Chapter 2

Distinguishing Features of Crime: Dacoity in Nadia

Crime manifests in various ways. Different types of crime have different implications to the administrators as well as to the society. The colonial state’s response towards each crime was conspicuously different. This differentiation was made according to the priorities of the state. This was because of the perception of potentialities of threat in the perception of the colonial perceived notion of order. In this way crimes that occurred were divided into extraordinary and ordinary category. Even in policy making and its implementation at the local level, the distinctive method of dealing with criminality was very clearly evident. Collective crime like violent gang dacoity was an extraordinary crime to the colonial rulers. Therefore this sort of crime has been getting much attention from a number of social historians in all over India. Violent gang robbery in Nadia district had almost undermined the power and authority of the local administration in the first decade of the nineteenth century. This chapter narrates the episode of the gang dacoity of this district and its various facets.

Dacoity as a type of crime formed an integral part of the Indian rural life. The word dacoity is an equivalent one for banditry. It is presumed that this term has been derived from Hindi ‘daka parna’ meaning plunder and is used for a system of robbery by gangs. It has also been held that the term is derived from Hindi ‘dakait’- ‘robbery’ belonging to an armed band'
probably from *dakna* (to shout) and usually employed as an equivalent for brigandage.4 *Dacoity* was the most dangerous crime as thought by the colonial administration. It was an organized, collective action, perpetrated usually by a large gang. It had the potential of an insurrectional character. For this serious reason the district administration singled out this sort of crime for early suppression. Almost all the districts of Bengal in the period under survey were, more or less, infested by violent gang robbery. Yet Nadia district was considered as a special place to the colonial administration, for its dubious distinction of gang *dacoity*. Many initiatives for suppressing this category of crime, taken by the government, had begun on the experimental basis in this district. For example, the employment of spies or *goindahs* to collect information about the dacoit gangs had first started, on a large scale and in systematic manner. Government had to appoint special magistrates with special powers for suppressing the dacoits. They were not responsible for their measures to the court of law.

It is, no doubt, a fact that the district administration was ignorant of what was actually the law-and-order situation in the interior of the district. The magistrate who was in charge of the police establishment was sitting idle only to rely on the report periodically sent by the *darogahs*. These reports contained the situation of their respective *thanahs*. But these reports were unreliable, defective and the magistrates were also aware of it, yet they seldom took the trouble to personally visit the interior of the district. An observer of a contemporary periodical observed “I was in Zillah Nadia the year previous to the development of its real internal condition. There was apparently no business for the magistrate. His *darogah* sent
him no reports of dacoities and murders. The arrears in business were small; the duties of his office were easily performed by the magistrate. They occupied, perhaps an hour or two of the day. His assistant had a very easy life. There was nothing thought of but hunting, racing, the pleasure of the table, music and dancing. The station was the resort of the gay from every part of the country." This comment indicates the indifference and neglect or ignorance of the magistrates towards the situation of the interior. The year as the observer mentioned was, however, not the only year when dacoity got momentum. Before that year, 154 dacoities were reported by the police. His writing becomes more interesting when he observes “I left it to attend the judge on the circuit. I returned to it within a few months, appointed to assist the magistrate. I found 1700 prisoners in gaol, three magistrates employed jointly in restoring tranquility, and nothing but robbery and murder to be heard of.” This comment reconfirmed the fact that the local administrator was in a complete state of ignorance of what was going on in the interior of the district. This observation reflects the indifferent attitude of colonial officials until and unless the situation was becoming alarming. This writer further observed and very correctly that the state of this Zillah was discovered by a thoughtless exploit of the dacoits; in attacking a European; that caused enquiry; and enquiry disclosed the whole scene of villainy and violence. On this point he was absolutely correct. He is correct in the sense that the attack on a European by the dacoits was indeed thoughtless exploitation; and unless this attack was not on a European the enquiry had seldom been held and the real internal condition of this district in surfacing might have been delayed and the general inhabitants had to endure the atrocities of the dacoits. Even the dacoits of this period themselves thought that the attack on Mr. Faddy brought them into confinement in the prison. Gangaram Sirdar who was
apprehended from Gaya confessed while communicating with the magistrate that “his [Biswanath Sirdar] folly has brought us all to the Gallows; had it not been for attack on Mr. Faddy, you [the magistrate Elliot] would never have been appointed, and we might have gone on with impunity.” It is interesting that Gangaram also understand that he might have been safe if he attacked a native as his confession went on “…for the attack of a native, is only the thought of a moment, and the storm is soon blown over,…and has only been brought on a little sooner by the rashness of Bishennauth.” However this dacoity had changed the scenario in this district. Government machinery had to be on alert since then.

This dacoity under discussion was an attack on the house of Mr. Faddy, an indigo planter who was very active and co-operative in apprehension of the dacoits. This attack was held in the leadership of Bishwanath, the famous sirdar dacoit of Nadia. This case was most graphically reported by the then acting magistrate of this district, H. Shakespeare in 1808. According to this report on 27 July 1808, Faddy’s house was surrounded by the dacoits at 4 o’clock in the morning. His chowkidar fled immediately. Mr. Faddy and Mr. Liddiard, a European priest were overpowered by the dacoits. A servant of Faddy was cut to pieces, his gardener and peon severely wounded. His house was plundered to the smallest articles and the value of the plundered property was about rupees 5000. The gang comprised about 150 to 200 dacoits. The most disappointing point to the magistrate was that, after accomplishing the crime, the robbers fled in “open day without any fears of being taken.” The investigation into that dacoity case revealed the horrible situation of this district. Dacoity with violence and murder was so frequent that the local administration could not cope with it. Repeated request for increasing of burkandazes and even for military intervention manifested the local administration’s nervousness and anxiety.
H. Shakespear prayed to the government for increasing of additional *burkandazes* in the district and also recommended for the enhancement of number of *burkandazes* for the thanas of Haskhali and Doulatgange. In the November of 1808, the Governor General in Council ordered that a company of *sepoys* from one of the regular battalions be deployed in this district for apprehending dacoits. Even before that the magistrate had to send *sepoys* for apprehending dacoits. In the month of June, 1808 a gang had assembled into the house of Pitumbar, a notorious dacoit, in the vicinity of the Santipore intending to commit robbery. After receiving information, the magistrate H. parry sent a party consisting of one *Subedar*, two *Havildars*, Two *Naibs* and thirty two *sepoys* for apprehending the dacoits. The sepoys surrounded the house where the dacoits assembled but surprisingly, they did not surrender; instead they come out of the house and commenced firing with spears and turbuars on the *sepoys*. This encounter in which three dacoits were killed by the *sepoys* reflected the indomitable spirit of dacoits of this period.

