CHAPTER III

THE EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF THE AHOM GOVERNMENT
(FROM A.D. 1228 TO A.D. 1496)

Relations with the Barahis and Marans

The first people, apart from the Nagas of the Pat-kai region, with whom the Ahom Government under Siu-kā-phā came into direct contact, were the Barahis and the Marans, the two small Mongoloid tribes, who occupied, as mentioned earlier, the tract between the Buri-Dihing and Dikhow rivers, where the Ahoms founded their kingdom.¹ Naturally, therefore, the future of the new kingdom depended, to a very large extent, on the nature of the treatment of the Ahoms meted out to these tribes. A survey of the general nature of Tai conquest on expansion, as already made in the last chapter, showed that a Tai conquest did not involve displacement or uprooting of the conquered people. In the same way evidence is lacking to suggest that the Ahom conquest of the Brahmaputra valley had ever caused depopulation or displacement of its local population.

¹ DAB, p. 100; AB(KTP), p. 11; SAB, p. 5; ATR, p. 50; ITK, p. 269.
In his march through the territories of the Barahis and the Marans from Ti-pam to Charaideo along the courses of the Buri-Dihing, the Brahmaputra, the Dikhow and the Disang, Siu-kā-phā's army did not encounter any opposition from them. It is mentioned in the chronicles that after he settled down at Charaideo, Siu-kā-phā sent messengers to Thakumtha and Badaucha, the chiefs of the Barahis and the Marans respectively, inviting them to receive him saying, "Come and receive us. We have come from the upper kingdom. You are local chiefs. We are your guests. You should acquaint us with your villages and places." After learning that Siu-kā-phā was a Māo prince, Thakumtha submitted without demur by offering his daughter. But the Maran Chief Badaucha hesitated at first, but soon submitted. He, too, offered his daughter to Siu-kā-phā. Afterwards Siu-kā-phā employed the Barahis and the Marans in different capacities as wood-cutters, fuel suppliers, honey gatherers, elephant catches, orchard keepers, and so on. Finding some local dishes prepared by the Barahis tasteful, some of them

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3DAB, p.100.
4Ibid.
5Ibid.
6Ibid.
had been engaged as cooks and even placed them in the royal kitchen.  

The reasons for the easy submission of the Barahis and the Marans are not far to seek. Some chronicles record that a few years before Siu-kā-phā's advent, there was a Tai invasion of the Brahmaputra valley under Sam-lung-phā, a Tai prince of the Māo royal family and a cousin brother of Siu-kā-phā.  

He subjugated the Kacharis, the Chutiyas, Kamata, the Nagas, the Marans and the Barahis, and left them as tributaries of the Māo ruler. These chronicles also record that on Siu-kā-phā's arrival some years later, the tributes from these states and tribes had been submitted to him. Without stating that the Barahis and the Marans were tributary tribes to the Māo ruler, some other chronicles simply mention that on the arrival of Siu-kā-phā in their territory, the Barahis and the Marans submitted to him without any resistance. Narrating a popular account about the the submission of the Barahis and the Marans, these chronicles further say that Siu-kā-phā after having established his authority in eastern Assam invited the chiefs of these two tribes to a meeting.  

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7 AB(SM),p.5; SAB,pp.6-7.  
8 Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States,p.197; PAB,p.32. Some chronicles even ascribe this conquest to Siu-kā-phā.  
9 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.  
10 A-B,p.38; PAB,p.32.  
11 DAB,pp.100-101; SAB,pp.5-6; ATR,p.50.  
12 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
fine appearance and the dignified manners of Siu-kā-phā and his associates had impressed the two chiefs so much that they were convinced of the heavenly origin of the Ahoms and, therefore, quickly submitted to the Ahom king without any demur. Behind this simple statement lies the fact that the Barahis and the Marans had submitted to Siu-kā-phā without any resistance. The submission of the Barahis and the Marans was only a transfer of their loyalty from the Māo king to Siu-kā-phā, his cousin. This supplies the clue as to why the chiefs of the Barahis and the Marans offered their daughters to Siu-kā-phā.  

It was, therefore, not mere marriage alliance or a matter of equal treatment, as some scholars think, but essentially conform to the basic principle of Tai foreign policy according to which a chief or ruler, who submitted himself to the Tai king should offer his daughter or sister to his overlord. Throughout the long period of the Ahom rule this principle was strictly adhered to in all such cases. It may, therefore, be claimed that this principle which Siu-kā-phā applied to the Barahis and the Marans in his relations with them was not a new one but was an

\[13\] DAB, p. 101; SAB, p. 6; ATR, p. 52.

\[14\] ATR, p. 52; N. N. Acharyya, The History of Medieval Assam, p. 69.

established practice followed by including the Shans.

