A Review of Past Presence of Debi Chowdhurani and the then Societal Structures of Rangpur, Bangladesh

Gautam Kumar Das

Abstract: Debi Chowdhurani was never a female dacoit as described by the Company rulers, rather a savior to her peasantry though evidences in the form of letters, statements, and petition are rare in support of her existence and activities. Still the collected rare documents from the century-old rare books and records turn the ideas into a working hypothesis in the form of an article – Historical Presence of Debi Chowdhurani. This review takes a look at the acquaintances of Debi Chowdhurani, her contemporary zamindars, namesake blunders, societal structure, revenue systems, nepotism, insurrection, oppression, her strolling places, rumours and the last spell of her life. Evidences include authentic and original letters, statements and documents regarding Debi Chowdhurani. This paper focuses on the history and origin of Manthana estate, its contribution to Rangpur peasants’ revolt, its controversial aspects of namesake blunders of Debi Chowdhurani and outcomes of counter-checks and about its probable solutions. This review also focuses on potential research work and thorough survey in the field of social sciences through the records annexed in this article on the assumption that Debi Chowdhurani was not an imaginary figure, but was a real person, and the zamindar of Manthana estate.

Keywords: Debi Chowdhurani, Bhabani Pathak, Rangpur peasantry insurrection, Richard Goodlad, Lieutenant Brenan, Paterson Commission, Rangpur Commission

Introduction
Debi Chowdhurani is undoubtedly a historical figure. Official records and documents give enough evidence of her historical existence. People all over Bengal discard the intentional acts of reports and records of the British rulers to stigmatize the character and life history of Debi Chowdhurani, a stubborn and firm lady of Bengal, though a few records relevant to her zamindari and other affairs are still available, annexed (spelling unchanged) here to draw upon the study of almost all the events about her life. Editor Ven. Walter K. Firminger, M.A., D.D., Lit. B.; Archdeacon of Calcutta; Member, Indian Historical Records Commission reported in brief about the loss of records at the office of the Collector, Rangpur in the introductory part (Page v) of Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II; 1779 – 1782 (Letters Received), Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta, 1920 – “The first impression which may be made on any one inspecting the volumes of records at such a place as Rangpur is that, as no records can be found for certain periods, these records have been inevitably lost. On closer study, however, he will find that the absence of the records may be explained by charges in the Revenue Adminstration, and so in the years when there was a council of Revenue at Dinajpur, he will at once see that what is missing at the Record room at Rangpur, may perhaps be found in the

* The Annexure refered to in the article is attached to the “Individual Article” only and can be accessed from the content page at: http://www.bangladeshsociology.org/Content.htm
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Records of the Provincial Council at Rangpur. Again, as to the Collector’s letters, in the local office the researcher may only find poorly kept letter copy-book, while, at the archives of the Board of Revenue, the actual holograph letters of the Collectors may perhaps still be recovered.

Debi Chowdhurani took over the charge of a zamindari (estate) during the worst of transitional period when the dynasty of muslim rules were over, Bengal famine ruined almost all the peasants and their family members and the British company people yet to start managing the administration. In this span of time the activities of dacoits were accelerated due to the absence of administrative body and failure of law and order situation, particularly in the remote areas of Rangpur district. Rangpur, covered with dense jungle, was then infested with the bands of dacoits. The then zamindars compromised with the dacoits offering concessions in return getting a share of booty and security of both sides. Regarding such understanding of the landlords with the dacoits, Lieutenant Brenan made the following observations in 1787 –“the principal zamindars in most parts of these districts have always a bandit ready to let loose on such of their unfortunate neighbours as have any property worth seizing, and even the lives of the unhappy sufferers are seldom spared. The zamindars commit these outrages with the most perfect security, as there is no reward offered for their detection, and, from the dependence of the dakaits upon them, they cannot be detected without bribery.”

Debi Chowdhurani, against all odds of the British rules in her entire tenure as zamindar, was the single standing block who put the tyrant Debi Singh’s back to the wall. Debi Singh had an understanding with Warren Hastings, the Governor General appointed by the East India Company to extract more revenue from the peasants. He was notoriously known as leaseholder Raja Debi Singh for his application of the highest degree of torture on the farmers. He not only oppressed the farmers by demanding extra tax, but he physically tortured their children and molested their wives in the presence of all in his kachari bari (revenue collection office of the zamindar). The farmers finally gathered together to start a movement in the form of an insurrection. To enquire into this insurrection, two commissions were set to go through the real facts and after getting all proofs against the oppressions of Raja Debi Singh, Lord Cornwallis finally issued orders on behalf of the Government. But Debi Singh escaped scot free by showing his loss of money against the Government’s demand of the large outstanding balances. Harram Sen was the head assistant of the leaseholder Debi Singh who was by position, a sub-farmer under his control. Harram used to treat the farmers tyrannically subject to the continual cruelty during collection of tax obeying the direction of landlord Debi Singh. Harram was imprisoned first for one year by the company administration for his rising oppressions and after its expiration Harram was banished from the districts of Rangpur and Dinajpur. Debi Chowdhurani saved the peasants from the tyranny of beyond description with the cooperation and help rendered by Bhabani Pathak during this period. Ultimately Rangpur had reverted to a land of peace and harmony under the leadership of land-lady Debi Chowdhurani.

During sannyasi revolution, Debi Chowdhurani was closely associated with the well-known dacoit leader, Bhabani Pathak to keep the peace and harmony in the peasant community in and around her estate. Richard Gudlad, collector of Rangpur and Lieutenant Brenan, army commander of British East
India Company feared insurgency and forfeited the Manthana estate from Debi Chowdhurani. During this period Debi Chowdhurani perhaps got involved with the brigandage under Bhabani Pathak levanting herself for few days in order to collect the money and man-power to rescue her zamindari, though all that Lieutenant Brenan stated in his report might not be true. After some days she managed to revive the old zamindari and ruled the estate till 1801. W. W. Hunter in his Statistical Accounts of Bengal – Rangpur (1876) supports such dual role of Debi Chowdhurani and describes her close association with Bhabani Pathak – “In 1787, Lieutenant Brenan was employed in this quarter against a notorious leader of dakaits (gang robbers), named Bhawani Pathak. He despatched a native officer, with twenty-four sepoys, in search of the robbers, who surprised Pathak, with sixty of his followers, in their boats. A fight took place, in which Pathak himself and three of his lieutenants were killed, and eight wounded, besides forty-two taken prisoners. Pathak was a native of Bajpur, and was in league with another noted dakaits, named Majnu Shah, who made yearly raids from the southern side of the Ganges. We catch a glimpse from the Lieutenant’s report of a female dakaits, by name Debi Chaudhrani, also in league with Pathak. She lived in boats, had a large force of barkandazs in her pay, and committed dakaits on her own account, besides receiving a share of the booty obtained by Pathak. Her title of Chaudhrani would imply that she was a zamindar, probably a petty one, else she need not have lived in boats for fear of capture.”

Debi Chowdhurani used to meander far and wide of the Teesta river basin of Rangpur district and almost entire Karla river basin of the present Jalpaiguri district using mainly the water courses of both the rivers. Rangpur was declared a district headquarters on 16 December, 1769; and on 1st January, 1869, greater Rangpur district was broken down into Jalpaiguri district. Debi Chowdhurani rendered her donation and distribution services to the poor peasants inside the Baikunthapur jungle of the present Jalpaiguri district. So, therefore, in Jalpaiguri district, Debi Chowdhurani is remembered in several places in the form of temple name like Debi Chowdhurani Sashaan Kali Mandir near Goshala more adjacent to the present Jalpaiguri town; Bhabani Pathak and Debi Chowdhurani temple at Shikarpur tea garden, near Sannyasikata market; Manthani temple on the Belakoba-Rangdhamali road. Wooden images of Debi Chowdhurani are worshipped in these later two temples.

Her noble munificence enabled the villagers of the Manthana kingdom estate to survive through the crisis just after a few years of famine of Bengal with a severe consequence of mortality. She became a zamindar at Manthana estate of Rangpur district and managed the estate for about three decades as zamindar. The word ‘zamindar’ feels or looks small to Debi Chowdhurani, it is better to express her stature of dignity as saviour to her peasantry. She had to collect tax from the peasantry in order to pay tax to her (zamindar’s) higher authority i.e. leaseholder on behalf of the British Company Government. With the collected taxes she never made a large palace for enjoying luxurious life styles for herself or for other family members, but she excavated ponds, constructed roads and advanced financial help to her poor starved peasants. For all these reasons, landlady Joy Durga Roy Chowdhury is known to all as Debi Chowdhurani in Bengal. Debi Chowdhurani, alias Joy Durga Debi Chowdhurani of Rangpur was the most influential and famous ruler of the Manthana estate. All on a sudden a family-event forced Joy Durga Debi Chowdhurani to swear in as a zamindar. Her husband, Narendra Narayan Roy
Chowdhury, son of Raghabendra Narayan Roy Chowdhury of Manthana estate (presently at Pirgacha up-zilla under Rangpur district, Bangladesh) died in 1765 without any legacy. Then Joy Durga Debi Chowdhurani had to govern the Manthana estate for about three decades. Debi Chowdhurani is so popular to her peasants and subjects since then, the people named the village, nearby railway station, school, market, bus stop and road after her name. Her wooden images are worshipped in different temples of the Teesta basin of Rangpur and Karla basin of Jalpaiguri district till date.

Acquaintances

Rangpur is a well-known locality with the flavor of culture and heritage marked with rich history. The name Rangpur, in vernacular, particularly in the naive dialect, means the place of recreation and sensual gratification. As a whole, the meaning of Rangpur is the place of beatitude where the people enjoy the heavenly happiness or happiness of the highest kind. E. G. Glazier mentions the meaning of Rangpur in his book ‘Report on the District of Rangpur’ – “The derivation of the name Rungpore is said to be ‘Ronggopore’ (Rangpur), the place of pleasure or abode of bliss – Bhagadatta having here a country residence on the Ghaghat.”

Rangpur is the place where renowned Debi Chowdhurani once lived and governned her zamindari namely Manthana estate for the period from 1765 to 1801. She started ruling Manthana estate since 1765, in that very year East India Company was granted Dewani of the Bengal Suba (province), although Rangpur district did not receive any administrator promptly on behalf of the East India Company Government. The first appointment was assigned to John Grose in the post of a Supervisor of Rangpur in 1769, four years after the achievement of Dewani by the East India Company. The office of the Supervisor, from then on started keeping all records like letters received and issued, statements, appointments, accounts etc. No records are found before then particularly during the previous Mughol period. There were several records including the letters and petitions of Joydurga Chowdhurani during the entire period of her zamindari, but unfortunately most of those papers were either lost, or have no trace at all. The life-sketch of Joydurga Chowdhurani could be drawn if all those records were available to this author. The limitations as a result of unavailability of all such records made inconvenient for W. K. Firminger to follow up in making the draft of the Bengal District Records Rangpur as he expressed the same troubles detailing most of the problems in the editorial part of the introductory portions of the Rangpur Records – “In past years a number of excellent historical sketches of certain districts have been prepared by Collectors from the records in their local record office. It is only necessary to refer to such works as Westland’s Jessore, Price’s Midnapore, Cotton’s Chittagong, Beveridge’s Bakarganj, Glazier’s Rungpore. These works, although they have served most usefully, were manifestly based on an insufficient survey of the materials. Sir James Westland, for instance, with his attention absorbed by the locally preserved records, took it for granted that until the commencement of the records actually preserved in his Record Room, there was no civil officer of the Company resident at Jessore. A complete mistake! The records published in the present series of Rangpur District Records do not nearly include the wealth of material available.” We catch a glimpse of Joydurga Chowdhurani for the first time in the Rangpur records in 1779 in a letter to the Collector of Rangpur written by G. G. Ducarel, Superintendent of Khalsa Records. But we cannot identify the
actual Joydurga Chowdhurani of Manthana estate as there were three other contemporary female zamindars having the same name and title living during her era. The name in the letter denotes an identity of omission, even it does not prove or ascertain to be the same person of historically famous Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani (Letter – 1; Appendix).

Joydurga Chowdhurani was a ruler, with her supremacy in the zamindari of Manthana estate ruling over 183 taluks or villages in her estate. The name of the villages is enlisted in the records of the Board of Revenue (Miscellaneous), 1795. Curshah, the village name of her birth place, belongs to her own zamindary that she obtained in 1765 after the death of her husband Narendranarayan Roy Chowdhury. The present name of the place where her Manthana zamindar bari (house of zamindary) stood has been changed to Pirgachha that too was under her zamindari. The meaning of the word ‘Kismut’ suffixed in the village names in the list of the zamindari is the village owned by the blessings of the God by the owner and for the ‘Opunchooky’ is that village where revenue is fixed. There are 92 Kismut, 26 Opunchooky, 2 Khord, 1 Serenjamy (Serenjamy - the village which receives allowances for incident at expenses made to the zamindars or farmers) found in the village-list of the Manthana estate during the period 1795-96.

Namesake Blunders

Bankim Chandra created a problem by carefully using only the title of Debi Chowdhurani (central character) in his well-known famous novel ‘Debi Chowdhurani’. Existence of Debi Chowdhurani in different names in Rangpur district makes a serious problem in the peasant insurgence history of Bengal. Several names of Debi Chowdhurani as zamindars in the district of Rangpur simply creates a complexity and confusion in such a manner that even historians get puzzled with the proper identification of real Debi Chowdhurani who was the central character of the novel. Debi Chowdhurani is not a name, but the title of the zamindar’s wives. Almost all the zamindars took the title of Roy Chowdhury, whatever were their surnames previously. The then wives of all those zamindars are entitled to the title of Debi Chowdhurani. All the names of the then zamindars in the name of Debi Chowdhurani in the Rangpur district (presently in Bangladesh) are as the following:

Table 1: The names of Debi Chowdhuranis and names of the then zamindar husbands in the Rangpur district (presently in Bangladesh)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Husband’s name</th>
<th>Estate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Jaymoni Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Man Mohan Roy Chowdhury</td>
<td>Tepa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ananga Manjuri Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Ananda Mohan Roy Chowdhury</td>
<td>Tepa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Ganga Sundori Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Tarini Mohan Roy Chowdhury</td>
<td>Tepa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Saradamoyee Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Itakumari</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Bijoya Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Kartick Chandra Roy</td>
<td>Bamandanga</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Researchers were sometimes puzzled to see that so many Lady Zamindars ruled for years in the same name ‘Debi Chowdhurani’ in Rangpur district even in the eighteenth century. Out of twelve such ‘Debi Chowdhurani’, the three nearest contestants with the same name are Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani of Manthana estate, Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani of Ghoraghat and Jagadeswari Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani of Bamandanga zamindari for entitling as the leader of peasantry movement of Rangpur in 1783. Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani took charge of Manthana estate (Pirgacha) in 1765 and Jagadeswari Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani ruled Bamandanga zamindari since 1779. Another Joydurga managed the Ghoraghat (Bardhankot) zamindari on behalf of her mentally sick husband Gokulnath Roy and later for her minor son, Goloknath after the death of her husband. Their same name ‘Joydurga’ and more or less same ruling tenure puzzle the historians and create complexity on sorting out the name of the correct one. With this problematical confusion, the content of the song of Ratiram Das, a Rajbangshi, an inhabitant of Itakumari of Rangpur district, a centre of the revolt, solved this namesake problem. He composed in his song – “With all the zamindars arriving at Sivachandra’s palace, Itakumari was filled with elephants, horses and soldiers. Also arrived the ruler of Pirgacha, Joydurga Devi. One by one, they were seated in the conference hall adjoining the temple. The raiyats (tenants) kept standing, hands folded and tears rolling down chests.” This was the preparatory stage in 1783 when the peasants in Rangpur rose in rebellion under the leadership of Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani, zamindar of Manthana estate (Pirgacha) and Sivachandra Roy, zamindar of Itakumari. Further, Ratiram Das wrote in his jaager gaan –Sivachandra Roy lost his temper and spoke again: “since the Rajput robber (Devi Singh) is a scoundrel, you should all drive him out.” At this stage mother Joy Durga, ruler of Pirgacha, flared up: “Are you not men – aren’t you strong? Though I am born a woman, I can seize him and cut him to pieces with a sword. Nobody would be required to do anything; everything will be done by the subjects.” All these words proved Joy Durga Debi Chowdhurani of the Manthana estate (Pirgacha) is the real Debi Chowdhurani who openly led the peasants’ movement and is the central character of Bankim’s novel – Debi Chowdhurani.

Joydurga was born at Curshah Bamanpara of Shib-Konthiram village under Kaunia police station of Rangpur district. Her father’s name was Brajo Kishor Chowdhury. Her father came of a zamindar family as reflected by his title Chowdhury and perhaps that zamindari declined day by day during his

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<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Father's Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Chandi Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Ram Chandra Roy Chowdhury</td>
<td>Bamandanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pabitra Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Bhairab Chandra Roy Chowdhury</td>
<td>Bamandanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jagadeswari Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Krishna Chandra Roy Chowdhury</td>
<td>Bamandanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Narendra Narayan Roy Chowdhury</td>
<td>Manthana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Gokul Nath Roy</td>
<td>Ghoraghat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Shyam Sundori Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Jayram Sen</td>
<td>Dimla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Bhabatarini Debi Chowdhurani</td>
<td>Jyanendra Narayan Roy Chowdhury</td>
<td>Manthana</td>
</tr>
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father’s regime. Kaunia is only 10 to 12 miles away from Manthana estate where Joydurga was married to the zamindar of that estate, Narendra Narayan Roy Chowdhury, son of Raghabendra Narayan Roy Chowdhury. Manthana estate was named after gaining this zamindari with payment of only *du-aana* paisa by one of his ancestors Anantaram Roy Chowdhury. Joydurga’s ancestral home is situated at Curshah village on the bank of river Teesta.

Hence, Debi Chowdhurani is a historical character. A few evidences support this fact like – Debi Chowdhurani’s Manthana estate (zamindari) was forfeited by dual treachery of both Rangpur collector and the Board of Revenue and this was reflected in the list of cancelled zamindari where the name of Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani was enlisted. Further, recently found two *pattas* namely Pirpal and Muskali Chukani were issued in 1769 and 1791 respectively by the then ruling zamindar of Manthana estate, Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani. All these prove that Debi Chowdhurani is an historical character and reigned at her Manthana estate during the period from 1765 to 1801. Further, Lieutenant Brenan reported that she was associated with Bhabani Pathak and Sivachandra Roy, zamindar of Itakumari to make the peasants’ movement a great success. Summing it up, it may be concluded that Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani (1765 – 1801) of Manthana estate (Pirgacha of Rangpur district) is the unanimously accepted leader of Rangpur peasants’ insurgence and is the central character of the novel, Debi Chowdhurani written by the great novelist, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay.

### Society

Manthana estate was one of the 75 zamindaries enlisted in the office of the Collector of Rangpur. The entire area of the Manthana estate containing 183 villages was populated by 12, 146 people, out of which the number of men were 4,643, women 4,287 and children 3,216 with admixture of the Hindu and Mohammedans.

