

THE KOCHES AROUND THE WORLD

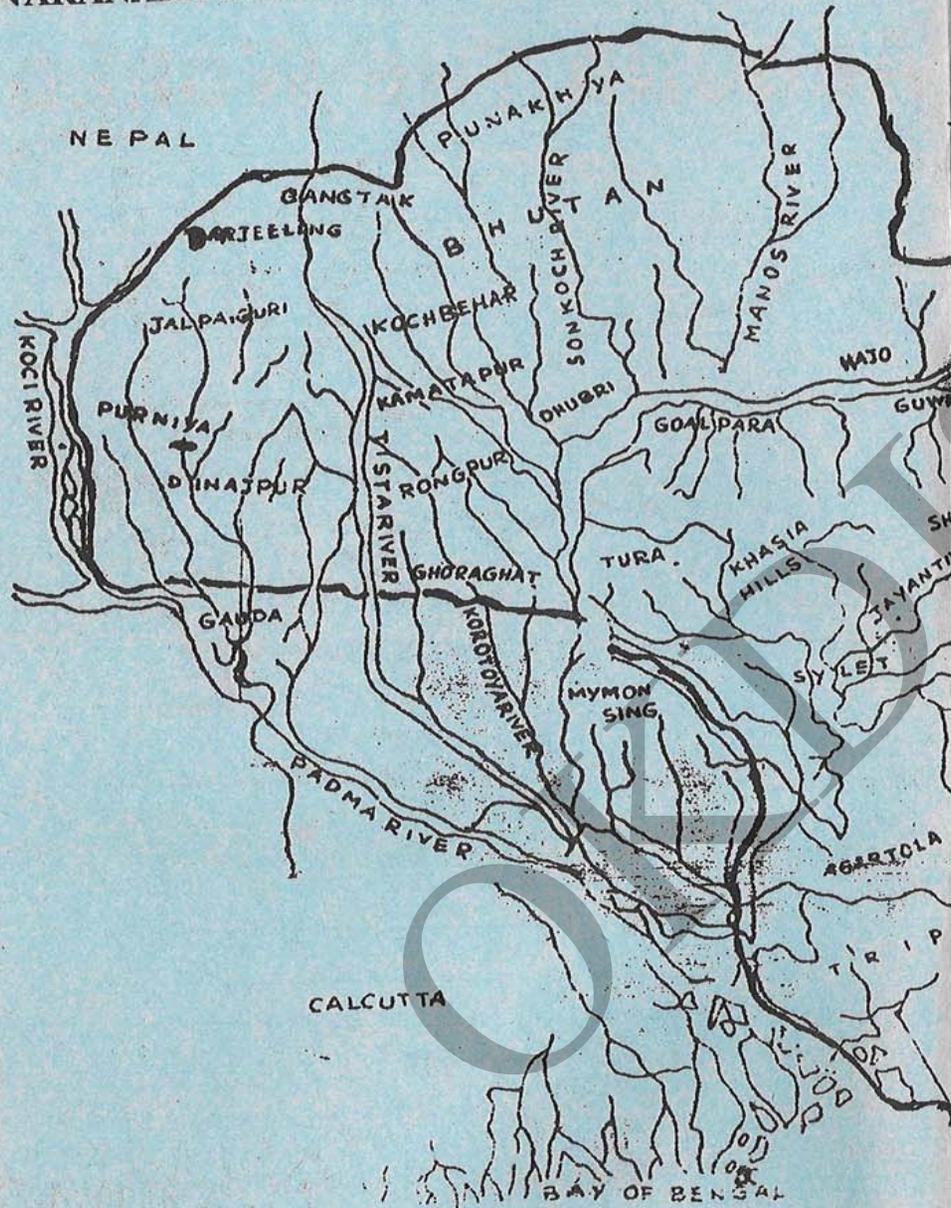


Preface

*(History of Koches alias Koch-Rajbonshies
of north-east India)*

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THE GLORIOUS KOCH EMPIRE OF MAHARAJ NARANARAYAN DURING 16TH CENTURY A.D.



The Koches Around The World Preface

0.1. The Koches :

The word "Koch" or "Koches" means the people belonging to the "Koch" race, an ethnic group of indigenous peoples of Asian continent mainly falling within Mongoloid stock ; who traversed in different places of Asia from Pre-Vedic period down to the present century. During vedic and epic age these people were known as Asurs, Mlechachas, Kiratas, Non-Aryans, Panis etc. During Paurani and Tantric age, these people were mentioned as Ku-Vachas (users of evil language). Subsequently in course of time these Kuvachas alias modern Koches had concentrated in the geographical area known as ancient Kamrupa alias north-east region of undivided India. This region was well protected by nature in the past, when means of communications and transportations were in primitive stage. Bounded on the north by the Lordly Himalayas and on the south by Mandachala popularly now known as the Garo Hills and protected in the East and West by the Dikkarai-Vahini (the turbulent and powerful Dikkarai river) and the sacred Karatoya river (compared to river Ganga in vastness and sacredness) respectively, this beautiful strip of land seemed situated on the very lap of motherly and lovely Nature.

