ali Fakir. The advance of the Burkandazes under Hazari Singh, Kanak Singh and Jagongiri Bairagi could not be resisted by the English troops stationed at Jogighupa under Lt. Sloanes. Sloanes was ordered to go back to Tezpur accordingly. The chief commander of the Burkandazes was one Dyan Giri Bairagi who was assisted by Phatik Banua. The task of expelling the Burkandazes then fell on Lt. Dick who was in charge of Gauhati for guarding the Company’s magazine and Golah. After series of encounters the Burkandazes were driven out in several directions to Bhutan. About 14 Sannyasis and Sikhs were killed. One Sannyasi was taken prisoner. Phatik Barua along his newly made a king Padloor fled towards Bhutan. Simultaneously their depredation in Assam, the Sannyasis and the Fakirs had also been committing ravages in the Bengal districts of Rajshahi, Dinajpur and Purnea. It was reported that the Burkandazes numbering about 2000 under Hazari Singh, Kanak Singh and Jagongiri were mainly recruited from the country west of Benaras and were at the payroll and command of Phatik Banua. Lt. Dick, assisted by Lt. Creswell, Lt. Chuttenden and Lt. Robinet, compelled Hazari Singh and his followers to retreat to the jungles.

After Gaurinath Singha was re-installed on the throne, Welsh managed to secure a commercial treaty from the king. Under the treaty of 28 February 1793 the Company gained liberty and reciprocity of

152. SFRB., pp. 114-21; AARs, p. 377.
trade with Assam-subjects. When Captain Welsh was busy with the task of consolidating Gaurinath's authority in Assam, there occurred a radical change in the Company's policy towards Assam and some other adjoining kingdoms. The Company appeared to revert to the policy of non-intervention, although commercial advantages were always sought.

Lord Cornwallis (1786-1793) retired from office towards the end of October 1793 and was succeeded by Sir John Shore, an avowed advocate of the pacific system of forbearance and neutrality in the affairs of the native powers in India. Deputing Captain Welsh with troops to Assam was an act of bold statesmanship on the part of Lord Cornwallis from the imperialist standpoint. But it was a departure from the Act of 1784 which restricted the scope of the Company's interference in the disputes of native powers. However, actuated by imperial designs, Lord Cornwallis dared to take such a step due to his own special relationship with Henry Dundas, President of the Board of Control, and with William Pitt, the Prime Minister of England. Over and above, he enjoyed the confidence of the Board of Directors and was vested with extra-ordinary legal powers by the Act of 1786. There could be no doubt that the Governor-General's act of sending troops to Assam was a clear departure from the pacific system of neutrality as prescribed by the Act of Parliament. But what was possible for Lord Cornwallis was not possible for another Governor-General. Further, at that time the trial of Warren Hastings was going on in full swing. So it was not unlikely that Sir John Shore, the new Governor-General would not venture to do things which...

bore the remotest resemblance to the questionable measure of his predecessor.

Sir John Shore reverted to the policy of non-intervention and hence the troops in Assam under Captain Welsh were recalled. The withdrawal of the troops from Assam took place in July 1754 despite the importunities of the king of Assam. The result was that the province again relapsed into a state of anarchy. Captain Welsh left Assam with a large booty. "The list of articles was as follows - 4,00,000 pieces of gold ornaments, 4,00,000 pieces of silver ornaments, gold to the value of rupees 2,00,00,000 and innumerable quantities of copper, bell-metal, brass and cloths. He also took with him 2,000 boats, one tusk, one shah-elephant and 4,000 guns. The Captain started from Rangpur for Calcutta in the month of Jaistha, Saka, 1716."

It seems the Lord Cornwallis departed from the declared policy of non-intervention for a very valuable consideration.

A brief reference may be made here to the report submitted by Captain Welsh about the conditions of Assam while he was posted at Kaliabaru. The Company Government of Bengal praised the report for its "clearness and accuracy of replies" for which Captain Welsh received the special commendation of the Government. Captain first incorporated in his report the details of the form of Government of Assam and then made his observations on prevailing discontentment in the country. In his opinion the discontentment was the result of a series of misdeeds, viz., the suppression of Mohammala Barjana Gohain by his younger brother Rajeswar Singha through the craftiness

155. HA2, p.212.
156. TB(R), p.131
157. AAR, p.358. See Appendix No.2.
of Kirtichandra Barbarua; the suppression of the rights of hereditary nobility by the appointment of Rupachandra and Kirtichandra to the office of Barbarua; the machinations of the Gohains; the general struggle for power under a weak monarch along with the discontentment of the people resulting from the Moamaria uprisings; execution of the Moamaria Guru Astabhuja and his son; acts of Gaurinath Singha's cruelty and depravity which offered opportunities to his officers to oppress the people; the execution of Bailung Bargohain with his five sons; the mutilation of Sibram Barbarua and other nobles; and the division of the men of consequence in opposite interests, united only by sentiments against the wicked favourites of Gaurinath.