Estimates of the members of persons, men, women, and children in the district composing the Collectorship of Rungpore, 28th August, 1789

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pergunnahs</th>
<th>No. of men</th>
<th>No. of women</th>
<th>No. of children</th>
<th>Total inhabitants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mantannah</td>
<td>4,643</td>
<td>4,287</td>
<td>3,216</td>
<td>12,146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*A Report on the District of Rungpore (1873) by E. G. Glazier*

Decennial and permanent settlement caused the most disastrous depopulation of the village in the zamindari of Rangpur as per remarks made by E. G. Glazier - “The effects of the stringency exercised subsequent to the decennial settlement in the realization of the revenue have been partly pointed out. Edrakpore collapsed early; Carzeehat suffered much, with the exception of the two anna shares, the Tooshvanda zemindary, the remaining four shares became much reduced by sales. Kankina remained whole, and the Futtehpore and Coondy estates, as a rule, weathered the breakers. The generally disastrous period for years preceding the permanent settlement had depopulated the country. The Zemindars of Munthona, Chakla Futtehpore, on whose estate the town of Rungpore stands, represented in 1790 that large tracts had become depopulated and overrun with jungle, in
which there were tigers, buffaloes, deer, and wild beasts of all sorts.” - A Report on the District of Rungpore (1873) by E. G. Glazier (p. 41)

The Collector of Rangpur was most embarrassed off and on in controlling the female zamindars as reported by E. G. Glazier (Report – 1; Appendix). The society was exposed to the acts of lawlessness during the transitional period between the end of Mohammedan rule and the beginning of the British Company rule. The entire area was infested with dacoits. Among them Narayan and Beerbal dacoits were the most notorious as reported in a letter by the Collector of Rangpur. The Collector of Rangpur wrote to the Chief of the Provincial Council of Purnea for his cooperation to arrest Beerbal dacoit who took shelter in the Purnea district of Bihar (Letter 2; Appendix). The Chief of the Provincial Council of Purnea not only helped the Collector of Rangpur at his best, but he even circulated letters among the zamindars seeking full cooperation by giving immediate information related to the location of the dacoits mentioned in the letter of the Collector (Letter 3; Appendix). Beerbal was captured and confined in the custody of the Rangpur Collector. The Collector of Rangpur informed this success of capture to the chief of the Provincial Council of Revenue (Letter 4; Appendix). The Collector of Rangpur wrote to his higher authority for providing him with a large force of burkandaz for strong security of his collectorship. The Board of Revenue disapproved his proposal after a long discussion in their meeting (Letter 5; Appendix).

During the disturbed time of lawlessneses, people were very corrupted, immoral. Most of the employees, even the peace-keeper sepoys were involved in snatching money and costly belongings from the common people (Letter 6; Appendix). Lieutenant Brenan informed the Collector of Rangpur about the lurking of dacoits near Gobindaganj who plundered all the goods and money from the boat of the tobacco merchants as reported by those merchants through a petition which was forwarded to the Collector for necessary and immediate action. The Lieutenant had already detached a party including 18 sepoys, one havildar and one naik for the arrest of that dacoit (Letter 7; Appendix). Surprisingly, the tobacco merchants described Bhabani Pathak a desperate man, as a dacoit in their petition sent to Lieutenant Brenan (Petition 1; Appendix). Lieutenant Brenan, in his public letter, stated his inability for providing the Collector enough force as required from his end because of the security personnel needed as guards for several prisoners in confinement. A concealed letter was perhaps sent along with this public letter addressed to the Rangpur Collector which was famously known as Lieutenant Brenan’s report which is very important for searching the history of Rangpur because it contains the news of death of Bhabani Pathak as well as the name of Debi Chowdhurani as a female dacoit mentioned by E. G. Glazier (Letter 8; Appendix).

The title Debi Chowdhurani was only once recorded in the report of Lieutenant Brenan in 1787 where the fight with Bhabani Pathak with the sepoys of Company force and his death thereon were communicated to the Collector of Rangpur. Debi Chowdhurani was described as a female dacoit and she was associated with Bhabani Pathak as stated in the report of Lieutenant Brenan. Lieutenant Brenan stated Debi Chowdhurani as a petty zamindar without mentioning her full name.
“In 1787, Lieutenant Brenan was employed against a noted dacoit leader named Bhowani Pattuck; in this quarter. He dispatched a Havildar with twenty four Sepoys in search of the robbers, and they surprised Pattuck with sixty of his followers in their boats. Pattuck’s chief man, a Pathan, Pattuck himself, and two other headmen, were killed, and eight were wounded, besides forty-two taken prisoners. Of the attacking party, two sepoys only were wounded. Seven boats, with arms, accoutrements, and ammunition, as the Lieutenant expresses it, were taken. Pattuck’s force consisted wholly of up-country men; he himself was a native of Budgepur, and he was in league with another noted dacoit, Majnoo Shaha, who made yearly raids from the southern side of the Ganges. We just catch a glimpse from the Lieutenant’s report of a female decoit, by name Devi Chaudhranee, also in league with Pattuck, who lived in boats, had a large force of burkundazes in her pay, and committed dacoities on her own account, besides getting a share of the booty obtained by Pattuck. Her title of Chaudhranee would imply that she was a zemindar, probably a petty one, else she need not have lived in boats for fear of capture.” - A Report on the District of Rungpore (1873) by E. G. Glazier (p. 41). Jadunath Sarkar wrote about Bhabani Pathak in the ‘Historical Introduction’ to B. Bandyopadhyay and S. Das centenary edition of the novel (p.1) - “The real Bhabani Pathak was a Bihari Brahmin, a Bhojpuri (Glazier’s Bazpur) from the Ara district.”

Nitish Kumar Sengupta noted regarding the decision to arrest of Debi Chowdhurani by the Collector of Rangpur after getting the report from Lieutenant Brenan in his book “Land of two rivers: A History of Bengal from the Mahabharata to Mujib” (p. 222) - “In 1787, Lt. Brenan led an expedition against Bhabani Pathak, the notorious dacoit. Twenty four sepoys led by an Indian officer were sent and they attacked Bhabani Pathak and his 60 followers who were in their boats. There was a naval fight which ended in the death of Bhabani Pathak and three of his men, injuries to eight others and the capture of 42 men. Lt. Brenan’s report discloses that Bhabani Pathak had contact with a female dacoit by the name of Debi Chowdhurani who lived in a boat and used to be accompanied by a host of paid fighters. She would take part in the raids herself and was allotted a share of the plunder of the Pathak’s gang. From the surname, Chaudhurani, it appears that she was a zamindar. On receipt of the Lt. Brenan’s report, the Collector wrote to him (12th July, 1787) informing him that it was not necessary to arrest Debi Chowdhurani just then and necessary directions would be given on receipt of further information regarding her.”

A few zamindars of Rangpur reportedly had the knack of attachment with the dacoits. They took the share of booty from those dacoits for their cooperation. The Company rulers mentioned zamindars’ involvement with the dacoits in the Rangpur records, though the regulations of 1783 was there regarding prohibition of such unusual incidents of attachment of the zamindars with those notorious dacoit gangs. The Collector of Rangpur, E. G. Glazier lamented over the non-application of that regulation of 1783. He commented – “The regulations of 1783 contained the following rule, which, it seems, was never carried out.”

The Regulations of 1783 for the zamindars
“That whenever a zemindar is proved guilty of having abetted, practiced, or connived at robberies or murder, none of his family be permitted to succeed to the zemindary without the express permission of the Board.”

Julius J Lipner who translated the novel ‘Debi Chowdhurani’ from Bengali stated that the content of the novel as mythical, not historical happenings - “The name of Debi Chaudhurani, Bhabani Pathak, Mr. Goodlad, and Lieutenent Brenan are historical, as indeed are the few facts that Debi lived in a boat, and she had ‘fighter’ and armies etc. But that is all. If the reader would be so kind as not to consider ‘Debi Chaudhurani’ a ‘historical novel’ (aitihasik uponyas), I’d be most obliged.” - Debi Chaudhurani by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, or The Wife Who Came Home – translated Julius J Lipner.

Insurrection
Tax rebellion at Rangpur is the first organized insurgence of peasants in the soil of Bengal. The villain of this insurgence is the then Collector of Rangpur, Mr. Richard Goodlad along with the direct assistance of leaseholder Debi Singh and his assistant Harram Sen. The Rangpur Collector Richard Goodlad, by nature, a treacherous character, directed Debi Singh and his assistant to collect tax from the zamindars and farmers by any means, just or unjust. This Collector Richard Goodlad started his career as an Assistant Collector of Rangpur as stated by E. G. Glazier in his book ‘Report on the District of Rangpur’ (p. 45) – ‘George Bogle died early in 1781, and Goodlad, who had been assistant here for two years, was appointed Collector and Judge; while the native officers of Goodlad foujdar and tannadar were abolished. Goodlad remained until 1784, when he was succeeded by Moore. He was for a year the Collector of Ghoraghat, and then we lose sight of him.’ The villain of Rangpur insurrection Richard Goodlad was nominated to his most pleasurable post as the Collector of Rangpur on April 14, 1781 against the vacant post of Mr. George Bogle who died early in 1781 (Letter – 9; Appendix). From the beginning of his collectorship, Mr. Richard Goodlad took the utmost help from leaseholder Debi Singh and his assistant Harram Sen for the collection of tax all over Rangpur. Debi Singh and Harram Sen are known as a deliberate scoundrel and a rascal respectively to the peasants of Rangpur. The arch villain Richard Goodlad plotting together with them for the evil purpose of collection of tax through torture and tyranny, operated in harmony with the zamindars which is reflected in his letter to the zamindars (Letter – 10; Appendix). Rangpur Zamindars, realizing the smell of conspiracy of those three Goodlad, Debi Singh and Harram, who combined openly for this unlawful purpose, replied in response to the letter sent by the Collector of Rangpur without any delay. The draft of this letter-in-reply to the Collector was written by Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani in consultation with the other Zamindars of Rangpur (Letter – 11; Appendix). Insurrection was caused due to the constant overall distress faced by the ryots (peasants) economically for over-taxation followed by cruel corporal punishment as a consequence of non-payment of the tax. Still the peasants prayed for justice to Richard Goodlad by requesting the abolition of different tax laying burden over them (Petition - 2; Appendix). E. G. Glazier (1873) clearly expresses the statements of the then peasants with their own words (Report - 2; Appendix).
Richard Goodlad wanted to restrain the insurrection through terrible and dreadful means of firing over the rebels and in order to fulfill his objective, he wrote to the Commandant to send more and more force to enrich his army force (Letter – 12; Appendix). In response to the several letters written by Mr. Goodlad to the Board of Revenue updating the situation of insurrection, the member of the Board managed to send the force to tackle the inconceivable situation at the earliest. The members of the Hon’ble Board of Revenue wrote to the Collector about the dispatch of more than 200 sepoys from Calcutta to Rangpur. They directed Mr. Goodlad to cooperate with Mr. Paterson whom the Board of Revenue sent with fullest authority to give orders etc for laying hold of insurrection (Letter – 13; Appendix). The Board of Revenue set a Commission for searching all the reasons for the insurrection with Mr. Paterson as its Chairperson. To make its full success, Mr. Goodlad was directed to share every information and facts of the peasants’ insurgence of Rangpur (Letter – 14; Appendix). The Rangpur peasants’ insurgence comes to an end after a huge defeat and death in the battle of Patgram between sepoy party led by Lt. Macdonald and the peasants who fought against the English Company-Government resisting its burden for levying tax. It was an uneven war as the rebels bore only indigenous arms like bows and arrows, lances, spears etc, against the arms like guns on of the government party. The fight took place without any din and bustle as the sepoy troop were in disguise covering themselves with white cloths obeying the advice of Lt. Macdonald and fired about 3 rounds from their guns coming nearer to the rebels. Sixty rebels died, 56 were wounded without getting any chance of resistance against the joint troops of Lt. Macdonald and Mirza Mohammad Tuckey’s burkundases force. Rest of the rebels were imprisoned. The report adds that one wounded rebel died on the way to Rangpur. The Lieutenant reported that the entire incident happened near Patgram detailing the rebels’ origin of residence from Bihar and Bengal (Letter – 15; Appendix).

The tyranny and torture upon the farmers by the Rangpur Collector Richard Goodlad, the leaseholder Debi Singh and his assistant, Harram Sen resulted in the insurrection as a consequence. The degree of torture even upon the zamindars is beyond description, the incidents of which is reflected in the Jaager gaan composed of Ratiram Das – the translated form (translated by Amiya Bose) of which is available in the book ‘Bangladesh Readers: History, Culture, Politics’ by Editors, Meghna Guhathakurta & Williem van Schendel (Appendix).

Mr. Richard Goodlad, Collector of Rangpur tried utmost to put down the insurrection, but to no effect as it was not an easy task. Mr. Richard Goodlad, by nature, is a traitor, betraying the farmers upon the issue of deductions of tax that he initially promised to them. But treacherously he did not remove the rate of tax, and that’s why the insurgence broke out again. Ultimately the insurrection was stopped with the interference, assistance and help rendered by his higher authority, Board of Revenue of Fort William, Calcutta. They supplied a large army force from Calcutta and Purnea and the peasantry insurgence came to an end at last after a huge loss of life. Warren Hastings, Governor General and Richard Goodlad had had the same vested interest to earn money from the farmers and zamindars through collection of tax and in order to fulfil their goal they took the assistance of the leaseholder
Debi Singh of same character as they had. The description of the one sided gun-firing over the starved peasants as a “battle” in his letter is the reflection of his character. Mr. Richard Goodlad was showcaused by his higher authority for the incident of Rangpur insurrection and Mr. Richard Goodlad communicated his answer to his higher authority with a delay of about a month seeking another chance to repair insurgency-disturbed Rangpur (Letter – 16; Appendix).

The Paterson Commission started its full-fledged functioning at Rangpur, although Mr. Richard Goodlad, Collector was transferred in 1784 from Rangpur by his higher authority. So the members of the Paterson Commission wrote to the Acting Collector to send Dherajnarayan – one of the leaders and accused in the insurrection for taking him in their custody for relevant questioning (Letter – 17; Appendix). Paterson Commission members further communicated with the Acting Collector of Rangpur to send the Officer-in-Charge of the Police Station as an important attestation of the insurrection (Letter – 18; Appendix). The search of Paterson Commission ended on the 21st May, 1785. The members of the Paterson Commission, which was commenced on the 31st March, 1783, declared the closure of their search and communicated to the Acting Collector directing him to send Debi Singh to the President with proper security as available at his collectorate (Letter – 19; Appendix).

The report of the Paterson Commission is brought to light in 1785 and the Commission’s Report accuses Mr. Richard Goodlad, the then Collector of Rangpur and the leaseholder Debi Singh. The higher authority refused the facts of the overall Report and sat another Commission namely Rangpur Commission. Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani was questioned several times during the progress of this Commission (Report - 3; Appendix). Several important questions, facts and query were put before Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani, the Zamindar of Manthana estate by the members of the Rangpur Commission (Report - 4; Appendix). Final orders were given ultimately in 1789 during the Governor Generalship of Lord Cornwallis after a gap of 6 years from the commencement of Rangpur revolt. The order and judgment have not satisfied the inhabitants of Rangpur (Report - 5; Appendix).

Oppression

The British East India Company rulers oppressed Joydurga Chowdhurani severely and unjustly as she not only supported the peasants of the Rangpur revolt, but led peasants’ insurrection in 1783. Joydurga even had to go in hiding and living incognito and had suffered hardship during her tenure of zamindari. British company rulers started exerting pressure by enhancing the rate of taxation but the zamindars could not pay the tax. We have found the name of Manthana estate, in a letter written by Acting Collector of Rangpur who reported against Joydurga Chowdhurani of the non-payment of tax to the Governor General, Warren Hastings (Letter – 20; Appendix). Zamindars had to pay tax in due time to the Collector’s treasury. Joydurga Chowdhurani went into hiding and living incognito away from her subjects from 1778 as she being a zamindar, was unable to pay the tax which was forcefully
claimed from them by the British Company rulers. Due to non-payment of tax on behalf of the zamindar, the Acting Collector forced sending a sezawal (Company-rulers appointed tax collector) to collect tax in the Manthana estate subject to the approval of appointment from the end of the Governor General in Council.

The Acting Collector in his letter further reported that Joydurga was absent from her zamindari and secluded to Batoriah. The zamindar herself went in hiding, the Gomastah died, so the management on the zamindari was not properly going on including collection of tax (Letter – 21; Appendix). Charles Purling, Collector of Rangpur reported the same in his letter dated 17th September, 1779 as good as the Acting Collector had communicated as on the 24th July, 1779. He prayed for the approval of the appointment of the sezawal till that period of either returning of the zamindar herself or appointing a Gomastah for her zamindari in the post vacated by the death of her former Gomastah. Concealment of Joydurga Chowdhurani from her zamindari continued from 1778 (Letter – 22; Appendix). Warren Hastings was very strict particularly on collection of tax and therefore he directed the Collector of Rangpur to apply the general orders regulated as on the 14th October, 1777 by confinement of the zamindars who did not pay tax and they would be confined up to the date of repayment of arrears as due from them. Further, Warren Hastings approved the post of sezawal appointed for the collection of tax in the absence of Joydurga Chowdhurani from 1778 (Letter – 23; Appendix).

During the rule of the British East India Company, the settlement of the zamindari had to be renewed every year as per terms settled by the Board of Revenue at Fort William, Calcutta. All those temporary appointments made by the local administrators were subject to the approval by the higher authority. Collector of Rangpur sent letter to the Governor General for the approval of appointment of the sezawal for the Manthana estate. Rangpur Collector mentioned in his letter the reason behind the concealment of Joydurga Chowdhurani having absconded from the dread of a warrant (Letter – 24; Appendix). Non-payment of tax fixed from the Government side led to the sale of the portion of the zamindari at a nominal price. The Manthana estate zamindari faced such crisis for non-payment of tax to the Collector’s treasury (Letter – 25; Appendix).

The then Gomastahs were very powerful employees in the zamindari and the post was almost hereditary. Having such back grounds, gomastah sometimes did not abide by the orders of the Company rulers. That’s why the Board of Revenue empowered the Collector of Rangpur for the approval or rejection of the appointment of gomastah of any such zamindari (Letter – 26; Appendix).

Surprisingly we cannot find any documents in the form of letters, statements, notice etc. regarding the management of her or her zamindari from April, 1781 to April, 1787. Joydurga Chowdhurani was still in living incognito. The members of the Board of Revenue ordered the Collector for the engagement of the zamindari, if the gomastah was empowered by her zamindar or if the Ranny (Joydurga Chowdhurani) returned to her zamindari being summoned by the public advertisement in the mean time or any other expedient way of solution, but the peasants of her zamindari were allowed to
cultivate their land. The British Company rulers knew that no tax would be collected from the farmers if they were not allowed farming. The zamindar of Manthana Joydurga Chowdhurani remained absent from her zamindari from 1778 to 1787 as reflected in the letters of the Board of Revenue, although she managed her zamindari keeping herself in hiding (Letter – 27; Appendix).

Due to over-taxation, the Manthana zamindari could not pay the entire amount of Rs. 34,379 fixed for the year 1787 and for that reason, the Manthana zamindar prayed for the deduction of Rs. 3000. The Collector disagreed to that proposal and suggested to appoint a sezawal who promised to collect the proposed amount for the next 10 years (1778 – 1787). The sezawal was appointed at Manthana zamindari only due to the absence of the zamindar or her gomastah from her zamindari. But in the year 1788, the Collector proposed the appointment of sezawal for the collection of the total amount of tax fixed for the coming year of 1788. From this fact and content found in this letter of the Rangpur Collector dated 7th May, 1788; one could consider that Joydurga Chowdhurani returned to her zamindari in 1788 after 10 years of her living incognito (Letter – 28; Appendix). In other letter, Rangpur Collector informed about the tax due for flood at Manthana estate amounted to Rs. 4204 (Letter – 29; Appendix). Members of the Board of Revenue did not approve the remission of the sanctioned tax for the last year in favour of Manthana zamindari due to non-availability of any valid reason (Letter – 30; Appendix). The information regarding zamindar’s refusal of the government proposal at first to pay extra tax of Rs. 2000 induced to decline the management of the zamindari of Rangpur district (Letter – 31; Appendix). Joydurga Chowdhurani ultimately agreed to the proposal of increased tax of Rs. 2000 and she sent her second gomastah to the office of the Collector to put his signature on the modified agreement on behalf of Joydurga Chowdhurani (Letter – 32; Appendix).