**Intensity and Extent of Robbery**

Apart from the above *dacoity*, numerous reports of robbery with murder were pouring in from the interior of the district. Many lengthy letters had been sent by the then magistrate and Judge John Elliot. All these letters very clearly stated that law and order situation was in worse condition and the district was overrun by the sirdar dacoits. There were 4270 villages in 1809, in this district and few villages escaped from depredations of *dacoity* and it would not be an exaggeration to say that three-fourth of the Zillah (district) villages had experienced the evil of gang robbery. These facts seem to be true if we consider the number of dacoits who were active in perpetration of robbery in Nadia. There were no less than 100 noted dacoits operating in 1808. Even the whole of village
were said to be consisting of dacoits and since the year 1803 no less than 688 proclaimed dacoits were active with their gang in this district. 17 It was almost difficult to pass from one village to another without the experience of highway robbery. It was also very difficult for carrying the revenue in cash to the collector’s treasury. 18 In 1806 no less than 494 persons were involved in committing 20 robberies with murder and 3362 persons were supposed to be involved in committing 171 robberies without violence. 19

There was not an individual among sadar amlah and zamindari officers who did not avow that even in Krishnagar and Guary a day hardly passed without 3 to 7 occurrences of dacoity and burglary. The shroffs could not venture to keep money in their houses and muffussil remittance however trifling were instantly on its arrival deposited into treasury. Hence it may be presumed what was the situation in various distant villages of the district. 20

Nadia district was divided out among the sirdar dacoits in the first decade of the nineteenth century. 21 Four or five sirdas were the actual rulers of this district. 22 They were the masters of the district as acknowledged by one of the magistrates in his report in 1809. 23 Numerous gangs were infested in the district. The most notable among them were the Bishwanath and Buddeah’s gang and Gangaram’s gang. Bishwanath, Buddeah, Shyam Das, Goluck, Kasinath and Pitumbar when united were really formidable. 24 Although many of them operated in the neighboring district still Nadia was the principal seat for these gangs. Here are mentioned some gangs in the magistrate’s report who were very active not only in this district alone but also in the neighbouring districts. 25 Raghunath Sirdar was active in Burdwan, Murshidabad, Birbhum, Natore and Jessore
districts. Shyam Sirdar with a large gang operated in Nadia and Jessore and used to commit *dacoity* jointly with the Raghunath’s gang. Soobul Sirdar used to commit his perpetrations in Nadia, Rajshahi and Murshidabad by land and water. Thakur das and Goberdhun’s gangs operated in Nadia and Jessore and frequently joined with Raghunath’s gang by land and water. Shumser Ali and his sons were notorious dacoits and operated in the north eastern region of Nadia. Shumser was known as ‘*karbourer*’ of the dacoits. He particularly robbed and plundered the merchants. All these gangs of robber had operated with virtual impunity of detection and punishment in this district.

Statistically the crime of *dacoity* was not given due importance by the local authorities. The statistics of earlier *dacoities* committed in this district is not found in the government records. A record is however available which documents the number of trials held before the courts of circuit in the period from 1791 to 1800. According to this report, 44 *dacoity* crimes with murder trials were held in which 187 people were concerned. In the crime of *dacoities* 204 cases of trials were held in which 945 people were involved. In the comparative statements of robberies of several districts in the report of *Nizamat Adalat* indicates that the robberies were frequently committed in the several districts of Bengal. In the period from 1803 to 1806 the maximum number of *dacoities* were committed in the five districts. These districts were Backergunge, Burdwan, Dinajpore, Jessore and Nadia. In case of *dacoity* with murder, Nadia gained first place with 67. In total *dacoity* crime Dinajpore stood first with 678 and the number was 615 in Nadia. Still after this period this crime did not decrease in Nadia at all. In 1808 it reached its peak with 329 robberies
committed in Nadia. Out of 329, 30 were committed with murder. In that year Nadia witnessed an extreme lawlessness. The following table indicates the number of dacoities committed in this district from 1803 to 1860.

Table - VII

Number of Dacoities came under the notice of the police in Nadia: 1803-1860

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Source: for 1803-1804 see *Bengal Judicial Criminal Proceedings*, 19 June, 1807, No.10, for 1805-1856 see Appendix-2, for 1857-1860 see *Annual Report Relating to the Suppression of dacoity in Bengal for 1860*, p. 1

The above table shows that from the year 1803 to 1808 the crime of *dacoity* was prevalent in Nadia. The government took many harsh measures in curbing this crime but *dacoity* did not stop. Owing to the suppression measure of the Government it
was temporarily halted. From 1818 onwards 10 to 12 dacoities were regularly reported by the district authorities. From the middle of 1840’s it again gathered momentum and almost reached the height that was earlier. Numerous gangs again infested the district. The thanas of Santipore, Ranaghat, Suksagar, Kaguzpukeriah and Goberdangah were most affected by dacoity.\(^3^3\) There were also several well-known gangs operating in the thanas of Krishnagar, Hatrah and Nuddea (Nabadwip).\(^3^4\) Many gangs whose origins were in the neighbouring districts also committed their depredation in Nadia. Notable among these gangs were Gour Shikari gang and Keramdi Shikari gang of Barasat, the gang of Nepal and Gopal Dome of Hooghly and Calcutta lathirah gang.\(^3^5\) Even in the year 1857-1858 when the robberies were decreasing due to the operation of the suppression of dacoity commission, the thanas like Bagdaha, Doutlutgange, Damurhoda and Hurdee were infested by dacoits.\(^3^6\) The statements made by several gangs have shown that they committed a number of dacoities. Haru Sirdar’s gang committed 14 dacoities between the periods 31 March 1846 to 2 October 1850.\(^3^7\) Another gang was active in Ranaghat area and was committed 30 robberies in the period from 25 February to 24 January 1855.\(^3^8\) In the same thana area the gang of Dalo Mussalman committed 12 dacoities in between 17 January 1844 to 20 October 1852.\(^3^9\) In this time many dacoits also indulged violence during robbery. There were 174 persons engaged in dacoity with violence and torture in 1845.\(^4^0\) In 1849, 191 persons were involved in robberies with wounding.\(^4^1\) Even in 1856, 70 persons on an average were tortured by the dacoits in every month in this district.\(^4^2\)

