

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Raja Mayong, a village in the present district of Morigaon manifests a varied type of socio-political life. Till the advent of colonial rule in Assam, Morigaon area was ruled by a number of native kings. These kingdoms were characterized by different socio-political patterns. However, certain commonalities amongst them tied their relationship in definite ways. The religious and cultural patterns of people of those small kingdoms were largely alike. But the kingdom of Mayong was characterized by Heptarchy and Pentarchy with the political suzerainty of the king of Mayong. Another salient feature of the kingdom of Mayong was the existence of magical beliefs and practices in the form of Mantra and Tantra which was patronized by the king of Mayong. An in-depth study into the socio-political study of Mayong is considered essential because of its uniqueness. The socio-political change also needs to be studied as the locality has undergone a lot of social, economic, political and religious change over the few decades as a result of population explosion, growth of

modern education, absorption of modern technology, increase in productivity, etc.

Objective of the Study

- (1) The objective of the proposed study is to examine and understand the nature of Traditional Socio-Political institutions of Raja Mayong in the past and to analyse the nature of changes that have emerged in these institutions in the post independence period.
- (2) To examine the impediments in the free growth of education among the different ethnic groups in Raja Mayong and the endeavour made by the liberal institutions for growth of education.
- (3) To examine the different socio-economic forces that help in bringing in Social cohesion among the different communities in Raja Mayong.
- (4) To examine the nature of political participation of the people of the area in the modern democratic parliamentary system.

Research Technique:

A number of research techniques are adopted to suit the Historico-analytical method of the study. They are as follows:- Unstructured interview has been carried out with such persons who possess knowledge relevant to our study. The list of such persons include members of the royal families, old Socio-Political leaders belonging to different communities. Participant observation has also been the basis of our study

Universe of Study:

The general area of study is the Raja Mayong village in the district of Morigaon. However, the information on the socio-economic and political background of the village has been collected mainly through a survey which has been conducted on the basis of scheduled questionnaires, personal interviews of leading personalities and historical remains in Raja Mayong.

Chapterisation:

The first chapter is introductory in nature and mainly deals with the historical framework, methodology and techniques adopted, hypothesis to be tested, review of literature and significance of the study.

The second chapter deals with the changing social life of Raja Mayong including the Major castes and its role, emergence and growth of the ethnic groups and its role in building the society and their identity movement.

The third chapter deals with the trends of changes of the traditional religious institutions of Raja Mayong. An attempt has been made in this chapter to trace down the history of religion in the locality right from animistic practices to the growth of Buddhism, Tantrism, Vaisnavism and other religious practices.

The fourth chapter deals with the changing political life of Raja Mayong with special emphasis on the monarchy which is still prevalent in the face of democratic institutions like the Panchayat system and the parliamentary system.

The fifth chapter deals with the changing economic life of Raja Mayong. Though the economy of Mayong has remained basically agrarian as in the past a lot of change has taken place in the field of agriculture also particularly in mechanization of agriculture and to some extent in occupational shift.

The sixth chapter summarises the finding of the study and provides necessary suggestions on the basis of findings for development in the socio-political, religious, educational and economic fields.

Hypothesis:

The area of Raja-Mayong had a rich cultural heritage in the past and its Socio-Political scenario was distinctive. Traditional Magical practices and the political institutions like Heptarchy and Pentarchy, which were the peculiarities of the area, have undergone changes under the influence of modernity and Traditional political institutions have been replaced by modern democratic parliamentary system. There has been a lot of change in all spheres of life in Raja-Mayong. Changes have taken place elsewhere also. But the change that has taken place has a definite pattern and the study of this pattern is the central focus of this study. After an in-depth study of the changes, remedial measures can be suggested if the changes are for the worst. Moreover, it is believed that at least some changes are not congenial for the healthy growth of socio-political life of the people of the area.

Significance:

The ancient history of Raja-Mayong shows that there were well-organised political institutions in Rojamayong, which continued for generations. The significance of the study lies on its attempt to analyse the political participation and voting pattern of the people of Mayong, the different Social institutions and also the efforts made by the young generation through their organisations to improve the standard of living of their people and to spread education among the masses.

Another significance of the study lies in its attempt to understand the nature of the sentiment of the people and their organisation as an essential part in the formation of the greater Assamese Society.

Another noteworthy significance of the study in that, this is an attempt to investigate in to the nature of Socio-Political transformation that has taken place amongst the different ethnic groups of the area in their institutions as seriously as possible.

Moreover, this is a study, which has been conducted at micro level basing on the area study of a single village. It is hoped that this will enable us at arriving at a conclusion with more realistic footing.

Sources of data:

The primary data for the study has been collected from various Government records, District reports, pamphlets, annual report of each groups, souvenirs of different organisations, such as Koch Rajbongshi Sonmilonee, Koch Sahitya Sabha, Yogi Sonmilonee, Keot Sonmilonee, organisations of the scheduled castes, etc.. Information received through interview, scheduled questionnaire and observation has formed the bulk of

primary sources for the proposed study. The secondary sources comprise of books in different languages, manuscripts, articles, magazines, newspapers, research papers, journals, unpublished thesis etc. Beside these archaeological remains, etc. have been analysed for arriving at conclusions in the present study.

Review of Literature:

The proposed study will be a pioneer of its kind as no major work has been done on any aspect of Mayong in the district of Morigaon in Assam's social history by any author or organization till now. "Mayongar Loka-Sanskriti" – A little book has been compiled by Dr. Hemanta Sarma. This book does not touch the social growth of this region or ancient and modern institutions of this region. Lokeswar Gogoi's "Tiwa Sanskritir Ruprekha", 2nd Part, contains only the culture of the Tribal people. In the last part of the book, he has tried to describe the history of ancient Kingdoms in this region without any comparison and analysis. Birinchidhar Burha Gohaini's article – "Morigaon Jilar Purani Buranji," Published in, "Pabitarā" a Magazine published on the occasion of Assam Sathiya Sabha, 60th Session, Morigaon, 1994, contains only a simple description but it is not sufficient to understand the long history of Mayong in details. In the same Magazine, Lokendra Hazarika's "Mantra Sahitya, Asom" – an article has been published. Lokendra Hazarika's several articles have been published in school Magazines, Mayong Higher Secondary School and in news papers also. All these are attempts to know about Mayong. But these are considered to be insignificant to give a composite view of Mayong's socio-political life. Mahadananda Goswami's "Mayong Prasanga" and "Bharatar Mukti Yudat Panbari Relgadi Bagarowar Itibritta" edited by Sathiya Charjya, Dr. Golok Chandra Goswami, is not a research work.

Recently, Jiba Kanta Nath's analytical study, namely, "Mayangia Upabhasha" contains a collection of practices of local language" in the district of Morigaon. It does not evaluate the growth of the social groups and institutions. This author's "Mantra Prashiddha Mayong Aru Pabitarar Itihas" contains a simple collection of Historical facts and Archaeological evidences". A Doctoral thesis has already been completed on the magical lore of Mayong in the last decade of the last century. (Kalita, Dr. Dilip Kumar-*Magical Beliefs and Practices in Assam with Special Reference to the Magical Lore of Mayong*)

The survey was conducted with the help of questionnaire solely by this researcher and the interviews for this work were taken solely by him. All the information by the informants has been meticulously scrutinized. Yet, the researcher will remain responsible for any misinformation or omissions and commissions.

BACKGROUND

This chapter of the proposed study is devoted to the Historical background of Raja-Mayong village and a discussion on the village which is known for its magical and Tantric speculations which was patronised chiefly by the king of Raja Mayong. It also involves an analysis of ancient political institutions under the name of Heptarchy and Pentarchy and Socio-Political force of the area. Further, some brief observations are made on the Socio religious and archaeological remains in Medieval period of the village.

Raja-Mayong, a village in the district of Morigaon lies at a distance of 40 km., to the east from the district headquarter and 30 km, to the west from the city of Guwahati via Chandrapur on the South bank of the Brahmaputra. It is situated between $26^{\circ} 1' 5''$ North latitude and $92^{\circ} 6' 4''$ East longitudes. The area of the Village is 2.35 sq. km. Raja-Mayong received an annual rainfall of 1426.6 - (2001) during the last 6 years; and its temperature varies from at 38°c . to 9°c in June-July and January respectively.¹ The village is connected to Guwahati via Chandrapur and to different towns of the eastern part of Morigaon and Nagaon district such as

Morigaon and Jagiroad by Motorable roads. Raja-Mayong is an important bus stoppage for almost all the passenger-carrying buses from Morigaon and Guwahati and from Chamata National Highway Stoppage Via Kamapur road. In the months of July and August, the buses cannot ply due to flood. During this period Raja-Mayong village is connected by at least one trip of (Bhoot-bhooti) motored boat to Jhargaon every day.

Morigaon is basically an agrarian district. It is situated between 26.15⁰ North and 26.5⁰ North Latitude and between 92⁰ degrees East and 95.5⁰ East Longitude. Morigaon town, the Headquarter of the district is situated 78 kms. away from Dispur, the State capital. Morigaon district is the second smallest district of Assam.