Board of Revenue becomes increasingly greedy to go for greate income from the farmers and zamindars of Bengal. Here in this letter the Board of Revenue members directed the Collector to carry on collection of tax from the zamindars (Letter – 33; Appendix). In 1790, the Board of Revenue formulated such a law by which the minor and female zamindars were disqualified as landholders. This is another oppression over Joydurga Chowdhurani by disqualifying her as zamindar from the Manthana zamindari where she has been managing her estate since 1765 after her husband’s death. Collector of Rangpur sent a letter to the Board of Revenue giving details about the disqualified minor and female zamindars adding such list as an annexure to his letter.

The statement of the Collector bears important information about Joydurga Chowdhurani that she is about 47 years of age in 1790 (Letter – 34; Appendix).

It is really splendid to see in black and white that one of the British Company rulers praised Joydurga Chowdhurani, zamindar of the Manthana estate. In their statement, she is one of the most worthy zamindars of Rangpur, she is capable of writing, reading and quite up and doing for managing her own concerns. The Board of Revenue thus has withdrawn the order of disqualification from her and she is then exempted from the General Regulations and able to appoint the gomastah according to her will (Letter – 35; Appendix). The Collector of Rangpur recommends and seeks the approval of the
Board of Revenue for some exemplary punishment levying upon the zamindars because of their negligence in providing documents as directed by the Collector. The name of Joydurga Chowdhurani is seen enlisted among those punished zamindars in the top of the list (Letter – 36; Appendix).

Revenues
The British East India Company planned a lot after achieving dewani of Bengal, but collection of revenue and tax turned into a headache for them. Ignorance of the local language by the British people and no knowledge of English among the inhabitants of Bengal are the prime reasons of inconveniences for the fixation of revenues as well as collection of tax. They left this business in the hands of the local clever people who preferred this type of job and had similar kind of experience before the establishment of the administration by Company rules. Likewise, Madangopal collected tax and maintained accounts for Rangpur followed by Mirza Hossain Reza during that period. Gradually the company rulers understood the local languages and learnt about the fixation of tax. They started to exert pressure by increasing taxes over the inhabitants of Rangpur every year. Such burden of over-taxation causes the tax rebellion in 1783 at Rangpur after 18 years of achieving Dewani by the East India Company in Bengal.

The name of the zamindar, Manthana estate is seen for the first time in the records of the statement of 1777 in an account of deduction favouring the zamindar of Manthana estate; the recommendation of which is sent to the Governor General, Warren Hastings for its approval. The deduction favoured accountability of the Manthana estate by Charles Purling, Collector of Rangpur is Rs. 3,119, Annas 7, Gundah 9 for the session 1776 (Letter – 37; Appendix).

Appointment of Debi Singh, Gangaprasad and Hurram Sen as Dewans of Rangpur in three consecutive years was tendered to the Collector of Rangpur by the Board of Revenue at Fort William, Calcutta. Though Hurram was temporarily appointed as Dewan of Rangpur, he ultimately became the assistant to leaseholder Debi Singh subsequently. Debi Singh and Hurram were marked as the noted villains of the Rangpur insurrection and were accused thereon by the Paterson Commission (Letters – 38 & 39 and Report - 6; Appendix). Hon’ble members of the Board of Revenue ultimately decided to remove the leaseholder Debi Singh from the post of Dewan of Rangpur at the end of the insurrection for his acts of tyranny and torture (Letter – 40; Appendix). Warren Hastings, the Governor General, dissolved the Provincial Council of Revenue that showed no sign of improvement of revenue in the province for which reason the Council was set up (Letter – 41; Appendix).

The statement of accounts reflected the name of Joydurga as the zamindar of Futtehpur 2 Annas Manthana estate for the first time in the records of Rangpur mentioning the amount of deposition and subscription scheduled for her estate by the Rangpur Collector (Statements of Accounts - 1; Appendix).

Joydurga Chowdhurani, disqualified as a zamindar for being a female in terms of the regulations under Company act, was paid monthly allowances (Mashohaara) as a landholder. Revenue of that estate was then collected by the agent appointed by the Collector of Rangpur. The gomastah was
asked several questions related to the ratio of cultivated land and jungle areas, improvement of agricultural lands and increase of revenue thereon after being called to the office (Statements of Accounts - 2; Appendix).

**Contemporary**

Joydurga Chowdhurani was the most popular zamindar for her forceful personality among all of her contemporary zamindars. Ranny Bhabani, the zamindar of Natore under collectorship of Rangpur, was also contemporary to Joydurga Chowdhurani. Ranny Bhabani managed her zamindari up to 1795. She died in 1795. Shiv Chandra Roy was not only a contemporary zamindar to Joydurga Chowdhurani, but a fan and follower of her. Shiv Chandra liked Joydurga Chowdhurani for her sagacious leadership. There are three contemporary zamindars bearing the same name of Joydurga Chowdhurani. One of them was her neighbour, the zamindar of Bamandanga, namely Jagadeswari Joydurga Chowdhurani. She died early in 1790. The last one zamindar bearing the same name of Joydurga Chowdhurani was the caretaker zamindar of Ghoraghat (Bardhankot) for her mentally disabled husband for the first time and later for her under aged minor son. There are several affairs of those zamindars during that period.

Shiv Chandra Roy, a contemporary zamindar to Joydurga Chowdhurani and one of the most noted leaders of the Rangpur insurgence, made a petition to the Collector for accurate calculation of tax in terms of the fixation of the settlement made between the zamindars and the Collector. The Collector of Rangpur forwarded the petition to the Board of Revenue for its approval (Letter & Petition – 42; Appendix).

The Bamandanga zamindar having the same name of her contemporary zamindar Joydurga Chowdhurani of the Manthana estate died in 1790. The Board of Revenue permitted her adopted son Bhairab Chandra Chowdhury, aged about 21 years, the possession of the Bamandanga zamindari left by her adoptive mother Jagadeswari Joydurga Chowdhurani. Death of Jugdeswari Chowdhriani, Zemindar of Bamandangah, leaving an adopted son by name of Bhyrub Chandr of 21 years of age, is reported by the Collector. Board directed Roy Royan to call on the Sudder Canoongoes for a statement of the farming of the deceased (Letter – 43; Appendix).

**Nepotism**

The Bamandanga zamindar Joydurga Chowdhurani had done with an appeasable incident of unusual daily attendance of two peons at her cutchery (office of the zamindar) through a written petition to the Collector of Rangpur. The Collector of Rangpur, after being confused with the movement of two peons, wrote all about to the Governor General and other members of the Council. Mr. Warren Hastings directed to the Collector of Rangpur to take those fake peons in his custody and must seek to show the warrant from the peons in presence of witness in the office of the Collector, Rangpur (Letter 44; Appendix).
A contradictory decision was taken by the Collector of Rangpur through appointing a ‘Aumeem’ in a land-debate issue between the zamindars of Baharbund and Bhatarbund, where Ranny Bhabani of Natore took appropriate steps for remedial solution of that issue with the request of those two zamindars. The Board of Revenue wanted a query about this legal matter seeking the reasons for the interference by the Collector of Rangpur in this issue as stated by Ranny Bhabani in her petition (Letter 45; Appendix). Rapid changing scenario of Mr. Peter Moore from poverty to affluence within the period of only 18 months of his collectorship set a series of examples of immortality to his native European fellows. William Hichey, once his European neighbour, recalled those early days and included in the Extract from the memoirs of William Hichey, Vol. III, pages 163-164, (Hurst and Blackett Ltd.), reprinted for insertion in Volume IV of the Rangpur District Records: Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. IV; 1779-1785 (Letters Received), Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta, 1921 (Statement – 3; Appendix).

Mr. Peter Moore was appointed on the 15th April, 1784 as the Collector of Rangpur and served for 18 months in this post before his departure for Europe for ever (Letter 46; Appendix).

After being informed by the Acting Collector of Rangpur, the members of the Board of Revenue were all surprised on the incident that Mr. Peter Moore had not left the letters and documents of public correspondence during his tenure of his collectorship. When the members of the Board came to know Mr. Moore had already sailed for Europe. The Board assigned the Acting Collector to recover those documents through the Attorneys of Mr. Moore. They smelled something fishy about this mysterious conduct of Mr. Peter Moore (Letter 47; Appendix).

Preparer of the Report of the Revenue Department requested the Collector of Rangpur to issue a summon to Indranarayan Bose, Naib of Manthana for his personal attendance at the office of the Collector requiring interrogations regarding illicit receipt of money against the Rangpur Commissioner. The Governor General in Council communicated such irregularities heard about the Rangpur Commissioner and directed to PRRD for an early investigation regarding this matter (Letter 48; Appendix).

Hearsay
Debi Chowdhurani was the ruler of Manthana estate. After the death of her husband, Narendra Narayan Roy Chowdhury, she managed the said Manthana zamindari for more than three decades. Manthana was never a name of a village or of a mouza. Establishment of a zamindari by extradition of the land through extraction from others i.e. ‘Manthan’ in Bengali - that’s why the zamindari is nomenclatured as “Manthana”. Debi played a leading role in the Rangpur peasants’ insurgence in 1783, and became a symbol of resistance to the arrogant revenue rule of the British East India Company. Debi Chowdhurani organized an army to defend peasants of Rangpur when the peasantry insurrection broke out, she joined the rebels. She led her soldiers in full warrior regalia, fought bravely and determinedly, but was killed in the battle on 18th April, 1783 in the field of Napai Chandir Math,
about a mile away from her zamindari palace of Pirgachha, Rangpur. Those rebels who were alive after that battle cremated the deceased body of Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani, her younger brother, Kesto Kishor Roy Chowdhury Itakumari zamindar, Shib Chandra Roy and other rebels inside the forest surrounded by the river Aalaikuri and nomenclatured the place as ‘Pabitra-jhaar’. The date of death of Debi Chowdhurani falls on the first Thursday of the month of Baishakh and the local people pay respect in her memory by holding a village fair thereon i.e. at Napai Chandir Math every year on that day. Her unquenchable spirit, courage, and self respect gave the British sleepless nights. The story of the guts and sacrifice of this 18th century warrior queen is truly an inspiration for all Bengalee.

Debi Chowdhurani exists on a foundation of believability. It was rumoured about her defeat and death in the battle of Napai Chandir Math. None witnessed that incident and no historian, surveyor, administrator or gazetteer writer recorded her death in black and white in a fight against the British armies, although the death of Bhabani Pathak in the fight against the armies of the British rulers is clearly visible at the Lieutenant Brenan’s report followed by almost all the books and gazetteers about Rangpur during the British era. The incident of Debi’s death had not been composed in the song (Jager gaan) of Ratiram Das, a member of Rajbangshi community, who lived in the village of Itakumari, a centre of revolt. It’s a common belief that the spirit of self-sacrifice of anybody else for the sake of country either for patriotism or for any revolt would become a more hit song than those of only praise or bravery in the traditional folk lore or folk-song. But Ratiram Das’s tears were a witness to sincerity, wisdom and sagacity to Debi Chowdhurani, not for her dire consequence faced ultimately as a leader of peasants’ insurrection.

The seal of order issued by Debi Chowdhurani are the splendid and powerful evidences of the time span of ruling the Manthana estate during the period from 1765 to 1801. One such firman or patta is Pirpal seal of order issued by Joy Durga Debi Chowdhurani on Magh 5, 1176 Bangabdo (1769 - 1770) and another one is Mushkali Chukani patta issued by Debi on Kartik 25, 1197 Bangabdo (1790 - 1791). Abdul Goffur of Pirgachha collected both these seal of orders issued by Debi Chowdhurani and the publications of those are visible in print at the magazine ‘Unnayan’, vol. 5 no. 7 (Rangpur: Rangpur District Council) edited by Nurul Islam. The date and year mentioned on both these seal of orders issued by Debi finally prove that she did not die at Napai Chandir Math on April 18, 1783. Perhaps she hid herself under the bush hide-away and her appearance was revealed again sometimes during 1787 at her zamindari ruling with full dignity after the end of Rangpur peasantry insurrection. These facts lay hidden for a long time. And again, more facts will be brought to light which are hidden in the womb of future singing the song again for the old times’ sake.

Debi Chowdhurani was the savior to peasantry as she led them well in all possible ways. She had been considered as goddess Chandi in the entire Rangpur areas and all her peasants called her mother Joydurga, her original name (Debi Chowdhurani is just a title to any wife of the then zamindar). She supported the peasants’ insurrection straightway from the zamindars’ conference held at Itakumari by stimulating and energizing both the zamindars and the peasants by her bold
Almost all the situations and happenings are perhaps debatable and imaginary as described by Ratiram Das in his song. Though the fact comes out that in the second and final phase of insurrection, peasants were not accompanied by Debi Chowdhurani and the justice had gone against the leaseholder Debi Singh and his associates when the Englishmen held the court after the end of the peasants’ insurgency. After being freed from all disturbances, Debi Chowdhurani managed and governed her zamindari peacefully and independently up to 1801 as evidenced by the seal of order issued by her available at Rangpur District Council Publication.

Debi Chowdhurani is an exceptional character ornamented with all Excellencies in the history of Rangpur, although she was described by the British Company rulers as a dacoit queen and an associate of Bhabani Pathak. She lived in a bazra and used to take part in the raids led by Bhabani Pathak. Debi Chowdhurani was accompanied by her paid armies and carried off a share as booty from Bhabani Pathak. Bhabani Pathak, described as gang leader by the British army, was killed in 1787 in an encounter with the armies sent by Lieutenant Brenan. Debi Chowdhurani was then absconding. Hiding away for years Debi Chowdhurani returned to her zamindari with all dignities.

Lieutenant Brenan reported everything including her arrival to the Rangpur Collector. On receipt of Lieutenant Brenan’s report, the collector of Rangpur wrote to him (12th July, 1787) informing him that it was not necessary to arrest Debi Chowdhurani just then and necessary directions would be given on receipt of further information regarding her (Land of two rivers: A history of Bengal from the Mahabharata to Mujib by Nitish K Sengupta, p.222).

**Departure**

Joy Durga Debi Chowdhurani never bid valedictory or farewell address to her obedient subjects of her Manthanah estate zamindari. She had to face trouble during the period of her exit and had to tender petition to the Board of Revenue praying for permission to pay revenue of her estate direct into the treasury without the interference of Rajendra Narayan Chowdhury, her adopted son, who, she asserts, has no hand in the management of her zamindari. She knew nothing about the submission of petition to the Collector in her own name and issuance of order by the Collector allowing Rajendranarayan to pay revenue for Manthana zamindari (Petition – 8; Appendix).

Board’s Order – Ordered that a copy of the above petition be transmitted to the Collector of Rungpore for his report.

Board of Revenue sent the petition of Joy Durga Chowdhurani, zamindar of Pergunnah Manthanah, protesting against the interference of Rajender Narayan Chowdhury, her adopted son, in the management of her estate to the Collector of Rangpur for his report. The report of Alex Wright, Collector of Rangpur, to the Board of Revenue on the 4th November, 1801 then came to the head quarters in Calcutta (Letter – 49; Appendix).

Then the petition sent by Rajendranarayan, the original one, is as following. The content in his petition, either true or false, is only to fulfill that fact that he deserves the transfer of the Manthana zamindari from her adoptive mother without spoiling any more time (Petition – 9; Appendix). Collector directed to ask Joydurga for an earlier reply against the petition of her adopted son.
Ordered that Mussamaat Jey Durga Chowdraine be advised of the above requisition and that a copy be furnished her Gomastah, and an answer be required from her.

Dated 25th February, 1801
A true translate
(Signed) Alex Wright, Collector

The content of the petition by Joydurga Chowdhurani looks doubtful. An iron lady like Joydurga who fought several fights against the British would never submit herself before the Collector writing that her name may be annulled and the name of her adopted son may be registered in the intermediate mutation in the records of zamindari. If this petition is supposed to be genuine and the draft written in her own words, she never complained about this petition before the Board of Revenue accusing its authenticity. She did not hand over the charge of her property and other liabilities of the Manthana estate, but only bequeathed the gift of property by deed to her adopted son (Petition – 10).

The petition of Joydurga Chowdhurani was submitted before the Collector of Rangpur by Gouri Kanta Chowdhury, the then gomastah of Manthana estate. During hearing, when the Collector asked about the authenticity of the signature of the petition, the petition bearer gomastah declared that Joydurga Chowdhurani signed at the end of the petition. The Collector took cooperation from another gomastahs like Ramkanta Roy (former gomastah of Manthana estate) and Bholanath Roy (agent of Coondy pargana) for the identification and verification of the signature of the petition. The question arises – the presence of the gomastah of the Manthana estate, the petition bearer, is sufficient for identification and authenticity of the petition, still other gomastahs attended the hearing. Was this hearing pre-planned? The answer of the query is smoky and the originality of the signature of Joydurga Chowdhurani in the submitted petition is not beyond suspicion. If the signature of Joydurga Chowdhurani in that petition is really a genuine one, the author should be the most obliged. Then order of the Collector was issued (Order – 1; Appendix) and was followed by the Board’s order.

Ordered that the Collector of Rungpore be informed that the Board are satisfied with the explanation contained in his letter, and do not consider the petition of Mossamaat Jey Dourga entitled to any further consideration from them.

Thus, the Board of Revenue finally rejected the petition of Joydurga Chowdhurani, Zemindar of Pergunnah Manthanah, asking permission to pay the revenues of her estate direct into the treasury without the interference of Rajendra Narayan Chowdhury, her adopted son, keeping status quo of the order of the Collector of Rangpur on the 20th November, 1801.

The story of transmittance of charge hand over of the Zamindari began a few months back where Alex Wright, Collector of Rangpur co-operated with Rajendra Narayan Chowdhury whole-heartedly, where the gomastah Gouri Kanta Chowdhury was the main traitor.

Conclusion
Debi Chowdhurani (Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani; Zamindarni of Manthana estate, Pargachha, Rangpur, Bangladesh), famous for her love and noble services towards peasantry, led the public rebellion and freed the people of Rangpur from leaseholder Debi Singh's torture. Except Bhabani Pathak, Debi Chowdhurani took help and cooperation from another zamindar namely Shib Chandra Roy, elder son of landlord Raja Ray for leading the public rebellion. Shib Chandra Roy, elder son of landlord Raja Ray, was the founder of Itakumari landlord house. Itakumari landlord house is popularly known as the Shiv Chandra's Jamindar Bari. The trio – Joydurga Debi Chowdhurani (Debi Chowdhurani), Shib Chandra Roy and Bhabani Pathak freed the peasants from the burden of tax of greater Rangpur (including present Jalpaiguri) from the tyranny and torture of leaseholder Debi Singh as reflected in all the records inserted in this article.