The report of Captain Welsh contained certain interesting information in respect of Gaurinath's weak personality. According to him Gaurinath Singha was "a poor debilitated man, incapable of transacting business, always either washing or praying, and when seen, intoxicated with opium". Gaurinath Singha was vindictive in nature and his treatment towards his enemies was cruel. Due to the Company's intervention restoration of the Assam Raj was effected and a commercial treaty was made possible on 28 February 1793. Captain Welsh was of opinion that so long as the troops of the Company were in Assam the treaty would be respected but in case of their withdrawal violation of the stipulations of the treaty could

158. AAR., p. 360.
159. HA., p. 215.
be expected. Captain Welsh further observed that the recalling of the troops of the Company and the cessation of the British influence would be disastrous to the country. "The chiefs and the principal officers would revive their contest for power and influence producing the same confusion, devastation and massacre from which the country had been rescued by the intervention of the Company. Krishnanarayana would invite the Burmadas to protect him from the vengeance of the Assam Raja. The wicked ministers would be restored to their offices. Commerce would be at a standstill owing to the prevailing confusion and would pass once more into the hands of the monopolists. The monarch would be compelled to abandon his kingdom and seek asylum in foreign territories."

It appeared that Captain Welsh was preparing a blue-print for British occupation of Assam on a permanent basis.

160. AAR., p. 361.
APPENDIX 1

Translation of a new system of Commerce
adopted by the Maharaja Surgy Deo, Assam,
28th February, 1793.

The Maharaja Surgy Deo, highly sensible of the benefit he has experience from the aid which has been afforded to him by the English Government, and desires not only of cementing the harmony and friendship which subsists between him and that power but also of extending the beneficial effects thereof, in general, to the subjects of Bengal and Assam, has, at the recommendation of Captain Welsh, the representatives at his Court of the said English Government, agreed to abolish the injudicious system of Commerce which has heretofore pursued, and to adopt in its stead the following plan, liable however to such alterations and amendments as occasions may require, for the mutual benefit and comfort of the subjects of both countries.

Article 1

That henceforth there shall be a reciprocal and entire liberty of Commerce between the subjects of Bengal and those of Assam for all and singular goods and merchandizes on the conditions and in such manner as is settled in the following rules.

Article 2

That to facilitate this free intercourse between the subjects of both nations, those of Bengal, in fulfilling the conditions hereafter prescribed, be permitted to proceed with their boats loaded with merchandizes into Assam, and to expose their goods for sale, at any place or in any manner may best suit their purposes, without being to any other duties than are established by these Articles.
Article 3

That a regular Impost be levied on all goods or merchandizes, whether of export or import, and that these duties be fixed as follows:-

Imports.

1st.-- That the salt of Bengal be subject to an Impost of 10 per cent. on the supposed prime cost, reckoning that invariably at 400 Rupees per 100 maunds of 84 sicca weight to the seer.

2nd.-- That the Broad Cloths of Europe, the Cotton Cloths of Bengal, Carpets, Copper, Lead, Tin, Tutamag, pearls, Hardwares, Jewellery, Spices, and the various other Goods imported into Assam, pay an equal Impost of 10 per cent. on the Invoice price.

3rd.-- That Warlike Implements and Military Stores be considered contraband and liable to confiscation, excepting the supplies of those articles which may be required for the Company's troops stationed in Assam, which, and every other matter of convenience for the said troops, whether of clothing or provisions, are in all cases to be exempted from duties.

Exports.

1st.-- That the Duties to be levied on all articles of Export (except in such cases as are hereafter mentioned) be invariably 10 per cent, reckoning agreeable to the rates hereby annexed to each, viz.,

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<th>Item</th>
<th>Rate (Rs. As. P.)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mooga Dhotees, per md. of 84 sa.wt. to the seer</td>
<td>95 0 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mooga Thread,</td>
<td>70 0 0</td>
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<td>Pepper,</td>
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<td>Elephants' Teeth,</td>
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<td>Cutna Lac</td>
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<td>Chuprah and Jury Lal</td>
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<td>Munjest</td>
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<td>Cotton</td>
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2nd. - That all articles of export not herein specified (with the exception of the following), and for which no certain calculation can be made, be subjected to an equal equal Impost, in such instances always to be paid in kind; and with respect to those articles which have been particularized, that the Duties be received either in money or kind, as may be most convenient to the Merchant; but as it may happen that a temporary scarcity of grain may occur either in Bengal or Assam, to provide against which, Rice and every description of Grain to be exempted from Duties.

Article 4

That any person or persons detected in attempting to defraud the Survey Deo of the Duties hereby established, shall shall be liable to a confiscation of his or their property, and for ever after debarred the privilege of the trade.

Article 5

That for the purpose of collecting the said Duties, Agents be appointed and Custom Houses established for the present, one at the Candahar Chokey and one at Gowhatty.

Article 6

That it be the business of the Agents to be stationed at the Candahar Chokey to collect the Duties on all Imports and on all Exports, the produce of the country to the westward of Gowhatty, for which they are to be held responsible. They are to examine all boats passing up and down the river and, after having settled with the proprietor for the amount of the Duties, they are to grant him, a passport, specifying the number and quantity of each article, a copy of which they are to forward, without delay, to the Agents at Gowhatty, whither, or
further, if it be necessary, the Merchant may produce under sanction of the said pass.

Article 7

That it be the business of the Agents stationed at Goghatty to collect the Duties on all Exports the produce of the country parallel to it north and south, and also on all Exports the produce of the country to the eastward, as far as Nowgong, for which in like manner they are to be held responsible. They are to examine all boats passing down the river, and to grant passport to the proprietors, copies of which to be forwarded to the Agents at the Candahar Chokey who are to re-examine the cargo, lest, on the way between Goghatty and their station, the merchant may have taken goods on board which could not be suspected specified in the pass granted at that place.