It was for the same reason that there had been no armed conflict between the Ahoms on one side and the Barahis and the Marans on the other. Moreover, the living style of the Ahoms differed from that to the Barahis and the Marans. The former preferred low lying areas on river bank which were visited by inundation during summer and were accustomed with growing transplanted paddy by using buffaloes, whereas the latter two usually resided on the high land not affected by the annual floods and cultivated the broad sowing variety of paddy.

The population of two tribes being small in number, many of them had, in course of time, been merged with the Ahoms. This was particularly applicable in the case of the Barahis, who have, today, lost all their separate identity of their own. The process of absorption started soon after they were subjugated by the Ahoms, who introduced their own pāik (kun) system, which was the foundation of the Tai government. Accordingly they had been engaged in various professions in which they were proficient.

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18 DAB, p. 100.
19 ATR, p. 54.
20 DAB, pp. 101-102; SAB, pp. 6-7; ATR, pp. 54-55.
21 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
Relations with the Chutiyas

Another tribe with whom the Ahoms came into contact at the beginning of their rule was the Chutiyas, whose territory lay, as stated earlier, to the right bank of the river Buridihing on the south, to the east of the river Subansiri on the north of the Brahmaputra river. It was ruled by a line of kings from their capital at Sadiya. It has been mentioned in some chronicles that the Chutiya kingdom was subjugated by the Tai prince Sam-lung-phā, who allowed it to remain as a tributary state and that on his arrival, Siu-kā-phā received the tributes from this state. From these accounts it appears that the Chutiya kingdom was a tributary to the Ahom Government during Siu-kā-phā's time. It is, however, difficult to ascertain, in the absence of a detail account whether the Chutiya king actually submitted to Siu-kā-phā or reasserted his independence. Most probably after Sam-lung-phā's departure the Chutiya king, who was Gaurinarayan, reasserted his independence. This led Siu-kā-phā to organize an expedition against the Chutiyas as referred to in Purani Asam Buranji, and took with him one Chutiya as captive.

22 TTK, pp.266-268; ATR, p.59.
25 PAB, p.32; TTK, p.255; A-B, p.38.
26 Ibid.
However, the Chutiyas could not be brought under Siu-kā-phā's dominion. In view of protection of his newly founded kingdom, he did not, perhaps, make any further attempt in this regard. As a result, the enmity between the Ahoms and the Chutiyas persisted. In this respect his friendship with the ruler of Kamata had emboldened the Chutiya king. It is mentioned in one chronicle that the Chutiya king Ratnadhvaj (1224-1304) married the daughter of Kamata king.²⁷ The Ahom-Chutiya relations, which had so long been hostile, took a favourable turn during the reign of Siu-khāng-phā (1293-1332) when, after a long period of warfare, the Kamata king concluded a treaty by offering a princess to the Ahom king.²⁸ Soon after this, the Chutiyas and the Ahoms came to terms leading to establishment of friendship between the Ahom king Siu-tu-phā (1369-1376) and the Chutiya king Vikramdhvaj.²⁹ Details of their friendship are, however, not available in the chronicles beyond the bare mention of this fact.

But the friendship between the two kings proved to be a matter of convenience as borne out by the fact that the Ahom king Siu-tu-phā was treacherously killed by drowning.

²⁹DAB, p.11; AB(KTP), p.14; HA, p.82.
his boat when he went to attend a regatta in compliance with the friendly request of the Chutiya king.\textsuperscript{30} This act of betrayal though emboldened the Chutiya king infuriated Tao-khām-thī, the successor of Siu-tu-phā, to lead an expedition against the Chutiyas to avenge the murder of his brother.\textsuperscript{31} On the approach of the Ahom army the Chutiya king Vikramdhvaj fled away from his capital\textsuperscript{32} and took shelter in a nearby hills.\textsuperscript{33} Although the details of the measures taken by Tao-khām-thī are not mentioned in the chronicles, from subsequent accounts it is known that the Chutiya king was still ruling his kingdom. This means that the Chutiya king submitted himself to Tao-khām-thī. This relation continued till the end of the fifteenth century.