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Appendix

Letter – 1

To
Charles Purling, Esqr.,
Collector of Rungpore

Sir,
I have the pleasure of transmitting to you enclosed copy of a petition presented to the khalsa on the part of Joydurga Choudrayn, concerning which I have already addressed you under the date the 17th August last, but, the party still complaining at the khalsa, and no answer having been received to my former reference on this subject, the regulations of my office in that respect render it incumbent as one to trouble you with this second address. I, therefore, beg leave to forward you the complaint for enquiry.

Khalsa
The 19th July, 1779
G. G. Ducarel, Superintendent, Khalsa Records

Supplement to the Rangpur District Records, Vol. 1; No. 116, P. 94

Report – 1

“The female Zemindars gave the Collectors the most trouble. He could not confine them, nor could he even catch them; for when he sent for them to live at Rungpore, they ran away to Calcutta. In 1781, the zemindar of Kankina thus took her flight; the Collector to send her back, and they tried to apprehend her and failed. The final upshot, however, was the sale of some of her lands two years later. It is pleasant to come across a notice in Buchanon, to the effect that he found Ram Rudro of Kankina, the adopted son of this lady, among the few zamindars of the district who showed any real politeness to strangers.”

A Report on the District of Rungpore (1873) by E. G. Glazier (p. 41)

Letter – 2

To
William Rooke Esqr.
Chief and C³ Provincial Council of Revenue, Purnea

Gentlemen,

The borders of Boda Bicuntapore and have been told Purnea, had been infested by a band of decayts whose ring leaders name was Narrain for a great many years, within these few days he was surprised by a party that went against him, and after some resistance took to flight, in which he and a considerable number of his associates were slain, Beer Bul, however, the second of the gang, escaped, and I have now people out in quest of him. I am informed that he is somewhere near the borders of Punea, and may probably attempt to take shelter in your districts where my people without your permission cannot follow him. To remedy this I beg leave to submit to you
the propriety of furnishing me with a perwannah to the officers on your borders directing them to
give every information and assistance in their power towards seizing Beer Bull and other
decoys, and for that purpose to cooperate with my people in case they should find it necessary to
carry their pursuit beyond the borders of Rungpore, and that you will also be pleased to send me
another perwannah containing a passport for Diaram Tiwaree and Adur Sing the Jemadar in
quest of Beer Bul to allow him to follow him into your districts.
Rungpore                                                   I am Sir etc.
The 23rd April, 1780                                          George Bogle, Collector

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. IV; 1779 - 1785; p. 31-33

Letter - 3
To
George Bogle
Collector of Rungpore
Sir,
We have been favored with your letter of the 23rd ultimo, & now do ourselves the pleasure to
enclose your perwannahs to those zamindars under your authority who we think are most likely
to prove of service towards apprehending the decoits you complain of. We have directed them
not only to cooperate with your people in endeavouring to seize & bring to justice those robbers,
but also to give the earliest intelligence in their power of all their motions, and on no account to
interrupt the jamutdars you have thought proper to send in quest of Beer Bul should they have
occasion to follow him or any of his gang through these districts.

Purnea                                                   We are Sir etc.
The 2nd May, 1780                                            William Rooke, E. Fenwick

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II; 1779 - 1782; p. 46

Letter – 4
To
Edward Fenwick Esqr.
Chief of the Provincial Council, Purnea
Sir,
I was duly favoured with a letter from your Board of the………………………………………….

Soon after the receipt of the perwannahs which you were pleased to send for pursuing the
associates of Narain decoyt. Their ring leader Beer Ball was seized and is now in confinement at
Rungpore. As I have had no complaints since of robberies committed towards your province I
hope the number of decoys who have been taken or slain – has broken the gang.

Rungpore                                                   I am Sir etc.
The 19th July, 1780                                           George Bogle, Collector

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. IV; 1779 - 1785; No. 69, p. 52

Letter – 5
To Mr. Richard Goodlad Esqr.
Collector of Rungpore

Sir,

We have received your letter of the 14th instant. The Board having disapproved of any further Burcundasses to your Establishment. We cannot make any further representations to them.

Calcutta
The 26th August, 1782

J. Shore, Saml. Charters, C. Croftes

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II; 1779 - 1782; No. 382, p. 264

Letter – 6

To Mr. Richard Goodlad Esqr.
Collector of Rungpore

Sir,

A Jemmadars party of sepoys in passing from Rungpore thro’ this place have in attempting to plunder from the people here occasioned much disturbance. May I entreat that you will enquire into the matter and give such orders for the future as may prevent the like happening.

Apole
The 31st October, 1782

James Christie

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II; 1779 - 1782; No. 422, p. 283

Letter – 7

To D. H. McDowall Esqr.
Collector of Rungpore

Sir,

I conceive it incumbent on me to lay before you the accompanying arzee, presented to me, and signed by seven merchants, residing at Govin Gunge.

Referring you to the contents, I have now only to inform you, that on a supposition that the offender complained of, was in the Dinagepore Division, I deemed it my duty for the preservation of the peace of the country, and good of the service, to apprehend him for which purpose, I yesterday detached a party from hence, of one Havildar, one Naick, and eighteen Sepoys to Govin Gunge. But, having just learnt that the place mentioned in the petition, where this dacoit lurks, is in your Collectorship, I have dispatched experts orders to Havildar, not to until I may be further ordered with your on the subject.

I am further to acquaint you, that the merchants, before mentioned, have constant, and faithful spies over this robber and that he is within ten coss of Govin Gunge, with fifty Burcondoses.

The order which I gave the Havildar, were, to endeavour, by all mean to surprise, and make him prisoners in the night, without blood shed and only for the purpose of securing him, and defending themselves, to suffer the Sepoys to have to their arms.

It now rests entirely with you, whether the detachment shall proceed, or be recalled, immediately.
Petition - 1
Translation of a petition from Canooram & Merchants, to Lt. Brenan Commandant, Silberris
“We buy tobacco and other goods at Rungpore and we dispose of them at Dacca obtaining the Company’s parwannah for that purpose; Bowanny Pattuck a desperate man, having taken, and plundered our boats in their passage; we complained to Mr. Williams, superintendent of Govt Customs at Dacca, and he gave us some Seapoys and a perwannah to take Pattuck into custody. Pattuck refused to obey the Seapoys or the perwannah and the Seapoys having complained to Mr. Fendall Judge of the Nattor adalat they brought a warrant and an order to the Naibs of Pergunnah Puttah Deh. Pattuck having received intelligence of this, retired to the village of Cheriah Candy in the district of Gourghat where having collected a number of people he plunders our boats and actually seized on one and the property that was in it. For these reasons we request that you will order Pattuck to be seized, and that you will send him to Mr. Williams at Dacca, in order to carry on our business and pay the Company’s revenues.”
12th Assar, 1194 B.S.

Letter – 8
To
D. H. McDowall Esqr.
Collector of Rungpore
Sir,
I am just favored with you public letter of the 7th instant.
I am sorry that I cannot with prudence, or fately, supply the military force you require, and which I am confident you would not have desired had you known that I have 42 prisoners, and not as many Seapoys fit for duty to guard them.
My public letter will have ere now informed you that the prisoners are all up country men. They are at present reduced to desperacy, and there are 500 of the same description, in, and about Seeb Gunge.

Letter – 9
To Richard Goodlad Esqr.
Sir,
I am directed by the Hon’ble the Governor General and Council to acquaint you that they have been pleased to appoint you to the office of Collector of Rungpore vacated by the death of the late Mr. Bogle.
Revenue Department
Fort William
The 14th April, 1781

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. V; 1786 – 1787
Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. V; 1786 – 1787; p. 194

I am Sir etc.
A. Brinan Lt.,
Commandant, from the 29th Batallion

I am etc.
I. Baugh
Secretary
**Letter – 10**

Letters to the Zemindars by Richard Goodlad, Collector of Rungpore
To the Zemindars who farm their own lands and the other farmers of the Pergunnah Bamindangah, Futtypore 6 Annas and 3 ½ Annas, the Pergunnah Tepah, Cargeehaut, Odassey, Basut, Panga, Kankneah, Munteenna, Mehals Muskoorey, Pergunnah Fucker Coondy & Cª of the Zillah of Rungpore sircar Bagoohah –
You in the beginning of the year gave mutchulkahs that you would not collect from the country any extra tax, you received large deductions when you made your Bundobust at the Sudder. I now understand from the epresentation of the ryots that you demand derrivillah and Batta & Cª that are forbid, and distress the ryots. You who took such large deductions and made your settlement agreeable to your wishes, with the agreement that you would take no more than the rate of the year 1187, the complaints the ryots now make of these exactions, what is the reasons for it, write me an answer, are their complaints true or false.

**Letter – 11**

Zamindars’ Reply
We who are Zemindars farming our own lands of the Pergunnahs Bamindangah, Futtypore 6 Annas and 3 ½ Annas, Pergunnah the Chucklas Cargeehaut, Odassey, Bausut, Panga, Kankneah, Munteenna, the Mehals Muskoorey Pergunnah Coondy & Cª Sircar Bazooah, have received and comprehend the meaning of your orders, at the time we entered into engagements for farming our own lands, we gave mutchulkas & Cª everything necessary under our own hands, in which were expressed that expecting the rate of last year we would not take from the ryots any new assessment, we accordingly collect from the ryots agreeable to the year 1187. Those ryots who have represented to you we have taken otherwise from them, have told a falsity, we beg you will order those who complain to pay agreeable to the rate of 1187, besides this if they complain any one in the mofussil has attempted to take more will immediately redress them, and deliver such people as have taken more to you in order to be punished.
Dated 15th Maug

**Petition – 2**

Petitions of the Ryots of Futteypore, Tepah, Munteenna etc. to Richard Goodlad, Collector of Rungpore
We ryots are ruined. You are chief of the country, you have not done us justice, - in our houses we have nothing left – our grain, cattle, and other effects we have sold – the advances we received for the opium we have paid in notwithstanding how long are we to put up with the severity of the collections we have not sufficient left to subsist on we have therefore assembled quittepd our houses and come forth for justice. The price of Couries in the mofussil is five Cown upon this demands are made on us for 3 Annas Batta Hoondeawn Cartunney, & Durrivillah. Rungpore was formerly (najey) or deficient in ability to pay its revenue, Rajah Debi Singh having agreed to an increase has secured the country we shall not be able to remain in the district - if you are chief God has sent you to do us justice, enquire into our complaints and redress us,
being without remedy we have left our houses and came forth on the plains, if you do not do us justice our calamities will light on you. God has made you chief render us justice, our opium lands are gone to ruin we are not able to look after them. Requests of the ryots of the foregoing pergunnahs as follows –

1. The abolishment of the present Durrivillah
2. The Narrainy rupees to be taken in payment
3. The abolishment of Curtunney & Hoondeaun
4. The deduct the Ferarey from the kistbundee

You will cause these four heads to be excused us we have nothing left we have sold our cattles, assets, women and whatever we had, how much longer are we to bear the severity of the collections, we therefore left our houses and come forth as Fakirs. You are our chief and to us are father and mother render us justice we will remain in thin manner to the end of the year do you order us as you please excuse us the above heads, when we will return to our houses.

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. IV, 1779 – 1785; No. 188, p. 139 – 140

Report – 2

‘We then sold our cattle and the trinkets belonging to our women; we have since sold our children, and have naught left but our lives; upon that two annas increase has been put on the jumma of this year, and Sezawals and tassildars were sent throughout the mofussil, who coming into the country, tied into bamboos, beat us with corahs, with fists, and put us to every possible inconvenience; our beards were not left.’ – E. G. Glazier

Letter – 12

Ensign Richard Leavis Coleby
Sir,
Lieutenant Macdonald being in need of assistance, I am to request you will march to Calpanney with 50 Seapoys without delay, and put yourself under the command of that gentleman.

Rungpore
The 22nd February, 1783

I am Sir etc.
Richard Goodlad, Collector

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II, No. 185, P. 136

Letter – 13

To
Mr. Richard Goodlad
Collector of Rungpore
Sir,
We think it necessary to advise you that we have written to Major Robertson at the city to dispatch to Rungpore a party of 200 sepoys, or as many as he can spare, on the supposition that an additional force may be necessary to bring the insurgence to subjection; the Commanding officer will receive his instructions from you.
We have invested Mr. Paterson with the fullest authority to take such measures as he may deem necessary for restoring the peace & tranquility of the country, and direct that you cooperate with him in all such orders as he may judge expedient to give.
We have likewise written to Mr. Rooke to send as many sepoys to you as he can spare.
We direct your particular attention to secure the opium manufacture suffering any molestation and that you lose no time in taking effectual measures for this purpose.

Calcutta
The 28th February, 1783

We are Sir
J. Shore, Cs. Croftes

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. III; 1783 - 1785; No. 36, p. 22

Letter – 14

To
Mr. Richard Goodlad
Collector of Rungpore
Sir,
We think it necessary to inform you that we have authorized Mr. Paterson to hear examine and decide upon all complaints relating to oppressions preferred by the farmers or his Collectors, and to summon such persons as he may deem necessary for ascertaining the objects of his Commission, without any application to you.
We desire you yourself furnish Mr. Paterson with every information regarding the late insurrection, the nature and extent of it, and the persons who are supposed to have been concerned in it, and that you direct the farmer to do the same.
We have also authorized Mr. Paterson to issue such orders or adopt such measures as he may deem necessary to promote the peace and prosperity of the district at large, or for carrying into execution the objects of his Commission.

Calcutta
The 31st March, 1783

We are Sir
J. Shore, Saml. Charters

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. III; 1783 - 1785; No. 58, p. 35

Letter – 15

To
Mr. Richard Goodlad Esqr.
Collector of Rungpore
Sir,
In my public letter of yesterday I mentioned to you that I had a party in readiness to march in consequence of an information I had of a Ding assembled to the northward of Surradooby. This party marched about 12 o’clock last night under the command of a Jemedar & with them Meersa Mahd Tuckah with his burcundasses, & all the horsemen that were here they came up with the Ding about dawn of day, who were very numerous, and the greater part of them armed with bows and arrows, lances & spears, as I advised the sepoys to disguise themselves, by covering themselves over with white cloths, the Ding allowed them to come very near taking them for burcundasses, whom they are not afraid of. The sepoys when near enough threw off the white cloths and fired about three rounds among them, then charged them with bayonets as did the horsemen with their swords. A great many have been killed & wounded. The Jemedar counted upwards of sixty dead on the plain, & fifty six prisoners are arrived living one prisoner died of his wounds on the road. I have not learnt as yet, what leading men are among the slain or the
prisoners. The greater part of them is from Behar. Many of the Palgong rhyots are among prisoners.

Campat Calpany
The 22nd February, 1783

I have the honor to be
(Signed) Alex Macdonald Lt.
Commdg the Militia & Burcundasses

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. III; 1783 - 1785; No. 32, p. 20

The editors add about the biography of Ratiram Das in brief – ‘Local composers created songs about the rebellion that were passed on for generations. Most of these are now lost but one survived because it was written down in the early twentieth century. The composer was Ratiram Das, a member of the Rajbangshi community, who lived in the village of Itakumari, a centre of the revolt. Here it is in a prose translation.’

Jaager Gaan – ‘A Tax Rebellion in Rangpur’ by Ratiram Das

“In Rangpur, Fatehpur was a big ‘chakla’ (revenue district) and king Rajarai lived there all alone. A deeply religious man, Rajarai was given to charities and many Brahmins were gifted land. The plots of land that he gave away to Brahmins and physicians, or consecrated to gods, cannot be measured. One can name Manthana, Bamandanga and others in the Fatehpur division. Fatehpur’s stock is high, because the gifts were bestowed on loyal Brahmins.

During the time of the East India Company, Debi Singh was the ‘Raja’; he had a dozen associates. As one looks, so one dresses or deports oneself. Because of the sins of the king, the country faced famine. People died, leaving money under their pillows. The amount of taxes to be taken from subjects was never determined; from the people they exacted as much as they could - but still wanted more. All they did was to demand more and more, and due to inhuman torture there rose a wail of agony. Even the honourable zamindar (landlord) was denied his honour; people of all classes cried in despair. Passengers on palanquins were assaulted by the ‘paiks’ (armed men) – and everything was rendered futile by Debi Singh’s oppression. Women could not move about their backyards; they were forcibly taken away by Debi Singh’s men. Raja Debi Singh himself became the incarnation of ‘Koli’ (untruth). The subjects were utterly sick of his misrule.

Sivachandra Roy was Rajarai’s son; everybody praised him as equal to Siva. He had a palace at Itakumari, massive and neatly laid, which had numerous rooms, doors and yards. No other building could stand comparison to it; the lounge with the altar of the goddess Chandi a high ceiling; the twin-roofed room had low eaves. One never found a west-facing lounge elsewhere – one adjoining room could be seen from the other.

There were paiks, bailiffs, guards, clerks and ministers without number. Joydurga Choudhurani, the ruling lady of Manthana, was praised by all for her sagacity and forceful personality. All that Sivachandra did was on her counsel – and the whole world was firmly convinced of her wisdom.

When the country was perishing of famine, Debi Singh, the arch villain, was busy plundering the people. Their misery touched the heart of Sivachandra, who, at the command of Joydurga, made a move. He went down to the court of Debi Singh and narrated the story of the people’s
suffering. Debi Singh, the Rajput, was as black ghost in appearance, could put ‘Mahishasur’ in the shade. On hearing this, his angry eyes turned red; ‘who is here, who is here’ shouted he. Sivachandra was put behind the bars, his feet in iron-fetters. Later, when his dewan (minister) learned all this, he had Sivachandra freed and brought to Itakumari – on paying a lot of money. Sivachandra was the pride of the Baidya family; he could not bear Debi Singh’s oppression any longer. He wrote letters to all zamindars in Rangpur asking them to come over, he sent out an open letter to all the people of his area as well as to those outside it.

With all the zamindars arriving at Sivachandra’s palace, Itakumari was filled with elephants, horses and soldiers. Also arrived the ruler of Pirgachha, Joydurga Devi. One by one, they were all seated in the Conference Hall adjoining the temple. The raiyats (tenants) kept standing, hands folded and tears rolling down their chests. They had neither food to eat nor cloths to wear; through starvation they were reduced to bones, covered only by a skin.

Sivachandra stood up with folded hands to speak; as he spoke he wept in anger. Pointing out the subjects to the zamindars, he said: “How could you eat without a thought for the sufferings of these people? Too often there were floods when the waters came down from the north, in which all the paddy was destroyed. I spent a good deal of time, labour and money to have the mouth of Caroah dyked. The subjects perish for the sins of the king. There is no water for irrigation; the paddy in the field is scorched down, and there is nothing left at home. Every year, we have a famine. There is no straw on the roof, no rice in the stores. The mother goes away, the father disappears, so does the wife – and without caring for anybody go away the son and the daughter. I went down to reason with the vicious Raja Debi Singh, but his slaves put fetters on my feet. Look at the condition of the subjects, dear zamindars, and do whatever you deem proper.”

Nobody uttered a word; all heads were bowed low. Sivachandra Roy lost his temper and spoke again: “Since the Rajput robber is a scoundrel, you should all drive him out.”

At this stage Mother Joydurga flared up: “Are you not men – aren’t you strong? Though I am born a woman, I can seize him and cut him to pieces with a sword. Nobody would be required to do anything; everything will be done by the subjects. But we shall never bow down.”

Sivachandra spoke, trembling with anger, like a charging hooded king-cobra. Sivachandra Nandy said: “Listen, my subjects, you provide the king’s food, his riches. Go out to Rangpur in your thousands, plunder Debi Singh’s palace and pull it down. Get him, bring him here along with his henchmen, and I will, with my own hands, cut his ears off.”