Article 8

That as an incitement to the Agents to be industrious in the discharge of their duty, a recompense be made to them, bearing a proportion to the amount of the collections, and that for the present it be fixed at 12 per cent on the said collections, which is calculated to defray all incidental expenses.

Article 9

That the said Agents be required to be sureties for each other and that the whole be bound by engagements to the Surgy Deo, not only for the purity of their conduct in the collections, but also that they abstain from having any concern, either directly or indirectly, in trade.
Article 10

That a copy of their accounts be produced on or before the 10th of every month, and that the payment of the collections be made into the hands of any person the Surgy Deo may appoint to receive it at the expiration of every quarter.

Article 11

That the standard weight hereafter, both for Exports and Imports be 40 seers to the maund, and 84 sicca weight to the seer.

Article 12

That as much political inconvenience might arise to both Governments from granting a general license to the subjects of Bengal to settle in Assam, no European merchant, or adventurer of any description, be allowed to fix their residence in Assam, without having previously obtained the permission of the English Government and that of the Surgy Deo.

Article 13

That as Captain Welsh, the representative of the said English Government, in consideration of the Surgy Deo having removed the prohibitory restrictions which have hitherto existed, to the detriment of a free intercourse, has signified his intention of bringing to punishment all persons from Bengal, offending against the established laws of Assam, or infringing these Articles, so the Surgy Deo, on his part, declares he will punish all abuses in his subjects, tending to obstruct or discourage the reciprocal intercourse this system is designed to promote.
Article 14

That copies of these Articles be affixed at every public place throughout Assam, that none may plead ignorance, and that Captain Welsh be requested to send one officially to his Government.

(Sd) THO. WELSH, Captain.

*Source - TBS., p.134 ff.*

APPENDIX 2

Welsh's Report on Assam, 1794

From Captain Welsh, to Edward Hay, Esq., Secretary to Government, dated 6th February 1794.

In obedience to the orders of the Honourable the Governor General in Council, I beg lose no time in replying to the questions proposed in your letter of the 6th ultimo.

The information transmitted is, I may venture to say, correct in the most material points.

1st Question.

"What form of government subsisted in Assam previous to your arrival there. In replying to this query you are to specify, as far as may be in your power, the relative degree of authority possessed
by the Rajah and the different Chiefs."

Answer to 1st Question.

At the period in question a subversion of all regular government had taken place, but the question involves the ancient form of government and the most important alterations which it may have experienced. At present the outlines of the system will suffice for the information of the Board; it deserves a minute detail at a period of more leisure.

The right of conquest had vested the dominion of this Kingdom in the race of Surgee Dee and the descendants of the principal associates of Sookapha, the original conqueror. The form of government was consequently monarchical and aristocratical.

The monarchy was possessed by the descendants of Sookapha, being partly hereditary being partly elective. It was hereditary in the fraternal line. In failure of brothers in the direct line of the Monarch's sons; in failure of these in the sons of the brothers next in seniority. Beyond this line, the aristocracy exercised a latitude of election among the nearest relations of the late monarch with some attention to the claims of nearer consanguinity, but more to those of personal merit.

The Monarch was the first executive Officer and presided over every department of the State. He distributed honours, titles, and offices, without the concurrence, but not without the council of the aristocracy. He was not lord of the soil, but would alienate lands for the legal tenure of which the possessor had not written documents. All uncultivated land was entirely at his disposal. He possesses no power over the lives and property of his subjects. He could not make
peace and war without the concurrence of the aristocracy. He treated with foreign powers by his own ambassadors and in his own name, but with the previous concurrence of the aristocracy. In the public councils, he possessed the privilege of a casting voice. In executing sentence of death on a criminal criminal his order alone would sanction a form by which the criminal's blood might be shed. He alone coined money. His person was sacred.

Aristocracy:

The aristocracy, or Patrah-Mutree, was composed of three Gohains and the two Prime three Gohains or Patrah were the Burh Patrah Gohain, Burh Gohain, and Boorah Gohain. They were permanent and hereditary counsellors of State little inferior to the Monarch in rank. On all occasions their counsel, and on all important affairs their concurrence, were indispensable. They proclaimed the Monarch and could depose him in the instance of incapacity or great delinquency. Some doubt, however, exists of their legal power of deposition.

In the provinces allotted to each, they exercised most of the independent rights of sovereignty. In the execution of sentence of death, their order could not sanction a form in which the blood of the criminal might be shed, but they could authorise his death by drowning. In the event of war or the construction of public works they furnished their proportion of militia or men. They likewise supplied some trifling articles for the king's stores, but paid no other revenue. They ruled their provinces on the principles of the general system. The pre-eminence was possessed by the Gohains who obtained from the Monarch the title of Roye and the additional services of 2,000 men.
If the son of a Gohain was incapacitated by youth, want of abilities, or other causes, he was excluded from the succession.

The Monarch, with the concurrence of the two Gohains, conferred the appointment on the late Gohain's brother or his brother's son. In failure of incapacity or delinquency of the nearest claimants, a greater latitude was allowed, but in every instance the vacancy was supplied from five families descended from the associates of Sookapha. In the event of delinquency of Gohain might be removed from his office by the Monarch with the concurrences of two Gohains.

The Prime Ministers, or Muntree, were the Burra Burwah, and the Burra Fogon. Their offices were not hereditary, but they were chosen from four families, the descendants of the associates of Sookapha. The Ministers were removable at the Monarch's pleasure with the concurrence of the Gohains.