The present Morigaon district with a population of 776256 (SC 100346 and ST 120730), was a sub-division of erstwhile Nagaon district since 26 January 1972. The erstwhile subdivision was upgraded to a district vide Govt. notification No. GAG(B)370/87/102 dtd 29.9.89. It started functioning as a fullfledged district from 14.10.89 when the first Deputy Commissioner Sri Nilamay Choudhury took over charge. The Morigaon district consists of 16 Mauzas 7 police stations, 5 circles and a lone Mahkuma. The five circles are, Mayong, Mikirbheta, Laharighat, Bhuragaon and Marigaon, of which, Mayong, Bhuragaon and Laharighat circles have fallen victims of erosion regularly since 1969. These circles have lost 135 villages consisting of more than one lakh bighas of land and 1039 families with a population of 1,05,840 because of erosion.

Raja-Mayong is situated in a picturesque surrounding beautified by several numbers of small hills and hillocks towards the north, the east and the southwest of the village. Each hill or hillock towards the northern

boundary of village has a name of its own with a rich heritage of shrine and sculptures. The rivers, Sonai and Pakaria flow from the east to northwest of the village. On the extreme south, the Kalong River flows from the northeast towards the west up to the confluence of Brahmaputra. Pabitora, a Wild life Sanctuary, declared in 1987, with the world's highest density of single-horned Rhinoceros along with varieties of other animals and various native and migratory birds is situated on the south.² Almost all the sides of the village is surrounded by paddy fields and water bodies and swamps. These swamps are believed to be abandoned course of the Brahmaputra. Many legends are associated with the abandonment of the course of the Brahmaputra.

There are two revenue villages in the Mayong Gaon Panchayat area having related names namely Raja-Mayong and Burhamayong. These two villages are situated at a distance, of 2.5 kms. Raja-Mayong is the Royal village where the king of Mayong resides at present. Burhamayong, is believed to be the earlier settlement from where the first king of this dynasty had established his kingdom.³ The descendants of the kings of Mayong are scatted in the villages like – Burhamayong, Hatimuria, Bhuragaon, Nelli, Bhurbandha, Panbari, Ghagua Kolbari and Garubandha. Besides the Royal family, other local people also migrated from Mayong to Laharighat, Moirabari, Ghagua, Bangaldhara, Bordua, Nagaon, Choraibahi and Mikirbheta. There is a complete revenue village in Charaibahi named Mayongia.

Even the forefathers of Sankardeva lived in the area of Mayong at least for 25 years before they had settled at Bordowa.⁴ Besides, the whole area from Mayong-Kajali to Kaliabar was ruled by the Bhuyans before the

establishment of the kingdom of Maoyng. One Kajali Bhuyan was the chieftain of the Bhuyans during their rule.⁵

Raja-Mayong is the name of the village, which is generally known as Mayong to the outside world. But, Mayong, as such, is also a Mauza or the revenue circle, a police station, a P. W. D. sub division, a Community Development Block, an administrative area for the gaon panchayat or also the village to which the people refer to in connection with their Socio-Political and economic life. In fact, Raja-Mayong is the centre of most of the activities of the people of this mauza, or this Police Station, or the Gaon Panchayat. The term “Raja”, literally means “King” and is used as a prefix before the name of the village “Mayong” to signify the abode of the king of Mayong. Thus Mayong in olden times was a kingdom. Though at present the name is invariably pronounced as Mayong, there are references to its being called as “Mayang” in olden times. Historically, Mayong includes the whole area of the western part of the undivided district of Nagaon except the south bank of the Kapili.⁶ Locally, all villages of erstwhile of Mayong mouza, prefixed the name Mayong before the name of the village for example- Mayong Kamarpur, Mayong Kajali, Mayong Buraburi, etc.

There is one degree college named Mayong Anchalik College, established in 1992, located in the southeast side of the village. There is one Higher Secondary School providing computer education, one M. E. School, four Primary Schools, one independent telephone exchange, one Museum, a big Hari Temple, a bi-weekly market, four Salagram Temples a co-operative society and an electrical division in the Mayong area.

In addition to these, some important government departments and offices like the offices of Mayong Gaon Panchayat, P. W. D., Agriculture,

Veterinary, E. & D., Public Health Engineering for drinking water, Raja-Mayong Post office, Mayong Development Block, etc. are located in the area. The Mayong Police Station is located to the northern part of the village slightly away from the village on the roadside. Mayong Revenue Circle, Raja-Mayong Pobitara Range Office, State Bank of India (Raja-Mayong branch), are some more institutions located in the area.

At one time the king of Mayong was so powerful that he was instrumental in appointing the nearby kings of the little kingdoms and the kings of these little kingdoms were known as "*powali raja*". As the kings were appointed by the king of Mayong the kingdoms were deemed to be under the King of Mayong. As such all these areas also came to be known as Mayong and the name Mayong was prefixed to the name of their respective kingdom which were villages in reality.⁷

"Raja-Mayong" is traditionally known as "Mayang". Mayang is a Sanskrit term which implies the "*Yoni*" or "*Prakriti*" or "*Mahamayang*". This term "Mayang" is also found in the *Dasham* i.e. the tenth canto of the *Bhagawata* and the twelfth canto of the *Srimad Bhagabata* and the "*Gita*" and the last part of the "*Bhahma Samhita*", This proves that "Mayang" is the Prime "deity" over the nature, Demigods and Goddesses.

According to the "*Sveta-Sveta Upanisad*," *Mayang* implies the nature or *Yoni*. *Maya* covers the real knowledge of the creation. It is therefore essential to know about the "*Mayang*". *Maya* leads to better understanding of the Almighty, the real originator of the Universe as the text mention "*Mayang to prakriting bidyat majinong hi parameswara asmatmayi srijate biswametad*".⁸

The text of the first literature of the universe, the *Brahma Samhita* says that “*Maya*” is the presiding deity of Devi-Dhama. The external potency “*Maya*” which is of the nature of the shadow of the inner potency of the soul is worshiped by all people as Durga, the creating, preserving and destroying agency of this mundane world.⁹

There is another opinion regarding the origin of the name from the *Maya* where *Maya* is an evil spirit along with the evil spirit *byadhi*. They circumambulated the world and were the causes of diseases.

Another text of the *Gitopanisad* has theoretically explained that *yoni* or *maya* creates all the life of the universe. None is spared from her influences. The virtues of a man come from the nature or *Maya*. So, he must have sound knowledge of the *Maya* to attain the “*moksha*”, i.e. salvation.

In the text of *Yonitantram*, it is referred that *Yoni* is the goddess Durga or Mahamayang. The worship of the Mahamayang satisfies Parvati the wife of Lord Shiva. Therefore *yonitvatva* is the best form of the tantric texts.

Another view is that “Tantra” is a mixture of five “M”s namely *Madya, Mangsa, Matsya, Mudra and Maithuna*. “Tantra” is regarded to be a magical platform where the five “Ms”, which are regarded to be the essential elements, are kept. Mahamayang or the yoni is essential for the *maithuna* and in tantric terminology according to the *Yonitantra* it is also called the Kuladevi. The last part of the five “Ma”, which is equivalent to Kula-Devi, is essential part of the Tantric “*Shadhana*”. As regards the origin of the name Mayong, Mahadananda Deva Goswami says that

Mayong was the part of Eastern Kamrupa Kamakhya and that this place was a land of meditative practices and Tantrism.¹⁰

In the story of Manikonwar it is stated that ancestors of the kings of Mayong were the descendants of the powerful king Mayamatta. It is also believed by a section of the people that the name Mayong has been derived from the name of Mayamatta.

On the other hand Rajmohan Nath has stated that Rampala the king of Bengal sent a General named Mayan with a huge army to invade Kamarupa. Mayan established a town at Kajali and named it Mayangarh. Nath is of the opinion that the name Mayong is derived from this Mayangarh.

The village Burha Mayong is located just below a hill, which is called Mayong hill. This is the biggest hill in the whole of undivided Nagaon district. The Mayong Hill is a centre for adoration of the Mother Goddess Kamakhya. The shrine located on the Mayong hill is regarded to be that of Kamakhya. To differentiate it from the Kamakhya temple atop Nilachal hill in Guwahati it is called the Mayong Kamakhya.¹¹

The tantric works, support the fact that Kamrupa was a stronghold of Tantric - Buddhism between the eighth and the fifteenth century AD.¹² As such, Mayong is also regarded as a centre of magic and witchcraft as magic and witchcraft is associated with Tantric Buddhism.¹³ The area of Mayong was famous for Tantrism and magic from the medieval period.¹⁴ The charms and spells are regarded to be older than the Vaishnavite literature. Most of works on Tantrism were created during the tenth and eleventh century.¹⁵ So, the time of composition of the charms and spells can be

regarded to be traced from eleventh century AD. The Raja-Mayong village is still a centre for widespread practice of Tantric and magical practices.¹⁶

“The tantric works *Pag Som Zon Zam* mentions the ancient kingdom of Kadali within the bounds of Nagaon along with others. This shows the possibility of some other kingdom in the same locality.”¹⁷ Kadali was an independent kingdom in the north - eastern part of Nagaon ruled by Kirata or Mongolian chiefs and was definitely included in Kamrupa in the sixth century A.D. during the reign of Bhuti Barman if not earlier. Though this kingdom lost its independence, it did not lose its entity till as late as the eleventh century A.D. when the Palas ruled in Kamrupa.