At Sivachandra’s command all the people took heart and rushed together in their thousands. They took sticks, spears, sickles, choppers; nobody remained to look after the children. On their shoulders, they carried a balance of load and the yoke. They were made beggers – so they ran like savages.

From all directions the people converged on Rangpur. The gentle folk came – only to watch the fun. The men threw brickbats and stones, some suffered broken bones and Debi Singh’s palace was reduced to a heap of bricks. He escaped through the backdoor; with him fled those twelve associates. Debi Singh got away with a wrapper on his body. Some say he went to Murshidabad, some say he fled to Dacca (Dhaka).
The Lord entrusted the English with the kingdom – and justice was done by the East India Company. The Englishmen held a court and a trial; one by one Debi Singh’s associates were put in prison. Let it be known well that I live in the same village of Itakumari where Sivachandra was the king.”

The editors of the book ‘Bangladesh Readers: History, Culture, Politics’ describe the social and political situations of the then Bengal – ‘In 1757 after winning the battle of Polashi (Plassey), the British East India Company formally took control of the Bengal Delta. It took the company decades, however, to establish effective control of the countryside and to adjust the system of land taxation to serve colonial interests. They made terrible misjudgments, most notoriously in the case of the devastating famine of 1770, which carried millions of inhabitants to their graves. Overtaxing continued, resulting in pervasive rural resistance and migration.

In 1783 peasants in Rangpur (northern Bangladesh) rose in rebellion. They tried to put an end to the oppression of revenue farmers, people whom the East India Company had given license to collect taxes on its behalf. One of the peasants’ targets was Debi Singh, a particularly ruthless character. At first the government tried to suppress the rebellion, but later it sought to pacify the rebels by canceling Debi Singh’s license and reducing tax demand.’ - translated by Amiya Bose in ‘Bangladesh Readers: History, Culture, Politics’ by Editors, Meghna Guhathakurta & Williem van Schendel.

Letter – 16

To
David Anderson Esqr.
President & C° Gentlemen of the Committee of Revenue at Fort William

Gentlemen
Since I had the honour of addressing you on the 6th February my time has been so taken up in endeavours to quell the unfortunate disturbances that broke out in this district, that I have not had leisure to write you so fully as the nature of the subject required, - they being at length appeared I set down to lay before you the particulars of my conduct in this affair, my situation for this month past has been a more a critical one than over any Collector yet was nor placed in, I have had a Riot to quell the most formidable that ever happened in Bengal. Had I adhered solely to the little authority invested in me, everything fatal was to be expected. The officers of the mofussil were murdered, wherever they could be found, and the whole authority of Government was entirely annihilated, impelled by necessity I have had to act entirely from the dictates of my own reason. The orders I have been obliged to issue, have been attended with the loss of many lives, this circumstance tho’ the consequence of absolute necessity, most still be repugnant to ones feelings, and when I came to consider the whole of what has happened in consequence of the authority I have been obliged to assume, the situation of my mind till such time as my conduct has undergone the most minute investigation can much better be conceived than expressed, - I begin therefore my narrative from the first intimation I had of any disturbance and continue it down to the time of its being appeased.

Several battles, ensued in consequence. On the 8th of Falgun, the Subadar, when I sent to the northward, came up with a party who were on their march to burn Mogulhaut, when an engagement ensued; the head man, named Nural Dine, who has assumed the title of Nabob, was
wounded and taken prisoner, and his dewan, Dyah Seel, killed, together with four other ryots. Nural Dine died of his wounds two days afterwards.

The district being at perfectly quiet without any apprehension of the disturbance again breaking out, and my being much impaired I request you will permit me to repair to the Presidency in order to establishment of it.

Rungpore
March, 1783
Richard Goodlad, Collector

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II, No. 204, P. 151
Letter – 17

To
William K Amherst Esqr.
Acting Collector of Rungpore

Sir
We have been informed that Deragenarrain styled the Nabob of the insurrection in this district is confined in the Collectors Guard.
We acquaint you will give the necessary orders that Deragenarrain may be delivered over to the charge of this Commission.

Rungpore
The 10th April, 1785
We are Sir etc.
E. E. Pote, W. Douglas, Cha: Ogilvie

J. Eliot, Secretary

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. III; 1783 – 1785; No. 456, p. 280
Letter – 18

To
William K Amherst Esqr.
Acting Collector of Rungpore

Sir
We beg that you will again order Mirza Mahomed Jaffer the Drogah of the Faujedarry Adawlut to attend this Commission.

Rungpore
The 1st May, 1785
We are Sir etc.
E. E. Pote, W. Douglas, Cha: Ogilvie

J. Eliot, Secretary

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. III; 1783 – 1785; No. 474, p. 291
Letter – 19

To
William K Amherst Esqr.
Acting Collector of Rungpore

Sir
We beg leave to inform you in obedience to the orders of the Hon’ble Board that we closed our Commission on the 21st & request you will issue the necessary orders, for Rajah Deby Sing’s being sent immediately to the Presidency under a proper Guard.

Rungpore
The 25th May, 1785

We are Sir etc.
E. E. Pote, W. Douglas, Cha: Ogilvie

J. Eliot, Secretary

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. III; 1783 – 1785; No. 497, p. 304

Report - 3
Report B of Rangpur Commission
The Muntunnah Zamindar who is a female states in her petition delivered by Gouree Bose, the present Gomastah, and entered on out proceedings 1st October that Hurram put all the under farmers of her Pergunnah into confinement put gunlocks on their ears and heated oil ready so throw over them, and beat them so that they begun to desert in bauke October. No credit can be given to this charge as it is directly contradicted by Deby Prasaud in his deposition taken 19th October who was the Gomastah of Muntunnah Pergunnah for 1188 and at present is one of the Gomastahs of Carjeehaut, and a party against the Rajah in the dispute.

By the above deposition of the zamindars bolley churn, Munglee it appears that all excessive severities and fortunes inflicted on the zamindars to make them pay up their revenue in 1188 were inflicted by the order of Hurram.

That the zamindars were afraid to complain to Mr. Goodlad who resided about two miles from the Cutcherry or to the Rajah who was at Dinagepoor from the fear that Hurram would have treated then with greater severity, but, except in the deposition of Govin Mazumder and that not supported by any other evidence, it does not appear from any deposition that the Rajah had the least knowledge that such severities were exercised in the district or that the zamindars ever complained to him on his arrival at Rungpore during the year, or at the end of the year, of the severities inflicted on them by Hurram, on the contrary the zamindars and Hurram declare on the 16th February, 1785 that the Rajah did not interfere in the management of the district for 1188, and from the fullest evidence which we could collect. It appears that Hurram had the entire management of the district for that year, and to him only can the Commission of those cruelties be charged, though it appears by the deposition of Govin Mozumdar 31st October, unsupported by any other evidence, in one or two instances, that in the absence of Hurram they were inflicted by his Naib. Hurram in his answer delivered 13th April to the charge and to the evidence regarding the excessive cruelties exercised on the zamindars and then Gomastahs to enforce the payments of revenue for 1188, does not attempt to deny the charge invalidate the evidence brought in support of the charge, but sets up a defense in justification of his conduct, by a detail of greater severities exercised in making of the country prior to the establishment of the English Government in Bengal, and by some instances of a later date, and one which he says was exercised on Gopaul Nakee, Gomastah of Coondea during the time of Mr. Purling’s Collectorship, but through the whole of his answer he does not accuse the Rajah, or intimate that these severities were inflicted either by the Rajah’s order, knowledge or permission.

Governor General in Council, 29th March, 1787

Report – 4
Report C of Rungpore Commission

Muntunnah – The Gomastah of Pergunnah Muntannah states on 5th May his Chowdrain was under mofussil for the balance of 1189 through balances were due from her. That she refused to give engagement for 1189 according to the Rajahs estimate for want of assets that Sooroojnarainsaid she should never be released from her peon till she signed the settlement, and therefore she signed the settlement.

Soorajnarayan on the 17th May in reply says that the Gomastah’s deposition does not allow him of farming towards his zemindar denies that he made the settlement on an estimate made by the Rajah, that he made the settlement with the zemindar with their own free will and sent the papers to the Rajah for his appreciation the Rajah approved of the settlement and the zemindar was put in possession.

The amount of the increase laid in the Pergunnah in 1188 by the Rajah was rupees 2201,, 14,, 3.

The deduction granted to this Pergunnah by the Rajah in 1189 was 11422.

Your Honoble Board must decide where such large deduction are given what real bauke there can exist of a complaint of Commission.

Governor General in Council, 29th March, 1787

Report C of Rungpore Commission

p. 298; Muntunnah

Al tho the zemindar has complained that a sezawal was appointed to her Pergunnah, it does not appear that a sezawal was appointed to Muntunnah in 1189 for more than eight days.

p.314; this paper has no signature but it is endorsed by Mr. Paterson as delivered in by Rajemohun brother of Gour mohun Chowdry.

p.352; in the year 1189 Gourmohun was naib to Sooroojnarain, and had the management of the collections of the separate mehals. In Poose he gave shahood or engagement for their amount and at the time of the insurrection he was killed by the insurgents.

His brother Rajemohun delivers in a petition to Mr. Paterson entered on the committee’s proceedings stating that the Rajeh had compelled his brother Gour mohun Bramin by confinement of three days without bothering and threats of mounting him upon a bullock, and exposing him by beat of tomtom/drum/to sign an engagement and must bundee for the separated mehal at an increase farmer mossil bundabust.

Rungpore Commission’s Report – ‘E’, p. 422; On the cause of insurrection; We have not been able to trace out the names of the parties who actually murdered Gourmohun or Gour mallah though we made very strict enquiry to bring the particulars of those murders to –

Report ‘E’, p. 424; By the time of those letters addressed to the riots of several pergunnahs in the name of some zamindars, it appears that the zamindars were concerting an insurrection in the beginning of Poose/December and inceting the riots to assemble and suspend the collection for the remainder of the Rajah’s lease. On these letters the Rajah accuses the zamindars of being the authors and instigator of the insurrection.
Governor General in Council, p. 271, 29th March, 1787

Rangpur Commission submitted their report before the Hon’ble members of the Governor General in Council in the year 1787. The Rangpur Commission Report accuses most of the Zamindars and peasants for concerting insurgency of Rangpur

Report –‘E’
On the cause of the insurrection in Rungpore in the year 1189

Having completed our investigation into the various changes laid against Rajah Deby Sing during his lease of the district of Rungpore – your Honble Board will decide how far the exortions and oppressions attributed by the inhabitants to the Rajah can be considered as the cause of the insurrection in that province.

Report - 5

Two commissions sat on this insurrection, and in February 1789 in the time of Lord Cornwallis, the final orders of Government were passed. Devi Singh got off scot-free, with the exception of the loss of his money. Har Ram, a native of Rungpore, who had been the sub-farmer under him, and whose oppressions had brought about the rising, was sentenced to one year’s imprisonment, and after that time to be banished from the districts of Rungpore and Dinagepore. Five ryots, the ringleaders of the insurgents, were also banished; two of them, men of Dimla, had apparently been in confinement since the time of insurrection, six years previously. Har Ram had further to give money douceur to nine persons, gomastahs and others, on whom he had inflicted what is called corporal punishment to wit, torture; and great quantities of land of the zamindars which had been put up to sale and bought by Devi Singh and Har Ram were given back to the former owners. Among the proceedings of the decennial settlement appears a statement, to the effect that the dewan of Devi Singh, probably this same Har Ram, sent women to the house of the zemindar or Chowdhranee of Tepa (a woman), who committed much violence there, until they had compelled her officers to execute the agreements for increase of rent they wanted.

Introductory part; Supplement to the Rangpur District Records, Vol. I, 1770, 1777 – 1779; P. 20

A Commission of three appointed by the Governor General inquired into the causes after the suppression of the revolt and attributed it to the boundless oppression and extortion by Debi Singh’s men. Warren Hastings’s failure to control Debi Singh became a major issue during his impeachment in the British Parliament. Burke’s fiery eloquence graphically describing Debi Singh’s oppression which devastated North Bengal reportedly made many of the ladies present in the Parliament soon. – Land of two rivers: A History of Bengal from the Mahabharata to Mujib by Nitish K Sengupta, p. 221.

Rangpur revolt is described in brief in the introductory part of the Supplement to the Rangpur District Records, Vol. I, 1770, 1777 – 1779

In January, 1783, the ryots of Chaklas Cazeerhat and Kankina, and Tepa, Chakla Futtehpur, suddenly rose in rebellion, and drove out the collecting officers. Their grievances are set forth in
a statement they sent to the Collector, who, on first hearing of the rising, had made an attempt to appease them. They complained of the levy of the durreevilla tax, which we have noticed in Mr. Grose’s settlement of ten years before, and which now amounted to 5 annas on the rent; and, secondly, of the discount which they had to pay for the exchange of narainy rupees into French

Raja Debi Sinha ("Debi Singh"), to whom frequent reference is made in the Records, is, of course, none other than the “Devy Sing”, about whose oppressions Edmund Burke, at the trial of Warren Hastings, waxed so eloquent that the ladies in court fainted, and the Orator himself succumbed to an attack of cramp in the stomach. The unscrupulous use made by Burke of Paterson’s report on the charges against the Raja has long since been exposed.”

arcots, which has another 3 annas. The Collector agreed to revert to the demand of 1187 B. S., and the ryots expressed themselves satisfied, and apparently dispersed; but this adjustment did not dispose of the question of the large balances, and the malcontents soon again assembled in larger numbers than before. The revolt now extended throughout the whole of Futtehpur, and the insurgents forced the ryots of Cooch Behar to join them, and sent parties into Dinagepore to bring over the people there. They murdered at Dimla, in Cazeerhat, an under-renter, and the naib of Tepa with seven or eight of his people, and issued a proclamation that they would pay no more revenue. One of the leaders assumed the title nawab, and another became his dewan, and a tax, called ding khurcha or sedition tax, was levied for the expenses of the insurrection.

Matters now looked serious, and active measures were taken to put down the rising. Forces of burkundazes were sent out in various directions. To the southward 800 prisoners were taken, who, being ryots of Dinagepore, were sent back to their homes. Several engagements occurred in other parts. In an attempt to burn Mogulhat, the nawab’s forces were defeated, his dewan was killed, and he himself was wounded and taken prisoner. A party of sepoys, under Lieutenant Macdonald, marched to the north against the principal body of insurgents. A spy caught by the Lieutenant was hung in open market, and a jemedar was dispatched against the retreating enemy. The decisive battle of the campaign was fought near Patgram on the 22nd February; the sepoys disguised themselves as burkundazes by wearing white cloths over their uniform, and by that means got close to the insurgents, who were utterly defeated; sixty were left dead on the field, and many were wounded and taken prisoners. The numbers engaged are not given.

Mr. Goodlad’s final report on this outbreak is in naïve simplicity sufficient by itself to clear the Collector’s character from the aspersions cast upon it by Burke in his reckless eagerness as prosecutor to catch at anything that might tell against Warren Hastings. Whatever Devi Singh’s enormities may have been, nothing is clearer from the whole history of the transaction than that Mr. Goodlad knew nothing of them. The Collectors did not leave their stations. It was not until six years later that the first orders were passed for them to go on circuit in their district and while they remained stationary at head-quarters, they could see nothing but what their native subordinates chose to show them.

The loss of large balance, which appears against 1188-89 B. S., fell principally, if not wholly, upon Rajah Devi Singh. Mr. Goodlad, in hoping that his conduct will meet the Committee’s approbation, begs that they will keep this “ground point in view”; that their revenue is secure.
After the collapse of the farming system in the insurrection of 1783, the settlement were again made with the zemindars’ great reductions were made in the demand for 1190 B. S., and to recover the standard for 1187 B. S., became the aim in succeeding settlement. The committee at first proposed to hold the settlement of 1191 B. S. in Calcutta, and the zamindars were directed to repair there; but a new Collector, Peter More, having been appointed to Rungpore, he was entrusted with the settlement. Zamindars who arrived at Calcutta were sent back to Rungpore in charge of Government peons, and a jemedar and peons were dispatched to catch any that might be found loitering on the way, and to carry them safely back. A moderate increase of the revenue was obtained, but in the following year (1192 B. S.) a large addition was put on, making the demand from Cazeerhat higher ever than Devi Singh has assessed it. This nearly caused, as we have seen, another rebellion, but not withstanding it was collected without much balance. A deduction was made in the settlement of 1193 B. S., but still the revenue for Cazeerhat was higher than it had stood in 1187 B. S.

In his editorial notes, Walter K. Firminger; Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II; 1779 – 1782 (Letters Received), Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta, 1920; Edited by Ven. Walter K. Firminger, M.A., D.D., Lit. B.; Archdeacon of Calcutta; Member, Indian Historical Records Commission wrote in brief about Mr. Richard Goodlad and leaseholder Debi Singh (page iii).

“Richard Goodlad who succeeded to G. Bogle in the Collectorship had been appointed to the service on the 16th November, 1770. He had served as Assistant Collector at Purneah and Persian Translator to the Dinajpur Provincial Council.

Letter – 20

To
The Honble Warren Hastings Esqr.
Governor General and the Gentlemen of the Council of Revenue at Fort William

Honble Sir & Gentlemen

I have the honor to transmit you the aumilnamas for the Zemindars of these districts excepting those of the Pergunnah – Futtypore 9 ½ Annas, Battis Hazary, Baharbund, Rangamatty, and Bulleeahr, which are in balance – and am –

17th June, 1779 with respect Honble Sir & Gentlemen
Your most obedient humble servant
(Signed) Richard Goodlad
Acting Collector, Rungpore

List of the Aumilnamas transmitted to the Honble Governor General and Council of Revenue under date the 17th June, 1779

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<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Aumilnamas</th>
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<td>Pergunnah, Futtypore 4 ½ Annas or Bamindungah</td>
<td>...1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ditto - - 2 Annas or Muntenna</td>
<td>...1</td>
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<td>Kankneah</td>
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<td>Bodah &amp; C’a</td>
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Haut Mortuza Gunge  ...l
Mhal Phousdary  ...l
Coondy 4 Annas  ...l
Ditto...3 Annas 15 gundah  ...l
Ditto...7 Annas 15 gundah  ...l
Ditto...5 Annas   5 gundah                                              ...l

Baubunpore  ...l
Shaikshar  ...l
Pallasbarry  ...l
Sultanpore  ...l

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. IV; 1779-1785, P. 15-16

Letter – 21

To The Hon’ble Warren Hastings., Esqr., Governor General and the Gentlemen of the Council of Revenue at Fort William

Hon’ble Sir and Sirs

The zamindar of the Pergunnah Muntenna, who is a woman by name Joydurga, having absented herself for the space of a year from Rungpore and retiring to Batoriah, and her Gomastah with whom she left the management of her business being lately dead, and no one here on her part to take charge of the Pergunnah, I have, for the security of the public revenue, sent a sezawal to carry on the collections till I am honored with your commands.

Rungpore
The 24th July, 1779

I am etc.

Richard Goodlad

Supplement to Rangpur District Records, Vol. 1; No. 119; p. 95

Letter – 22

To The Hon’ble Warren Hastings., Esqr., Governor General and the Gentlemen of the Council of Revenue at Fort William

Hon’ble Sir and Sirs

I have been honored with your letter of the 24th July, containing directions concerning the balances of last year, and that of the 31st ultimo, enclosing the aumilnamas for the present year, all of which have been delivered, but the following which I have delayed till I receive your further orders.