The Burra Burwah commanded the forces, received the revenues, and administered the justice of the upper provinces from suideea on the eastern confines to Kiliabar in Decanpah and Derung in Ooterpah with an exception in favour of the provinces under the Government of the Gohains. He could not sanction the execution of a criminal by any form of death. The Burra Fogon's office was considered of higher importance, though of later creation than the former. The jurisdiction commenced at Koliabar and Derung and included the whole of the kingdom to the western confines. His jurisdiction was similar to that of Burra Burwah, but its distance from the seat of Government rendered it necessary that he should possess the power of executing sentence of death by drowning. Appeals from his judicial decisions were scarcely practicable, and were only made on very important occasions.
Department of Government, Civil, Military and Ecclesiastical:
The civil establishment was composed of the officers who superintended the various arts sciences, trades, sources of public revenues, employments of the King's household, and numerous other departments. About 12 Fogons and 20 Burwahs were allotted for these offices, and were from the nine families of hereditary nobility. They were amenable for their conduct to the Monarch only.

In the department of Justice, the Neesay Khodah Fogon represented the sovereign, and received appeals from the Burwah and Burra Fogon. Every officer under Government was a Judge in his department, with an appeal to his superior officer, and ultimately to the Monarch's representative. In the Gohain provinces no appeal was allowed from the decision of the Chief. In the administration of justice, witnesses were examined and written documents received in evidence, the Judge decided according to the customs of the country and to the best of his judgment, as no written laws existed previous to the introduction of Brahmanical religion. The Monarch would authorise any person of consequence to take cognizance of particular causes in any part of the kingdom.

Military Establishment: The army was a militia, and organised in the following manner:-

Every family furnished the Sovereign with one man in four as a permanent militia or standing army. When the public service required an additional force, two men, and in cases of great emergency either of war or public works, three men. The first was denominated Mool, the second Dowal, the third Tewal. The fourth who remained
to cultivate the soil, and the four are termed Ghote Pike Officers.

Twenty men were commanded by a Burra, one hundred by a Khotkee, one thousand by a Hazarikkee, three thousand by a Rajekoar, and six thousand by a Fogon. The Burra Burwa and Burra Fogon as Commanders-in-Chief, had each the particular command of a body of twelve thousand men, The Fogons, Rajekoars, and Hazarikkees were nominated by the Monarch, but with the advice and concurrence of the Gohains. The Khotkeas and Burras were appointed by the respective Fogons and Rajekoars. The privates might demand through the regular channel the dismissal of their Burras and Khotkeas, and the appointment of an officer of their own nomination. Each officer administered justice to the men under his command with an appeal to his superior officer, and ultimately to the Neeay Khodah Fogon.

From these services were exempted the descendants of the hereditary nobility, unless in the event of delinquency, and all who possessed offices under Government.

Military stores were under the superintendence of the Kargoriah Fogon.

Ecclasiastical: It is only necessary to observe that the Brahmanical religion has prevailed since the time of Rooder Sing, who reigned about 70 years ago.

The creation of three lesser Gohains from the same families are the former appears to have been the principal legal alteration in the Civil and Military Departments. The Office of Burra Fogon was of later creation also. The recent Gohains are the Suddea Koa Gohains, Governor of the eastern
In a lapse of centuries every possible deviation from regular Government might be enumerated, but it will be proper to confine the discussion to those illegal innovations, which proved the first source of the late troubles.

Source of discontent and disaffection: The sacred regularity of succession to the Throne was violated by the power of the Burra Burwah, in the instance of Rajah Swar Sing who superseded his elder brother Mohun Mala Deo.

The right of the hereditary nobility were superseded by the appointment of Robp Sumi, and at a later period of his son Chiste Sund, the grandfather of Joinath, to the high office of Burra Burwah. Joinath is the dismissed Burra Burwah.

The power of the State and the direction of the Royal Councils were now completely diverted from the lawful channel of the Gohains. The secret machinations of the latter co-operating with the general struggle for powers under a weak and vicious administration and with the discontents of the people seem to have excited the Moran and Maimaria insurrections.

The execution of the Gooroo or High Priests of the Momactias and of his son, suspected, probably with great justice, as the principal authors of the troubles, was the chief cause of the subsequent insurrections.

Mohun Meeha Deo's death by Moran poison had rendered legitimate the latter part of Luckee Sing's reign, but the sons of his elder
brothers possessed a right to the succession superior to that of Gourinaut Sing; the expedition of Mutilation, however had left Gourinaut (the present Rajah of Assam) without a rival, and he became lawful Sovereign at an early period of life.

The debauched minority, the ignorance, imbecility, caprice, execrable cruelty, and oppression of Government, whose ministers and low favourites were the dread, detestation, and shame of the great, the scourage, and execration of the people, involved the whole kingdom in confusion.

The Burh Gohain and his five sons were murdered. Adasooria, Burra Burwah of hereditary nobility, and numerous adherents suffered mutilation.

All the men of consequence were divided in opposite interests; but the whole seem united in sentiments against the vile favourites of Gourinaut.

Every kind of oppression was practised on the people. The Momarias succeeded probably by the connivance of the King's Generals—certainly by their supineness. The Boora Gohain may with great justice be suspected of having favoured the insurrection. The king fled from his capital on the approach of the insurgents and repaired to Gowhattty. The Boora Gohain and other persons of consequence, many petty chiefs of districts and towns, and some adventurers, with a very few followers, assumed independence in various parts of the country.