At one time the Nath cult was popular in Mayong also. The Nath cult is associated with the activities of Meena Nath and Goraksha Nath who flourished shortly after Brahmapala, the founder of the Pala dynasty in Kamrupa. At that time Kadali was ruled by a woman named Kamala with the help of her sister and ministers and was therefore known as “Narirajya”. She enjoyed the liberty accorded to women by tantrik Buddhists and ruled possibly as a feudatory of the palas of Assam.¹⁸ This kingdom of Kadali is identified with “Kajali” of Mayong. Mayong was known for tantirism and magic. It has a large number of Ashramas where bananas, mangoes, coconut, etc. grow abundantly. The name for banana in Sanskrit and many other Indian languages is kadali. Hence according to some people the name Kadali for the kingdom has been derived from this. There are also lots of water bodies and marshy land having a lot of fishes. Kamala was expert in magic and witchcraft. Meenanath had fallen a victim of the witchcraft of kamala. Meenanath was the Yogi and practised Tantric Buddhism. There is a cave in the Mayong hill which is known as the Bairagi Than.¹⁹ It is believed that this Bairagi *than* was a Buddhist shrine

and was associated with Meenanath. There is ample scope to believe that the Kadali kingdom, references of which are found in many sources, was situated in the Mayong region.

“Narakasura prohibited the Tantric practices in the temple of Kamakhya after he was deceived by the goddess in his attempt to marry her. After that it is believed that Tantric practices were carried out secretly for fear of Naakasura.”²⁰ It is during this period that Mayong became a centre of the secret practice of Tantra as the popular belief goes.

Assam is considered to be the land of Saktism. Some scholars are of the view that the territory was the chief diffusion centre of Saktism. Along with its tantric aberration, Assam is associated with the worship of the Devi. Epigraphic records of the Assam rulers Ratnapala and Indrapala may be seen to have references to the Devi under such names as Mahagauri, Parvati and Girija.²¹ There is a *Devikunda* with *Yonimudra* with the five seats for the five deities at Kasachila, a hill in the Mayong area.

In accordance with the principles of magic tradition the term “Mayang” stands for the divine mother of magic or witchcraft. According to tradition the king of Kamarupa should worship Mayang the divine mother. It is believed that the king of Mayong descended from “Narkasura”. Narakasura worshiped “Mayang” as per Lord Krishna’s advice.²² The king of Mayang has been continuing the worship of Mayang following this tradition of his forefathers.

“Tantric eroticism is, ultimately, an inner experience of the sacredness of the Male-female relationship, as depicted in this image of an amorous Couple gazing tenderly into each others eyes.”²³ This type of

sacredness of male-female relationship in fine stone sculpture is found in Mayong also. The “Hara - Gauri” or “Siva - Parvati” of Burha Mayong and Chanaka hill are such examples.

The fine image of Ganesh sculpted on rock at Baha temple with length and breadth of 15” x 15” feet is regarded to be the biggest sculpture of Ganesha.²⁴ According to R. M. Nath Shiva temples at Moadanga and other temples of the Kopili and Jamuna valleys definitely belong to ninth to twelfth century A.D.

Another pointer to the antiquity of the place lies on the biggest stones script at Burha-Mayong village. The village of Burha-Mayong located in the hilly terrain of Mayong, is famous for a big stone inscription. This 3.85 metres long inscription may be the longest stone inscription found in India so far. This inscription can be divided into three parts with few lines. The first part consists of six lines. The second part is in 16 lines. The third part consists of only four lines. The inscriptions are worn out and only a few alphabets in the Devanagari script along with the word Rama is legible at present. It is very likely that it has been done by some king of the Koch dynasty.

Raja-Mayong village is subdivided into Jak or Chuk viz. Barua Jak, Panisara Jak, Kana Jak, Gada Jak, Nowa Jak, Bayan Jak, Bhajar Chuk, Hadug Par, Major Chuk, Raja Chaki and Murarbari. All Jaks or Chuks are in the village of Raja-Mayong. Of course the village of Murarbari has got separate identity within the same revenue scheme. But the villages of traditional units have their own identity with separate revenue. Every village is connected with early legends. Jaks comprises the village unit of “Nath Castes” and Raja Chaki comprises only of the “Koch caste” within the Raja-Mayong village.²⁵

The decennial figures of the village population according to the census reports and the records of the gaon panchayat have been as follows :

1981	1157
1991	1518
2001	1994
2006	2170

There were some settlements in Mayong viz. Kalita bari (14th century AD), Hira bari (12th century AD), Bamun Bari and Bhuyan bari where people of the castes mentioned in the name of the settlement resided. Unfortunately, these villages had been rooted out as a result epidemic. Besides these, the following villages or the parts of villages under the Mayong Gaon Panchayat area, viz. 1. Sagunpari, 2. Sialtari, 3. Uzatari, 4. Kalatoli, 5. Barhoitari, 6. Mantari, 7. No. 1 Hiloikhunda, 8. No. 2 Hiloikhunda, 9. No.1 Ganeshgaon, 10. Pakariguri, 11. Chapari, 12. Katahguri, 13. Pakariamukh, 14. Aparia, 15. No. 2 Ganeshgaon, 16. East Sildubi, 17. North Kajali, 18. Kheroni, etc. fell victim to the erosion of the Brahmaputra.²⁶

There is a big village named Mayongia, which literally means- pertaining to Mayong, in the Charaibahi area and lies at a distance of about 50 km. from Raja-Mayong village. This village has carried out the tradition of Raja-Mayong. The people of this village say that they came from Mayong more than 250 years ago. Mayongia village has the six khels, consisting of 400 households with more than 2000 population. They say that the people of Mayongia village have a strong faith of tantrism or

exorcism. At present also, folk-medicine-men, popularly known as the bej, are there who are practising exorcism, which is regarded to be a heritage of Mayong

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF RAJA-MAYONG

A glimpse at the history of Raja-Mayong in the district of Morigaon till Independence is considered essential here to understand the socio-political position of Raja-Mayong through the ages. Many great men and powerful kings lived in the kingdom of Mayong in the past. It has a rich wild life also along with deep forests. The outskirts of the capital of Mayong were covered by a Rampart of Kajali on the west, the mighty Brahmaputra on the North, the river Kapili on the South and the river Sonai in the East which made Mayong a veritable natural fort.

The Raja-Mayong village has a place in the history of Assam from quite early days. The history of Mayong is almost synonymous to the history of the Eastern Kamrupa. Eastern Kamrupa extended upto Raha-Barapujia and the present district of Morigaon in medieval period.²⁷ In the "*Mahabharata*" Bhagadatta, the son of "Naraka" is called the Mighty king of the Mlechhas as his subjects were mostly people of Mongolian stock. He is also described as a warrior king (sacred Khatriya) not inferior to "Indra" in battlefield.²⁸ After him, his son, Bajradatta ruled in Kamrupa. Kamrupa was a frontier kingdom of India.²⁹ His descendants, ruled in the eastern Kamrup and came to be known as the Pala dynasty.

Thereafter, the kings of Pal dynasty ascended the throne of Kamrupa. The last king of Pal dynasty, Sandhya shifted the kingdom from Kamrupa to Kamatapur. Mayamatta, the son of Sompala, became the king

of Kamatapur.³⁰ Sompala was the son of Ratna Pala of Pal dynasty. Mayamatta extended his kingdom to the East and became the king of Mayapur, that is, Mayong.³¹ Mayamatta was a powerful conqueror and extended the boundaries of his rule and is regarded to be the founder king of Mayong kingdom. Mayamatta is known by many other names such as, Pratap Singha, Ramchandra, Bhalukpung, Mrinanka and Ratnapuriya.³²

The powerful king of Assam, Arimatta, a descendant of the Pala dynasty is also said to have founded several kingdoms viz:- Dimoria, Mayong, Kumoi, Rani, Dandua, Baghara, etc. He was a good administrator and well cultured king. He established the Jagannath Temple at Mitani village.³³ Arimatta lived in Baidagar, a rampart, near Betana in the district of Kamrupa as stated in the *Sonar Asom*, a book on the history of Assam, written by Bhupendra Choudhury. Arimatta rebuilt the Baidagar, that is, the rampart of Baida, which was built formerly by the king, Baidadeva.³⁴

Arimatta's kingdom spread from Karatoya in Coochbehar to Raha in the district of Nagaon. Arimatta dethroned Indranarayana, the king of Kamatapur and he ascended the throne of Kamatapur in the 13th century.³⁵ Mayamatta the king of Kamatapur was the father king of Arimatta. Arimatta defeated numerous kings in his time. He extended his kingdom upto Kaliabor. But later, Frengua Konwar of Kamatapur killed Arimatta and reigned in Kamattapur. Again, Ratna Singha son of Arimatta killed Frengua Konwar and rescued his father's kingdom.³⁶