**River Dacoity or Water Robbery**

A peculiar form of crime that one of the officers of Nadia district described was river dacoity or water robbery. This was prevalent but little recorded. Nadia was a district which has
many great rivers. Rivers like Bhagarathi, Mathabhanga, Churni, Jellingee, Ichamati, Padma and many others run through this district. These rivers were the principal connecting waterways from Calcutta to the Eastern Bengal and Upper India. Hundreds of boats loaded with various goods throughout the year used to pass through these rivers. The security of these river routes was not great in this period. Successive magistrates repeatedly reported about the insecurity that existed in the river ways of this district. Robbers used to plunder boats virtually at will. The Armenian merchants residing in Calcutta and carrying on trade in clothes, silks and other articles brought from Kasimbazar were subjected to repeated attacks by the river dacoits near Plassey. Sometimes the amount of property plundered was as astonishing as one can imagine. In 1821, two boats with 6500 mounds and 2500 mounds of salt owned by one Gourmohan Coondoo were plundered. On 3 July 1820, in a daring river dacoity 10000 dollars were robbed near Santipore and in spite of the best joint effort of the magistrates of Nadia and Burdwan and superintendent of police, no trace was found of the perpetrators. In 1844 the superintendent of police reported that in the river Bhagirathi, between Katwa and Nuddea (Nawadip) and many other parts, river dacoities became very frequent. A river dacity occurred on the boat of Rasik Krishna Mullick, a deputy collector of Burdwan in 1844 at Bhagirathi. On the Bhagarathi and Padma an immense quantity of goods and other properties were plundered every year by the villagers residing on the banks of these rivers. Mr. Imlach, an indigo planter, was murdered by a gang of river dacoits headed by Bishwanath Chakraborty and Mohon Kundo, on the same river in 1822. An English periodical on this occasion had written “the Zillah of Nuddea has long been notorious for the troublesome character of its inhabitants and although...succeeded in subduing and dispersing of the regular
marauders, the ferocious spirit still remained.” 49 Many examples of daring river robberies were found in the confessions of the Nuddea Gowla gang.

Factors Responsible For The Gang Dacoity

The factors that precisely contributed to the rise in gang dacoity cannot be pin-pointed at a certain John McLane said “the growth of gang robbery ...at the turn of the century was undoubtedly a consequence of the Cornwallis administrative reforms of the early 1790s rather than of changes in the economic production patterns.” 50 He expressed further doubt when he said “but these reforms were so complex and affected so many different interests that the problem of discovering the precise causes of increase banditry is a formidable one.” 51 However, the Nadia magistrates were repeatedly, at least in the first decade of nineteenth century, attributed to the changes in production system for rising gang robbery. In the later period this cause became stranger because most of the sirdar dacoits were in the employment of the landlords in this district. It is, therefore, really hard to find a fixed or specific cause for the prevalence of the dacoity crime. That the official documents are somewhat perplexed in finding out reason for this sort of crime is proved by indecisive responses from various officials at different times. It is also found that they had never tried to investigate the real factors behind this crime. Because the colonial authorities were preoccupied with their own interests it prevented them from going into deeper areas for finding out the discontent which existed among the rural people right from the beginning of the foreign rule. However, the local officials offered casual explanation occasionally which did not satisfy either the superior authority or the observer of the contemporary events. Henry Oldfield, the magistrate of Nadia, mentioned non-cooperation of zamindari gomastahs and rascality of the village watchmen for the cause of the
prevalence of the robbery.\textsuperscript{52} This tone was almost invariably reiterated by the successive magistrates of this district in the later period.

John Elliot, who was appointed as magistrate of Nadia in 1808 and probably first investigated into the alarming rise of robbery, had mentioned six causes for the excessive \textit{dacoity} crime in this district in the early decade of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{53} These causes were i) that the trials routinely conducted by the court of circuits in which numerous sirdar dacoits were involved acquitted them for the lack of credible evidence. Continual non-conviction of the dreaded dacoits in the court gave them confidence. Thus \textit{dacoity} became excessive. ii) That the facility with which sirdar dacoits and gang robbers got over the trial at the sessions. Nobody had come forward with evidences against the \textit{dacoits} for fearing of revenges by them. This reason has doubtless some validity. Considering the number of proclaimed \textit{dacoits}, avowed sirdar and the number of desperate dacoits for whom \textit{perwansas} had been issued in this district, Elliot acknowledged the validity of the people’s fear. There were not less than 100 noted sirdar dacoits and 688 proclaimed dacoits operating in this district since 1803.\textsuperscript{54} The dacoits had extensive connections in various villages; intimacy was established between the dacoits and heads of the villages. Elliot further said in his report that the dacoits of this district possessed the means of procuring riches to a greater extent than any other district of India. There were few villages in which a dacoit had not a selection of \textit{dhemmney} or concubine who had the means of affording them protection and by using such means of eluding the vigilance and search of police officers. To evince this claim an instance can be cited here: A village was surrounded in which Bishwanath was known casually to have been, the women gave the shout to warn him of his danger and covered him with straw in so artful
manner in a cow house that he on that occasion escaped apprehension.\textsuperscript{55}

iii) The failure of the harvest. Successive failure of crops in this decade compelled many ryots to resort to gang robbery. iv) That the excessive oppressions of the ryots, which had compelled them to turn to dacoity for subsistence. v) Thana officers' indifferences to their duty and their exactions in cases of a complaint. vi) The want of energy in the magistrate. Among the above causes some reasons were permanent and common and applicable throughout Bengal. Reasons like defect in the colonial judicial system, inefficiency and corruption of the police officials, want of energy of the British magistrate and oppressions were mentioned by the officials in all the levels of the administration as the causes for robbery. Sometimes this sort of crime increased purely on temporary ground. For example, dacoities were increased during monsoon than in the dry season. H. Parry, the magistrate reported that dacoities at the session of the June were more frequent owing to the facility the dacoits have of concealing themselves in the high grass which grew in rain. Besides, numerous creeks and nullahs which were became navigable in small boats aided the dacoits to escape after their perpetrations.\textsuperscript{56}