The same crimes and oppressions afflicted the vicinity of the Monarch's residence wherever he fled. It is probable that the Diga Rajah, of Derangh, was provoked by similar oppression to
rebel, yet there is some reason to think that his principal motive was the opportunity to assert independence which the times afforded. He perished by the execrable hands of executioners. His son, deprived of the succession, seized Derangh and Kamroop with the assistance of the Burkandases.

The Rajahs of the Noaduwar esteemed the times favourable to their personal independence, which was accordingly asserted, without any apparent provocation. A bold adventurer, with two or three hundred men, advanced to Gohatty, and Surgee Deo fled to Bengal.

Relative authority of the Rajah and different Chiefs: This question has been partly answered. It remains to notice the western Rajahs of Doomriah, Derangh, Beltolah, Rannygong and Noaduwar.

Surgee Deo's title of Sovereignty over these Chiefs on the right of conquest or voluntary submission.

With the concurrence of the Patrah, or Patrah Muntree, he could dismiss a Rajah, and appoint his brother to fill the vacancy or his son in failure or the fraternal line. It is doubtful whether he possessed the lawful power to put a Rajah to death.

The Rajahs were Judges in their own districts, but with an appeal to the Burra Fogan and the Monarch. They must attend personally with their complement of men, when summoned by the Surgee Deo. All the Rajahs, except the Ranees, pay an annual revenue, in addition to the number of men they might furnish on any emergency.

Confines, Suddia, Miree, Duffala Orika, Botan, Naga, Kosaree, Jointa, and the Garrows paid tribute to the Monarch of Assam.
2 Question.

"How far Surgee Deo, Rajah of Assam, has been restored the exercise of his legal authority? You are desired to signify particularly whether any of his subjects still refuse submission to, or continue to act independently of him and if any should come under this description, it is wished that you should communicate their names, quality, forces, and situation, with the grounds of their disaffection as far as you are acquainted therewith. It is also desired that you should state your opinion whether any and what measures are necessary to be pursued for establishing obedience to the Rajah's authority, and the period required for carrying those measures into execution."

Answer to 2nd Question.

The limited degree of authority which the Surgee Deo at present enjoys, he derives from the countenance of the Company's troops.

The different Chiefs and Rajahs profess submission and obedience to the authority of the Surgee Deo, but seem all inclined to act independently of it. The grounds of their disaffection are enumerated in reply to the first question, and their military force appears to be extremely despicable.

I am clearly of opinion that to establish obedience to the Rajah's authority, it is only necessary that the mediating power should more decidedly interfere, and declare its determination to support, the Government of Assam in all its constituent parts.

3 Question.

"Whether you think there is any probability that the Principal Rajahs of Chiefs will soon be prevailed upon to accept your and Rajah's
invitation to assemble for the purpose of concerting a form of government, and in that case how long it will be before such an assembly can be formed and admitting them to meet, whether you have any hopes from your knowledge of the characters and views of the individuals that they will be induced to agree on a plan for the settlement and tranquility of the country."

Answer to 3rd Question.

By proceeding to the capital I shall have an opportunity of requiring the personal attendance of all those Chiefs who are stationed in our route, and who only agreeably to prescriptive rules are necessary to establish the original form of Government. Convinced of the impossibility of prosecuting with success their ambitions designs, and of being protected by the mediating power against the tyranny of the Surgee Deo, they will I doubt not, unite and agree to a plan for the settlement and tranquility of the country. The period required to effect this depends upon adventitious circumstances.

4th Question.

"The late Ministers having been dismissed and the Rajah's incapacity for the government of his country being asserted, whether you know any person or persons of sufficient ability, weight, and authority in that country for supplying the places of the dismissed Ministers. If you do, you are desired to name them and to deliver your opinion how far their appointment could be made with the Rajah's consent, and would be acceptable to the principal people. It is also wished that you should specify how far the Minister lately elected by the Rajah appears to you to possess the requisite qualifications for the trust committed to him."
Answer to 4th Question.

On my arrival at the capital I shall have an opportunity of consulting the three Gohains, whose concurrence is necessary in the appointment of Ministers. I cannot yet venture to recommend any one to fill the important office of Burra Burwah.

The nomination of the late appointed Burra Fogon appears to be generally acceptable to the people; and I have reasons to think that he possesses the requisite qualifications for the trust committed to him.

5th Question.

"Whether Kissnarain since his admission to the Raj of Derangh has behaved with proper submission to the Surgee Deo, and whether you can rely upon Kissnarain's assistance, if required, in supporting Surgee Deo."

Answer to 5th Question.

Kissnarain since his admission to the Raj of Derrungh, has behaved with proper submission to the Surgee Deo, or rather has acted compliance with my wishes, in every instance. I do not think his regard for the interests of the Surgee Deo would induce him to contribute his assistance, but I can rely upon Kissnarain's affording his services, whenever required by me.

6th Question.

"What are the reasons in your opinion of the Rajah's delay in proceeding to his capital and whether any and what obstacles occur to this measured."
Answer to 6th Question.

The late Ministers, and other interested advisers, represented to their infatuated Monarch the danger of returning to his capital, and to their successful attempts to awakened his fears I partly attributed the delay. But the Rajah's extreme indolence and impotence, both of body and mind, would naturally render him averse to a measure, which must be attended with some degree of personal exertion. He is now, however, on his way thither.