Relations with the Kacharis

Another tribe with whom the Ahoms had their early relations since the time of Siu-kā-phā's conquest of eastern Assam were the Kacharis. Although the bulk of the Kachari population inhabited the left bank of the Dikhow\textsuperscript{34} as far as the Dhansiri valley,\textsuperscript{35} a few Kachari settlements were still existing

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{31}AB(KTP), p.14.
  \item \textsuperscript{32}DAB, p.197.
  \item \textsuperscript{33}AB(KTP), p.14.
  \item \textsuperscript{34}ATR, p.78.
  \item \textsuperscript{35}TTK, p.268.
\end{itemize}
on its right bank. The Dikhow being the southern boundary of Siu-ka-pha's kingdom, he did not try, during his lifetime to push it to the other side of the river. Siu-kā-pha desisted himself from any venture to occupy the Kachari territory, which lay beyond the Dikhow. There was, therefore, no cause for a direct confrontation between the Ahoms and the Kacharis during his period of reign. One of the factors, as one chronicle says, that the Kachari population was greater than those of the Barahis and the Marans, whose territory he first acquired. He is said to have expressed his feeling thus, "Let us deal with the Barahis and the Marans first and afterwards the Kacharis for any combination of the Kacharis with the Barahis and the Marans would be unfavourable to us."36 During his life time, he did not have any opportunity to "deal with" the Kacharis.

His son and successor, Siu-teu-phā (1268-1281), after ascending the throne sent envoys to the Kachari king, demanding that "This country is mine, you should vacate it. How did you dare to raise huts (living quarters), and dig tanks? If (you) wish to stay, pay tributes."37 The Kachari king

36DAB, p.100; SAB, p.5.
37Ibid.; ibid.
refused to comply with the demand saying, "It is a serious matter. We have been staying here for several generations and no one has made any claim. Now only its owner came forward. What is the proof (that you are the owner)?" 38 This statement indicates the Kachari settlement on the left bank of the river Dikhow was not very ancient but only a few generations old. The Kacharis themselves were not very firm over their claim of the tract. Having learnt this weakness of the Kachari claim and also to substantiate their ownership, the Ahom side made a proposal that both sides should prove their own capacity in a particular venture. 39 It was proposed that each party should dig a canal of eighteen feet deep from a particular point to connect it with the Dikhow 40 in the course of a single night. Whoever could finish the digging first before day-break would be proved as the owner of the land. 41 The Kadharis having agreed to the proposal, each party started digging a canal separately. On the Ahom side, some of them brought fowls and kept themselves concealed in the jungle while others dug the canal. 42 Finding

38 Ibid.; ibid.
40 Ibid.; ibid. L. Debi gives the measurement of the canal as 1500 feet long and 30 feet wide. ATR, p.78.
41 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
42 Ibid., pp.102-103; ibid.; ibid.
the Kacharis nearly successful in completing the canal before the Ahoms could do, the Ahom forced the fowls to crow before day-break. The night being moonlight, the Kacharis mistook the cocks' crow to be the sign of dawn, and hence stopped digging and left the place. The Ahoms, on the other hand, continued and finished it before the dawn. Now according to the agreement the Kacharis surrendered the place to the Ahoms. In this way the territory immediately to the left bank of the Dikhow came under the possession of the Ahoms which remained under them for the next several centuries.

But it was during the reign of Siu-hăn-phâ (1488-1493) that hostility with the Kacharis broke out. Though the chronicles are silent about the causes of the war, from its course, as described in the chronicles, it was the Ahoms, who adopted an offensive posture by advancing themselves into the interior of the Kachari territory. The Kacharis gave a determined resistance by badly defeating the Ahom army with heavy loss and compelled the latter to sue for peace.

43 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
44 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
46 Ibid.; ibid.
47 HA, p. 80.
49 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
A treaty was concluded in 1490 between the two sides by which the Ahom king offered, among other things, a girl with twelve servants and two elephants—one female and one male. Thus the first planned attack of the Ahoms to invade the Kachari kingdom proved failure. The Kacharis, thus, remained as powerful as before but with enhanced prestige till the end of the period.