Most of the district officials in Nadia had repeatedly accused the new land system for the alarming rise of the dacoity-crime. Changes in agricultural production system, no doubt, in many ways, contributed to the rising crime graph. This land system gave birth to the new landed class whose sole purpose was to make profit out of the available means. From the large landholders to the smaller one every class of land owner practised coercive method to realize maximum rent from their holding. Tytler who was employed to suppress dacoity in the northern part of Nadia wrote “in amounting for dacoity or robbery in a Zillah, our first step ought to be, to
examine the condition of the *ryots*, and we shall always find, in their poverty and oppression the chief cause of this evil." For this purpose, it would be worthy to take a particular account of the condition of the some villages for locating different changes in the management in *Ijara, Katkina* and as to the *Khas* lands of the *zamindars*. By this means, a complete view might emerge. In the year 1810, Tytler made an attempt of this kind which presents a fair specimen of the state of that part of the district. According to his survey in six villages the result was that Chundpore village had in 1808 not less than 60 houses, the lands in the cultivation amounted to about 2000 *bighas*. In 1810 it had only 3 houses and the whole land was overrun with jungle and was full of hogs. It had been in *Katkina* for four years previous to its being deserted. The village Cola had 100 houses and 5000 *bighas* of beautiful cultivation. In 1810 it contained 40 houses and the whole land cultivated was not above 200 *bighas*. The principal *ryots* having deserted it, left the houses to be occupied by any that chose to inhabit them. It had been for 10 years in *Katkina*. In another village Juranpore had 250 houses and 7000-8000 *bighas* fertile land. In 1810 it had only five houses of respectable cultivators and 5 or 6 huts were inhabited. The cultivation was reduced to 400 *bighas*, it had been in *Katkina* for 9 years. Another three villages namely Khasipoor, Beerpoor and Tertulberia, the situation was more or less the same. In the opinion of Tytler, all these things happened due to the oppression of the *Katkina*.*dars*. It had driven the *ryots* to commit different crimes for earning their living. Tytler’s views have supports in the opinions of other magistrates of this district. John Elliot received many complaints from the *ryots* regarding the oppressions of the petty landholders while he was touring in the different parts of Nadia. Mr. Elliot, when passing through the Rajah of Krishnagar *zamindari*, observed that the waste land far exceeded the proportion of cultivation and villages were becoming deserted.
On enquiry he learnt from the ryots, that it was caused by the excessive oppressions of the Katkinadars. Villagers sought protection from excessive oppression by flight. He described it as a most oppressive system and cause of the excess of dacoity crime. Another magistrate, J. Shakespeare in one of his reports in 1812, mentioned that a tract of land to the north of Krishnagar, consisting of 500 square miles of lands, which with the exception of some few spots of scattered cultivations, was an entire waste. These lands once were in high state of cultivation but they were now covered with grass jungle, and infested by wild animals. “If you enquire how these lands fell waste, you are told they have been overrun by decoits and wild hogs, if ask from whence the decoits came, you are told that originally the cultivators of the soil, and if push your enquires further, you discover that they were driven to this desperate mode of livelihood by the oppression of the land holders”, concluded Shakespeare.

The land of this district was almost entirely sold to the purchasers who were not the residents of this district. They were the speculators and capitalists from Calcutta. Consequently, the ryots, who formerly had trust in their zamindars and regarded them with respect and veneration as the power rested with the landholders, could not build up the same kind of relationship with the new proprietors. Almost the whole of this district had been disposed of, either by public or private sale, the old land holders were no more, and the new purchasers were, for the most part, opulent native merchants who considered land as a means of profit and would part with it at will after they had thoroughly fleeced the ryots. These men were, of course, non-residents, and they had chosen their agents for their superior abilities, in cunning and rapacity. The estates have consequently been farmed and under farmed and rack-rented, and the old respectable ryots hapless, and oppressed, have either fled from the fields of their forefathers.
or gradually produced “a counter balancing spirit of opposition”, observed another magistrate in 1814. But all these magistrates have failed to explain why dacoit sirdars were under the protection of the landholders.

In the years 1819 and 1820 there was a sudden increase in the number of dacoits and the magistrate and superintendent of police were quick enough to identify the causes of this rise. They attributed it to the rising price of rice and other daily necessities. They also said that in addition to this factor, release of large number of suspected criminals from custody was another factor for the rise of robbery. In 1836 again the commissioner of Jessore division attributed the crop failure to the rising of gang robbery in Nadia. In 1850, the superintendent of police also concurred with the commissioner that in that year failure of the crops was the prime factor for the increase in robbery. He very complacently remarked that it is quite understandable that robbery had increased because of crop failure. But such utterance is not compatible when these very officers mentioned that dacoits are all lathials and are in payroll of the landlords, dacoits are idle and avert of work etc. If dacoits were really in the pay roll of landlords and aversed to work why then they did bother for crop failure or any other calamities? Some dacoit approvers’ testimonies had corroborated with official views as regards the cause of robbery. For example, Manick Ghose replied to a question that poorer people were increasingly joining in the dacoity crime for failure of crops. The failure of crops, price rise or any other natural disaster can be designated as temporary factors for the prevalence of violent gang robbery. Some officials thought natives’ character to be the cause of dacoity crimes. R. Rock, the first judge of Calcutta court of circuit, in his report in 1809 emphatically wrote “many ascribe it to the defects of the system...I cannot concur in this sentiment....the cause of dekoity ...may rather be traced to that
propensity to vice which generally mark the character of the lower orders of the natives...".64

It is more difficult to identify the factors for river dacoity. It might, therefore, be inferred that same sort of elements contributed to the prevailing of this crime. Official views were aptly expressed by the report of superintendent of police in 1844.65 According to the report, the attack used to take place during the night. The dacoits were strangers to the boatmen. Recognition, therefore, was seldom possible. The boatmen proceeded to their destination without running the risk of further loss and there was a delay in informing the police. The report further explained that the boatmen were silent because the loss did not occur to them or their merchants but to the native insurers. Thus they had no interest either in the recovery of property or the conviction of the offenders. The objective of the boatmen was to proceed onwards as fast as possible. This, of course, gave great impunity and encouragement to the increase of this crime.66 Magistrates also echoed this observation in their reporting on river dacoity. They also made remarks about the lack of sufficient number of boats, patrolling of the river police etc.

It is, therefore, futile to search for a singular and precise cause of dacoity crime. There were rather multiple factors that contributed to the existence and the occasional rising of dacoity crime.