Arimatta's mother, Queen Chandra Prabha was expelled from the kingdom of Darrang as she cast an amorous look upon Luit Konwar a prince of the Kachari dynasty. She did not get married to Luit Konwar but

took shelter in the Kachari kingdom. Arimatta was born at the house of Luit Konwar.³⁷

Arimatta (1365-1385) was one of the most powerful kings of Assam. He amalgamated both the upper and lower Assam up to Lakhimpur. He subdued all the Bhuyan chieftains in the eastern part of Kamrupa.³⁸ He resided in Mayong in the 13th century. It is said that his head was shaped like the "Ari" fish and as such a Brahmin who visited the Kanyaka village named him as Arimatta and foretold that one day he would be the king of Kamrupa (Kamatapur).³⁹ Arimatta established his rule in Kamatapur and toured through eastern Kamrupa subjugating all petty kings. It is quite possible that, for further administration, he established his capital, at least, temporarily, somewhere within modern Assam. Once, he proceeded towards the East of the kingdom with his garrison. As a result of that, a serious fight was fought between Mayamatta and Arimatta. Arimatta killed his father, "Mayamatta" without knowing him to be his father. Since then, he became the independent king of Assam. His kingdom extended from Kartoya River to Kaliabar in the district of Nagaon.

Arimatta was known as "Gajanka". Gajanka means as powerful as the Elephant. It is believed by a section of the people of Mayong that the name Gajanka is derived from the huge sculpture of Ganesha which is the elephant god in the Hindu pantheon. He was survived with four sons - Ratna Singha, Sutaranka, Jakanka and Mriganka. His wife was Raktabala. He had the three daughters viz Dharmavati, Avantee and Jayantee.⁴⁰ It is also said that he had another wife named Gangavati who was not legitimately married to him through whom he had another son named Jongalbalahu, also known as Jakanka.⁴¹ His illegitimate wife Gangavati was a Tiwa girl and the princess of the kingdom named Khola. Arimatta left

Gangavati in her kingdom due to the dissatisfaction amongst the Lalung chieftains. He became the king of Khola and extended his kingdom up to the area of Kaliabor. He established his Capital in the area of Raha-Chahari.⁴² High embankments named Jongalbalahu Garh around his capital is still existent beside the National Highway near Raha.⁴³ It is said that Jangalbalahu killed his father, Arimatta in a fight not knowing him to be his father during his expedition towards the Mayong kingdom. After that, he was killed by the Kachari king at Kajalimukh. The legend goes further to say that Jongalbalahu dived in the water of the river Kolong at place now called Raha and emerged out of the water downstream at a place now called Jagi. The names of the places Raha and Jagi were derived from this incident. The name of another place called Baha is also said to be derived from the fact that he sat at this place. Jongalbalahu left his son Ratna Singha at Baghara. Ratna Singha became the king of Baghara kingdom. After the death of Arimatta, his son, Sataranka ascended the throne. Two other sons namely Jakanka and Mriganka ascended the throne of Dimoria kingdom one after the other.⁴⁴

The village Kajali was famous for its temples and shrines prior to the Ahom kingdom.⁴⁵ It is a hilly area about 10 km. to the west of Raja-Mayong. Kajali was the western part of Mayong kingdom during the reign of pala dynasty. The king of Mayong handed over the Kajali village to Pratap Singha the Ahom king. The strategic importance of the Kajali post led to the creation of a new Barphukan for this post. The Barphukan of the Ahom king at first governed the tract between the Kolong and the Brahmaputra in Morigaon at Kajali in 1617 A.D. as viceroy only. The name of the Barphukan in charge of the Kajali post was Langhi Phukan.⁴⁶ Kajali Chaki directly witnessed 13 battles out of the 17 battles fought against the Moghuls. After that, the Ahom king, Chakradhaj Singha performed "*Homa*

Yajna” at “Kajali” and this was an indication of the strategic importance of Kajali Chaki. In the battle of Saraighat (1671) the weaponry of the Ahom king was stored at the fort of Kajali. Besides these, in the last battle between the Ahoms and the Moghuls at Itakhuli, King Gadadhar Singha camped at Kajali fort and fought against the Moghuls. The king Rajeswar Singha once toured the whole Assam and he was accorded a warm welcome at Kajali. He visited the Kalsila Satra of Mayong. A reception camp was set up at Kalsila during his royal march to Kajali.⁴⁷

It appears that during Durlabh Narayan’s reign some families from places, as far as Kanauj in central India, were settled by him in Mayong area where the authority of the Kamata kings were getting weaker and weaker. At first, Brahmins and Kayasthas from Kanauj settled at Banduka in the 13th century. As they were displaced by the Hilly Rivers, they came to Kajali and remained there for some years. Thereafter, they left to the village of Alipukhuri in Nagaon right opposite from Singari on the North side of the Brahmaputra. The Brahmins were Raghupati, Lohar and Bayan and the Bhuyans, i.e the Kayasthas were Srihari and Chandibar Kayastha.⁴⁸

The Medieval History says that Mriganka died without issue. But it is probable that a grandson of Arimatta, ruled over the eastern Kamrupa. Later, the kings of Khan Dynasty ascended the throne of Kamatapur. But the kings of Khan Dynasty after Nilambar were unable to defend the Mogul aggression.

After the Khan kings, the kingdom of Kamrupa-Kamata were virtually disintegrated and a number of Bhuyan chiefs were holding control over it.⁴⁹ When the Muslims occupied that country and began to kill cows and Brahmins, they migrated to Gour. There also the Muslims followed

them and committed atrocities on the Hindus. The Bhuyans then shifted to Kamata and settled there.⁵⁰ At this stage the rise of the Koch power in Kamrupa put an end to this state of disorder. Since the kingdom of Mayong is essentially a Koch kingdom, it would be desirable to discuss the magnificence of the Koch history.

The founder king of the Koch dynasty was Biswasingha. This king had a very humble origin. His father, Haria Mandal was a village headman and married Hira and Jira, the two daughters of one Haju. Two sons were born to Hira and Jira - Bisu was the son of the former and Sisu was the son of the latter. It appears that Bisu, in his early youth, witnessed the fourth Mahammadan invasion of Hussain Shah and the fall of Nilambar the last Kamata king. After the fall of Nilambar, Bisu's father Haria came into conflict with the Bhuyan chief of Phulaguri. Haria was subdued and made to pay a tribute to the chief. Seeing the Humiliation of his father, Bisu resolved to take revenge on the Bhuyan's. Soon after that he embarked upon a mission of subduing the Bhuyans one after another, on either side of the Brahmaputra in the kingdom of Kamrupa. By about 1515 AD after throwing out all the Bhuyan Chiefs Bisu proclaimed himself as the king of Kamatapur and assumed the name of Biswa Singha.⁵¹

On Biswa Singha's death in 1540 AD, his son Malladeva ascended the throne assuming the name Naranarayan. Naranarayan appointed his brother Suklathwaj alias Chilarai as his Prime minister and commander-in-chief. Chilarai led the Koch armies with unvarying success to different kingdoms surrounding Kamata.

Mallathwaj (Naranarayan) and Suklathwaj (Chilarai) had their education at Benaras under the guidance of Acharyya, Brahmananda. During the reign of Naranarayana (1540-87), the Koch power reached its

zenith. The whole erstwhile Northeast region and the south east, the district of Kamrupa were included in the area of Dakhinkul or the south bank of Brahmaputra as far as Mayong and Dimoria including modern Guwahati and its neighbourhood. Kamrupa of the Kamata kings was the capital of the Koch king.⁵²

The Koch king, Biswa Singha (1496-1540) appointed the 18th Tributary kings in Dakhinkul of Brahmaputra. The Ahom king Swarganarayan named the Tributary kings as petty kings (*Powali Roja*)⁵³ The kingdoms of the petty Rajas of Luki, Barduar, Ouguri, Moirapur, Pantan, Dimoria, Bongaon and Mayong are situated on the south Bank of the Brahmaputra.⁵⁴

Formerly, the Kachari king committed atrocities on the Dimoria kingdom. So, the king of Dimoria, "Sona" and "Rup Singha" took shelter under the Koch king. Naranarayana appointed the king of Dimoria as the head of eighteen petty kings to protect the Dakhinkul from the Kachari king.⁵⁵ During the reign of Naranarayana, Dimoria paid at least 70 thousand rupees as tribute to the Koch king in 1564 AD. At that time the seven kingdoms viz. Ahom, Chutiya, Jayantia, Manipur, Dimoria, Kachari and Tiripura also paid their revenues at Satgaon (present Narengree) unitedly in the same place to the Koch king. So, the village is named as "Satgaon" meaning 'seven villages'.⁵⁶

Almost all the kings of the region were brought under subjugation by Chilarai- the general of Maharaj Naranarayana of the Koch kingdom and they agreed to pay tributes, among others, in terms of hundreds of thousands of rupees.⁵⁷