The zemindar of the Pergunnah Muntenna having absented herself for many months from Rungpore, and the Gomastah she left to manage the business dying, I have been obliged to appoint a sezawal to carry on the collections till such time as the zemindar either returns or appoints somebody to act for her.

Rungpore
The 17th September, 1779

I am etc.

C. Purling, Collector

Supplement to Rangpur District Records, Vol. 1; No. 134; p. 102

Letter – 23

To

Mr. George Bogle
Collector of Rungpore

Sir
Rev\textsuperscript{e} Dep\textsuperscript{j}

Para-1 – We have received your predecessor’s letter and those of your assistant of the 17\textsuperscript{th} and 24\textsuperscript{th} July, the 3\textsuperscript{rd}, 17\textsuperscript{th}, 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} August, the 10\textsuperscript{th}, 11\textsuperscript{th}, 14\textsuperscript{th}, 17\textsuperscript{th}, 18\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} ultimo, with the several papers and accounts mentioned to accompany them –

17\textsuperscript{th} July, 2\textsuperscript{nd} – We direct you to carry into execution our general orders of the 14\textsuperscript{th} October, 1777, for the confinement of such Zemindars as shall fail to pay their monthly kists after the expiration of 15 days of the ensuing month; and if after that term they shall still remain in arrears, you will keep them in confinement until they shall have paid up the arrears, as well as the growing kists; taking such means as you shall think most expedient for securing the current revenues –

24\textsuperscript{th} July, 3\textsuperscript{rd} – We approve of the appointment of Sezawal to carry on the collections of Pergunnah Muntenna.

August, 4\textsuperscript{th} – We also approve of the measures taking respecting the one anna, 5 gundah division of Pergunnah Coondy.

9\textsuperscript{th} August, 5\textsuperscript{th} – It is not customary to build hauts or quarter for sepoys, we cannot therefore allow the charge proposal on this account.

10\textsuperscript{th} September, 6\textsuperscript{th} – We approve of what has been done respecting the zemindar of Bycauntpore; but direct that you suspend the proposed publication; and in the mean time you will summon the zemindar to attend, either by a written order transmitted to him, or by proclamation, and answer to the charges alleged against him.

14\textsuperscript{th} September, 7\textsuperscript{th} – And we direct that any further proceedings against the Rajah of Bycauntpore be suspended until your arrival at Rungpore.

18\textsuperscript{th} September, 8\textsuperscript{th} – We wait the result of publication issued for farming the Pergunnah Coondy & Futtypore 9 ½ Annas, before we give you any orders upon the subjects.

20\textsuperscript{th} September, 9\textsuperscript{th} – We shall here after furnish you with our instructions respecting the claim on Mirza Mahomed Tuckey.

Fort William
The 1\textsuperscript{st} October, 1779

We are, Sir, your most obedient servants
Warren Hastings
Edward Wheler

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II, 1779-1782, P. 12

Letter – 24

To
The Honble Warren Hastings Esqr.
Governor General & C\textsuperscript{o} Council of Revenue
Fort William
Honble Sir & Sirs

In obedience to your commands of the 2nd instant, I, now the honor to lay before the jumma wassil bakee, and General Treasury accounts for the Bengal year 1186 closed at the 30th of Bysack.

In spite of every exertion I have occasion to regret that it has not been in my power fully to collect in the revenue. The jumma wassil bakee account which accompanies this address contains a particular state of the balances. It appears necessary however in this place, to stay something on the situation of the districts arrears.

The Pergunnah of Futtypoor & Coondy were collected khaus. The zamindars applied for a reduction in their rent. Their petition was not granted; but the Pergunnah being left in the mean time in their hands, they appropriated considerable sums of the revenue to the payments of their debts, which I am afraid it will be difficult to recover. The zemindar still decline to undertake the collections of their pergunnahs for this year. I hope how ever by early measures to realize the present jumma.

The Pergunnah of Cargeehaut & Kankneah lye each other & the circumstances of the balance are nearly similar in both. The low price of tobacco which forms a capital article in their cultivation, and the appropriation of part of this years revenue to the payment of money borrowed at the end of the last year. I hope to be able to recover the balance.

The arrears of Bamindanga, Tepah Bahseet & Oodassy are not considerable & I expect by this end of this month to be able to realize them as well as the balance of Muntenna. This last Pergunnah was collected Khaus, the Zemindar, at the beginning of the year having abscond from the dread of a warrant.

I cannot conclude this letter without referring the enclosed petition, which I have received from Gunga Persaud, the Dewan of this province not being in profession of the materials on which you were pleased to suspend him from his office, I can only say that I have received no complaints against him since my arrival here. Your Honble Board will please to judge whether his sufferings have been sufficient to expiate the faults with which he was charged. I request you will invest me with authority to put up to public sale the Pergunnahs in arrears.

Rungpore your most faithful and obedient humble servant

The 16th May, 1780 George Bogle, Collector

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. IV; 1779-1785, P. 37

Letter – 25

To
David Anderson Esqr.
Fort William, Calcutta

Sir

4 ½ Annas called Bamin dangah –

The Zemindar of this part of Futtypore was obliged last year to sell some part of her Cottah to complete her Mulguzarry several of the farmers of it this year resigned and the greatest part of
Pergunnah fell under the management of the Zemindary officers which has occasion the present balance.

2 Annas called Muntenna –

This balance is occasioned by nearly the same circumstances as Bamindangah –

Rungpore
31st March, 1781

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. IV; 1779-1785, P. 67

Letter – 26

To
Mr. D. H. McDowell
Collector of Rungpore

Sir
We have received your letter of the 24th ultimo. For the reasons you have assigned, we agree in deeming you empowered to approve or reject the appointment of any zemindary Gomastah.

Calcutta
8th May, 1787

We are Sir, your most obedient servants

W. Cowper, J. Mackenzie

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. V (Letters Received); 1786-1787; No. 142, P. 85

Letter – 27

To
Mr. D. H. McDowell
Collector of Rungpore

Sir
We have received your letter of the 23rd ultimo. We desire you will call on the Gomastah of the Zemindar of Pergunnah Muntenna, to discharge the arrears due from her, and in case there shall ultimately remain any balance on your informing us thereof, we will order a portion of the Zemindary to be sold –

Should the Gomastah not deem himself authorized to renew the engagement, of the Zemindar for the ensuing year, and should the Ranny herself, being summoned by publick advertisement, neither return nor send a deputy for that purpose to your Cutcherry, we direct that agreeably to the general instructions, transmitted you of this date, the Pergunnah be let to farm, or otherwise, as you shall deem most expedient –

8th May, 1787

We are Sir, your most obedient servants

W. Cowper, T. Graham, J. Mackenzie

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. V (Letters Received); 1786-1787, P. 163

As the gomastah of the Manthana zamindari refused to renew the engagement for the ensuing year 1194 B.S., so the Board of Revenue directed the Collector to take the decision expeditiously for a means to an end or take any a contrivance deemed to be fit for the terms with the zamindar.
Rungpore – Board’s order to Collector instructing him that should the Gomastah of the Zemindar of Pergunnah Muntenna refuse to renew the engagement on behalf of the Zemindar for the year 1194 B.S. he should let in - the Pergunnah on terms he shall deem expedient and advantageous.

**Board of Revenue Index, 1787; 8th May, 1787**

**Letter – 28**

To John Shore Esqr.
President and Members of the Board of Revenue

Sir

I found little difficulty in prevailing on them, one by one, to come forward with fresh proposals, which being much more reasonable than those which they had formerly delivered in, I thought it advisable to accede to them; and having suspended for future investigation a sum equal to one sixth-part of last year’s jummah, the whole of the zamindars of Rungpore, expecting those of Carjy haut, Kankina and Manthana, executed engagements for the remainder, voluntarily consenting to the continuation of the authority of the Sezawals for the purpose of ascertaining by a local enquiry whether or not they were justly entitled to deductions for the sums suspended. The distinct which had hitherto remained solely under management of Sezawals, were also settled on the same principles with those which had continued in charge of the zamindars, excepting in the single instance of Pergunnah Munthona, the revenue of which last year was Rs. 34,379 of which sum there appeared a deficiency, by the investigation, of Rs. 13,279; and the zamindar having refused to undertake the management without a further deduction of Rs. 3000, I judged it expedient to keep the district in the hands of Sezawal, who agreed to become responsible for the amount which appeared to be forthcoming.

Rungpore                                                                   D. H. McDowall
The 7th May, 1788                                                      Collector

**Board of Revenue**

**Letter – 29**

To John Shore Esqr.
President and Members of the Board of Revenue

Gentlemen

In conformity to the intimation conveyed to you in my letter of the 25th ultimo the Punnaeh for the new Bengal year 1195 was held this day and the collections having accordingly commenced, I request to be favoured with your orders respecting the balance of 1194, which now stand as follow. Pergunnah Futtypore, Bamundanga, Muntenna & Oddasy loss in the talook of Ram Jeevan Sein occasioned by the inundation and famine. The cases of this mafisal ready fully before the Board.

Pergunnah Muntennah: Amount due for flood at Pergunnah Muntonna – 4204, 10

Rungpore                                                                   D. H. McDowall
1st July, 1788                                                                  Collector
Board of Revenue

Letter 30

To The Collector of Rungpore

After proposing to us a khaus management of this district for the first parts of the year to ascertain the actual injury received by the rubbee crop – Muntenna – No reasons being assigned for a remission the jumma of last year must be kept up and if the zemindar decline it you will adopt the alternatives pointed out by your general instructions –

Calcutta The 20th July, 1787

We are Sir

W. Cowper, T. Graham, J. Mackenzie

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. V (Letters Received); 1786-1787, P. 203

Letter – 31

To John Shore Esqr.

President & Members of Board of Revenue

Gentlemen

I have the pleasure to inform you that the Zemindar of the following districts making requested from the unreasonable demands which they made at the beginning of the year and which induced me to decline managing faster with them as communicated to you and having severally agreed to such an increase of the previous year as Government had a request taken engagement from them for the undernoted as which I trust will meet with year.

Pergunnah Muntana

Increasing for 1194 including the Mozdorry at talook

Revenue – 26,100

Increase for 1195 - 2000

Rs. 28100

Rungpore 5th August, 1788

D. H. McDowall Collector

Board of Revenue

Letter – 32

To John Shore Esqr.

President & Members of Board of Revenue

Gentlemen

After the above letter was written the Zemindar of Muntenna who had agreed to an increase of Rs. 2000 sent her Gomastah to sign the tahud, but he refused to give more than one thousand rupees increase I wrote to the Zemindar that offer did not immediately the tahud to be signed on
the terms which had agreed upon. I shall let her distract to farm on consequence of which she
sent another Gomastah to be had executed with engagement for she first stated in the above
attached.
Rungpore                                      I am Sir most obedient
10th August, 1788                             D. H. McDowall, Collector

Board of Revenue

Letter – 33
To
W. C. Purling
Collector of Rungpore

Sir
We have considered your letter and enclosure of the 9th instant, and desire your attention to the
following instruction.

Muntunnah
We cannot authorize any refund beyond the third year of the settlement. We
therefore desire you will endeavour to obtain the increase of 2,000 rupees within the three first
years, and should the Naib not agree thereto we leave it to you to obtain the best term you can
from him on a rupees of three years.

25th June, 1790                                   Board of Revenue, Fort William

Board of Revenue

Letter – 34
To The Honble Charles Stuart
President and the Gentlemen of the Board of Revenue at Fort William

Gentlemen
I have been honored with your letter of the 25th instant transmitting copy of a letter appointing
you a court of wards with a control over the conduct and accounts of all persons instructed with
the management of the estate of disqualified landholders, and conveying your orders to
Correspond with you separately in the capacity and furnish you with a list of all persons
incapable of managing their own estates, together with reports of their property, guardians,
manager and situations. The accompanying information you require, as tho it does not
particularize their personal property and effects an account property in landed estates the several
branches of their families under whose tuitions they are and their several Naibs, who, tho not
serving in the capacity of Cerberakars manager, are appointed by the several zamindars
mentioned in the list with full powers to act for them, and by the parents or relations of such as
are minors. It will rest with you to determine, whether, these Naibs, admitting their character to
be good, shall be considered in future as the manager of these estates, or whether, any other
description of persons, shall be nominated to this trust. It may be also necessary for your Board
to give your instructions to the Collector how far they may exercise a direction as to the
admission or rejection of any person nominated by disqualified landholders, and whether, he
shall in any instance appoint cerberakar on the part of government to any of these zamindars, I
have attended to your former orders upon the subject of the regulations laid down by the
Governor General in Council for the conduct of the Serburkars or stewards of estates the
security to be taken from them. I know therefore beg leave to submit to you a form mutchleka
and security bond, which I have thought it necessary under these orders to prepare to be executed
by each cerberakar and the person who becomes his security.
I have already informed you that Gokulnaut and Nub Kishore the serberakars of Edrackpore had refused to sign their tahuds and have given you the reasons at large for their declining forward to you by this letter being considerably now binding than that transmitted in my letter of the 20th instant, being made out conformably to the orders of the 28th July. It is scarce necessary for me to mention that they have been more strenuously objected to by Gocul naut and Nub kishore and that they have likewise chalenzed to execute this. None of the Naibs have objected to signing the mutchulka or giving the security required.

Rungpore
8th September, 1790

C. Purling, Collector

List of the landholders in the district of Rungpore disqualified by the 3rd and 6th Articles of General Regulations passed on the 10th February, 1790

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zemindar</th>
<th>Purgunnah</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joydoorga Chowdrainee</td>
<td>Muntonna</td>
<td>The widow of Nurindr late Chowdery of Muntenna, she is about 47 years of age, has no child, signs a paper herself looks into all the business of her zemindary and dismisses her Naib when she thinks proper. The name of the present Naib Kessen govin Gupe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rungpore
8th September, 1790

C. Purling, Collector

List of – in Rungpore
Beemola Dassee, S.M. – Estate talook of Magoorah
Callysunker Chowdhury, Baboo – Estate talook of Ballihar
Joydoorga Chowdrain, S.M. – Estate talook of Muntonna
Kissen pershaud, Baboo – Estate Palasbarry (2 as. 1 g share)
Nundo Coomer Chowdry, Baboo – Futtypore (3 ½ as. Share)
Ranny Puddabutty – Estate Edrackpore
Rajessuri Chowdrain, S.M. – Estate Ballihar (3 as. 4 gs. Share)

Board of Revenue Index, 5th October, 1790

Letter – 35
To
William Cowper Esqr.
President and Members of the Board of Revenue at Fort William

Gentlemen
In obedience to the order contained in your letter of the 24th of August last, and to the 15th Article of the Regulations for the estates of disqualified landholders, I have now the honor to transmit to you translations of the annual accounts delivered into me by the managers of the following purgunnahs.
1. 1. Futtehpur 3 ½ annas – Nundeeram Chowdry
2. Having thought it expedient to question the managers in general respecting the present state of the districts under their charge and the probability of future improvement, their answer will appear on the face of my proceeding and for that reason, I shall have the less to trouble you with in this address but if any explanations are thought necessary, I shall be happy to furnish them when called on for that purpose.

3. You will observe that all the managers have objected to deliver in their accounts on oath in the usual form and I have for the present agreed to require from them only a solemn declaration in terms similar to that prescribed in the 24th Article of the Judicial Regulations acquainting them however that they must hereafter to them, of your Board should not think it expedient to dispense with this Article of the Regulations in their favor I was induced to grant this indulgence of the present from a belief that were to administer on oath to the managers it would be the means of depriving of the services of some of those in whom I think I have most reason to confide and whose surplus are such that I am confident they would rather throw up their offices that submit to what they consider as a degradation in the general opinion.

4. Futteypore 3 ½ Annas

5. Muntannah

The manager of this pergunnahs has been long employed in it as Gomastah of the Zemindar, he is certainly capable of conducting the business as much to the advantage of his principal as any other individuals I could fix on for the office and I have no cause to doubt his integrity. The Proprietor Joydoorga Chowdrayne according to general report is very active in the inspection of her own concerns, for which she is much better qualified than are most females in the country, being herself capable both of reading and writing and having personally attended to her affairs for many years, she has sent me several petitions desiring that on these grounds, she might be exempted from the operations of the general regulations which requires that managers shall be appointed by Government for the lands of females Zemindars but as I convinced that no duration would be admitted from the General Rule I have thought it necessary to trouble you with them.

6. Tipah

12. the managers of Muntannah, Futteypore 3 ½ Annas and Sultanpore have declared that they can not furnish any lists of the personal property of the Zemindars of whose lands they have charge as the latter have refused to communicate to them the necessary information to enable them to do so. It is notorious however that they posses nothing of any great value. Joydoorga Chowdrayne the Zemindar of Muntenna has addressed a petition to me on the subject in which she declares that she should consider it as a disgrace to deliver it as a disgrace to deliver in any such list.

13. my proceedings on the remaining accounts of the manager of estates of disqualified landholders in this district shall be forwarded to Calcutta as soon as possible.

Rungpore
21st June, 1792
(Signed) J. Lumsden, Collector

Board of Revenue
Swearing to accounts by managers – Rungpore. Board recommended to Government that the proceedings of Collector dispensing with the 15th Article of the Regulations which requires the managers of disqualified landholders to swear to their accounts, and accepting of their solemn declaration in terms similar to that prescribed in the 24th Article of the Judicial Regulations in lieu thereof, be approved.

6th November, 1792; Board of Revenue Index

Exemption from operations of the Regulations for disqualified landholders – Rungpore. Board recommended to Government that the female proprietors of Montannah be exempted from the operations of the Regulations for disqualified landholders

6th November, 1792; Board of Revenue Index

Rungpore. Board recommended to Government that the Female proprietor of Mantannah be permitted to enter into – for the public revenue as a qualified landholder

6th November, 1792; Board of Revenue Index

Board of Revenue approved the Collector’s recommendation and they sent their recommendation to the Governor General in Council for its approval.

Agreed we reply to the Collector as follows –

To Mr. J. Lumsden
Collector of Rungpore

Sir

We have had before us your lettersw and enclosures of the 21st June, 2 of the 17th July and 1 of the 7th September last.

Futtypore 3 ½ Annas
Muntannah
Tepah
Coondy
Sultanpor
Palasbarry 8 ½ Annas
Ditto – 3 ½ Annas
Talook Magrah

2nd ............................................................................................................................................................... 3rd .................................................................................................................................................................

4th We approve your proceedings on the accounts of the manager of this mehal and for the reasons stated in your letter we shall recommend to the Governor General in Council that the Female proprietor thereof be exempted from the operation of the Regulations for disqualified landholders and that she be permitted to enter into engagements for the public revenue as a qualified proprietor.

To Earl Cornwallis, K.G.
Governor General in Council

...........................................................................................................................................................................

26
4th We also beg leave to recommend for the reasons stated by the Collector that the Female Proprietor of Muntannah be exempted from the operation of the Regulations for disqualified landholders in like manner as authorized by your Lordship in council on the 21st October, 1791 with respect to the Female proprietor of Iatualtun under Burdwan and that she be permitted to enter into engagements for the public revenue as a qualified landholder.

6th November, 1792
Board of Revenue

Letter – 36
To
Charles Buller Esqr.
Sub Secretary to the Board of Revenue

Sir

Having respecting called upon the Zemindar to furnish the necessary documents to enable me to form the quinquennial register account the year 1197 to 1201 B.S. and three months having since elapsed, though perwannahs have repeatedly been issued reminding them of the unreasonable delay in the transmission several of them have to this day neglected to comply with the orders.