Impact of Dacoity

Whatever the precise factors might be, the impact of dacoities was felt in every aspect of life of people in Nadia. Magistrates’ reports indicate that all classes of people, irrespective of caste, religion or creed who had money, had been attacked by the dacoit gangs. This has been corroborated by the confessions and depositions of many dacoits. One of the earliest
depositions made by three notorious dacoits of this district in 1809 before the assistant magistrate Mr. Alexander Fraser Tytler clearly prove that they had attacked everybody who had property and money. During a brutal robbery at the house of Nello Camar at Chagdaha the dacoits demanded money from the owner in this way: “Camar you have two distinct branches of trade, is this all the money you have given?” Nello responded “I have nothing more”. Then two dacoits threw Nello on his back and began rolling him with a bamboo across his breast. Nello begged them not to torture more and said there are six gold mohurs and ornaments in a box at the shop for them to take. Three or four dacoits went to the shop and broke opened the box. After coming out from the shop they asked Nello “give that you have besides this”, Nello replied “I have nothing else”. After that Nello died due to the treatment he received from the dacoits. On that night the dacoits also plundered and robbed eight more houses in the same village.  

There are enough indications that dacoits greatly wanted to prevent people from informing the police about their crime. They targeted, therefore, not infrequently, the eye witnesses, the police informers and those whose intentions were to resist them during their operations. The magistrate acknowledged in one of his reports that “the fact of a general murder of the witnesses admits of no doubt.” The dacoits, who after obtaining bail in the court, or after escaping from jail, used to murder the persons who were responsible for their imprisonment. Dacoits murdered Bhirab Napit because he had given evidence against them at Krishnagar in a case of dacoity and murder. Bhyrub was tied to a stake and speared and hacked to death by Khodabux Sirdar, Sumboo Bania, Korui Sirdar and others, they kept on exulting over him at the time saying “ you give [evidences] against us, and got us confinement, who will save you now”. These dacoits escaped from prison by breaking jail at Nuddea. In an incident, some
villagers of Kishnagunge afforded aid to the apprehension of one of Buddhea’s men. Reckless and inflated with revenge, Buddheah resolved to strike terror into the hearts of all who should presume to thwart his career. He assembled his entire gang, and surrounded the village in the dead of the night. The dacoits lighted their torches and rushed into the village, and every female of the village had been violated by them.\(^7\) In elucidation of the spirit of revenge against those who in any way acted against them an example may be given here. One day the dacoits assembled in a large force near Dignagar with an intention of robbing in various places in that quarter. It had been privately intimated to Issore Sircar, the Buxy of the Nazir, who instantly reported it to Mr. Parry, the then magistrate of Nadia. The consequence was an attack on them. Issore Sircar was an inhabitant of Dignagor and was the man who led the sepoys to attack the dacoits. He also wrote to Banikaunt, his friend, for sending carts to carry the dead bodies of robbers, and to prepare provisions for the sepoys. The consequence was that the dacoits attacked Bany Kaunt’s house. The dacoits seized his mother and wounded her in three places, compelled her to tell where Banikaunt was at the moment. They killed Jaynarain Chakraborty, a child of 12 years and his nephew and also murdered his servant, Hurry Narain Paul and carried off his nice Omanny Devi. The dacoits were so bloodthirsty for revenge when they discovered a friendship between Issore Sircar and Dulal Moyrah, they made a second attack in this village and burnt Dulal, robbed him of all his property, and made him solemnly swear that he would, in the future, avoid any further connection with Issore Sircar. All these instances can lead us to the raising of a question: were the victims the local collaborators of the local units of the colonial administration? In absence of clear evidences it is not possible to infer a logical answer but certainly that does not reject the probability.
On the contrary of the popular perception, dacoits were not at all averse attacking and perpetrating their depredations against the Europeans and government treasury. A daring dacoity had been committed on 19 February, 1807 at the Cutchery of the village Jagully on the government treasury in which 50000 rupees had been carried off by dacoits and several guards of the Cutchery were killed and wounded. Altogether 62 persons were involved in this daring dacoity. The Indigo factory was another target place of the dacoits. One of the earliest recorded robberies of this district was committed in 1794 at an indigo factory of Mr. W.C. Dexter in which property amounting to rupees 1000 was carried away by robbers. Another daring dacoity was perpetrated at an indigo factory of Mr. Haig, in which four persons were murdered and 10-12 were wounded.

Dacoits were very daring and cruel as well. Dacoits who operated in the early decades of the nineteenth century were, no doubt, were most cruel and bravest. The narratives given above provide ample proofs of their daring activities. However, in the later period of our study we find dacoits were less cruel. They, it seems, were more humane and kind. Sometimes they desisted themselves from attacking a house where there was a chance of resistance. But this was unthinkable in case of dacoits of the earlier period. From 1840 onwards the dacoity crime again appeared like an endemic but this time it was different from the former period both in terms of quality and quantity. Available documents indicate that in the 1840s dacoits were not professional and gangs were rather amateurs. It is not in any way an indication that dacoits felt shyness to commit daring robbery. Manick Ghose was a daring dacoit and active in the 1850s. In order to show the courage of this man and his gang I describe two of their dacoities as an instant. On the night of the 18 December 1849, 30 or 40 men gathered outside the village of Teyot to commit dacoity on a rich
oilman’s house. Since a party was going on in that very house so the people were sleepless till very late at night. As a result they had to defer the dacoity till the next night and hid their torches and weapons in some trees and jungles. They separated into small parties and remained in neighbouring villages until the next evening, when they again assembled. To their utter disgust they found the torches stolen. They made new torches, first broke into a shop to obtain oil, and then went up to the house they had planned to attack. The people in the house waited without sleeping and expecting the dacoits. The roof of the house was swarming with people. They had made all preparations to keep away the dacoits. The dacoits renewed the attack two or three times but in the end were obliged to desist. A party of 20 of them went down to the river Jellinghee and chosen a boat to attack and plunder. On it was a rich Brahmin with all his family. The dacoits robbed rupees 3000 in cash and a large number of gold and silver ornaments from the boat. In another dacoity in a Banya's house in Joogpore, in the same manner, the dacoits were assailed by the people in the house and they obliged to throw the dacoits down and make off. These cases show the determination and bravery in which these crimes were committed. Notwithstanding in both cases they knew the people were awake and ready to oppose them, the dacoits still did their utmost to force their way into the houses. The dacoits went upon these expeditions with the full intention of overcoming all obstacles and committing crime in spite of all hazards.