7th Question.

"Whether the Commercial Regulations settled between you and the Rajah are considered to be in force, whether any and what benefit has resulted from them, and whether you think they admit of any, and what alterations, with a view to the improvement of the commercial intercourse between the two States?"

Answer to 7th Question.

The Commercial Regulations settled between the Rajah and myself are in full force, but the principal benefit which has arisen from them is the demolition of an iniquitous monopoly, which ultimately must be productive of great pecuniary advantage and in the meantime removes the distresses of the people. Resulting from the collection at the Candahar chokey the sum of Arcott £. 12,012-2-9 has been received during the space of nine months, after defraying incidental expenses, and from this source the Rajah is to receive annually £.12,000/- and the overplus is destined to defray part of the expense of the detachment.
I am of opinion that this commercial compact will admit of considerable alteration with a view to the improvement of trade between the two States. But as the efficacy of such alteration depends, in the first instance, on the restoration of order and, in the second, on the degree of influence the Honourable Board may be desirous of obtaining in the affairs of Assam. Before I can give a decisive answer on this subject, I beg I may be indulged with some time to be assured of the former, and to be informed of the latter.

8th Question.

"Whether from Your knowledge of the Rajah's character you are of opinion that after the return of the Detachment, he will observe the stipulations he has entered into or may further agree to."

Answer to 8th Question.

From a knowledge of the Rajah's character and the views of many individuals in power and favour, whose personal interests are affected by the stipulations entered into with him, I am decidedly of opinion that none would be observed, supposing the detachment and all control on the part of the British Government is withdrawn.

9th Question.

"Whether you think it probable, in the event of your detachment being recalled, that the Government of the Country will be so regulated as to admit of a beneficial commercial intercourse between the two States, and to what extent, and in what articles you suppose such a commerce may be carried on. In your answer to this query you will state such information as you may have obtained relating to the productions and actual commerce of Assam."
Answer to 9th Question.

This query may be considered under three distinct heads viz.:

1st.- The consequences of the recall of the detachment, with respect to commerce which will be noticed in my reply to the 13th query.

2nd.- The articles of commerce.

3rd.- The probable extent, and actual state of commerce.

IMPORTS

Articles of Commerce: From the eastern confines or Suidea, copper, cotton, spring salt, fir trees.

From the northern confines Miree supplies copper, munjeet, ouka, and Duffala supply munjeet, long pepper, ginger goomdan, Maytoon, an animal of the kine species. Botan supplies musk, blankets, cowtails, small horses, gola boraz, rock salt, Nainta, kind of cloth, Goom, Sing, an embroidered cloth, Daroka, a silk of a mixture of green, red and yellow colours.

From the southern confines, Naga supplies cotton, Lickibilla, a silk cloth, Toatbund, a silk cloth, Narakapore, an embroidered silk red hair, (?) and Nagazatee spears. The Garrows supply cotton, copper, iron, coarse cloth.

From the western confines or Bengal, copper and other metals, red lead, woollens of Europe, chiefly of the coarser kind, cotton, of Bengal, chiefly of the coarser kind, chinty particularly kinkhobs, cloves, nutmegs, mace, cinnamon, blue vitriol, assafetida, alum, damok, orpiment, a variety of drugs, salt.
The exports to Bengal only will be noticed here, they are divided into:

1st.- The produce of the other confines.

2nd.- The produce of Assam

1st.- Cotton in considerable quantity, munjeet in doubtful quantity, Fir trees probably in any quantity, ginger probably in some quantity, gold in considerable quantity, borax probably in considerable quantity, musk in considerable quantity, small horses.

2nd.- The merchantable produce of Assam may be considered at more length under three heads of vegetable, mineral, and animal productions.

Vegetable Productions: Sugarcane thrives in every part of Assam. The cane of the best quality affords a granulated sugar, on experiment superior to the cane of Rungpore. The natives convert the juice into a substance (ghoor) unfit for granulation, and of little consequence as an article of export. But in respect to this article it may be confidently asserted, that proper encouragement would render it very valuable.

Pepper vine is cultivated in Kamroop, Derung, Bassadoyung in larger quantity. Bissawenath and other provinces of the kingdom possibly, in no great abundance anywhere, although the soil in many parts would seem extremely favourable to its cultivation.

Poppy grows in luxuriance in most of the Lower Provinces. The natives, however, are as yet unacquainted with the manufacture of merchantable opium, which might be procured in considerable quantity.
Indigo is cultivated in various parts of the kingdom, but in every inconsiderable quantity. Encouragement would probably render this a very valuable export.

Mustard seed, The plant is cultivated in great abundance. The seed and oil are articles of export, the latter, of universal consumption, within the kingdom.

Tobacco was procured in luxuriance in the Lower Provinces and of a superior quantity in the higher. It was formerly an article of export.

Sooparee was produced in great quantity everywhere; the consumption among the inhabitants was enormous, yet it was formerly an article of export.

Ginger is produced everywhere in abundance.

Rice was, and is, produced in very abundance. It is asserted positively that a scarcity has never been known to happen from natural causes. The nature of the seasons in Assam confirms the assertion. It might prove an invaluable export in times of famine in Bengal.

Mineral Productions: Gold is found in considerable quantity among the sands of the Burrampooter and other streams which flow from the northern and southern mountains. It was formerly a source of considerable revenue to the monarch.