02. Antiquity of Koches :

The Panis alias Pani-Koches - the forefathers of modern Koches of north-east India, were mentioned in many hymns of Rig-Veda (Vide-IV.58:4; 1. 124.10; i. 83.5; X. 108.7 etc.) ; wherein the story of Sarama - is an instance of tricks

played by the Aryans against the Panis (Pani-Koches) are available. Names of Pani Chiefs, descriptions of their territories and terrible battles between Panis (Pani-chiefs) and Aryans also available in Bhagawata-Purana (Skanda V. Chapter 9 ; and V. 24.30) . These Pani Koches were not only civilised but also undertook sea-voyages for purposes of trade and commerce (vide Rk. 1/46/2). There is one widely circulated story . In in the dim past one Chand Sadagor of Champak Nagor situated on the foot hills of Mandachal (Garo hills area) carried out several Sea-Voyages for trade and commerce in Lanka (Sri Lanka) and beyond countries with the help of his famous seven Dingas alias "Sapta Dinga" (7 big boats). Learned critics of social history opined that Chand Sadagor, his son Lakhindar and daughter-in-law named Beula alias Bahula etc. belonged to Pani-Koches. There is sufficient reason to beleive that the time honoured popular story of this locality (ancient Kamrupa region) was incorporated in Padma Puran by the complier of such Pauranik treaties for the purpose of glorifying Lord Siva and his consort Sakti. It is an admitted fact that Lord Siva was worshipped as the Firest God (Adi Dev) at least by the Koches of north-east India since people started worshipping spiritual forces. There was not a single village or a family where Lord Siva was not worshipped individually or collectively by an ordinary family or by a royal family. It is also historically ascertained that the royal dynasty established by Hariya Mandal and his famous son Bisu alias Biswa Singha during 15th century A.D. was identified as Siva Dynasty and this royal dynasty ruled, in different parts of undivided north-east India, continuously from 15th century to 1947 A.D., when British India was divided into three parts i.e. India, West Pakistan and East Pakistan (subsequent Bangla Desh). It

is also an admitted fact that the main national dress of the females of Koch-Rajbongshi peoples of north-east India was "Patani" till the end of 20th century. Now it is used sparingly by the females of rural areas. This "Patani" was the main dress of "Behula" of Padma Puran fame; though she belonged to aristocratic family i.e. daughter-in-law of Chand (Chandradhar) Sodagor - a chief of Pani-Koches of ancient Kamrupa region. "Patani" is now being replaced by "Mekhala", "Saree" and "Churidar payjama" with the march of time. Indeed a careful study on the hymns of RigVeda composed under inspirations by the Seers(Rishees), who were deadly enemies of the Pani Koches, would leave no room for doubt that the Panis were a powerful, prosperous and civilised race. They were engaged in trade and commerce. In many places of Rigveda the Vedic Rishees are found to express lamentations for fear of the Panis, who were opposed to all kinds of sacrificial rites. According to Yajurveda while the Aryans performing "Pitrimedha Yanga"(for propitiating the spirits of the departed ancestors) the very first hymns that has to be offered is " Opato Yong tu Ponoyo Omunna Devo Piyoboh" (Vajasaneya Samhita 35.1). The meaning of this hymns is - " Be off the disagreeable Panis who are enemies of the gods". Many such instances can be cited that the modern Koches, the decendents of the ancient Panis or Pani Koches, were there at least in various parts of ancient India and Asia since Vedic and Pre-Vedic age. From the ancient literatures of western world including Greek literature written by historian like Herodotus of 5th century (450/B.C.) it can clearly be proved that the Koches used to dominate even over the waters and sea-shores of Mediterranean sea. Babu Nagendra Nath Vasu in his famous book "The Social History of Kamrup" dealt with Pani Koches of East and West at

different pages of 1st Chapter of Vol. 1 of above book, first published in 1922 and first reprinted in 1983 A.D. in three volumes. In this volume Babu N.N. Vasu has clearly said that the Panis alias Pani-Koches alias the Phoenicians, described in the Vedas, as an ancient race of traders whom the Vedic Aryans hated and regarded them as their rivals. The Panis settled down on the eastern borders of India, after they had been expelled from the western parts of the country by their more powerful opponents - the Aryans. All traces of the existence of the phoenicians who were the originators of European civilization have been bottled out from the western world. Col. Delton in his book "Ethology of Bengal" at page 92 clearly said about the Koches - "They assumed the name of Pani Koch to distinguish themselves from the hill neighbours, the Garos, with whom they were often confounded in consequence of the similarity of their manners, and customs; but their religion and language resemble rather those of the Rabhas than the Garos." Earlier in one of my Assamese article entitled "Bismrito Otitor Rangoni" (Ray on the forgotten past) much have been discussed on the Pani Koches of erstwhile Goalpara district (created in 1822 A.D.) and this article was published at pages 1 to 8 in "Agloti" - Souvenir of 57th Annual Session of Assam Sahitya Sabha held from 19th to 22nd April, 1991 A.D. at Dudhnoi town (Goalpara district), Assam.

03. From Panis to Modern Koch-Rajbongshies :

Here an attempt has been made to throw a flash of light on the checkered history of the Koches since pre-vedic days, who traversed the boistrous waves of time, under various names : such as Asuras, Demons, Mlechachas, Kiratas, Kuvacha, Pani-Koches, Meches, Kombozees, Koches, Bratya Kshatriyas, Bhanga-Kshatriyas, Kshatriyas

and lastly as Rajbongshi alias Koch-Rajbongshies as are evident from the written records of ancient scriptures, Vedas, Purans, Tantras, mythological stories, Greek writings and also in various ancient and modern histories of native and foreign scholars. These ancientmost peoples originally twined in matriarchial society, as were common in many other tribes of Lord Siva and his consort Sakti (Siva-Sakti).

The ancient Koches might have accepted Asura and Mlecha cult but as time gone by gradually the Koches of lower Himalayan terrain and Bhutan Doowers area supported Jainism and Budhism as Mohabir Jain and Gautom Budha belonged to the above area as their birth places surrounded by the ancient Koches at that period. Many stone statues of Mohabir Jain (the last Tirthanker) and 'Stups' including statues of Gautom Budha have been discovered in the mainland of Pani-Koches areas like Sri Suryya Hills, Jogighopa etc. areas of earstwhile Goalpara district. The story of Moinamoti and Gopichand and connected songs amply demonstrate the influence of Budhism and Jainism amongst the indigenons peoples of north east India. Thereafter the ancient Koches came under the strong hold of Hinduised Aryan priests when Budhism, with its perverted practices, was withering away from Indian soil due to strong suppressions on Budhists by the privileged priest class under the covering name of Brahmins- the custodians of Hinduism. The fall of Budhism and rise of Hinduism gave birth to many caste and sub-castes amongst Hindus.