Relations with the Kamatas

The Ahoms relation with the Kamata kingdom, which lay at the western part of the Brahmaputra valley, begun with an armed conflict with it towards the end of the thirteenth century during the reign of Siu-khāng-phā (1293-1332). The chronicles do not throw much light about the cause of the war or the beginning of the hostilities between the two powers. But it appears that firm foothold that the Ahoms gained in the eastern part of the Brahmaputra valley and their slow but steady rise to power made the ruler of Kamata to initiate a bid to halt the advance of Ahom power before it was too late. As the Ahoms were also equally determined

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50 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.; AB(KTP), p.18, says that the battle was decisive, and the Kacharis ceded their territory upto Marangi to the Ahoms.

51 A-B, pp.47-48; DAB, pp.9-10; SAB, pp.49-50; TTK, pp.271-272. DAB, p.13 records that the name of the Kamata king was Sekhang.
to resist any such invasion, a long-drawn armed conflict began between the Ahoms and the Kamata powers. As the struggle continued for several years, the Kamata ruler, being tired of the warfare, sued for peace by sending an envoy with a message expressing his willingness to make a settlement which runs thus, "The war between us has been going on for years and months together without a stop. A great number of men has been killed on both sides, so I desire to make friendly relation by offering my daughter to His Majesty. Having received this Siu-khāng-pha, too, agreed to make peace and the war ended. Following the treaty, Nang Rajani, the Kamata princess, was sent to the Ahom capital. This shows that the Kamata king had submitted to the Ahom power. It seems to us that ultimately it was the pressure of the Muslims that had compelled to adopt such a measure of the Kamata ruler.

A few years later during the reign of Siu-khrāng-pha (1332-1364), Prince Chāo-pu-lāi, the son of the Kamata Princess Rajani, who was designated Saring Raja and who aspired

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52 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
53 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
54 According to DAB, the Kamata king offered his sister, Rajani. The chronicles of much later period record that the Kamata king offered two princesses, Rajani and Bhajani, to the Ahom king.
55 A-B,p.48; DAB,pp.9-10; SAB,p.50; TTK,p.272.
for the Ahom throne finding himself deprived of it, fled away along with a thāo-mōng named Tā-phri-khin, to his maternal uncle, the king of Kamata. The Kamata king took up his cause and advanced with an army as far as Saring on the border of the Ahom kingdom and constructed a fort there. Learning this unfriendly move on the part of the Kamata king, the Ahom king, without showing any hostile feeling, sent an envoy with an apparent friendly message enquiring the purpose of his advance and also requested him to surrender Chāo-pu-lāi and Tā-phri-khin, who had taken shelter with him. This determined reaction of Siu-khrang-phi had the desired effect. Realising the seriousness of consequence of a conflict with the Ahoms, the Kamata king returned to his country without any further action but not before surrendering Tā-phri-khin. Chāo-pu-lāi, however, escaped apparently at the connivance of the Kamata king and fled away to Mōng-kang. Thus a conflict was avoided and that the friendly relations between the Ahoms and the Kamata remained till the end of the fourteenth century.

56 Ibid., p. 48; ibid., p. 10; ibid., pp. 50-51; ibid., p. 273.
57 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
58 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
59 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
This relation with Kamata was disturbed during the reign of Siu-dāng-phā (1397-1407), commonly known as Bamuni Konwar in the Assamese chronicles for he was born and brought up in a Brahmin family at Habung, when Tāo-sulāi, the Tipam chief and Tāo-blāk-seng, who had escaped to Mōng-kang earlier, now returned and took shelter in Kamata kingdom. It has been mentioned in one chronicle that the Kamata king sponsored the cause of these rebels and sent an army against the Ahom kingdom. Having learnt this Princess Rajani, who was married to former Ahom king Siu-khān-phā, became greatly concerned as this would destroy the good relations subsisting between the two countries since the time of her marriage, advised the Kamata king not to quarrel with the Ahom king. She also suggested, in her message through an envoy, Rupai Laskar, that the friendship should be further strengthened by an offer of another Kamata princess. But the Kamata king at first refused to listen to her wise counsel and to extradite the rebels. The Ahom authority took a serious view of the unfriendly attitude of the Kamata Raja and prepared an expedition under the

60Ibid., pp. 50-51; ibid., pp. 12-13; ibid., p. 53.
61Ibid.; ibid.
command of Thāo-mōng-lung Ta-tan-bin. At this crucial period Kamata was attacked by the Muslim force from Bengal under Ghiyas-ud-din A'zam (1393-1410). In this situation, the Kamata Raja quickly submitted to Siu-dāng-phā and agreed to pay tribute.62 Accordingly submission was received from the Kamata king.