General inhabitants of Nadia district never felt secured and they had little trust on the government agencies for their protection. In 1809, a group of inhabitants of Krishnagar and Hooghly petitioned to the Lord Minto for their insecurity. The petitioners wrote “owing to the misdemeanors of the robbers, we have been unable to reside our houses from our forefathers we continued to inhabit in these places with security but never
met with such injury from the robbers as at present.” Most
insecure routes were the river ways. Passage through the
various rivers of this district was most unsafe and insecure. In
1834 an interesting letter was sent by a reader to the
newspaper Samachar Darpan in which he stated that people
with some property of Nadia district had no sleep at night in
their own home rather they left their house at the dawn of the
night for security and safety. In 1852 a group of zamindars of
Nadia and some other districts petitioned to the Governor
General of India complaining that their security was at stake
due to the great prevalence of dacoity crime. Even the
Lieutenant Governor of Bengal concurred with the general
feeling of the natives regarding their insecurity and remarked
“it has been asserted, and the assertion is very little if at all
exaggerated, that in the districts afflicted with this dreadful
social evil, no man, with property worth rupees 200 in his
house, can lay down to rest at night without the most vivid and
well founded fear, that he and his family will be awakened in
the night by the assault of these merciless plunders.” One of
the magistrates of this district in his report said that from the
depredations of these men (dacoits) large tracts of lands in the
district have been left uncultivated, and whole village deserted.
Sleep has not been for long time, known to the inhabitants by
night; it was a common habit of the villagers to quit their
houses after dark, and thus seek safety from their homes, and
such was the universal terror that no one dared to show any
appearance of property. Numerous gangs operated in the
several thanas of this district.

Measures Taken by the District Administration

The dacoits and their cruel tortures compelled many rich
peoples to leave their residences. In the year 1808 there were
eight lakh inhabitants in this district and near about two lakh
and a half of individuals had been compelled to leave their
houses because of the excess of dacoity and the violent oppressions of the katkinadars. According to a magistrate’s report “the rich have been plundered, and many have fled the country and those in moderate circumstances ruined; ... the effects of dacoiting.” He very emphatically remarked, “the decoity will not be permanently stopped from occurring until the oppression of the under renters is checked.” The central government did not sit idle after the attack on a European by the dacoits. After the attack on the house of Mr. Faddy, the government and local administration as well took it seriously and adopted measures in its disposal for crushing the dacoits. The government appointed three magistrates with special powers. The chief magistrate and judge was Mr. Elliot and three assistant magistrates were employed under him. They were Mr. Blaquire, Alexzander Fraser Tytler and Mr. Lyndon. What prompted the government to take serious steps for putting down this sort of crime was the gradual ascendancy of the dacoits in the district. It was continually prevailing but local administration completely failed to contain the crime. It undermined the authority of the administration, lowered the prestige of the colonial state power, manifested the weakness of the local power structure and threatened the operation of the ‘rule of law’. The alien rulers, in response, came out with vigour and power. Some of the adopted methods were lawful; some were not, but very much effective for the purpose. They rightly identified that without co-operation of the landlords, especially the under renters, their entire attempt to suppress dacoity crime might be gone in vain. So the newly appointed administrators at the very beginning of the operation bluntly warned the landlords and their agents that they should wholeheartedly support the government measures. The chief magistrate and judge, John Elliot ordered the zamindars and their agents and amlahs to co-operate with the administration for apprehending the dacoits. He also threatened them with
dire consequences if they did not give away the information they had. He in his first sitting publicly in court ordered the attendance of all the zamindari sadar amlahs and was happy to see hundred present. His declared objective was to notify them about a most arduous situation of the district. He also explained to them what he expected from their constituents in the aid of the magistrate’s authority. He assured them that he was armed with sufficient powers to act with determination and effect. He warned them to do their duty and the magistrate would support them to the utmost in securing the dacoits. The amlahs, on their part, assured the magistrate that their establishments were ready and willing to do everything in their power, in aid of the magistrate’s authority. The magistrate also promised them that they should not be made the prosecutors of dacoits and all such prosecutors should be carried on by the vakeel of the Government. The consequence of the measures was that the prosecutors and ryots brought every man of avowed bad character. Elliot also recommended that four things were clearly required of a magistrate for bringing law and order under control in this ‘unfortunate’ district; that an unlimited control over the police officers; that a means to administer summary justice: that an immediate example by confiscation of property to compel the surrender of the dacoits and that a prevention to the facility of escape to men of notorious character and absolute necessity of keeping such men out from the society.

Such was the spirit throughout the zillah that all were in search of the sirdar dacoits proudly claimed by Mr. Elliot. It was an unbelievable environment in the district. As a result, from November 1808 to January 1809, 738 dacoits were apprehended, 92 were apprehended by magistrates, 210 by the zamindari estates and ryots, 409 by police and 27 by the goindahs. The descriptions of dacoits who were apprehended were i) notorious sirdar dacoits-9, ii) petty
sirdar dacoits-96, iii) proclaimed dacoits- 10 and iv) dacoits and men without any ostensible means of subsistence and had been connected with the various gangs of the district- 623. His measures created such an environment of fear and panic among the most desperate and notorious dacoits that even a boy with two ryots could bring a daring robber from another district to the magistrate of Nadia. John Elliot, the magistrate said “I imagine government will have no hesitation, in agreeing with me, that no pains ought to be spared, in adopting every means possible to trace out facts that will tend to bring to justice men the pest of terror of the country.” He also argued that the situation of this district was peculiar and required more than ordering measures. He said that it is absolutely requisite that some of the accessories to the gangs should receive the pardon of the government.

Before his arrival the district administration did not take any concrete step for subduing robbery. The violence involved with such robbery openly challenged the authority of the magistrate. Therefore whenever the magistrate succeeded in arresting any robber it appeared to them a great success. This can be understood from the reaction of the magistrate after hearing of the apprehension of Shyam Das. Shyam Das was apprehended on 14 October in 1808, by the several burkandazes led by the nazir of the fauzdari court of Krishnagar. The magistrate H. Shakespeare was so joyous and happy after hearing the news that, besides a reward of 500 rupees distributed among the nazir and burkandazes, he requested to the Government for allowing him for distributing an additional 100 rupees to the nazir and his followers. He increased the amount of reward from five hundred to eight hundred rupees for the apprehension of Bishwanath and Buddhua Sirdar with the remark “I have now a number of people who are interested by fear as well as the hopes of the reward, in taking of those two men and with this
encouragement I hope I shall be able to reward the apprehension of both of them.”89 The latter two dacoits were apprehended by the help of the spies who were once in their gang. According to official records,90 Tincory Bera pointed out the mode of Bishwanath’s apprehension. Daneesh Kangally adopted measures for securing Buddhia Sirdar and Shyam Kullog and Godhay aided in arresting Shyam Sirdar.