The eulogy of castes especially upper castes, eulogised

* Nagendra Nath Vasu, Prachya Vidya Maharnava, Sidhanta Varidhi, Tattva Chintamani, Compiler of Bengali Visvakosha and Hindi Visvakosha, author of Mayurbhanj Archaeological Survey Report, Caste and Sects of Bengal and the Modern Budhism etc.

the priests class as Brahmins who were supposed to be first children of God - the almighty. Such caste eulogy in Hinduised India started playing havoc in Indian society ; which caused vivisections and badly weakened the strong hold of the solidarity of Indian society - i.e. the pride of feeling or being Indian. Thus the protagonists of Islamism got widely spread red carpets for entering Indian field from Arab world in every nook and corners of house divided India. Ultimately the Mughal emperors who were also followers of Islamism occupied Delhi - the one time political and royal centre of Hindu powers. But due to fanatically orthodox some leaders of Islamism whose hearts were in Macca & Madina and bodies in India in the name of religion, have played the same pernicious role in Mughal India and Christianity started entering deep amongst the so called untouchables and low castes of Hindus, who were hitherto kept backward and deprived from acquiring scientific knowledge. Of course Indian Govt. after independence has realised the cause of such mental backwardness of the commoners ; but the steps to remove backwardness failed to make any headway due to corrupted mentality of most of the bureaucrats who mostly hail from upper castes. The faulty system of education adopted by Govt. of India, taught, the Degree holder elites, one most harmful philosophy of life. These elites imbibed the ideal that "Money is dearer than man ; catch money as many as you can". So most of the bureaucrats who generally hail from so-called upper castes or class of Indian society have become servants of money. So castism must be removed with strong hand from Hindus of India. By mere oral slogans caste will never be eradicated unless an alternative to caste system is provided. In place of caste, the inherited peculiarities and particularities of each ethnic group

or sub-group of peoples of India and world should be protected and enriched. Each region should be made responsible for the wellbeing of the next neighbouring region. Each bridegroom should marry a bride of any ism or ethnic group, who is a little bit less or inferior in every respects including culture, for better progeny. The question of caste system and ism distinctions should in no way be considered in such compatible marriage or union. This is based on divine and universal law which is also scientific. Observance of caste system and ism distinction are totally unscientific and harbinger of ignorance. Beware of those men whose God or gods are in the sky. Beware of those religious leaders who hold the view that isms are 'Dharma' or religion. Because if isms are held as Dharma, then terrorism, separatism, plunderism, chauvinism, communism, capitalism, Hedonism, Racialism, Marxism, Gandhism, Escapism, Individualism etc. should also be treated as Dharma. If the above isms are not accepted as Dharma ; then Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity, Islamism etc. are also not Dharma. The word 'Dharma' implies oneness and singular . It is a Sanskrit word. The idea, ideal, action which uphold the being and becoming and becoming of an individual with his environment is called Dharma. That which uphold the being and becoming is called Dharma. "What makes anything stand on with life and growth is Dharma. Upholding urge of our existence is Dharma"- said Sree Sree Thakur. So Dharma through out the world is one ; because there is not a single living being or man who does not desire to live and that too in a better way. As nobody wants to die, so Dharma is also one for all. It is, on this practical and present background especially of north-east India, where Koches are predominately larger in population as an ethnic group and who are now most backward Hindus,

Caste system in India is one of the main factor of injustice, exploitation and backwardness. Hence independent India even after sixty years is a backward country and is treated as one of the corrupted country in the world as are reported in Newspapers ; vide Daily Newspaper "Asomiya Khobor" at page 4, dated 12th June/2003 in the article written by Lakhinandan Bora, Ex-President, Assam Sahitya Sabha & Assam Tribune dated 13th June/2003 reported by S.J. Sorabji Atorny Genl. The fathomless plight of the Koches alias Koch Rajbonshies of north-east India created deliberately by some shrewd politicians in collusion with some corrupt bureaucrats, is a glaring case-history for carrying out research works by sociologists and scholars alike. The detailed and gradual conversion from pani-Koches to modern Koch- Rajbonshies have been discussed in subsequent chapters of this book- "The Koches Around The World."

04. Koches after Independence:

The present-day deplorable conditions of the Koch-Rajbonshies of north- east India especially of Assam, Meghalaya and North Bengal areas, after independence of India, have become not only a deep slur to Indian civilisation ; but also bespeaks utter lack of magnanimity of Indian leaders and bureaucrats concerned. Incidentally it can safely be said that hundred percent of the Koch-Rajbonshies of the above areas are Hindus and are under the strong grips of Brahmin priests or such Guides hailing from so-called upper castes, in matters of performing religious rites and rituals. It has been now proved that the Koch-Rajbonshies of the above areas are committing serious crimes by remaining staunch followers of Hinduism. From my personal close and long observations on these unsophisticated unfortunate Koch-

Rajbonshies of the above areas of post-independent period ; it can safely be suggested that their emancipation lies only with finding out an alternative Dharma (not ism) which is based on scientific knowledge. They should now tarry a while and find out such alternative. They should stand on their own legs instead of blaming others or depending on other's mercy.