I have to observe that in consequence of the frequent in attention which have been evinced to requisitions of this nature if some exemplary punishment be inflicted and a fine imposed on the offender it would be productive of salutary effect. I have therefore to request the sanction of the Board of Revenue for levying on the under mentioned persons the fines prefixed to their names respectively.

Joy Durgah Chowdrain - Pergh Muntannah …100
Bishen Narain Chowdry - do- 3 as. Futtypore …100
Issury Chowdrain - do- 4 as. Cargechaut …100
Sree munt Chowdry - do- 4 as -ditto- …100
Sheik Khyrullah - do- 4 ½ -ditto- …100
Sham Kishore - do- 1 ½ -ditto- …50
Bridge Kishore - do- Oodassey … 50
Purtab Nair - do- Pangah …100
Jeynty Deo - do- Bykuntapore …100
Rajekishore - do- 7 as. Coondy …100
Jugger nauth Battercharge -do- -do- 1 a. 1 p. ...50
Gocul Naut Roy & Nob gere –do- Edrackpore …200
Kissen Chund - do- Boboonpore …20
Brinda lucky - do- Shaikshire …25
Kissen Beharry - do- 3 as. 7.3. Plassbarry …20
Bydee Nauth - do- 2 as. 5. –ditto- …20
Gouree Nauth - do- 1.7. –ditto- …20

Rungpore
27th February, 1799
Board of Revenue

Board of Revenue approved the recommendation sent by the Collector of Rangpur

(Signed) A. Wright
Collector
Collector authorized by Board of Revenue to levy – from landholders who had neglected to furnish him with information required from them for forming the quinquebbial register of the district.

Rungpore. Sreemutty Joydurga Chowdhraim - Rs. 100
   Baboo Bepin Narain Chowdry - Rs. 100
   Sreemutty Issury Chowdhraim - Rs. 100
   Baboo Sreemunto Chowdry - Rs. 100
   Shaik Khyrulla - Rs. 100
   Baboo Sham Kissore - Rs. 50
   Baboo Brojo Kissore - Rs. 50
   " Pertab Narain - Rs. 100
   " Jugatie Des - Rs. 100
   " Rajkisore - Rs. 100
   " Juggernath Bhuttacharjea - Rs. 50
   " Gocool Nath Roy - Rs. 200
   " Kissen Chand - Rs. 20
   " Kissen Behary - Rs. 25
   " Bydeenath - Rs. 20
   " Gowreenath - Rs. 20

Board of Revenue Index, 4th June, 1799

Letter – 37
To
The Hon’ble Warren Hastings Esqr., Governor General and the Gentlemen of the council of Revenue at Fort William

Hon’ble Sir and Gentlemen

All the Zemindars of the Rungpore province have agreed to the jammas of last season expect the under-mentioned three Zemindars of Futtypore 2 Annas, Bahsut and Oudasee to whom I have given deductions as follows –

Rs.  a.  g.
Mantanah – 3,119 – 7 – 9
Bahsut –     2,661 – 5 – 15
Oudasee –     600 – 0 – 0

Rungpore

I am etc.
The 24th September, 1777
C. Purling

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. I; 1770, 1777 – 1779; No. 12, p. 14

Governor General Warren Hastings approved the recommendation for deduction by the Collector of Rangpur in favour of the Manthana estate.

To
Mr. Charles Purling
Superintendent of the collections of Rungpore

Sir,

4. September 24th. – We agree to the settlement you propose for the Pergunnah of Montinna, Bahsut and Odassey.

Calcutta We are Sir etc.
The 7th October, 1777 Warren Hastings, Richard Barwell, P. Francis

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. I; 1770, 1777 – 1779; No. 15, p. 21

The Collector of Rangpur sanctioned another deduction after checking the authenticity of the accounts submitted by the zamindar of the Manthana estate. Joydurga Chowdhurani, the Zamindar of the Manthana estate submitted the claim of Rs. 214, Annas 13, Gundah 16, Cowri 2 with a request for deductions.

To
The Hon’ble Warren Hastings Esqr., Governor General and the Gentlemen of the council of Revenue at Fort William

Hon’ble Sir and Gentlemen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pergunnah</th>
<th>Deductions claimed by the Zemindars</th>
<th>Deductions granted by the Committee</th>
<th>Balance Allowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rs.</td>
<td>a.</td>
<td>g.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Futtypore 9 ½ Anas</td>
<td>1254</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogdaubry</td>
<td>1055</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aubeer Sudder</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenna</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamindungah</td>
<td>2235</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cargeehaut Mushroot</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oodassey</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorinndo</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soonarain</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbeil</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaundconnah</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coonyd</td>
<td>8432</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rungpore C. Purling
18th April, 1778
Superintendent of the collections of Rungpore

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. I; 1770, 1777 – 1779; No. 45, p. 43

Letters – 38 & 39

To
Charles Purling
Collector of Rungpore

Sir,
Para --- 1st--- We have received your assistant’s letters of the 20th, 24th & 31st May, the 7th, 17th, 23rd & 29th June, with your letter of the 7th June, and the several papers and accounts mentioned to be enclosed in the farmers.

7th June --- 4th --- We approve of the temporary appointment of Hurry Ram to be the Dewan of your district.

Fort William We are Sir etc.
The 27th July, 1779 Warren Hastings, Richard Barwell, Edward Wheler

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II; 1779 – 1782

To
George Bogle
Collector of Rungpore

Sir,
On our representation, we have restored Gunga Persaud to his office of Dewan of Rungpore. We authorize you to put up to public sale, such pergunnahs as are in arrears.

Calcutta We are Sir etc.
The 25th July, 1780 Warren Hastings

To Mr. Richard Goodlad
Collector of Rungpore

Sir,
We have received your letter of 12 instant. Having appointed Rajah Deby Singh Dewan of Rungpore, we send you enclosed sunnud investing him with this office.

Calcutta We are Sir etc.
The July 23rd, 1781 J. Shore, Saml. Charters

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II; 1779-1782; No. 193, P. 147

Report - 6
Rangpur Collector Richard Goodlad and leaseholder Debi Singh were engaged and involved for the collection of revenue that were marked in the pages of history for their oppressions and
torture upon the peasants. Such tyrannical activities had been elaborately discussed in British House of Commons voiced by Edmund Burke with his excellent power of eloquence during the trial of Warren Hastings using the Paterson Commission Report as the weapons. Editor Ven. Walter K. Firminger, M.A., D.D., Lit. B.; Archdeacon of Calcutta; Member, Indian Historical Records Commission described in brief about the happenings along with a life-sketch of notorious leaseholder Debi Singh in the introductory part (Page iii) of Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II; 1779 – 1782 (Letters Received), Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta, 1920 – “Richard Goodlad who succeeded to G. Bogle in the Collectorship had been appointed to the service on the 16th November, 1770. He had served as Assistant Collector at Purneah and Persian translator to Dinajpur Provincial Council.

Raja Debi Sinha (“Debi Singh”), to whom frequent reference is made in the records, is of course, none other than the “Devy Sing”, about whose oppression Edmund Burke, at the trial of Warren Hastings, waxed so eloquent that the ladies in court fainted, and the Orator himself succumbed to an attack of cramp in the stomach. The unscrupulous use made by Burke of Paterson’s report on the charges against the Raja has long since been exposed. In the year 1912 a work entitled Maharaja Debi Sinha and the Nashipur Raj was privately published by Mr. Demetrius C. Boulger in London. The Nashipur family traces its history back to a Maharajah Tarawah, a “Ruling Chief of Bajepur” in the fourteenth century. Tarawah’s descendants settled in Northern India. Rai Dewali Sinha, the father of our Rajah Debi Sinha, is said to have “emigrated soon after the celebrated battle of Panipat, and established his seat in Bengal at a place not very remote from the present Nashpur.” Mr. Boulger writes: “Devi Sinha entered the service of the East India Company either before or just after the battle of Plassey. He is stated to have rendered Clive some some useful service on that occasion.”

The earliest mention of Debi Sinha in the state documents traced by the present writer occurs on 29th October, 1765 in a letter written by Mahammad Riza Khan in which Debi Sinha is described as Peshkar of Ruhu-d-din Husain Khan, the Faujdar of Purnea. When next we heard of Debi Sinha, he is serving as Diwan to the Supervisor of Purneah, and in 1772 we find him under arrest to answer charges of oppression made during the great famine of 1769 – 70. Of these charges the Raja was honorably acquitted after enquiry in 1772. In 1770 he had exposed some intrigues emanating it would be seen from the Nawab of Oude and perhaps not uninfluenced by Nandakumar.

Debi Sinha, however, lost his appointment under the Company in 1772, and seems to have devoted his energies to the lucrative occupation of a revenue farmer. In the year mentioned the activities of a Rai Devi Sinha as Sezawal can be traced in the Shahabad district in January, 1775 the Raja made proposal to the Provincial Council of Revenue at Patna for the farm of the Ghyaspur pagunna, and for some time he farmed the Rajmahal collections.

In the year 1781, or thereabouts, Debi Sinha was appointed Diwan to the young Raja of Dinajpur, who was a minor, and whose zamindari Debi Sinha farmed. It may be noted that on 21st May, 1781 the Collector of Rangpur was ordered to reside occasionally at Dinajpur, and it was not till 1786 that the latter was again provided with a British Collector of its own.”

Letter – 40

To Mr. Richard Goodlad
Collector of Rungpore

Sir,

The Honble Board having been pleased to remove Deby Sing; we direct that he is not employed by you directly or indirectly either as Dewan or farmer, his removal from the district appears essential to your success in completing the object of the Commission you are invested with.

Calcutta

The 14th April, 1783

We are Sir etc.

J. Shore, Saml. Charters

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. III; 1783-1785; No. 65, P. 40

Letter – 41

To

George Bogle Esqr.

Collector of Rungpore

Sir,

The Hon’ble the Governor General & Council having thought proper to entrust us with the charge & Administration of all the public revenues of these provinces, we have this day assembled and entered upon the business of our department.

As the Honble the Governor General & Council have also directed that the Provincial Councils should be dissolved & that the chief should remain in the temporary charge of their respective division, we desire you will in future correspond with us & transmit us your monthly accounts according to the established regulations.

The 20th February, 1781

We are Sir,

D. Anderson, J. Shore, Saml. Charters, Chas. Croftes

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. II; 1779 – 1782; p. 70-71

Note: In February, 1781 the Provincial Councils were dissolved, and their powers and duties vested in a committee of revenue at the Presidency, consisting of four of the Company’s servants (D. Anderson, J. Shore, Saml. Charters, Chas. Croftes).

Statements of Accounts - 1

Table of subscription by the zamindars and dependant on the Collectroship of Rungpore, for defraying the expense of an establishment of magazines to be erected for grain – within the two soubahs of Bengal and Behar – December, 1784

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Pergunnah</th>
<th>Name of the Zemindars</th>
<th>Amount jummah paid to Government</th>
<th>Amount Subscription</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Futtypore 3 Annas 10 Gundahs</td>
<td>Sreedhur</td>
<td>15,901</td>
<td>993.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Futtypore 6 Annas</td>
<td>Sheeb Chund</td>
<td>31,274</td>
<td>1954.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>Russoom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Futtypore 4 Annas 4 Gundahs, Bamindangah</td>
<td>Jugdey Sorry</td>
<td>41,558</td>
<td>2597.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Futtypore 2 Annas – Montennah</td>
<td>Joy durgah</td>
<td>31,977</td>
<td>1998.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cargey Haut</td>
<td>Ramkaunt</td>
<td>2,46,768</td>
<td>15423.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teppah</td>
<td>Mun Mohun</td>
<td>29,001</td>
<td>1812.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kankneah</td>
<td>Ram Raddro</td>
<td>67,500</td>
<td>4218.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pangah</td>
<td>Purtab ntain</td>
<td>19,701</td>
<td>1231.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bausset</td>
<td>Rogoobur</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>500.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odassy</td>
<td>Hurrydeb &amp; Neelmoney</td>
<td>8,200</td>
<td>512.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahl Foujedarry</td>
<td>Joy Horry</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>12.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coondy 14 Annas 15 Gundahs</td>
<td>Rajechundre</td>
<td>58,000</td>
<td>3625.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coondy 1 Anna 5 Gundahs</td>
<td>Jogornaut</td>
<td>4,701</td>
<td>293.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bykuntapore</td>
<td>Durp Deo</td>
<td>14,762</td>
<td>922.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodah &amp; Cª</td>
<td>Rajah Horrinder ntain</td>
<td>95,001</td>
<td>5937.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bengal District Records Rangpur; Vol. IV, 1779 – 1785, P. 194

The Acting Secretary of the Board of Revenue explained the word “Russoom” to the Acting President of the Committee of Revenue.

To
Samuel Charters Esqr.
Acting President & Cª Members of the Committee of Revenue

Gentlemen,
The Honble the Governor General & Council, in their secret department of inspection, having been informed that interpretations have been put upon the word ‘Russoom’, different from the meaning which such expression was intended to carry with it when it was intended to carry with it when it was used in the proceedings of the 17th June relative to your allowances and those of the chiefs and Collectors, I am directed to acquaint you, and to desire you will make the same known to the chiefs and Collectors, that by the word ‘Russoom’, was meant that increase of revenue from the several districts which might arise from any voluntary offers from the Zemindars.

Revenue Department
Fort William
The 22nd July, 1785
(Signed) B. Aplin
Acting Secretary

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. III; 1783 – 1785; No. 529, p. 321

The Board of Revenue consented to the remission of Rs. 2000 for the Manthana estate raised due to the unequal assessment by the Collector of Rangpur, Peter More.

To
William K Amherst Esqr.
Acting Collector of Rungpore

Sir
We have received your letter of the 11th ultimo in reply to our requisition of the 4th August last, to be informed of the grounds of the increase in the Rungpore settlement for the present year, as made by Mr. Moore, and of the unequal assessment of that increase upon the Pergunnah respectively.
Upon a consideration of the reasons assigned by you, we have consented to the several remissions herein after mentioned.

Muntanna … Rs. 2,000
Cargeehaut…Rs. 25,000
Bikuntpore…Rs. 3,262

We further deemed it expedient upon your representation, to dismiss Onoopnaran Gose the present Dewan of Rungpore and have appointed Ramlochun Muckerjee to succeed him in that office.

Calcutta We are Sir etc.
The 3rd October, 1785 S. Charters, Wm. Cowper, Thos. Graham, J. Evelyn

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. III; 1783 – 1785; No. 570, p. 345

The Board of Revenue had made a query and forwarded the said letter to the Collector of Rangpur regarding the amount fixed for the stipends of the zamindars.

To
Mr. McDowall
Collector of Rungpore

Sir,
Enclosed we transmit you a statement of allowances made to the zamindars of Rungpore till abolished in October, 1785
We request that you will make particular enquiry into the nature of these allowances, and inform us if they were granted as personal stipends to the zamindars, in the manner of moshahira; or whether they were a provision for an establishment of zemindary umla, and other expenses of collection, commonly allowed under the head of akrajaut.

W. Cowper, T. Graham, J. Mackenzie, R. Johnson

Statement of allowances to the zamindars of Rungpore
The Russoom to the zamindars of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pergunnah’s name</th>
<th>Sezawal’s name</th>
<th>from Bysack to Aswin</th>
<th>from Cartick to Cheyte</th>
<th>Total 12 months Jummah, 1193</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mantunnah</td>
<td>Lucky narain Bose</td>
<td>14,325</td>
<td>20,034</td>
<td>34,379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moshaira to the Rajah of Sircar Coochbehar – 72,871.9,2
Total Ch° zemindary per an° S° R° – 92, 330.1,5,1
Or P M° S° R° – 7,694.2,15,2

Fort William

The 19th May, 1787 E.E.
Revenue Board; A true Copy – B. Aplin, Secretary

Bengal District Records Rangpur; Vol. V

The last sezawal appointed by the Collector for collection of revenue in the Manthana estate was Lakshmi Narayan Bose in the year 1787. The Sezawals appointed to the several districts attending and the accounts kistbunds having been prepared the particulars are records as follows-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pergunnah’s name</th>
<th>Sezawal’s name</th>
<th>from Bysack to Aswin</th>
<th>from Cartick to Cheyte</th>
<th>Total 12 months Jummah, 1193</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mantunnah</td>
<td>Lucky narain Bose</td>
<td>14,325</td>
<td>20,034</td>
<td>34,379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rungpore
12th July, 1787
Board of Revenue, 1787

(Signed) James Graham
Collector
Revenue of Rangpore for 1196 B.S.; Board of Revenue, 10th December, 1789

District Rungpore

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pergunnah</th>
<th>Rupees</th>
<th>A. (Annas)</th>
<th>G. (Gundah)</th>
<th>C. (Cowrees)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bamindangah</td>
<td>34,138</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunssutt</td>
<td>4,869</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodah</td>
<td>97,001</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bykuntpore</td>
<td>16,562</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coondy As. 14-15</td>
<td>57,515</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coondy As. 1-5</td>
<td>4,451</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corjehout</td>
<td>2,23,938</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fattypore As. 3-10</td>
<td>12,514</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fattypore As. 6</td>
<td>27,994</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foudzdarry mehal</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muntanna</td>
<td>25,972</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanknah</td>
<td>71,214</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oodosee</td>
<td>5,089</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pangah</td>
<td>14,347</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tipah</td>
<td>24,824</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooch Behar</td>
<td>99,560</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boobunpore</td>
<td>5,060</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baherbund</td>
<td>82,639</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edrackpore</td>
<td>1,45,196</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plousbarry</td>
<td>2,720</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuk shehar</td>
<td>2,978</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sultanpore</td>
<td>2,031</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soorepore</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Statement of Accounts – 2**
Serberakar of Pergunnah Muntennah from Pooneah to 21st Bysack 1198 B.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount Expenditure</th>
<th>Deduct/Disallowed</th>
<th>Total Allowed</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By remittance of sudder revenue to
Rungpore  21,524.1,16  -  21,524.1,16
Paid to Zemindar Mashaera  1749.2,6  -  1749.2,6
Poonea expense  11  -  11
Paper, oil, Veg, sourzima Cutcherry  41.10  -  41.10
Peon expenses  13.14  -  13.14
Nugeed birtee  30.4,16  -  30.4,16
Amlahs wages  1324.7,10  -  1324.7,10
Outstation expenses  10  -  10
Charity to Kally Sunkar Surma  1  -  1
Deposit and register files in the Dewany Adawlut  4.14  -  4.14
Wages to Duttyram & Aumeens in the mufussil  3.12,10  3.12,10
Paid in discharge of a debt for money borrowed in 1197  10.14  -  10.14
Total  24,725.18,2  3.12,10  24,720.48,2  5.12,7

Q. To the manager – In your jumma wassil baukee account you have stated a deduction of Rs. 1148.6,11 from the jumma of 1197 B.S. and an expense of Rs. 330.4 bearing the nett decrease Rs. 818.2,11. You are therefore directed to say whence this deductions originated?
A. Several of the villages in this Pergunnah were overflowed and the crop destroyed by the heavy rains in this early part of the year. If deductions were not allowed to the ryotts according to the usage of the district of lands coming under the disdisscription they would certainly desert. For this reason it was that I granted similar deduction to the farmers. This occasioned part of the decrease. In 1197 Keshore Baboo under a different name took the farm of talook Burabeel at an increase of 500 rupees on the jumma of 1196 but as he afterwards found that there were no assets to pay the jumma he had engaged for he gave it up in the month of Poos, and it was held khas from the beginning of many when the settlement of 1198 was made it was found necessary to give up this increase and the talooks were thus let in farm. This is the explanation of the decrease in question.