In the reign of Naranarayana, twelve kings of Koches which were formerly appointed by Biswasingha were invited to the capital of Kamrupa-Kamata to attack Gauda. Suddenly, it was stopped by negotiations. But the twelve kings of Nagaon, assembled at a place in lower Assam. Because of this reason the place in the district Kamrupa came to be known as "Nagaon". As the battle had been given up the kings were dissatisfied and to satisfy them Naranarayan held a fair in the style of the *Melas* celebrated in the Koch kingdom, where all sections of the people took part. The *Melas* held in the present day Mayong said to be continuation of this *Mela*. At a later period Malladeva the chief commander of Army suggested the twelve kings to perform Birpuja, i.e. the worship of the hero.⁵⁸

Mayong was ruled by another petty Koch king, Suinatta Singha. In the day to day administration of their kingdoms the vassal kings enjoyed maximum freedom and independence. These vassal kingdoms were treated something like autonomous political administrative units within the Ahom kingdom.⁵⁹ Prof. Bhuyan gives details in the name and nature of the tributary chiefdoms thus, "Darrang, Rani, Beltola, Luki, Barduar, Bholagaon, Moirapur, Pantan, Bangaon, Bageduar, Dimorua, Nelli, Gobha, Sahari, Dandua, Barapujia, Tupakuchia, Khaigoria, Panbari, Sara, Mayang, Dhing, Tetelia, Salmara, Garakhia, Baghara, Na-duar and Bhurbandha. These kings, either after being defeated or on their own, accepted the Ahom suzerainty."⁶⁰

The petty kings were completely independent in their administration. However they accepted the supremacy of the Ahom king and responded whenever the Ahom kings called them. Amongst them, Darrong, Ranee and Beltola were strong enough to stand alone and the others formed Heptarchy

and Pentarchy for their survival. Of course the list of kingdoms included in Heptarchy and Pentarchy were not clearly identified.⁶¹

“It is quite evident that though Ahom kingdom had administered Assam as a whole, yet the south bank of Brahmaputra still remained under several smaller but independent kingdoms of indigenous people. Amongst these, the kingdoms Nellie, Gova, Topakochi, Mayong, Dhing, Tetelia, Rani, Dimarua and Beltola etc were worth mentioning, after the weaker positions of the Koch-kingdom.”⁶²

“The Mayong area had a peculiar administrative system in the past. The region, as a whole, was ruled by several kings who were known as “Powali Raja”. There were as many as fourteen such kingdoms in this western part of Nagaon. Mayong itself was a kingdom.”⁶³ The region of traditional Mayong extended from Raha-Barapujia to the great fort of “Kajali”. It covers the whole district of Morigaon except the south bank of the river Kapili. Because of the existence of so many kings in the area of Mayong scholars have gone to the extent of calling Mayong “The land of Raja’s”.⁶⁴

With a view to extend, the territory of kingdom, for the first time, the Koch king of Mayong organized the Heptarchy (seven kings) and Pentarchy (five kings) with the twelve kings of the region. These kings helped the king of Mayong kingdom. Before the Ahom, the Heptarchy and Pentarchy were under the suzerainty of the Koch king. So, in that respect, they were known as the “Dekaraja” (Koch king). The Dekarajas could be appointed from among the common people also. The Heptarchy consisted of Chamua, Kakamari, Kachadhara, Barrangabari, Barapujia, Topakuchi and Khaigor while the Pentarchy consisted of Dandua, Baghara, Kumoi,

Sukhunagug, and Ghagua. Besides these, the king of Mayong appointed other Dekarajas at Manaha-Kacharigaon and gave him the charge of the *Maloibaria* that is the carrier of goods. The king Mayong also appointed two tributary kings at Bhuragaon and Bhurbandha.⁶⁵ All the vassal kings of the Koch dynasty owed allegiance to the king of Mayong. They maintained their Koch identity in spite of being subordinate to the Ahom king.⁶⁶ The Ahom king did not interfere in their administration and maintained cordial relations with the kingdom of Mayong.

According to Dharma Singha Deka, the Heptarchy and Pentarchy were the creations of the earlier Koch king of Topakuchi namely Man Singha and Ram Singha. Ranjit Singha the elder son of Man Singha ruled the eastern part of the Topakuchi kingdom. Later, the five sons of Ranjit Singha ruled the Pentarchy viz. Topakuchi, Barapujia, Sara, Khaigor and Mikirgaon. On the other hand, Jay Singha the elder son of Ram Singha, ruled the kingdom dividing the area of the west of Nagaon district into seven kingdoms for his seven sons viz. Mayang, Kumoi, Torani Kalbari, Sukhunagog, Tetelia, Ghagua and Baghara.⁶⁷

The area of middle Assam is also known as the land of seven kings. The names of the seven kingdoms were 1. Mayong, 2. Dimoria, 3. Gobha, 4. Nelli, 5. Khalá, 6. Kumoi and 7. Dandua.⁶⁸

According to Dr. Hatem Ali the Heptarchy consisted of - Kumoi, Baghara, Torani-Kalbari, Tetelia, Sukhunagog, Kumoi-Kacharigaon and Ghagua-Kalbari which differs slightly from the list provided by Dharma Singha Deka. He has further stated that Mayong Kumoi-Kacharigaon, Bhuragaon and Dhing were inhabited by the Kacharis; Ghagua Kalbari, Tarani Kalbari, Beltola were inhabited by the Karbis; Barapujia,

Tupakuchia were inhabited by the Tiwas (Lalungs). He has not quoted any source of his information. However, during field work for the present study most of the informants stated that all these were Koch kingdoms.⁶⁹

On the other hand, some local literary works include Mayong in the Heptarchy-under the Ahom kingdom. According to these works the names of the kingdoms under the Heptarchy are Mayong, Kumoi, Tarani-Kalbari, Sukhunagog, Tetelia, Ghagua and Baghara. These literary works also mention these kingdoms to be inhabited by the Koches. Of course the Historical works are not of the same opinion regarding the constituent kingdoms of the Heptarchy.⁷⁰

In this connection it may be mentioned that all the historical works have expressed similar opinion regarding the constitution of the Pentarchy and have mentioned Sara, Khaighor, Topakochi, Barapujia and Mikirgaon to be the constituents.⁷¹ These works also uniformly maintain that the Pentarchy was under the Ahom kingdom. There were 72 vassal kingdoms in the Brahmaputra valley under the Ahoms. Dr. Halem Ali classified the vassal kingdoms into Dantiparia, Satorajia, Panchorajia, and Ahom paria. He included Mayong in Ahomparia.⁷² Of course there are evidences of the fact that the Heptarchy, the Pentarchy, and the kingdom of Mayong, all are "Kochparia". Maharaja, Biswa Singha and Naranarayana, both appointed the former twelve kings as Dekarajas. They are still maintaining the Koch Royal Traditions. Of course they gave the charge of collecting revenue by the Ahom king for the respective Purganas.

The above study shows that the kings in the Heptarchy and Pentarchy are appointed by the king of Mayong. They are separate from the twelve kings appointed by the Ahom kings. But Mayong is excluded from

the Heptarchy according to the list showing revenue to be collected from different chieftains of Kamrup, Darrang and Nagaon,.

An agreement was signed between the Captain Welsh and Gaurinath Singha, the king of Assam on 12 February in 1794 AD.. The following is the detailed list⁷³ of the revenue to be collected from different Chieftains of Kamrup, Darang and Nagaon as per the agreement.

Dumariyah	Rs. 5,000/-
Kamrup (jaigirdhan)	Rs. 80,000/-
Darrang	Rs. 50,000/-
Beltola	Rs. 2,500/-
Rani GAon	Rs. 6,000/-
Na-duar	Rs. 15,000/-
Chatgurriah	Rs. 2,000/-
Chutia	Rs. 2,000/-
Charduar	Rs. 6,000/-
Ghiladhari	Rs. 3,000/-
Mayang & Panbari	Rs. 400/-
Dhing	Rs. 2,000/-
Sat-Rajiyas	Rs. 1,000/-
Bebajiyas-Pancharajyas	Rs. 1,000/-
Nowgong	Rs. 2,000/-
Kharangi	Rs. 2,000/-
Chaunadiriya	Rs. 400/-
Duaria	Rs. 400/-
<u>Kandahar choky & Kalitas of Bengal hat</u>	<u>Rs. 20,000/-</u>
Total	Rs.2,00,700/-

The king of Mayong created the Heptarchy and Pentarchy to the eastern side of his kingdom for the sake of safety. The Heptarchy and Pentarchy became the purganas of Kamrupa during the reign of the Ahom king, Rudra Singha. ⁷⁴ Of course, they were independent in their administration of their kingdoms.