It is really surprising to note that an ethnic group of adventurous peoples of ancient Kamrup region of 'Mohabharata' fame, who marched to Western India and beyond upto Persian gulf and Mediterranean sea kept deep foot-prints at different places of ancient India right from pre-Vedic age, established kingdoms and ruled sporadically upto the end of 14th century A.D. and systematically and gloriously in entire north-east India from 15th Century to 1950 A.D. have now fallen into the abyss of downfall, especially during post-independent period. Consequently due to their utter callousness and surrendering their future at the hands of their priests, the same one Koch-Rajbonshies have become Nepalee, Bhutane, Indian, and Bangladeshi nationals. Within India they were made Biharees (Purnea district of Bihar State), Bengalees (five districts of North Bengal after 1st. January, 1950), Assamese & Meghalayees after 1970. Constitutionally also these same Koch- Rajbonshies have been divided and sub-divided by concerned politicians of India by declaring them as Scheduled Caste in Bengal, Scheduled Tribes in Meghalaya, O.B.C. in Assam, M.O.B.C. in erstwhile Goalpara district of Assam, General in Karbi Awalong and North Cacher districts of Assam. In addition to these divisions and sub-divisions Govt. of Assam and India have deliberately given birth to some 'Autonomous Lands' like Rabha Hasshongs, Boroland and Autonomous Council etc. on their ancestral home lands and hearts of the Koch-

Rajbonshies. It is proved that the leaders concerned either donot have any knowledge of the history of north- east India and Assam , or deliberately sowing poisonous seeds of internal strifes so that leaders can exploit them when needed.

05. Considering the plight of these lamb-like simple but dogmatic Hindus, who always believe in unseen God and fortuitous fate, I myself took the lead of approaching Central Govt. and submitted memorandum to the hon'ble Chairman of Joint Committee of both the House of Parliament (A.K. Chanda, M.P.), met the Prime Minister and President of India on 10th Oct/1968 for enscheduling the Koch-Rajbonshies of Assam also. This memorandum was submitted on behalf of All Assam Koch-Rajbonshi Sanmilloni, organised democratic movements, awaited deputations to all the Prime Ministers of India, all the Chairman of the Joint Committees several times, the honourable Members of Parliament also visited for local studies at Shillong, Dispur (Guwahati), Dibrugarh and Bongaigaon at different dates, organised Assam Bandhs, Road Blocked, Hunger Strikes and Mass Rallies at Guwahati-Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon. In such Mass Rallies held at Guwahati Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and Central Minister Sita Ram Kesori attended and addressed the huge gatherings held at George Field on different dates and assured scheduling the Koch- Rajbonshis, the issue hanging since 1968. Ultimately Govt. of India declared the Koch-Rajbonshies of Assam (except in two districts named Karbi Awalong and North Cacher districts) as Scheduled Tribes only for three months by an Ordinance of President of India; vide Ordinance No.9 of 1996 dated 27th. Jan, 1996. After renewing this Ordinance an official Bill was introduced before the Parliament for regularisation of the above Ordinance. The foul game of the upper caste politicians started

to undo the scheduling issue of the Koch- Rajbonshies and this Bill is still hanging before the Parliament who ultimately constituted a Select Committee of hon'ble Members of Both Houses and this Mini Parliament (Select Committee) visited Bongaigaon on 16th Nov/1996 and the Leader of this Mini Parliament Mr. Amor Ray Pradhan, M.P. from West Bengal addressed the big gathering assembled in the cultural exhibition of the Koch-Rajbonshies. All the hon'ble Members of this Mini Parliament expressed surprise at the delay - dalling tactics adopted by Govt. perhaps at the behest of interested corners. The tentalising approach of both State and Central Govts in respect of scheduling is really unexpectedly pathatic for the Koch- Rajbonshies of Kamrup Rajjya alias Kamata empire alias Assam and North Bengal (West Bengal State) who were and are the ancientmost sons of the soil ; though they are now being threatened as 'foreigner' time to time by issuing deportation notices by Govt. of Assam. This is nothing but irony of fate. It can easily be regarded as the betrayal to the sons of the soil of north-east India, even after 59 years of independence. Likewhere after burning many fuels since oct/1968 to this date, the hanging scheduling issue of the Koch-Rajbonshies, Assam Govt. of late has linked up five additional ethnic groups for scheduling alongwith Koch- Rajbonshies ; vide Daily News Papers Agradoot/ Khabor dt. 9th, Aug/2006. These five additional ethnic groups are Adibashi Tea Garden tribes of Assam, Tai Ahoms, Morans, Motoks and Chutiyas. This is nothing but maneuvering of issues ; because the processing of required criterias for scheduling of the last four ethnic groups will definitely take considerable times which means inordinate delay and this delay bespeaks almost denial due to bureaucratic handling. The demand of the Koch-Rajbonshis and Adibashi

Tea tribes of Assam have already been examined & processed and are hanging before the Parliament since 1968. The criteria of Tai-Ahoms, Chutiyas, Moran & Motons are to be processed and finalised and it bespeaks delay for all. By this time Assam may be at the strong grip of Bangla Desh and Pakisthaniani Agenets due to bankruptcy of leadership in Assam. It is also surprising to note that not a single gentleman has been nominated from amongst the Koch Rajbonshis of Assam for Rajya Sabha Member since independence of India ; though these people constitute one third of the total population of Assam. Statistical figures showing representations of these down-trodden peoples in various Govt. and semi-govt. Departments and organisations draw a very shabby picture on the honesty of leaders in powers.

Without constitutional protection mere paper declaration as O.B.C. by State Govt. cannot solve the old problem created by privileged classes belonging to so called few upper castes ; these Koch-Rajbonshies though were descendents of kings ; yet 99% of these peoples remained ignorant of scientific outlook as they were made to believe that they are the descendents of not only royal families, but also 'khatriyas' of Aryan age and 'Mohabharata' fame. They could not understand the true and scientific meaning of the words like 'Sorgo' (heaven), 'Bhagawan'(god), 'Asura' (demon), 'Arya' (prone to go ahead), 'Mlacha', Adrista, 'Brahmon', 'Bipro', 'Lakshmi', 'Saraswati', 'Bishnu', Narada, Parboti etc. dubious words due to utter ignorance. As a matter of fact these words have got very nice and scientific meaning. Sree Sree Thakur (Late Anukul Chandra Chakravorty, 1888-1969) - the founder of Satsang movement, had explained such dubious words very nicely. So after independence these ignorant peoples have become fish out

of water and very soon became "Drawers of waters and Hewers of woods" immediately after acquiring the kingdoms and Zamindary Eatates by Govt. of India after independence.