The dacoits, to avoid the apprehension, hid themselves in the neighbouring districts. The magistrates sought the government order for co-operation between the neighboring districts. Sumbho Banya was traced at Jessore jail where he was in confinement on the charge of burglary to avoid the search which was made for him. The Government of Bengal ordered the district administrations of Jessore, Dahaka-Jalalpur and Rajshahi to co-operate with Nadia in apprehension of the dacoits. The immediate effect of the co-operation of Jessore and Nadia was the apprehension of a Sirdar named Kasinath for whom a reward of three hundred rupees had been offered.91 Gangaram was traced at Patna and arrested there and brought to Calcutta.92 Sannyasi Bagdi, a special friend of Biswanath, was apprehended in Burdwan district.93

One of the modes of apprehending the dacoits which was frequently adopted by the magistrates was offering reward to the persons who aided the police for arresting the robbers. The Government took it as a legitimate policy by passing acts in favour of this method. In 1793 the magistrate Redfearn had got authorization from the Governor General in Council for rewarding the persons who were helping in arresting dacoits.94 This policy was frequently used in the 1808 when robbery reached its height in Nadia. The policy, though not unique, was very effective from the point of view of the administration. Its intention was to create division in the gangs and among the
people in general. Reward and punishment was the commonest of all policies used by the district administration. Amount of declared reward was astonishing and very high considering the contemporary socio-economic conditions of Bengal.

Another policy taken by the Government to suppress the dacoits was to destroy the whole gang. “It is clear to me that the dacoity in Bengal is committed by gangs; that the only way to put down dacoity is to destroy the gangs by transporting at least every leading man in them”, remarked the Secretary to the Government of Bengal. The anti-dacoit agency which operated in the 1850s adopted this method for breaking down the gang. They allured a member of the gang, gave him the offer of pardon and thereby collected information about his gang and its members. Actually it was the approver system which assisted, to a great extent, in eradicating the dacoits from Nadia.

When the magistrates began to arrest the dacoits they found that it was an uphill task to convict them in the court because of the difficulties of procuring evidences against the alleged robbers. Nobody would come forward with evidences against the dacoits. Official explanations about this inability of collecting evidences were the fear of revenge by the dacoits, pusillanimous character of the natives and non-cooperation of the landlords. Even the weakness of Mohamedan criminal laws was, according to some magistrates, a factor for non-conviction of the dacoits. Or the dacoits had support of the people as they did not provide information to the police. Besides, it was a reflection of weakness of the district administration. In this difficult circumstance the district administration advocated for summary justice to convict the dacoits. They strongly recommended for the admission of spies as the witness and took them as king’s evidences. They insisted that without the
help of the informers, it would be impossible to convict many dreaded dacoits. Most of the time, the Central Government responded favourably to the plea of the district administration.

But the measures adopted by the magistrates created a huge controversy in the official circle of the East India Company’s Government. A large number of persons were arrested on the suspicion of being dacoits. They were confined in jail without being given the opportunity of self-defense. The Court of Circuit severely criticized the district administration for such measures but of no avail. The result was dreadful. Many of arrested persons died in police custody and in the prison. It is very clear from the documents that the torture of the police increased at the time of suppression of the dacoit. In 1806, only 25 prisoners died in the prison. 53 prisoners in 1807 and 86 in 1808 died in prison and 86 prisoners died in the first half of 1809 in the prison at Krishnagar. Sir Henry Strachey, in one of his answers to court queries, gave the following description of the effects of the measures taken at Nadia. “At Nadia were sent in as dacoits, from 20 November, 1808 to 31 May 1809, 2071 persons. Great delay necessarily took place in examination of these persons. I am unable to state the ultimate disposal of this multitude; but I find, that in six months and ten days forty eight had already died in jail; two hundred and twenty eight are stated to be in a course of enquiry or under examination by the magistrate, prisoners not yet examined, 1477. In some resolutions of Nizamat adalat, the court observe that since preceding December, when there were still 1500 prisoners in Nadia jail, the number has been reduced to 753. This is two years after the death of the 48. Now it is very probable that all these dreadful proceedings had some effect, though innocent men suffered... seeing a great stir made, and that vigilance of police was excited to such a pitch that no man could be secure against being seized by the goindahs, and thrown into jail...in this way, I think, the new measures have
had some good effect. Indeed it is certain, that in Nadia, at least, many dacoits were brought to justice, whether by ordinary mode or whether they were included in the 2071, I am not informed; at all events, the good done was purchased at the expense of too much evil. Such shocking cruelty, such a monstrous perversion of justice, committed our eye open, and with deliberation the imprisonment of multitudes, the harassing, the subordination of perjury, the plunder, the death of innocent men in jail-these scenes I conceive to be most discreditable to those who permitted them.” Strachey further said “decoity itself, dreadful as it is, cannot be compared, in its quantum of mischief, with what was produced by this horrid system.”

The dacoits did not easily obey the judgment passed on them. They made great stir against confinement. The district administration was compelled to seek military assistance for guarding the jail. Buddeah Sirdar planned to attack the jail at Krishnagar in order to help Shyam Das’s escape. But because of some disagreement among the dacoits they postponed their plan. The district administration at this juncture took steps that were not incompatible with the laws. The government gave enormous power to the magistrates. Most shockingly John Elliot, the chief magistrate and judge of the district was not responsible for his conduct to the sadar court. This means he had the liberty to pursue the policy he thought correct to clear Nadia of dacoits. A contemporary English journal remarked that Nadia was “cleansed [of dacoits] by means opposed to the tenderness of our institutions.” The rule of law was compromised for the apprehension of mere dacoits. It indicates another aspect of the local administration that they did not enjoy the support and confidence of the people. It had little knowledge about the perception of general people regarding the rulers. They ruled through fear and panic not less furious than the method adopted by the robbers. The
tactics and methods adopted by the robbers are quite understandable but why the Government took such harsh measures indicates other probability. Failure of the local administrative machinery to provide security to the common man was so evident that many scholars like Mill\textsuperscript{98} and others severely criticized the Company’s Government in Bengal.