After the self exile of Nilambar from the Khan dynasty, during the reign of the Koch king Biswa Singha, the Koch prince, Suinatta Singha ascended the throne of Mayong in 1538 A.D. According to the Rajaghariya Gaid i.e. the document containing the genealogy of the kings of Mayong, Suinatta Singha was the brother of the Kachari king Satrudaman of Maibong. Some people are of the opinion that the name Mayong is derived from this Maibong. But according to information provided by Ghanakanta Singha, the father of the present king and former king of Mayong the first king of Mayong belonged to the Koch community. They say that the introductory chapter of the Rajaghariya Gaid has been incorporated at a later period. He ascended the throne at the age of 35 years. He married Phuleswari, the daughter of Joy Singha, the king of Topakuchi at the age of 45 years. At the first time, he resided in Burha Mayong located beside the Mayong hill. He had two sons namely Muhit Singha and Moniram Singha. After his death Mohit Singha ascended the throne of Mayong kingdom in 1547 A.D. He immediately, appointed Saruman Deka and Mahiram Deka of that area as the "Deka Rajas". He was fond of hunting instead of political activities. Hence, the subjects of Mayong deposed him. Thereafter his eldest son Moniram Singha ascended the throne in 1552 AD. He tried to beautify the kingdom. He ruled for eight years till his death. ⁷⁵

On his death, Krishna Singha, the son of the former king Muhit Singha ascended the throne in 1560 AD. He did some valuable works for the welfare of his subjects such as digging out of ponds for drinking water.

He died in 1562 AD. suddenly after a brief spell of dysentery. He left behind two sons Kamaleswar Singha and Dadhi Singha.

After the death of Krishna Singha his brother Ananta Singha ascended the throne. Deka Raja, Saruman was not happy on his ascending the throne. So, he killed the king by conspiracy, giving poison in food.

At the death of Ananta Singha, his relative Singiram Singha ascended the throne in 1564 AD. As soon as his ascending, convicted the Deka Raja "Saruman" for killing the former king, killed the Deka Raja-Saruman. He died in 1572 AD.

After the death of Singiram Singha, Kamaleswar Singha, the son of former king Krishna Singha, ascended the throne in 1572 AD. He immediately appointed Rachik Deka as the Deka Raja, to fill up the post of late Saruman Deka. He also did some welfare activities and appointed the expert hunters to capture elephants.⁷⁶

On Kamaleswar Singha's death, his brother Dadhi Singha ascended the throne in 1581 AD. but he did nothing for his kingdom, he died a premature death.

On sudden death of Dadhi Singha, Soniram Singha, the son of Moniram Singha a family relative, ruled the kingdom from 1584 to 1590 AD. He constructed a road from Raja-Mayong to Burhamayong. He excavated a big pond for fishing in the western side of the village. The name of pond was "Kali Pukhuri". At that time, Cholera spread out in the area and he died in cholera in 1590 AD.

Svarachcha Chandra Singha, the third son of former king of Muhit Singha, ruled the kingdom of Mayong from 1590 AD to 1615 AD. His period of governance was a golden time of the Mayong kingdom. He extended the boundary of the kingdom. He was the maker of the fortune of the Mayong kingdom. A large number of Shrines and Monasteries had been established during his reign. He had a good relation with the Ahom king, Pratap Singha. The Ahom king sent a Golden Crown to the king of Mayong. He appointed all the office bearers regularly and administered the royal government in a disciplined way. He died of old age and left behind fourteen sons who served the kingdom of Mayong in different capacities.

It is said that the worshipping of the “Pancha Devata” the five sole deities of the universe and the fair, popularly known as *Mela Utsav* coinciding it, began during his reign.⁷⁷

He went on a Pilgrimage to Koch Behar (Nabadvipa) to bring the images of “Pancha Devata”. Initially he brought the image of Basundeva (Krishna) of “Salagrama”, for the royal adoration and other two idols for the respective royal “Medhis”. He started the yearly Royal worship of the “Pancha Devata” during his reign. He proclaimed that every subjects of the kingdom of Mayong would follow the rites of the “Five deities (Pancha Devata)”; otherwise, their family would be cursed by the five deities.

The king, Ranjit Singha added two more deities of and called them “The Pancha Devata” i.e. the five gods. This festival is marked by full public participation and is continuing till date in Raja Mayong. This “Pancha Devata” fair has inculcated social cohesion, consensus, fraternity and religious tolerance in the present society.

The process of Royal festival:- In the first week of Bohag (On 4th, 5th and 6th day), four deities (Gossains) are brought with the four royal Medhis to the gate of the royal Temple of "Basudeva" of the Mayong kingdom. On the fourth day of the month of Bohag, the office bearers of the royal family, the Dekaraja, Bishayas, Medhis, Pators, Senapatis, the royal Priest and messengers also remain present there. They are felicitated with the sacred "Sarai" consisting of earthen lamp, incense, Ghat, i.e. an earthen jar with neck (sacred waster) & big musical drums (Bardhol). Thereafter, the king proclaims that they have to go to two other places, namely, Hatimuria and Burha-Mayong on the next two days.⁷⁸ At one time the king of Mayong had his "pam" i.e. agricultural farms, at these places for which the procession was led to these places.

On the next day i.e. the fifth day of the month of Bohag, the important portfolio holders like the Deka Raja, the Brahmin, the Pators, the Bishaya, the Bayan, the Bangthai (Commander in chief) the Tamuli, the Maloibaria, the Thakuria remain present in front of the king's Mansion. As soon as they arrive there, the Medhi brings the garland and Brahmins distribute it according to the directions of the king. Thereafter, the king ascends on "Dola" and starts the procession of the festival to the "Hatimuriya" village. The other Bishoyas of the *than* of Bamtun Gossain ritually welcome the king and Gossains. After these, the king takes the Royal seat on a particular rock known as the Dhaphkota rock, and the others take their respective seats. As the king takes his seat, the traditional artists and dancers of the Bangthai family start their dance to the tune of a musical instrument called the "Kali". The Brahmins distribute garlands once again. After the end of traditional dance, all respectable people chant "Harikirtan" i.e. the glories of the God. After this, the day long programme ends and they return home.

'On the sixth day of Bohag' - the important Bishayas mentioned above, come again, to front of the kings palace and take out the procession to "Burhamayong" which lies about at the distance of about 3 k.ms. from Raja-Mayong. The itinerary of the procession is same as that of the previous day. They sit on their respective seats when they arrive at Burhamayong village which used to be the residence of the king in the past.

People thronged the road to witness the procession from Raja-Mayong to Burhamayong. Remaining members of the family offer the sacred 'sarai', 'lamp', betel nut, leaf, garland, gamocha, cheleng. A gamocha or cheleng is laid along the street in front of the Royal procession. It is believed that, laying a gamocha to be stepped by the procession wards off diseases and misfortune. Besides these, the people of Mayong bow down in front of the gossain and the king. The people of the royal procession pay obeisance to the Kachaikhaiti than of Raja-Mayong and Ma Kamakhya than situated in the Mayong hill.

On the way of return, they come to the place "Kathpara" located in the north side of the village of Burhamayong, the king offers the awards to the members of the Bangthai clan. At every prescribed place of festival, the people of the Royal Procession chant the name of "Pancha-Devata" as – *Jay, Mayongor Pancho Devota, Chintakoriye; Jayo, Mayongor Bhagavatee, Kachaikhaiti, Burhiai, Kamakhya-Devi, Chintakorie, Om Hari, Om Rama!*⁷⁹

"The Karbi Bishayas and dancers people give a full scream in a graceful manner on the last day in front of the king :-

a somalo, somalo oi, Damahi Bikang, (dance)

Damahi Dam (sing)

Gar Bhangar Utsav: (breaking of embankment),

After the returning of the Royal procession, all the people assemble in the precincts of the Royal Temple. Before entering the Temple, a traditional rite is performed by the people on this auspicious occasion. It is said that this ceremony in commemoration of Krishna's return from Ghunucha. The story runs that once, Lord Krishna went out on a procession to the city of "Ghunucha" where the divine consort of Krishna resided and he stayed there for at least seven days. This is the ceremonial day of returning. So the supporters of Goddess Lakshmi make a strong Bamboo-Fencing to impede the army accompanying the Lord Krishna as he lied to his legitimate wife, Lakshmi. Finally, the King's side, that is, the members of the procession representing the side of Lord Krishna pays an amount of three hundred rupees to appease the barricade holders. After that, Basudeva enters into the Royal Temple and take Prasada that is, the sacramental food is offered to a deity and the royal festival comes to an end.⁸⁰

Now a day, this ceremony has emerged as a major social institution in Raja-Mayong. The important personalities are invited to join in the festival. Among others it is attended by the Deputy Commissioner of the district of Morigaon, Ministers of the state Government many other dignitaries. Besides these, modern Bihu dance is also performed on this auspicious occasion at the village of Raja-Mayong, Hatimuria and Burhamayong village respectively.

There are four families of Royal Priests viz. that of 1. Hara Chandra Sharma 2. Goja Kanta Sharma 3. Santadhan Sharma and Gopal Chandra

Sharma. They had been settled in Mayong at the village of Hatimuria. There were at least 21 families of Brahmins at Hatimuria in the past for which, the place is still known as Bamun-Chuburi. There is an image of Bongshi Gopal of pure copper in the temple at Hatimuria which was worshiped by the Priests.