Thereafter, the Kamata king requested the Ahom king for an army against the Muslims.63 The request was granted and an Ahom army was sent under the command of Thāo-mōng-lung. The combined army then fought and defeated the Muslim invaders.64 The Kamata king then gave his daughter, Princess Bhajani, in marriage, to the Ahom king, Siu-dāng-phā, with a dowry of elephants, horses, gold, and silver and a number of attendants.65 This further consolidated the subordinate relations between the two powers.

Relations with the Shan States

The relations of the Ahom Government with the Tai or Shan rulers of Burma had been of special kind for several reasons. First, it was from Māo-lung (Mōng Māo), one of the

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62 **Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.**
63 **Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.**
64 **Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.**
65 **Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.**
Shan States in upper Burma that Siu-kā-phā, the founder of the Ahom kingdom, came to Assam. Secondly, that the Shan rulers of Mōng-Māo, Mōng-mit and Mōng-kāng and the Ahom rulers belonged to the same royal line. Thirdly, since the founding of the Ahom kingdom by Siu-kā-phā, the Ahom rulers maintained regular intercourse with these states, and even paid tributes to the ruler of Mōng-Māo. Fourthly, in language, customs and manners, and in religion the Ahoms had little difference from the Tai people of the Shan States. Throughout the Ahom rule, despite of occasional stresses and strains, and even one or two armed clashes, the relations between the Ahom kings and the Shan rulers had been continued without any serious break.

Siu-kā-phā, soon after the establishment of his kingdom, despatched his envoy with letters to inform Siu-khrān-phā, the Nara king of his success as well as the place of his stay thus - "We are at this place." With the envoys he sent silver water jug, water jar, tāo cloth (a kind of cloth)
basowal (another variety of cloth) as presents to Siu-khran-phi. On receiving the message from Siu-kā-pha and learning his success in the venture, Siu-khrān-pha expressed his satisfaction and, in return, sent his own envoys with letters and presents to Siu-kā-pha. Among other articles the presents included horses with saddle, crossbow, embroidered coat, a pair of golden shoe and golden cap. The nature of above presents sent to Siu-kā-pha by Siu-khrān-pha indicates that the Ahom king was considered a subordinate to the Nara king. In fact the establishment of a new kingdom by Siu-kā-pha in the Brahmaputra valley virtually meant an extension of the Tai dominion.

The same relation with the Möng-Māo kingdom was maintained by Siu-kā-pha's successors. Soon after his accession to throne, Siu-teu-phi (1268-1281), Siu-kā-pha's son, sent envoys with letters and presents to the Nara king, who, in return, sent his envoys with presents of dress, golden cap, crossbow and so on.

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72 *Ibid.; ibid.* According to *AB(KTP), AB(HB)*, the Nara king sent golden cap and horse only as presents to Siu-kā-pha.
73 *DAB*, p.102.
It thus appears that in the early period every Ahom after ascending the throne solicited recognition of the Nara king. The latter on his part granted recognition. Thus on the death of Siu-kā-phā, his son Siu-teu-phā sought the recognition as a ruler of the Tai kingdom in the Brahmaputra valley. E.A.Gait refers to a chronicle which says that Siu-khang-phā, who ascended the throne in 1293, when failed to seek recognition by sending customary tributes, the Chāo-phā of Mōng-kang despatched envoys demanding tribute.  

The early relations of the Ahom rulers with the Nara king was that of subordination.

During the reign of Siu-dāng-phā the traditional relation existing between the Ahom and Nara kings was greatly disturbed when the Nara king Siu-run-phā despatched an army to invade the Ahom kingdom. According to one version, a prince named Tao-su-lāi, who greatly aspired to the Ahom throne but was deprived by the councillors in favour of Siu-dāng-phā, went to Nara king, Siu-run-phā and informed him about the political situation of the Ahom kingdom saying, "There is no one in your family in the throne of Assam. The

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75 HA, pp.81-82.