The magistrates of Nadia frequently blamed that the non-cooperation of the natives were the major causes for the inability of the police to apprehend the dacoits. This allegation seems not very convincing and would not stand against careful scrutiny. There are examples of people’s resistance to robbery whenever they had an opportunity. In 1799 inhabitants of village of Ulah killed several dacoits and wounded many during the course of *dacoity* at the house of a respectable man of that village. Later in recognition of their heroic acts the Government rewarded the villagers and altered the name of that village from Ulah to Birnagar.\textsuperscript{99} In another incident, Jagannath Pradhan killed several dacoits during a *dacoity* case in his brother’s house. The Government gave him a reward of 100 rupees as recognition of his good work.\textsuperscript{100} People were living on the mercy of the criminals. They had no option but to employ *chowkidars* for their protection. This had a baneful effect on the villages as the chowkidars were most often engaged in robbery and had close link with the dacoit gang. During the Chagdaha *dacoity* the victims recognized some of the dacoits and many of them were once the *chowkidars* of that village or were the friends of the *chowkidars*.\textsuperscript{101}

In spite of such harsh measures which were adopted for suppressing *dacoity* crime, it could not be totally eradicated or subdued by the district administration. From 1840 onwards this sort of crime again came like an endemic. It was rightly understood by the Central Government that *dacoity* would not be eliminated by the district administration alone. So for this
purpose, a co-ordinated and collective effort was needed. A number of officials, who were employed in the criminal administrative departments, repeatedly urged the Government for enacting a stringent law for suppressing the *dacoity* crime. They argued that prevailing laws were too weak to punish a dacoit. By the pressure of these officials the Government passed a law known as Act XXIV of 1845. The preamble of this act categorically said that any person who once belonged to a gang of *dacoit*, irrespective of his involvement to any specific case, would be punished. Mere belonging to a gang invited punishment for many persons. By remarkable application of the ‘notion of guilt by association’\(^{102}\), hundreds of dacoits were transported to the overseas territories. In 1852 the suppression of *dacoity* commission was established. Nadia was included under this office in 1853. The suppression of *dacoity* commission, with the help of some native *darogahs*, apprehended numerous dacoits from the district. The famous *dacoits* of this period like Manick Ghose, Nabai Ghose, Kuber Ghose, Bishtoo Ghose, Monohur Ghose, Galakata Haurrish, Nayan Shaikh were arrested. Some of them later became approvers of the police to avoid transportation, others were convicted and transported. Thus *dacoity* crime was temporarily checked but never completely eradicated from Nadia. Many gangs emerged and operated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.\(^{103}\)

References


4 Shyam Sunder Katare, *Pattern of Dacoity in India: A Case Study of Madhyapradesh*, Delhi, 1977, p. 1. In the present work I have used the word dacoit, the anglicized form of daku and dakat. Besides I have uniformly used this spelling of dacoit, though, in official records this spelling had written differently like decoit, dekoit etc by various magistrates of different districts and officers of criminal department.

5 *Literary Panorama and National Register*, May, 1817, p. 226-27

6 *Ibid*
7 Letter from the Magistrate of Nuddea to Dowdeswell, the Secretary to the Judicial Department, dated 25 October, 1809, *BJCP*, 17 November, 1809, No. 20


9 Report of H Shakespeare, Magistrate of Nuddea, 29 September 1808, *BJCP*, 1 October 1808, No. 19

10 *Ibid*

11 *BJCP*, 4 November, 1808, No. 2A.

12 *BJCP*, 1 July, 1808, No. 17

13 *Ibid*

14 *BJCP*, 4 August 1809, No. 21

15 *BJCP*, 22 September, 1809, No. 46

16 *Ibid*

17 Report of the Magistrate of Nuddea, *BJCP*, 11 February 1809, No. 16

18 *BJCP*, 4 August 1809, No. 21

19 *BJCP*, 18 March, 1807, No. 5

20 *BJCP*, 9 March, 1810, No. 10

21 *Allen’s India mail, and Register of Intelligence for British and Foreign, India, China and all Parts of the East* (hereafter Allen’s India Mail), Vol. XIV, January—December, 1856, p. 603
22 *Ibid*

23 Letter from the Magistrate of Nuddea to the Secretary Judicial Department, 25 October, 1809, *BJCP*, 17 November, 1809, No. 20

24 *BJCP*, 17 November, 1809, No. 20

25 *BJCP*, 19 January, 1810, No.30

26 *BJCP*, 9 March, 1810, No. 10


28 *BJCP*, 19 June, 1807, No. 8

29 *Ibid*

30 *BJCP*, 19 June, No. 10

31 *BJCP*, 11 February 1809, No. 16,

32 *Ibid*

33 Correspondence Relating to the Suppression of Dacoity, in *Selections from the Records of the Bengal Government* (hereafter *SRBG*), No.18, p. 17

34 *Ibid*

35 *Ibid*, p. 6-7

37 SRBG, No. 21, Appendix-f, p. xlii

38 Ibid, Appendix, I, p. liii-liv

39 Ibid Appendix-K, p. lvi

40 RSPLPB, 1845, Nuddea, p. 53

41 RSPLPB, 1849, Nuddea, p. 51

42 Bengal Administrative Report for 1855-56, p. 24

43 Radhamadhab Saha, op.cit, p. 145

44 JJP, 16 March, 1821, No. 40


46 JJP, 1 April, 1844, No.111


48 The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Miscellany, Vol. 16, No. 91, 1823, p. 81

49 Ibid

50 John McLane, op.cit, p. 27

51 Ibid

52 Parliamentary Papers of 1812-1813, Vol. IX, p. 52

53 Letter from the Magistrate of Nuddea to the Secretary Judicial Department, Government of Bengal, BJCP, 22 September, 1809, No. 46

54 BJCP, 11 February, 1809, No. 16
55 *Ibid*

56 *BJCP*, 1 October, 1808. No. 18


59 *BJCP*, 22 September, 1809, No. 46

60 *BJCP*, 7 November, 1812, No.29

61 Radha Madhab Saha, *op.cit*, p. 140

62 Letter from the Judge and Magistrate of Nadia, 1 June, 1814, *JCP*,12 August, 1817, No. 20


64 Enclosed with Register’s letter of Nizamat Adalat, 31 May 1809, *BJCP*, 13 June 1809, No. 2

65 *JJP*, 1 April, 1844, No. 111

66 *Ibid*

67 Depositions of Gangaram Sirdar, Para Sirdar, Sumboo Banea and Ramsoonder Capally, 15 September, 1809, *BJCP*, 17 November, 1809, No. 23 – 26
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