Q. What plan have you adopted on – have you in contemplation for the settlement and increase of cultivation in the present year?
A. The following is an account of the circumstances attending the cultivation in this Pergunnah there are two crops, the rubbee and kharif as the preparation of the latter are now commencing at the fine of ploughing the land for the rubee crop. I sent abudgrees to assure the ryots of every village of kind treatment and a plentiful harvest has been the consequence.

Q. What quantity of ground has been brought into cultivation? And in any of the waste land of last year improved?
A. Both the lands in cultivation last year and some waste land have been brought into culture.
Q. To what extent may the waste lands have been improved?

A. I cannot form any accurate estimate of the quantity, as it does not belong to one or two villages but to the whole Pergunnah.

Answers having been appointed to make a measurement I shall as its conclusion be able to say certainly.

Q. What quantity of waste and jungle lands may Muntennah contain?

A. I imagine about 6 annas of jungle and 10 of cultivated land.

Q. What quantity of the jungle lands do you conceive to be capable of improvement?

A. About four annas is in capable of being turned to any use and two annas might be improved.

Q. Have you adopted any plan for the improvement of this part of Pergunnah?

A. The ryotts of this talooks which contain the land in question in their dead or deserted them at the time of the inundation in 1194 and those who remain are not more than enough to take bare of their own lands now in cultivation.

Mine translation (Signed) J. Lumsden
Collector of Rungpore

Board of Revenue; 6th November, 1792

Deductions of the revenues due for the different villages of Manthana estate were recommended to the Government by the Board of Revenue and sanctioned by the Government

Rungpore; 2nd February, 1798; Pergunnah Muntennah of talook Lobooni Dass for recovery of arrears of Rs. 1530 due from Joydoorga Chowdrain on account of Poose kist 1204 B. S. sanctioned by Government

2nd October, 1798; Pergunnah Muntennah of talook Joyram Ojah for recovery of arrears of Rs. 738 due from Joydoorga Chowdrain on account of Sawan 1205 B. S. recommended to Government

20th October, 1798; Pergunnah Muntennah of talook Bhugy for recovery of arrears of Rs. 1320 due from Joydoorga Chowdrain on account of Bhador 1205 B. S. sanctioned by Government

27th November, 1798; Pergunnah Muntennah of talook Dhaup for recovery of arrears of Rs. 1127 due from Joydoorga Chowdrain on account of Assin 1205 B. S. sanctioned by Government

28th December, 1798; Pergunnah Muntennah of talook Joyram Ojah for recovery of arrears due from proprietor to end of Cartick 1205 B. S. recommended to Government

Board of Revenue Index, 1798
Letter & Petition – 42
To The Hon’ble Warren Hastings Esqr., Governor General, and the other Gentlemen of the Council of Revenue at Fort William

Hon’ble Sir & Sirs

Futtypore – 9 ½ annas. – This Pergunnah is indebted the sum of Rs. 4,051. The zamindars by name Seebchund and Sirrydur represent their Pergunnah has not yielded the amount of its jumma, and beg an aumeen may be sent to form the hustabood, according to which their zemindary may be rated. From every information I can obtain of the state of this Pergunnah, I find it will hardly yield the amount of its jumma, so that there is no provision either for the mofussil charges or the zemindar’s expenses. The zamindars last year borrowed money to complete their engagements in hopes the Pergunnah would have reimbursed them, but though their zemindary has, I understand, yielded them something more than last year, it is yet inadequate to the amount it is rated at. I have the honour to enclose you translate of the zemindar’s petition no. 1.

Rungpore
The 17th June, 1779
Richard Goodlad, Collector

Translation of the petition of Seeb Chund and Sirrydur, zamindars of 9 ½ anna division of Futtypore
In the Bengali year 1184 we were honoured with our proportion of the Pergunnah as rated in the hustabood, which year with the utmost difficulty and by having recourse to loans from merchants we performed our engagements. In the said hustobood no deductions were allowed either for mofussil charges or our maintenance. In the Bengal year 1185 our zemindary was continued according to that said hustobood, and though we have paid in whatever our zemindary has produced, there is still a balance of Rs. 4,051 occasioned by want of produce and mofussil charges that were inevitable. We therefore humbly request an aumeen may be appointed to form the hustobood, when, after deducting the mofussil charges and allowing us where withal for our maintenance, the remainder may be our fixed jumma.

Shiv Chandra Roy, the noted leader of the tax rebellion, was summoned for interrogations regarding the facts of the Rangpur insurrection by Mr. J. Paterson, Chief of the Paterson Commission who was engaged for the searching of causes for that insurrection of 1783.

To
Peter Moore Esqr.,
Magistrate of Rungpore

Sir
In order to enable me to certain requisitions of the Honble Board signified to me by their Secretary in a letter of the 21st January, 1785. I request you will summon before you as Magistrate of Rungpore the several persons contained in the accompanying list to answer to such questions & give evidence upon oath to such matter as I may deem necessary for the information & satisfaction of the Honble Board respecting the points so required by them.

Rungpore
The 20th March, 1785

I am Sir etc.

J. Paterson
Sheeb Chund Choudry – Zemindar of Futtypore
Dololl – formerly Vaquil
Nemi Cherun – formerly Vaquil to all Zemindars
Khooshall Chatterjea – formerly farmer of Futtypore
Raj Mohun Choudry
Gunga Narain – formerly Naib to Carjeehaut
Raj Kishwer – his relation

Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. III; 1783 – 1785; No. 443, p. 274

Letter – 43

Board of Revenue Index, 22nd April, 1790
To The Honble Charles Stuart
President and the Gentlemen of the Board of Revenue at Fort William

Gentlemen
In conformity of the 8th of the General Regulations for the Collector, I have the honor to inform you of the death of Jugdessery Chowdrannee of Bahmundangah, on the 3rd Chyte, 1196. She has left an adopted son named Byrub Chund of about 21 years of age, who has been admitted by a perwannah of Government duly executed and dated 3rd December, 1788, to the possession of the Zemindary, and transaction of the business of it.

Rungpore

15th April, 1790

I have the honor to be
(Signed) C. Purling, Collector
Board of Revenue

Bamundangah Zemindari – Board submitted to Government copies of a letter, & C. from Collector, reporting the result of the publication ordered by the Government on 22nd September, 1790 relative to the succession of Bhyrub Chund to the Zemindary.

Board of Revenue Index, 18th May, 1791

Letter – 44
To The Hon’ble Warren Hastings., Esqr., Governor General and the Gentlemen of the Council of Revenue at Fort William

Hon’ble Sir and Sirs
Enclosed I have the honor to transmit you translate of a petition that has been presented me by the Chowdranee of Bamindungah, and beg to be favoured with your commands concerning it. The peons appointed to serve the warrant refused for some time to shew their authority. They said they came from Supreme Court, but would neither tell or produce what power they were invested with, and it was not till I had sent to them twice that I obtained a sight of the warrant. If the court peons are not obliged to produce the authority by which they act, it will subject the inhabitants to numberless abuses, as any designing person has only to declare he comes from the Supreme Court (the very name of which carries terror throughout the mofussil) to enable him to extort what money he pleases from the people. I beg to be honored with your directions in what manner I am to act, should a similar circumstance occur of a peon coming to Rungpore and refusing to produce his authority.
Translation of the petition of Joy Durga Chowdrannee of Pergunnah Bamindungah

The Pergunnah Bamindungah is my zamindary. It is now near two months that two peons have seated themselves at my door and say they are from Supreme Court with a warrant at the suit of Mr. Feake. I am a widow and have concerned myself with nothing, but the business of my malguzarry. I have neither been a servant of the company nor of any individual European, and am entirely ignorant of the customs of the court of Calcutta. This I am willing if called on to take oath of, besides which I am a woman of some character, whose public attendance on a court of justice would never entail on her a disgrace she could never surmount. The presence of the peons has caused all my amlahs to run away, and I have no one to settle with the ryots for the ensuing year’s malguzarry. I therefore hope you will represent my case to the Supreme Court that the peons may be withdrawn.

Supplement to the Rangpur District Records, Vol. 1; No. 108, P. 88

To Charles Purling, Esqr.,
Collector of Rungpore

Sir,

Paragraph 1. – We have received your assistant’s letters of the 20th, 24th and 31st May; the 7th, 17th, 23rd and 29th June, with your letter of the 7th June, and the several papers and accounts mentioned to be enclosed in the former.

4. – 7th June. We approve of the temporary appointment of Hurry Ram to be the Dewan of your districts.

8. – 23rd June. We are surprised at the question contained in this letter. Upon every similar occasion, we direct that you oppose the peons until they shall have produced their warrants, and if they shall refuse to show their warrants, you will take them into custody, reporting the same to us. You will however, be careful to appoint witness to be present at what passes between your officers and the persons so styling themselves officers of the Supreme Court.

We are etc.

Warren Hastings, Richard Baewell, Edward Wheler

Supplement to the Rangpur District Records, Vol. 1; No. 113, p. 92

Letter – 45

To Jonathan Duncan Esqr.
Preparer of Khalsa Report

Sir

I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 14th instant, covering a copy of a petition from the Ranny Bowanny referred to your enquiry and report by the committee of revenue & requesting I will inform you what have been the proceedings held by me to which she refers in her representation and desiring such general information on the subject of the ranny’s claim as may have come to my knowledge.
In consequence I beg leave to inform you, that a suit has been instituted in the Adawlot by Luckynaut Nundy the Zemindar of Baharbund against Neel Kaunt Roy the Zemindar of Bheterbund laying a claim to lands possessed by the latter to the amount of three thousand one and sixty one rupees 4 annas & four Gundah, annual rent under the denomination of Mahal why Ranny which at the desire of the parties was referred to arbitration and the arbitrators are still settling. You will find this suit inserted No. 455 – in the account Adawlot deposits which accompanied my letter to the register of the Sudder Dewanny Adawlot under date the 10th December, 1784.

The Ranny states in her petition, that Mr. Moore deputed “an Aumeen to attach the land in dispute” – this Aumeen was deputed in the ordinary routine of judicial process on the motion of the plaintiffs vakeel, to prevent the misapplication of the growing rents but, on the dependant vakeel giving security to be answerable for whatever rent should be collected in the event of the disputed premises proving to be the plaintiff property, which was all the satisfaction I thought the plaintiff had a right to demand, the Aumeen was recalled. It is not in my power to speak to the truth or falsity of any other part of the Ranny Bowanny’s petition; nor to give you any further information in the merits of the suit now under the consideration of the Arbitrators since that reference made it unnecessary for me to investigate them, & the special duty of the Arbitrators.

Rungpore 24th January, 1785 (Signed) P. Moore, Collector
Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. IV, 1779 – 1785, P. 198

Statement – 3

“ Whilst residing at Pott’s Gardens I renewed my acquaintance with Mr. Peter Moore and his family, which gentleman is now become a prodigious politician. He still (subsequently to 1805) continuous to represent the city of Coventry in Parliament, and frequently speaks in the House, always in the opposition. His change from poverty to affluence was uncommonly rapid. At the time of my return to India in 1783, I found him no better situated in point of circumstances than when I left him in 1779. He had a wife, with a host of children, was deeply involved in debt, without a prospect of ever being able to extricate himself, for, having rendered himself obnoxious to Mr. Hastings, he had long been out of employ, for several years receiving nothing more than the three hundred and odd rupees a month allowed to senior servants who held no post or office. From some unknown cause Mr. Hastings suddenly relaxed from his hostile conduct, offering Mr. Moore a lucrative employment, which he, with the utmost contempt, refused to accept, accompanying such refusal with a letter, wherein he wrote that having already waited so unreasonable a time in expectation of being treated with justice, and disappointed in such expectations, he was resolved to wait yet longer in preference to receiving anything in the shape of a favour from the then ruling power, whose reign of tyranny and injustice he had reason to hope was nearly at an end. Strange as it may seem after such arrogant and insulting language, it is nevertheless a certain fact that within two months after thus insolently spurning at Mr. Hastings offer to serve him, and within three months of that Gentleman’s quitting the Governor-Generalship, this very Mr. Moore did accept the Residency of Rungpore, to which station he accordingly went, and from whence in somewhat less than eighteen months he returned to Calcutta with so overgrown a fortune as to be enabled to return with all his family to England, get into the House of Commons, and purchase a fine estate in Essex. By what means such wealth
was so suddenly acquired he best knows.” - William Hichey, Vol. III, pages 163-164, (Hurst and Blackett Ltd.), reprinted for insertion in Volume IV.

**Letter – 46**

To  
Mr. W. K. Amherst  
Acting Collector of Rungpore

Sir  
The Honble Board having been pleased to nominate Mr. Peter Moore to the charge of the collections of Rungpore, we direct that you deliver over charges to that Gentleman on his arrival at Rungpore.

Calcutta  
The 15th April, 1784  
We are Sir  
Saml. Charters, John Evelyn  
Bengal District Records Rangpur; Vol. III; 1783-1785; No. 242, p. 149

**Letter – 47**

To  
Mr. W. K. Amherst  
Acting Collector of Rungpore

Sir  
                                                                                           
We are much surprised that Mr. Moore should have omitted to leave copies of his public correspondence in the office, not being able to conceive any reason for a conduct so extraordinary and unprecedented.  
Mr. Moore having already sailed for Europe, we shall apply to his Attornies for the papers in question and if recovered, transmit them to you without loss of time.

Calcutta  
The 18th August, 1785  
We are Sir etc.  
Saml. Charters, Wm. Cowper, Thos Graham, J. Evelyn  
Bengal District Records Rangpur; Vol. III; 1783-1785; No. 535, p. 325

**Letter – 48**

To  
Day Hort McDowall Esqr.  
Judge of the Dewany Adawlut of Rungpore

Sir,  
I request you will immediately upon receipt of this, summon before you Indernarrain Bose, late Naib of the Pergunnah, Muntunnah, in your division, who, as I understand, is now in the mufussil, and take his answers, upon oath, to the enclosed questions: the object of which is, as you will perceive, to ascertain the extent of his knowledge regarding the illicit receipt of money alleged against the late Rungpoor Commissioner: a point which the right Hon’ble the Governor General in Council has committed to me; and as it is very material to have his evidence as full
and circumstantial as possible, I beg that in case his answers to the abovementioned leading interrogations may not prove conclusive, or otherwise sufficiently satisfactory, you will put such further questions to him as your own discretion may suggest; in order clearly ascertain, will favor me with your answer as soon as circumstances will admit; and am –

Khalsa
The 3rd May, 1787

Sir
John Duncan
P R R D

P R R D – Preparer of the Report of the Revenue Department

Bengal District Records Rangpur; Vol. V; 1786-1787; No. 265, p. 161

Petition – 8

Substance of a petition from Mussamaat Joy Durga, Zamindar of Pergunnah Manthanah, Zillah Rungpore

“For upwards of 30 years I have been in possession and had the management of the above Zemindary, and I came under engagement to Government for the revenues assessed thereon at the time of decennial settlement, and this year I obtained a perwannah from the Collector to hold the Poonea; but this gentleman has since appointed Rajendra Narain who was brought up by me, but with whom I am now at variance, to the management of my estate.

I therefore hope the Board will order the Collector as heretofore to receive the revenues from me, leaving Rajender narain to see in the adawlut should he conceive he has claim to my Zemindary.”

(Signed) A. Johnstone

Letter – 49

To
A. Jhonstone Esqr.
Acting Sub Secretary to the Board of Revenue

Sir
I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo transmitting copy of a petition from Mussomaat Jey Dourga for my report.
In order to point out to the Board how far I have been instrumental to the appointment of Rajendernarrain to the petitioners Zemendarry I beg leave to annex translates of the representations delivered in by Rajendernarrain, the adopted son of Mussomaat Jey Dourga with translate of her answer to my reference.

I have merely to observe that she now denies the authenticity of the documents exhibited in the Collectors Catcherry and assert the whole to be a forgery which being cognizable in the criminal court. I have repeatedly instructed her dependants to prosecute the parties concerned.

(Signed) Alex Wright
Collector

Rungpore
4th November, 1801
Petition – 9

The Collector of Rangpur, Alex Wright forwarded the translation of the petitions of Rajendra Narayan Chowdhury and Joy Durga Chowdhurani respectively along with his order upon the interrogation with the Gomastah to the Board of Revenue as annexure.

Derkhaust of Rajender narrain Chowdry, the adopted son of Narraender narrain deceased Zemindar of the 2 Annas division of Pergunnah Muntannah of Chucklah Futtypore in Sircar Cooch Behar

The aforesaid Zemindarry was the inheritance of my deceased father at the formation of the decennial settlement. Owing to my minority the engagements were executed in the name of my mother Mussomaat Jey Dourga. Having now attained my twenty fifth year and every way qualified for the management of the estate, and my mother by reason of her sex and infirmities of age being secluded to her private apartments and conformable to the shasten when the son shall be competent to the management of the estate it devolves to him. There is no necessity to urge this plea as my mother has of her own free skill and accord bequeathes by deed of gift the whole of her estate to me, and forwarded a representation attested by witnesses and with the seal of the Cauzy affixed. I trust you will after the perusal cause my mother’s name to be erased and allow me to execute engagements and discharge the Government’s revenue.

(Signed) Rajinder narrain

Petition – 10

A true translate
(Signed) Alex Wright, Collector
Derkhaust of Mussomaat Jey Durga Chowdraine

I have been duly honored with your letter containing the requisition delivered in by Rajender narrain Chowdry, my adopted son, for the purpose of obtaining a transfer of the Zeminderry of the 2 Annas division of Chucklah Futtypore. The substance of which states Rajinder narrain to be my adopted son that my name may be annulled, and his established in the Pergunnah. I further beg leave to observe with respect to the representation which I formerly made to you, thro’ my agent Goury Kaunt Chowdry, of my son having appropriated in his own name, and without my knowledge the sum of sicca ruppes 10,359, for the purchase of an estate, in the Rajeshahye district, was the effect of anger, which my sons conduct produced and I represented it to you. I now recapitulate this circumstance, and to acquaint you that in consequence of my being reduced to the infirmities of age I am induced from religious motives to take up my abode near the river Ganges. My son is fully competent to the management of the Zemindarry, and is in attendance at the Huzzoor. I have to solicit that my name may be erased from the Zemindarry, and the name of my adopted Rajinder narrain be inserted among the records of the office, and he be directed to pay the Government rents.

(Signed) Jey Dourga Chowdraine

Order – 1

Order of the Collector
Goury Kaunt Chowdry, Gomastah of Mussomaat Jey Dourga whose paper of agency appears among the records, having this day attended and delivered in the above mentioned derkhaust; who on being interrogated relative to the purport of the petition, declares it to have been the act of Jey Dourga Chowdraine, and that she had more over written to him on the subject, upon comparing the signature of the present representation with one delivered under date the 27th March, 1801. They appear exactly to correspond and which on being shewn to Ram Kaunt Roy, her late Gomastah and Bholanath Roy, agent of Pergunnah Coondy unanimously agree as to the correspondence of the signature. In consequence there of Goury Kaunt Gomastah having asserted the requisition delivered in by him under the signature of Mussomaat Jey Dourga to have been made with the sanction of his constituent, ordered that Rajinder narrain pay the customary fees, and his name be entered in the register of intermediate mutation of landed property that a Perwannah also be issued in his name, and he be directed to execute engagements for the payment of Government revenue.

Dated 10th July, 1801
A true translate
(Signed) Alex Wright
Collector

Board’s Order; 20th November, 1801