06. So in order to study these down-trodden historic peoples more closely I myself assumed the office of General Secretary of All Assam Koch-Rajbonshi Sanmilloni (like N.G.O.) of Greater Assam area in 1967 and continued as General Secretary till 1982 and then working President for one year and thereafter as President fo another term i.e. in total more then 17 years at a stretch. The intimate association for such longer period enabled me to know the history & socio-political conditions compelled me to travel almost every nook and corners of north-east India and also south-east Nepal and southern parts of Bhutan & collected some materials for writing a book on them i.e. Koches. In 1969 I wrote and published a book on the history and culture of Koch-Rajbonshies right from pre- vedic period to 1950 in Assamese language limiting the book within 150 pages. Erudite scholars like Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, National Professor of India and President, Indian Sahitya Academy, Dr. Sukumar Sen, Dr. D.C. Sarkar, Dr. Moheswar Neog, President, Assam Sahitya Sabha, Dr. Birendra Kumar Bhattaacharjee, President, Indian Sahitya Academy and President, Assam Sahitya Sabha, recipient of Gyanpith Awards and many others highly praised this book of mine and established me as investigating writer. Indian Sahitya Academy appointed me as Referee for Assamese books in awarding Academy awards to Assamese writers and Assam Sahitya Sabha also honoured me as Guests etc. in Annual Sessions. This book has subsequently been revised and enlarged and republished in 1993 limiting the book within 426 pages. Now the Research Scholars of Universities on

Humanities especially on history and culture value this book most. In connection with the B.A.C. (Bodoland Autonomous Council) movement especially in Lower Assam area, Govt. of India constituted a Three Men Expert Committee led by Bhupindra Sing, Retd. I.A.S. to examine and collect views from various corners and the committee has requested me to appear and offer my views at Circuit House of Kokrajhar Town on 4th week of April/1991. As all the hon'ble members of Expert Committee were non-Assamese and non-Bengalees and as I am also not fluent in Hindi, so I started writing on Koches with reference to Kocharies (a species of Bodo) in simple English language and hurriedly completed it limiting within 186 pages (when printed in one/eight demy size book) and presented three copies to Expert Committee along with my oral comments before the Committee. The name of this hurriedly prepared book is "The Koches Around The World". At the time of offering my comments on the proposed B.A.C. (Bodoland Autonomous Council) area i.e. from Sonkoch river to Panchnoi(river) i.e. roughly from the north bank of Goalpara district to Darrang district; the total population of B.A.C. would be 18(eighteen) lac according to Govt. figure, I pointed out the break up of the above 18 lac population as below :

1. Total population in proposed B.A.C. area - 18 lac
2. Total population of Plain Tribals in B.A.C. - 6 lac
- 3 Total non-tribals in B.A.C. - 12 lac
4. Total Koch-Rajbonshies in B.A.C. - 7.80 lac
5. Total non-Koch Rajbonshies & non tribals in B.A.C. - 4.20 lac

So creation of B.A.C. means deliberate deprivation of legally non-tribal Koch-Rajbonshies and I requested the Three

Men Expert Committee & suggest Govt. of India to declare the Koch-Rajbonshies as scheduled Tribe first and then create BAC in the name of Bodos, and declare entire Assam as Tribal State. It may be pointed out that - "Bodo" is a generic term and its species are (1) Koches (2) Kocharies, (3) Rabhas, (4) Garoes, (5) Tiyas, (6) Hajongs, (7) Chutiyas according to sociologists, anthropologists and historians, both native and foreigners. So considering population pattern of the proposed Bodoland area I advocated in my public speech delivered as invited Distinguished Guest on 20th June/1992 at Bongaigaon College field before a very large Mass Rally organised by ABSU (All Bodo Students Union) and BPAC (Bodo Peoples Action Council); that BAC should be created covering the geographical area comprising entire North Bengal and present Assam for doing justice to all the indigenous peoples due to historical reasons; vide Daily News Paper "Natun Dainik" dated 29th June/1992. But for reasons not known to us Govt. of India created BAC with 18 lacs of population on 20th Feb./1993; wherein only 6 lacs population belonged to tribals largely Kocharies, as against 7.80 lac are Koch-Rajbonshies who are not yet tribals. Total population of non-tribals within BAC comprises 12 lacks. So for the sake of one-third tribals including Christian tribals; two-third non-tribals including Hindus and Muslims have been sacrificed. This is sufficient to comment that concerned leaders of Govt. of India are either trouble creators or hopelessly ignorant of the history and culture of north-east India. It is already known to all concerned that thousands of Indian refugees due to violent BAC movement, belonging to Muslims, Adi Bashies and Koch-Rajbonshies from proposed BAC area are yet to be rehabilitated by Govt. run by Regional or All India political party. This is a slur to civilisation.