Iron might be procured at Bossadayungh, as well as from the Garrows, in considerable quantity.

Saltpetre was procured everywhere in the Upper Province in considerable quantity and might probably in time prove an article of export.
Animal Production: Lac.—The quantity usually exported in favourable times, has not been ascertained, but we may presume, that it was not very inconsiderable from the actual produce, which we have lately observed.

Moongah silk seems to offer a most valuable and extensive article of export with proper encouragement, as the sueral trees on which the worm feeds, were cultivated in the utmost profusion, throughout the whole extent of the kingdom, with few exceptions. A coarser kind of silk is produced by worms which feed on the castor oil trees.

Elephant's teeth have always been an article of export and in the present disolated condition of the country might be procured in any quantity. Increase of population will necessarily diminish the possible quantity of this export.

Rhinoceros's horn was a trifling article of export.

Baffalo's hide has not hitherto proved an article of export.

Deer's skins - The animal abounds in Assam.

Probable extent and actual state of commerce: Until the geography, and other particulars of this and the neighbouring countries, be more particularly known, no decided judgement can be offered relative to the probable extent of the future commerce with Assam. It is certain, that an intercourse of some kind has existed with all the neighbouring nations, particularly with Jainta, Kossaree, and even Sylhet, with the people of Mooglo, now in the possession of the king of Barma or Ava. It is possible that a communication with all the neighbouring nations might be rendered beneficial, to commerce, with proper encouragement, during a considerable lapse of time,
hitherto, we may suppose it has been very inconsiderable, unless, perhaps, in the single article of Bengal salt.

Commercial intercourse is much facilitated by the number of navigable streams, which intersect Assam in every direction, especially in the season of the rains, including a period of seven or eight months. Some of these flow from the mountains on the northern and southern confines. Beyond the eastern confines, the great stream flows to very great distance; but whether there be any navigation or commerce on that river beyond the limits of Assam is doubtful.

Commerce could never have been very considerable in Assam, under the discouraging restraints imposed by a Government particularly jealous of strangers. The subversion of all regular Government, and the desolation of the country, reduced it to nothing. The actual commerce is therefore very inconsiderable, though reviving, and it would be unreasonable to doubt, that it might in time, under the influence of the British Government be rendered extremely beneficial to both States.

10th Question.

"How far the pecuniary commutation proposed by you to be made by the Chiefs in lieu of the supplies of men has been carried into effect, and to what extent the supplies furnished in consequence of such commutation have contributed to defray the expenses of the detachment."

Answer to 10th Question.

The pecuniary commutation in lieu of the levy of men proposed by the Rajahs of Derungh and Beltola in June 1793 is so far carried into effect, that since the period before mentioned, the service of
mem has not been exacted from them; and of the stipulated of annual sum of Rs. 51,600/- to be paid by them and appropriated towards defraying the expenses of the detachment, I have received Rs. 10,000/.

11th Question.

"What is the amount of expenses of the detachment in consequence of the service in which they are employed over and above the ordinary expenses attending it, and whether you know any mode by which these extraordinary expenses may be defrayed."

Answer to 11th Question.

In making a calculation of the extraordinary expenses attending the detachment and deputation, I have been careful not to omit any allowance, which I conceive to be incident to their situation. I have supposed the European officers to be on an average entitled to full batta, and the Non-Commissioned Officers, and Privates, to half time of full and half, of half batta.

The Surgeon Deo has promised that on his arrival at the Capital the arrears due on account of the detachment, &c., shall be discharged, and mode adopted for the regular payment of the expense attending it, which I have represented to him, as amounting annually to about 3 lakhs of rupees, and resources which may contribute to produce this sum are abundant.

12th Question.

"You are further desired to state generally what in your opinion is still necessary or proper to be done for the arrangement of the affairs of Assam, considering that arrangement as concluded by the establi-
shment of the Rajah's authority combined with the general assurances which you were authorised to make in conformity to the instructions of Marquis Cornwallis."

Answer to 12th Question.

In the progress to the establishment of the Rajah's authority throughout his kingdom, I am of opinion that the original form of government, in all its parts, should be preserved as nearly as possible. The little intercourse that natives of Assam were formerly permitted to have with strangers, has rendered them bigotted to the forms and customs of their own country, and innovations which would even prove beneficial to them must be introduced, with some degree of caution. They are naturally of a distrustful and jealous disposition, and it will require time to get the better of their prejudices.

All that appears to me necessary for the arrangement of affairs in Assam, is to effect the union of the Chiefs, without which energy cannot be restored to the Government, and as the Rajah is incapable of either judging or acting right, it is proper that the Government of his country should be vested in the aristocracy; and to prevent the conflict of opinions and interests among the Chiefs which inevitably produce factions and civil discord, it appears to me advisable that the British Government should continue its mediating and controlling influence, as the only means of preserving order and tranquility.

13th Question.

"What in your opinion would be the consequence of recalling the detachment from Assam without further measures or interference on the part of this Government."
Answer to 13th Question.