The four families of "Medhis" (Royal Pujaris) of Salagramas which are given to them by the king of Raja-Mayong are:-

1. Dandadhar Nath from Panisara Jak.
2. Gahin Nath from Kana Jak.
3. Tolaram Nath from Goda Jak.
4. Sukuman Nath from Nowa Jaka.
5. Bayan Nath, Muhidhar Nath (An Artist).

These Royal Medhis were appointed by the king of Mayong king in 1590 AD.⁸¹

Three important Royal families:

(1) The king, Muhit Singha had four sons are known as "Chari Bhagi".

(2) The king, Moniram Singha had nine sons are known as "Noi - Bhagi" and

(3) The king, Svarchcha Chandra Singha had 14th sons of his own, known as the "Saidhya Bhagi".

The king Muhit Singha accepted the "Sharan" from the Gossain of Kaliabar. The king, Moniram Singha who adopted the "Sharan" from the "Sildubi Satra" belonged to the kingdom of Mayong.

The king, Svarachcha Chandra Singha took Sharan i.e. got initiated into Vaishnavism from the Gossain of the 'Satra' of "Pat-Bausi". The

above three Royal families from Kalsila, Hatimuria and Raja-Mayong still get initiated into Vaisnavism in conformity with this tradition..

Relation between the kingdom of Mayong and the Ahom kingdom:-
The king of Mayong, Svarachcha Chandra Singha established a cordial relationship with the Ahom king, Pratap Singha. The Ahom king sent a “*dola*” i.e. a palanquin to the king of Mayong as a gesture of recognition and good will. He also presented a Golden Crown to the king of Mayong, as a mark of recognition of independence of the king of Mayong.

King Prem Singha:- (1615-1621)- After the death of Svarachcha Chandra Singha, his son Prem Singha ruled the kingdom of Mayong from 1615 to 1621 AD. He looked after all the shrines and monasteries established by the former king. He extended the territory of the kingdom. He opened the shrines for public use. He commanded complete allegiance from his subjects. He died in 1621 AD.

The king Gobinda Chandra Singha was the brother of Prem Singha. Gobinda Chandra Singha ruled Mayong from 1622 to 1630 AD. During his reign, a big pond was dug at Hatimuriya. The Brahmin played a major role in digging out of that pond. So it is known as “Brahman Pukhuri” and is used for commercial production of fish at present. The village people of Hatimuriya use it for washing clothes and Bathing in general.⁸²

The king, Keshav Singha (1630-39 AD.), cousin of the former king, Kashav Singha ruled Mayong from 1630 to 1639 AD. He dug out two ponds viz “Kaliram Hira Pukhuri” and “Dariya Hira pukhuri”. He collected revenue from these two ponds in lieu of permission for fishing. When Saruman died the king appointed one Gendhelo as the Dekaraja.

The king, Bidita Singha the brother of the former king ruled the kingdom of Mayong from 1639 to 1643 AD. The Royal Priest, Hari-Chandra fell ill and died during his reign.

Bhem Singha, the son of the former king Govinda Chandra Singha ascended the throne of the kingdom of Mayong after the death of Bidita Singha in the year 1643 and ruled till the year 1655. He also excavated a famous pond in Raja-Mayong village after discussion with the preists Rajendra Nath and Gahin Nath. But a calf accidentally fell into the pond. Since then, people did not take water from this pond for a long time. At last, this pond was purified by Brahminical rites and after that people started using its water. So, this pond is still known as "Garumara Pukhuri" i.e. the pond where a sow died. Of course the name has been changed to "Lakhi Pukhuri" now-a-days. He constituted a formal "Rajdurbar" consisting of all the Bishayas of the Royal administration.⁸³

The king Keerti Singha was the son of Bhem Singha. He ascended the throne in 1655 AD after the death of Bhem Singha and ruled till 1662 AD. During his reign, an embankment was constructed in the south west of the Beel of Amaramul which is known also as the "Hatee Garh" and was used for elephant capturing. The two Senapatis - Huhak Mikir and Garjan Mikir had been appointed to capture elephants. There was a huge tree called "Amara" in Assamese, with a girth of twelve cubits. The name of the beel is said to have originated from this tree.

The next king, Amar Singha was the brother of the former king Kirti Singha and ruled from 1662 to 1672 AD. As soon as he ascended the throne, he captured elephants at least, ten elephants out of which four were

released as they were too old. He was talented and excellent administrator. He kept two elephants and presented the other four elephants to the Ahom king, Jayadhwaj Singha for maintaining cordial relationship. As a result of that the Ahom king had offered a golden-crown and two golden coins to the Mayong king. Since then, the kingdom of Mayong had a friendly relation with the Ahom kingdom.⁸⁴

After the death of Amar Singha in 1773 AD, Nakul Singha the son of Bhem Singha ascended throne and ruled till 1775 AD. He was disinterested in Royal administration. On that very ground, the subjects of Mayong deposed him. Hence, he was known as the “Bhanga Raja” i.e. the deposed king. In his time after the death of Santaram Sharma, his son, Moneswar Sharma was appointed as the Royal, Priest, for the worship of the “Salagrama” and Shrines.

The next king, Bhagadatta Singha (1675-82 AD.), was the son of Kirti Singha. He ascended the throne in 1675 AD and ruled till 1782 AD. Like the king Svarachcha Chandra Singha, he was very fond of Pilgrimage. He appointed Santaram Mikir as the Bangthai, i.e. chieftain of that clan. After discussion with the Bishayas and Medhis, he decided to start the “Malpuja”, the deity of physical power (Malshram). During the Puja, the priest carries the “mal” i.e. symbolic representation of the deity of physical power from the king’s house to Burhamayong while the king’s men display their arms in a procession. They offer a peculiar type of sacramental food to the deity at the corner of the village of Gobhali and the deity was immersed in a deep pond specially dug for this purpose.

The king Gopal Chandra Singha, the son of the former king, Keerti Singha, ruled Mayong from 1682 to 1689 AD. He appointed Behula Koch,

the son of Toleswar Bishaya as the Bishaya after his father's death. Again, the king appointed Tonuram Nath, the son of Tolaram Nath from "Goda Jak" as the priest of their caste after his father's death. The Royal priest Jay Chandra Sharma died of old age and after him, his son, Bhakatram Sharma was appointed as the Royal priest.⁸⁵

The next king Ranjit Singha (1689-94 AD.), was the brother of the former king, Gopal Chandra Singha. It has already been mentioned that he added two more deities to existing three and called them "The Pancha Devata" i.e. the five gods.(Page 19)** In this connection, Sukuman Nath was appointed as the new Medhi (Pujari). Since then, his family was known as Nowa Jak.

The king, Mahat Singha (1694-98 AD.), was the son of Gopal Chandra Singha, during his time, after the death of Gahin Nath, his son, Kanuram Nath was appointed as the Bishaya. Bhoganath was appointed as the Bishaya after the death of Rajendra Bishaya. Another former Bishaya, Gohin Koch of "Tamuli Dobhi" which is presently belonged to 'Pabitora Range' died of old age and his brother, Gerjan Koch was appointed as Bishaya.

The king Siva Singha.(1698-1701 AD.), son of Mahat Singha ascended the throne in 1698 AD. During his time, Jageswar Mikir (Pator) died and his son, Jutula Mikir was appointed to his post. Again Nanda Nath, from 'Panisara' Jak died of illness and his son Durlabh Nath was appointed as the Royal "Pujari". The king Siva Singha died of "Cholera". He left behind him two sons, one of them, Ramjay Singha migrated to Bhuragaon and established a Vassal kingdom at Bhuragaon.

The king Chandita Singha (1701-05 AD.), was the son of the former king, Ranjit Singha. As soon as he ascended the throne, he wanted to capture elephants. With this purpose, the chief commander (Senapati) Garjan Mikir constructed the Hatigar i.e. embankment made for trapping Elephant. During the process of capturing elephant a she elephant attacked one of the trappers killed him. The king felt deep sorrow at this and gave an amount of Rs 500 to his wife as compensation. During his reign, one of his army commanders named Loder Mikir died and his son, Lohong Mikir was appointed as the commander. Again, a Bishaya named Thapau Koch died of old age and his son, Thaneswar Koch was appointed as the Bishaya. One Bhador Mikir was appointed as a commander after the death of a commander named Bhogdhar Mikir.⁸⁶

The king Balita Narayan Singha (1705-40 AD.), was the brother of the former king, Chandita Singha during his time, agriculture was done on a cooperative basis and the produce was equally distributed among the households. A big Rocky "platform" was carved out at the village of Kalsila with a view to distribute the produce. After the harvesting, another great development is that Balita Narayan Singha carried out an expedition to the east side of the kingdom accompanied with the Dekaraja, Bishayas, senapatis, soldiers, Medhis, Patars, Bangthais and Thakurias. He met the two village chieftains and other important persons of the village of "Jahi". He appointed the seven kings (Heptarchy) in discussion with the Bishayas. These seven kings were Chamua, Kakamari, Kachadhara, Barangabari, Barapujiya, Topakochi and Khaigar. After appointing the Heptarchy, he came towards the west and appointed the five kings (Pentarchy) from Dandua, Baghara, Kumai, Sukhunagog, and Ghagua. They were known as 'Pachorajia'. Besides these, through his expedition, he appointed Charaikhowa Dekaraja from Manaha village as the Maloibariya that is, the

carrier of provisions. The people of Manaha village came from the River Valley of "Manah". So, the village is named as "Manaha". The people of the village were Koch by caste.⁸⁷

The king, Amrit Singha (1740-49 AD.), was the son of the former king, Siva Singha. In his time, Mahidhar Bayan died and his son, Mani Nath was appointed as the Bayan (Satriya Musical Artist). He celebrated all the yearly Functions of the Monasteries and the Royal family. He wanted to look after the whole area under the Heptarchy and Pentarchy. He died of dysentery after visiting the vassal kings or Dekarajas.