07. Assam Movements:

The Assam Prodesh (province) was created by British Govt. in 1874 A.D. prior to this formation Assam Prodesh area was mainly ruled by kings of various ethnic groups of indigenous peoples. Entire Lower Assam plus the present-day North Bengal (now West Bengal after 1950) area was ruled by Koch kings as Koch Behar kingdom, Bijni Kingdom (Koch King), Sidli Kingdom (Koch King), Parbat Jowar and Maechpara Zamindary Estates (All Koches), Darrang Rajya (Koch King), alias undivided Darrang district, Beltola Rajya (Koch King) alias greater Guwahati area and Cacher Kingdom (undivided Cacher District) ruled by Koch Kings upto 1693 and thereafter jointly by Koch-Kochari prince and princess upto 1824 A.D. The Kocharies ruled in Dimapur i.e. near Upper Assam now within Nagaland and North Cacher district around Maibong. The rest of Assam i.e. Upper Assam area was ruled by Ahoms (Tai) people who first entered this region only in 1228 A.D. from outside Upper Barma (Mungra-Mungri, near China) area as invaders. Only limited numbers of male invaders entered this part of land and never went back to their native place to bring back any females of their original ethnic group. These new comers and their childrens subsequently came to be known as Tai Ahoms alias Ahoms (not Asom). These adventurous armed fighters known as "Ahom" under the leadership of Sukapha vanquished the Borahi Kocharies, Nagas etc. and after mixing up by marriage of local females of then indigenous peoples permanently settled in upper Assam areas, extended their kingdom upto the eastern border of Koch Kingdoms. In course of time say within two hundred years these Ahoms lost their original Tai language and culture; though their originalism was modified Buddhism. Meantime they became Hindu

and adopted Aryan titles like 'Singha'. Briefly speaking the Koches, Kocharies with six species, Rabhas with five species, Garos with their species, Tiyas (Lalung), Karbies, Chutiyas, Khasiyas and Jayantias etc. were the ancient indigenous peoples of the land subsequently came to be known as Assamese. Almost all these ethnic groups of peoples, except the Tribals either Plains or Hill tribes of all these ethnic group of peoples Koches are perhaps the ancientmost when there were no caste system in this part of land. All so called upper caste peoples, Muhammandans, Adi Bashies etc. came to this part of land from outside Assam at different periods and thereby constituted Assamese culture and society in course of time and ultimately Assam itself has become a mini India in respect of demographic pattern of population. After independence the influx from outside Assam was next to invasion on the local language, culture and even on avocations and livelihood and ultimately started threatening the very existence of the indigenous peoples of Assam compared to pre and past independent period. Hence the crisis of identity movement started in Assam from 1980 in the name of Assam Student Union (ASU) which was popularly known as "Assam Movement" - a covering name of upper caste movement was gathering strength a book named "Assam : A Crisis of Identity" - written by Sanjaya (pseudonym) published in 1980 from Delhi and distributed in places other than Assam. At page 10 of this book one Sri B.K. Sharma while showing the distribution of Assam's population as per census Report of 1971 the total population of Assam were 1.46 crores. Out of this total population (1) 43.5 lac indigenous; and 1.02 crore are non-indigenous or others. The others were shown as (i) Tea-garden labourers and families, (ii) Emigrant Muslims, (iii) Bengali Hindus of

Brahmaputra Valley, (iv) Tribals of Assam, (v) Bengalees of Cacher district, (vi) Nepalees, (vii) Koch-Rajbonshies of Goalpara district of Assam - totalling 1.02 crores (vide page 10 of the book). From the above figures it is now clear that those upper caste Hindus and others who came to Assam from different parts of India and received patronage and protections from the Koch Kings right from 15th century to 1947 A.D. were or are now more indigenous.

08. Goalpara District of Assam Province was created by East India Company in 1822 A.D. and till 1947 this district was ruled by the Koch kings under British Empire ; whereas Assam Province was created by East India Company only in 1874. Likewise Cacher district was created by East India Company after 1824 A.D. Prior to this Cacher Rajya was ruled by Koch Kings upto 1693 A.D. and thereafter by Dimacha Kochary kings upto 1824. Govt of Assam under the aegis of ASU issued thousands of Expulsion Notice to Koch-Rajbinshies of Goalpara district alleging them to be foreigners and harrassed them physically by Assam Police and financially in the Courts of Law. As a matter of fact one Koch-Rajbonshi woman named Srimati Niro Bala Roy of Titaguri village under Kokorajhar Civil Sub-Division of Goalpara district, was extened by the Police Deptt. of Assam Govt. composed mainly by the upper caste peoples during the period from 1985 to 1990 A.D. The Koches of present Assam especially of northern, central, and lower Assam areas are so much backward that eventhough they constitute 33% of the total population of Assam, they are getting hardly 2½% facilities in Govt. and other avenues. Their poignant condition has also been realised by the Legislators (MLA's) of Assam and unanimously passed a resolution in the floor of Assam Legislative Assembly on 10th Feb./1976 which runs-

“This Assembly do recommand to the Govt. of Assam to take immediate steps to rationalise appointments of posts in Govt. and Semi-Govt. seVICES so that Sub-Divisional wise population pattern in the State is suitably reflected”. But nothing has changed during these 30 years since adopting the resolution ; because the implementing Govt. officers are mostly from upper castes. The downfall of the Koches in general can well be summerised in the language of a great research scholar of the eastern world named Babu Nagendra Nath Vasu-Prachyavidya Maharnava, Sidhanta Varidhi, Tatta Chintamani etc. which run - “It is no mean glory to India that the race of mankind that civilized the eastern portions of Europe by dint of their commercial enterprise and their education had carried their civilization from Pragjyotishpur or modern Kamrupa described in Ramayana. Though all traces of the existence of the phoenicians who were the originators of European civilization have been bottled out from the western world ; yet their descendants may still be seen in various parts of Assam. They have been brought to such a low stage in consequence of repeated foreign attacks that seeing them, one can scarcely imagine that at one time their ancestors had risen to the pinnacle of civilization. Here we have a glowing example of how a highly cultured society sinks down to the bottom of degradation through vicissitudes of fortune ; how the Mlechcha kings came to be deprived of their sacredotal function from the time of king Naranarayana (Maharaj Naranarayana - 1509 to 1587 A.D.) ; though they had been enjoying it from the time immemorial ; how respectable and learned Brahmins were taken from Gauda and Mithila for introduction of the manners and customs of the ideal Hindu living in Aryavarta, how the manners and customs of Mithila came to be introduced in Kamrupa and Kamata ! how they