The contest for influence, power and independence, would re-

ive among the first officers of State, the dependent Rajahs and the
petty Chiefs of districts and towns. The same confusion, devastation
and massacre would ensue. Assam would experience a state of desolation
greater in proportion to the temporary restraints, which the British
influence had imposed on the inhumanity of the monarch, the ambition
and resentment of the Chiefs, and the vengence of the people. Kismar-
would either abandon his country or recall his Burkanasses', for in
defiance of any possible stipulation in his favour, he might reasonably
expect and would certainly fear private assassination. The obnoxious mini-
ters and favourites would be immediately restored to their offices.
Every individual, who had been observed to cultivate the friendship of
the British, would flee the country, with the well-grounded apprehen-
sion of destruction from the ministers, or their connections.
commerce would again be suppressed by the confusion prevalent in the
country, and the monopoly would revive in its pristine vigour. The
monarch, whose person is too sacred for assassination would probably be
compelled to abandon his kingdom again.

Such would be the consequence of a cessation of the British
influence, until a long course of regular administration shall have
operated an entire revolution in the habits of the principal Chiefs,
and in the minds of the people and in predicting the evil which would
result from the recall of the detachment. I have been guided not
by my own opinion alone, but by that of the most respectable natives,
with whom I have had intercourse, the Rajah himself has repeatedly
declared that with the detachment he would quite
His kingdom, Sindoorah Hazaree has the charge of 1,000 Ghot Pykes, and is one of those petty Chiefs who, taking advantage of the confusion of the times, asserted his own independence and became the leader of a faction. Lieutenant MacGregor invited him to attend at Kaliabar, which he evaded doing by frequent excuses, and considering his attendance necessary to effect the object of his deputation, MacGregor detached Deen Dially, Naick, with orders to bring Sindoorah Hazaree to Koliabar.

P.S. - Omission under the head of Monarchy.

To absolve the monarch from the lesser, and to assist him in the greater cares of Government, two executive officers were added to the monarchy, viz., the Teepama and Seringh Rajams. Their titles are derived from the districts annexed to their office, their Jurisdiction in their respective districts was similar to the Gohains.

Their rank next to the monarch, their duties to communicate the deliberations of decrees of the aristocracy to the monarch, to receive, promulgate, or carry into execution, his consequent order on less important occasions the decrees of the aristocracy might be promulgated by these officers, without application to the Monarch.
The two brothers next in succession to the throne, became Teopam and Seringh Rajahs, and in failure of brothers the senior nephew according to the usual course of succession to the throne.

The aristocracy who possessed a legal power of deposing an unworthy monarch might certainly have exercised a similar power in the instance of the two presumptive successions.

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### Abstract of the monthly extra expenses attending the detachment and deputation in Assam

<table>
<thead>
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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Officers</td>
<td>Average of &amp;c., &amp;c.</td>
<td>Expense of the detachment &amp;c., &amp;c.</td>
<td>Expense of the detachment in Assam</td>
<td>Expense of the detachment in Assam or due</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Captain</td>
<td>415 0 0</td>
<td>595 0 0</td>
<td>180 0 0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Lieutenants</td>
<td>2,296 0 0</td>
<td>3,064 0 0</td>
<td>768 0 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Adjutant incl. staff allowance</td>
<td>389 0 0</td>
<td>485 0 0</td>
<td>96 0 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sergeant Major</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>280</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Quarter Master</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>280</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The different Ranks and Deptt. of the Battalion</td>
<td>734 12 0</td>
<td>1,469 8 0</td>
<td>734 12 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allowances for Harkarras and Guides</td>
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<td></td>
<td>150 0 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probable amount for boat allowance to 9 Subalterns 16th Battalion</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>720 0 0</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Lieutenants</td>
<td>574 0 0</td>
<td>786 0 0</td>
<td>192 0 0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The different Ranks and Depots of this Detachment.</td>
<td>234 12 0</td>
<td>469 8 0</td>
<td>234 12 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probable amount for boat allowance to 2 Subalterns</td>
<td>160 0 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Detachment Staff</td>
<td>287 0 0</td>
<td>485 0 0</td>
<td>198 0 0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Adjutant's allowance &amp;c.</td>
<td>287 0 0</td>
<td>383 0 0</td>
<td>96 0 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Quarter Master</td>
<td>25 0 0</td>
<td>22 8 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Assistant Surgeon</td>
<td>158 4 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Quarter Master Servant</td>
<td>63 4 0</td>
<td>74 4 0</td>
<td>11 0 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Tindal and 9 lascars of Artillery</td>
<td>2,300 0 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boats for the transportation of the Troops on an average</td>
<td>2,300 0 0</td>
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</table>

Expenses incident to the Deputation.

- Captain Welsh's Salary Rs 1,500
  - Ditto average of contingent bill for Durbar Charges Rs 850
  - Captain Welsh's probable boat allowance Rs 220
  - Ditto for transporting public servants Rs 60
  - Assistant to the deputation, his salary Sicca Rs 200
  - Ditto his probable boat allowance Rs 145
  - Mr. S.P. Wade, his salary Sicca Rs 100
  - Ditto his probable boat allowances Rs 80

Total amount of extra expenses attending the detachment and deputation monthly: Rs 9,489 5 4

Total Ditto annually: Rs 1,13,872 6 0

Abstract of the sum to be paid annually for the purpose of defraying part of the expense of the detachment, &c.,

- By the joint-Rajahs of Derungh in lieu of the levy of men Rs 50,000
- Do The Beltolah Rajah ditto Rs 1,600
- Do Bisnaruing from Kamroop ditto Rs 51,000
- Do Collection of the Candahar Chokey an overplus of the sum of Rs 12,000 to be paid to the Rajah, the amount not yet ascertained Rs 0

Total amount: Rs 1,02,600

*Source* - HRGNEFB., p.377-94.