The king Bhogali Singha (1749-58 AD.), was the son of the former king, Chandita Singha, during his time after the death of Chutiman Hira, his son, Gonaram Hira was appointed as the (Thakuria). He, again, appointed Gariya Hira, son of Kolaram Dariya Hira as the thakuria after his death. He also celebrated the yearly "Maroi Puja".

The king, Padmaram Singha (1758-86 AD.), was the son of the former king Balita Narayan Singha. He ascended the throne after the death of Bhogali Singha. He also appointed Sukumar Mikir, son of Santaram Mikir after his death. He again appointed Keta Koch, the relative of Kehala Koch (former Bishaya) as the Bishaya. He also carried out the annual worship in the shrines.⁸⁸

The king Luhit Singha (1786-90 AD.), was the son of Gopal Singha ascended throne after the death of Padmaram Singha. In his time, the Royal "Medhi" Sukumar Nath died and his son, Khora Nath was appointed as "Royal Medhi" again, the Bishaya Garjan Koch also died of illness and Sapalu Koch was appointed to the post. The king also celebrated all the

yearly religious adorations of the Shrines. After the death of Moni Bayan, Ghatbar Nath was appointed to that post. Religious functions are essential to the king of Mayong. It was his duty to celebrate the rites by the Brahmins, or pujaries. Otherwise the king would be considered weaker and unfit to the throne.

The king, Koloram Singha (1790-1810 AD.), ascended the throne after the death of his father Luit Singha. He was very fond of Pilgrimage amongst the king of Mayong kongdom. He went on a Pilgrimage to Koochbehar (Navadwipa) after discussion with Bishaya, Medhi, Bangthai, Pator etc. He arrived there after one month and stayed there for about three months. During his time, after the death of Anuram Nath of Gadajak, his son Taling Nath, was appointed as the Royal "Medhi".

The king, Lakshmi Singha (1810-25 AD.), was the son of Kularam Singha, the former king of Mayong during his time Bishnuram Sharma was appointed as the Royal priest after the death of his father Khargeswar Sharma. Jaradia Mikir was appointed as the "patar" after the death of Jachula Mikir. Again, Gelai Mikir was appointed as a senapati, after the death of Garzan Mikir.⁸⁹

The king, Pratap (Singha) Narayan (1825-40 AD.), was the son of former king "Lakhi Singha". He created, a further post of "Dolia Bora". Rachik Hira was the Dulia Bora. In his time, Koloram Medhi was died of oldness and his son, Ganthimara Medhi was appointed as the Medhi.

The king, Ban Singha (1840-55 AD.), was son of Lakhi Singha. He ascended the throne after the death of Pratap Narayan Singha. During his time, Durlav Nath died and Dev Nath from "Panee Sara Jak" was appointed

as the "Medhi". He looked after the yearly rites of monasteries. The Maroi Puja was discontinued from his time. The British administration annexed the Mayong kingdom, into the erstwhile Nagaon district. The king raised his objections in the interest of preserving and protecting the Mayong kingdom.

The king, Narayan Singha (1855-75 AD.), was the son of the former king Ban Singha. During his time, "Mauza administration" was introduced in his kingdom. The king had to pay 25% of this revenue to the British.

After the death of Bhakat Ram Sharma, former royal priest of Mayong kingdom, his son, Kandarpa Sharma migrated to the Baghara village. During his reign, a new born Rhinoceros was domesticated in the Royal family. It was named "Garanee". A British officer Cambel and others came to the king's house and wanted to buy the Cero. But, the king did not transfer her to British people. Once, it took the food of the Royal "feast" at Phani Konwar's house at Raja-Mayong and died of fever.⁹⁰

The belongings of the Royal Family:- The Rajaghariya Goid records a list of belongings of the royal family of Mayong. The big musical drum, the small musical drum, chabuk (a whip), chamaj (A scourge of leather). One iron Dola (palanquin) Kekora dola, Chariya dola, Barchatra, Dhekur dola, etc. There was a durbar house and a separate house of weapons containing borhilo, bows and arrows, gunpowder, sword and shields and spears.

The king (1875-1899 AD), Bakat Singha, ascended the throne on the death of Narayan Singha. During his time, Motiram Koch was appointed to the post of Bishaya after the death of former Bishaya of the Ketakharia

phoid. The post of Senapati was abolished after the death of Gelasing Mikir. On the other hand, after the death of former Thakuria, Nidhiram Hira, his village was ruined and the Hira phoid became extinct in Mayong kingdom. In his time, Jaydev Sharma was appointed to the post of Royal priest after the death of Bishnuram Sharma. On Dau Nath's death, his son, Chenaram Nath, was appointed to the post of Royal "Medhi". He did lot of administrative functions. Men were engaged for carrying the dola i.e. the palanquin, till his time. He died of illness. The epidemic disease, cholera spread during his time.⁹¹

The king, Rahan Singha (1899-1920 AD.), was the elder son of the former king, Bakat Singha. He ascended the throne after the death of the king Bakat Singha. In his time, after the death of Gagan Nath, his relative Niral Nath was appointed to the post of Royal "Medhi". After that, the two sons of Motiram Koch, Dhirai Bishaya and Mahendra Bishaya took the charge of Bishaya. After the death of Kajal Nath from Barua Jak, his son, Jaybar Nath was appointed as the Royal Bishaya. The king insisted upon celebrating the rituals of the Shrines of Mayong. On Ghatbar Bayan's death, his son Haliram Nath was appointed to the post of Bayari and he was given extra charge of Bishaya. Again, after the death of Ganthiram Nath, his relative Bharat Nath was appointed to the post of Royal "Medhi of Kana" Jak. After some days, his brother, Bipra Nath was appointed to the post of Royal "Medhi" on account of illness of Bharat Nath. After the death of Tabhuram Medhi, that post was abolished. In this ways, the king did a lot of Administrative works. On his death, his son, Baneswar Singha ascended the throne in 1930.

The king, Baneswar Singha (1930-1957), was the maker of modern Mayong. He was an able administrator. He participated in the freedom

movement of India. He was known for his political knowledge and social consciousness. The British administration of the district of Nagaon appointed him as the member of "Jury" of the British court. He appointed other two Dekaraja, Daneswar Deka and Purnashing Deka as he had to be present in the district (Jury) court of Nagaon. On the other hand, Maheswar Nath was appointed to the post of Royal Medhi after the death of the former Medhi Tabhurar Medhi. Bakuram Medhi was appointed to the post of "Medhi" after the death of Niral Nath. During his time, Jaydev Brahmin worshiped in the shrines and monasteries of Mayong kingdom. But he died without any issue. Since then, the Brahmin sect was extinct in Mayong as the Royal priest.⁹²

During his time, a primary school was established in the east side of the "Bamun Pukhuri" in 1937. The sole duty of the constructions of the school was given to Hari Gogoi, another maker of person of modern Mayong. Besides these, a "Volunteer Bahini" and "Mrityu Bahini" of the national congress party were organized by the people of Mayong under the leadership of the king. The training for these two forces were established at Hatimuriya near the Primary school. The king, Baneswar Singha was the king during the declaration of independence of India in 1947. He died of illness on the Tilhi of "Bhim-Ekadashi in 1960 crossing hundred years of Age.

On his illness, his brother Minaram Singha ascended the throne in 1957-80 AD. He also, celebrated the yearly functions of Royal Manasteries. He was himself a practitioner of "Mal Shram" the deity of physical power. He could carry a grown up buffalo on his back.

The king, Ghanakanta Singha, ascended the throne after the death of king, Minaram Singha in 1980. He was also a freedom fighter and the Raj Medhi of "Salagrama" in absence of the Royal priest (Brahmin). He accepted the "Sharan" from the "Auniati Satra" of North Guwahati. He inaugurated the public "Mayong Museum". He is a Vaishnava of the Sharania unit of Damudaria bhakti cult.

Owing to his illness and old age he handed over his charge to his elder son Sri Tarani Kanta Singha. He ascended the throne on 3rd Bohag (17th April) in 2005 AD. observing traditional rites with Hari Kirtan. He invited all the members of the traditional Heptarchy and Pentarchy. The king of "Ghagua" and the king of Kachodhora were also present in the Royal festival in the Mayang Kingdom.⁹³

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