were reduced to a low stage in consequence of the persecution of Mlchcha rulers” - “It may now be safely asserted that Koch are descendants from the Pani (Pani-Koch) - although they have managed through centuries of social, political and religious disturbances and persecutions to forget themselves the history of their descent and their former greatness and glory. Besides destructive agencies have all along been at work against them. Brahmin authors of the Puranas have sparad no pains to represent their ancestors as Daityas, Danavas, or Rakshasas. Systematic attempts have also been made for centuries to keep in a state of perfect segregation, away from the Aryan community. And no one can tell how high waves of oppressions and repressions have rolled over their heads. What a terrible downfall has overtaken the race, which even several thousand years back, attracted the admiration of the whole western world by holding before it a brilliant torch of culture and civilisation ! what a pity that descendents of such a race should now be found steeped in ignorance, superstition, illiteracy and and barbarism ! The Koch furnished an object lesson of what vicissitudes of fortune can do to a nation however great and powerful once.” (pages 3,7,82-83 of Vol.1 - Social History of Kamrupa by N.N. Vasu.)

09. The Omnipotent God has created everything following a system of laws and his creations big or small, static or mobile are characterised by their inherent peculiarities and particularities. There is nothing in this world which is devoid of respective inherent peculiarities and particularities and there lies the beauty and grandeur of God. To destroy or suppress any peculiarities and particularities of any ethnic race clan or an individual is definitely a crime against the will of God. So in order to enjoy and appreciate the beauty of God, it should be our sacred duty to preserve such inherent qualities of the

Koches at least for the sake of humanity. May I appeal to the world also to study these Koches and help them for ameliorating their abysmal downfall. If there was something utilitarian goodness in the age-old caste system of post vedic India amongst Hindu fold of society, the same was overshadowed by many evils due to utter ignorance of the masses and foul game of the few privileged so-called upper caste peoples. Mother India is now pathetically shedding tears due to evils of present caste system ; which must be replaced forthwith by more scientific divisions on the basis of Eugenic science and compatible marriage to counter-act heterogenous mixture of blood group due to incompatible marriage.

10. From the checkered history of the Koches especially of Eastern India, it is evident that Koches, though were makers of history for centuries, were never capitalists or despotic monarchs, neither they were selfish and exploiters of any form. They were also not oppressors on other's culture, language and faith ; but were fighting force by muscle power and not by intellect. The contributions of the Koch kings and the good qualities of these peoples have never been discussed, not to speak of glorification. Rather it is very interesting to note that History and Geography subjects have been dropped from the core syllabus of High Schools of Assam during the reign of Govt. formed by a Regional Party, as it appeared. Of course it is also a fact that history & geography of Assam through ages means mainly the history of Koches, Kocharies and Ahoms. Likewise during the long life of Assam Sahitya, Say at least more than eighty nine years (Estt. in 1917) old, have not carried out any research works and brought out any standard book on the Koches and the contributions of Koch Kings in the field of literature, language and culture etc. of Assam or greater Assam ; though the founder patron of Assam

Sahitya Sabha was late Nagendra Nath Choudhury of Goalpara district in 1971 A.D. Likewise Assam Publication Board & the Guwahati University (1st in Assam) have not done any work on the "Vikramaditya of Kamrup" (Moharaj Naranarayan, 1509 - 1587) and his brother Generalissimo Chilarai alias Yuvaraj Sukladhwaj - the world hero (1510-1517 A.D.). Both the royal brothers were erudite scholars, wrote valuable books and patronised learned scholars and established an empire named Kamrupa alias Kamata alias Koch empire which extended upto Burma to the east, upto Ganges river to the west, upto Tibbet to the north and upto Chittagong and Bay of Bengal to the south i.e. almost entire north east undivided India. Naranarayan and Chilarai - both the royal brothers were perhaps the highest educated Emperor a Generalissimo that the world has ever produced.

11. With the above preface I now humbly submit, before the kindself of all peace-loving, philanthropic and concious citizens of Assam, India and world, the brief history of the Koches of present-day north-east India right from pre-vedic age to 1950 A.D. for their appraisal, appreciation and admiration. Because human nature is very much complex and complicated thing. There is no end to the aberrations and deviations that may take place in the human character. We ignorant people are often deceived by appearances. So we cannot always determine and discern the true nature and character of Men the unknown around us, with whom we have to deal in life. Problems are created due to misunderstanding. Let us try to understand and honour each other and find out the hidden greatness in all men. I believe this book will at least serve to provoke fresh thinking and inspire efforts for re-adjustment which will enable us to uphold life of us all and upholding every individual with due nature of both

individual and collective life is called Dharma.