76 According to AB(HB), p.17 he was the son of princess Rajani.
councillors had become the rulers."

Having learnt this, the Nara king sent an army which appeared at the Ahom frontier. According to another version, soon after the accession of Siu-dǎng-phā, one Tipamiya named Tāi-blāk-sheng, conspired against the king. But on timely detection, he fled away and took shelter under the protection of Siu-run-phā. Sometime after another person from Tipam named Chāo-tā-su-lāi, who was, probably, a betrothal of the queen of Siu-dǎng-phā, with two others had plotted against the king. The plot came to light before time, and the plotters fled away to the Nara kingdom. They intimated him that, "There is no king of your family in Namraj (down country, i.e. Assam). The throne is vacant, go and take the possession of your kingdom." Siu-run-phā then sent an expedition under Tā-chin-pāo. On hearing the advance of the Nara army, Siu-dǎng-phā with Thāo-mōng Tā-tān-bin as commander advanced with

77 AB(KTP), p.15; AB(HB), p.17.
78 Because he lived at Tipam.
80 One of them was named Tām-rāo, or Temera.
81 A-B, p.50; DAB, p.12; SAB, p.52; AB(KTP), p.15; AB(HB), p.18.
82 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
83 Ibid.; ibid.
a strong force. A battle was fought at Kuhiyarbari near Tipam in which the invading army unable to hold the ground retreated as far as Kham-jang on the Pat-kai where they sued for peace. In the meantime, the Nara king came to know the true origin of Siu-dāng-phā. A treaty was concluded between the two parties on the shore of the Nong-yang lake and an oath was taken in accordance with the Tai custom by the two generals of the two armies by dipping their hands in the water of Nong-yang and, also, by sacrificing fowls on the spot. The contents of the treaty was inscribed on a piece of rock which is said to have been existing till today. According to the treaty Doi-kao-rang, by which name Pat-kai was known to the Tais, had been fixed as the boundary between the Ahom and the Nara kingdoms. For taking oath by cutting fowl, the Doi-kao-rang came to be known as Pat-kai-seng-kan, meaning taking oath by sacrificing fowls, or simply, Pat-kai. The name Pat-kai-seng-kan itself bears

84 AB(KTP), p.16; AB(HB), p.18.
85 Ibid.; ibid.
87 Ibid.; ibid.
88 The literary meaning of this name is pat=cut, kai=fowl, sen=oath, kan=taking.
the testimony that there was an oath taking ceremony performed there.

Taking the advantage of the conflict with the Nara king, the governors of three mongs on the eastern frontier namely Mong Kham-jang, Mong Ti-pam, Mong Iton stopped paying tributes to the Ahom king for several years. On this Siu-dang-phā sent a mission with a letter to the court of Nara king, Siu-run-phā to ascertain whether the aforesaid three mongs were paying tribute to him. 89 Siu-run-phā then sent an envoy named Mong-khu-bān to the three mongs with the message, "Why have not you paid tributes to my brother king? Why did you remain independent?" 90 This threatening posture worked and they agreed to pay tribute to the Ahom king. At the same time, he sent an envoy named Tāo-lung-bān to accompany the Ahom envoy to the Ahom royal court. 91 This shows that better understanding was restored between the two states.

The escape of the Ahom officials with Tāo-su-lāi to the Nara kingdom and their submission to the Nara king to effect that there was no Ahom king on the Ahom throne which

89 DAB, p.13; A-B, p.51; SAB, pp.53-54.
90 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
91 Ibid.; ibid.; ibid.
had prompted the Nara king to invade the Ahom kingdom are only apparent causes. The real cause lay deeper. The main cause was that with the growth and consolidation of the kingdom, the Ahom kings sought to assert their authority to the detriment of the interests of the Nara king to whom the Ahom rulers owed their original allegiance. The advance of the Nara king was but an attempt to reassert his authority over the Ahom rulers of the Brahmaputra valley.

Having thus fixed their eastern boundary at the Pat-kai, the Ahom rulers had developed greater interest towards the western side of their kingdom. They were now determined to have the control over the whole of the Brahmaputra valley.

**Relations with the hill tribes**

During the period from the coming of Siu-kā-phā to the close of the fifteenth century the only hill tribe with whom the Ahoms had their relations was the Nagas living in the hills extending from the Pat-kai to southern border of Sibsagar. As has been noticed earlier the Pat-kai Nagas had been subdued by Siu-kā-phā with a very heavy hand for resisting his advance at Kham-jang on the Kham-jang valley. Since then the Nagas created no troubles rather remained submissive to the Ahom government without making any further troubles. More than two hundred years later, during the reign of Siusen-phā (1439-1488) the Tangsu Nagas in the Sibsagar border
came down to the plains pretending friendship and attacked some villagers. They were soon suppressed by an Ahom army and those found guilty were severely punished. After this there was no more trouble during this period.

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