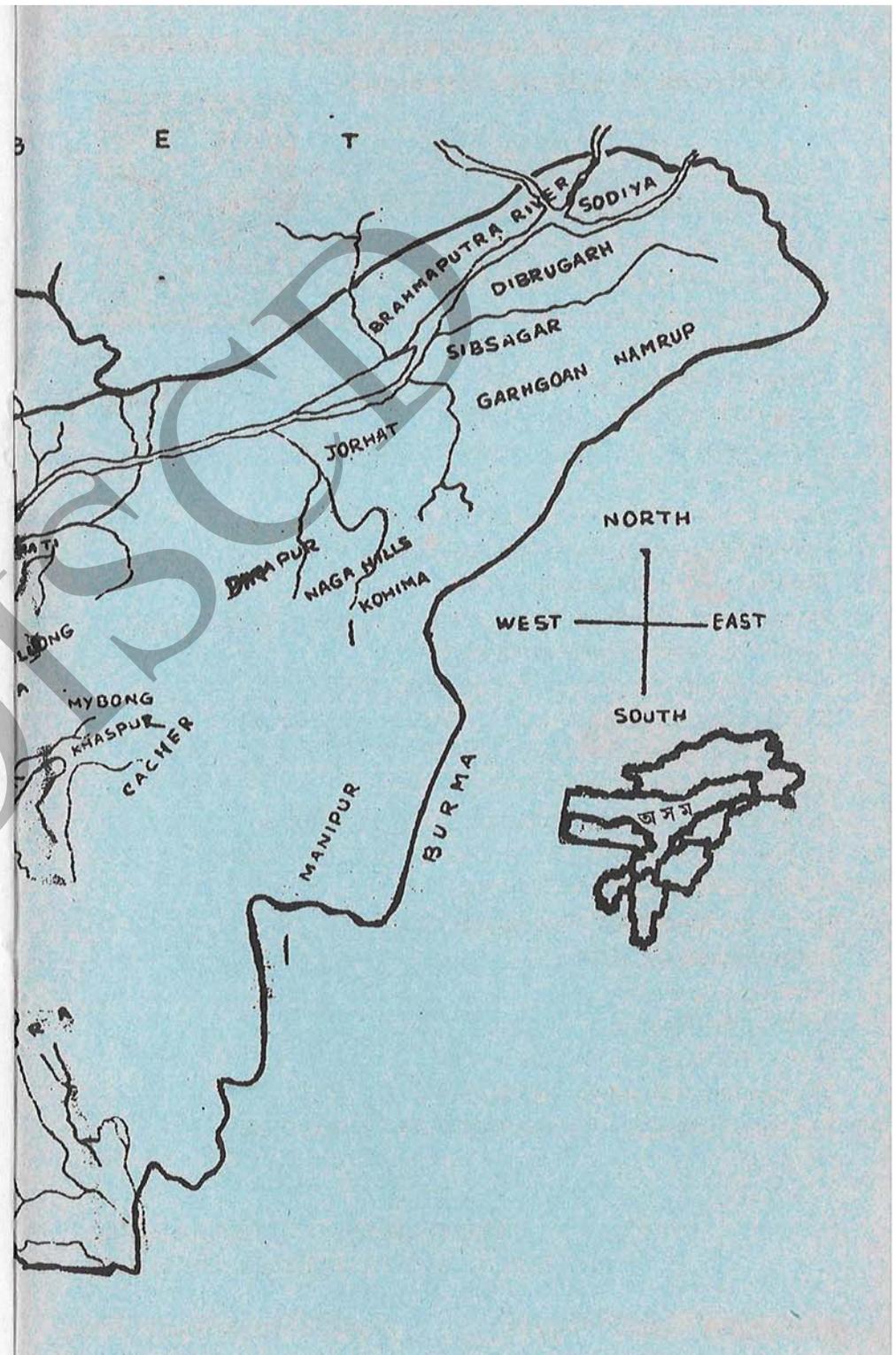
In conclusion, considering the above preface I humbly appeal all concerned, especially Assam Govt., West Bengal Govt., Meghalaya Govt. India Govt. and the political leaders in power to conduct a sample survey on social-economic and political conditions of the Koch-Rajbonshies of north-east India by an impartial agency to find out (i) the causes of their abysmal downfall of these unsophisticated but martial peoples during post independent period ; (ii) and to examine if there is prima facie evidence of violation of human rights ; A writ petition to the Chairman, National Human Rights Commission, Sardar Patel Bhavan, New Delhi, was submitted on 21st Oct./1994 by an young unmarried Advocate named Bhabesh Das of Koch Behar (Kholta) who was General Secretary of Koch Behar People's Association. This writ petition having strong prima facie was duly accepted by the Commission as it appeared from letter No. 25/110/94 L.D. dated 2nd, May/1995 written by Sri Ranganath Misra, Chairman of National Human Rights Commission, New Delhi. This writ petition is still lying unattended for reason not known to us. May be for want of following up the case ; as the petitioner Mr. Bhabesh Das expired unexpectedly within two years of submitting this writ petition mysteriously ; Though they were once the protectors and patronisers of Arayan culture in north-east India ; so that the Planning Bodies of State Govt. concerned and Central Govt. can properly assess the problems and chalk out suitable specific plans for their improvement. If immediate steps are not taken to protect the peculiarities and particularities of these historic Koch-Rajbonshies the future of north-east India will be, very soon, bleak which may even threaten the existence of north-east India, especially when this area is surrounded by foreign countries and Isms.

This proposed book “**The Koches Around The World**” contains the following chapters :

1. Koches in Pre-Vedic an Vedic Period.
2. Pani-Koches in ancient Kamrup region.
3. Pani Koches in western world.
4. From Pani-Koches to modern Koch-Rajbonshies
5. Koches - their ethnic relations with other tribes of north east India.
6. Koches in the eyes of Scholars.
7. Koch-Kings from pre-vedic period to 14th. century A.D.
8. Koch Kings from 15th century onwards.
9. The last meteoric rise of Koch powers in NE India.
10. Setting and cloudy Sun of Koch powers.
 - (a) The Koch-Hajo Kingdom ;
 - (b) The Koch-Bihar Kingdom ;
 - (c) The last struggle for survival.
12. The sword of Generalissimo Chilarai.
13. The sweet saintly queen Abhayeswari.
14. The House-divided petty Koch kingdoms of NE India.
15. Specimen of Memoria and a map of Koch empire during 16th century.

With salutations to Fulfiller the Best.

Ambika Choran Choudhury.



Published books of Sri Ambika Choran Choudhury,
Retd. Principal & Literary Pensioner :



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26. Glory : Thy Name is Goalpara, 1997
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Ratnapeeth Prakaashon
Borpara, Bongaigaon (Assam)

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