



Imperialism in the Making of Cooch Behar State: Role of Political Agents

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In the second half of the 19th century, the Indian sub-continent was finally divided into two distinct identities; the British Indian States, and the princely India. Initially, there were two ways to extend British rule: either by making conquest over the Native States or through inducing the voluntary consent of the Indians. The British Indian States, they ruled directly but the princely States, they ruled indirectly. The political Agents were, of course, nothing new in the British Indian administration. The British Residents and political Agents were appointed to the more important position to act as the “eyes and ears” of the Government.¹ They were expected, being on the spot, to observe and report regularly on all major events occurring in the states and to recommend appropriate measures where necessary. It was true that the company was, after all, more interested in profit making than in any civilizing mission.² During the period of 1870's that the political Agents, as instruments of reform and modernisation was realised, though such possibilities were anticipated by Lord Canning as early as in 1860.³

It was to be noted before that the Kamata Koch kingdom or Koch Behar State became Cooch Behar State during the period of Anglo-Koch treaty of 1773. After that, the situation became complicated, when there was the clash between Nazir Deo Khagendra Narayan and Sarbananda Gosain (a mentor and favourite of the Queen). At that time Harendra Narayan, the minor king and his mother were seized and confined at Balarampur.⁴

For this stage, the East India Company sent an enquiry Commission to see into every detail of the administration. The enquiry Commission gave report to the Government and the Government accepted the recommendation of the commissioners and appointed British Resident or commissioner in Cooch Behar State in 1789.

During the period from 1789 to 1800, Henry Douglas, C. A. Bruce T. W. Smith and Richard Ahmuty were efficient Commissioners of Cooch Behar State and they played a vital role in controlling the Cooch Behar's administration. Their main objective was to take care of the land revenue administration. Lord Cornwallis assured the Raja of Cooch Behar (the Minor king Harendra Narayan) that the appointment of commissioner was temporary, and not

permanent.⁵ A huge number of letters were exchanged with the Governor General, the Secretary and Sub-Secretary to Government and the Commissioners of the Cooch Behar State from time to time.⁶ The Commissioners informed to the Government of their day to day decisions with regard to the numbers of problem of the State. In fact, the Commissioners became the real administrator of the State. During this period, steps were taken up for the betterment of the Revenue administration.⁷ Other issues relating to administration or functioning of the State affairs, however remained untouched. Henry Douglas was appointed the first British Resident in Cooch Behar in 1789 with a monthly salary of Rs. 1,500.⁸ He was instructed to manage the administration of the State and was also to guide the king properly and make him fit for administration. Incidentally, When Douglas took over the charge as British Resident or Commissioner in Cooch Behar, Harendra Narayan was only ten years old. The British Government was taken carefully so far as the young Raja's education and all the responsibility in this respect were concerned.⁹ Jay Nath Munshi was appointed as one of the tutors of Harendra Narayan.

It may be noted that some remarkable changes were brought in by Henry Douglas in the administration of Cooch Behar. Some of them were really outstanding and these are as under- (a) The Commissioner's signature and seal must be put-on side by side with that of the Maharaja.¹⁰ (b) Separate criminal and revenue courts were established and respective seal for each court was introduced. Henry Douglas' first attention was to look into the revenue administration of Cooch Behar State. When Douglas took charge of his office, the condition of the exchequer was very deplorable. He informed the detailed report to the Governor General on the condition of the State. He observed, "From the monthly accounts, which have been transmitted to your Lordship will have been perceived the very impoverished state of the Cooch Behar Treasury: that the expenses have exceeded the revenue and the deficiency has been obliged to be supplied by loans".¹¹

Henry Douglas observed many abuses and irregularities with regard to land Revenue settlement. First of all, there was too many taxes in the State, there was no practice to fix rent.¹² The State was not given the regular deed of agreement to the cultivators. The *Ryot* had to pay **Nazzars** and **Salamis** to the officials, but there were not clear accounts. Sarbananda Gosain aquired large portion of the lands and Maharani enjoyed the whole of the Raja's private land. For this situation, real revenue of the State gradually deteriorated. Besides, the interest on money as reported by Douglas, "has never been regulated except by the avarice of the lender and the necessities of the

borrower so that in common 72 percent has been considered as very moderate interest and what almost exceed belief that in many instances which come to my immediate knowledge, 360 present has been exacted. Money landing was so profitable that the Sepoys of the company had to a share in this business. In 1783, Captain Duncanson had lent an amount of rupees 14,901 to the minor king of Cooch Behar. He was not satisfied with an annual return of rupee 21,000 as the interest was considered to be very low".¹³ Again he states, "as a result of extortion by the revenue collectors and the exploitation by the money lender a good number of Ryots fled from the state resulting in further reduction of the revenue of the state. Douglas had introduced certain reforms which helped to increase the revenue of the state and provided "great relief to the Ryots too. The first ever settlement was completed under his direct supervision".¹⁴

Therefore, Douglas had main attention to introduce a uniform system of Revenue collection pattern in the Cooch Behar state. First of all he introduced the *Ijaradari* system in land revenue settlement of Cooch Behar State. Before coming of Douglas, the revenue of the State collected by the State officer was named as *Sazwals*. The land revenue settlement was made annually by the supervision of British Resident of Douglas. Douglas had placed so much faith as a suitable settlement for Cooch Behar.¹⁵

Charles Andrew Bruce became the Commissioner of Cooch Behar in place of Henry Douglas in 1791. The British East India Company ordered C. A. Bruce to see all the documents with regard to the revenue settlement of Cooch Behar State. Government also gave suggestions to Bruce that he might follow the previous settlement or to prepare any alternative plan which could be different from the system suggested by the previous Commissioner of Cooch Behar State.¹⁶ Bruce gave the proposal to the Government that previous revenue settlement was not sound and needed modifications. There was a serious defect and so he did not want the system to continue. The defect was the villagers and others who let them again the intermediate agents. Bruce gave some proposals to remedy the evils. He introduced his reforms in Boda, Patgram and Purbabhag. For these areas he introduced the farming system. Every village had prepared a farm and the farm was controlled by the **Pradhan** or the head Ryots of the village. The Ryots should pay the expense of the village **Patwaries** and other charges. Commissioner gave appointment to the pradhan for one year and paid the revenue in installments calculated on their crops. According to Bruce, this system was benefited both the Ryots and British Government. So Government accepted the proposals of Bruce.

After Bruce, W.T. Smith became the commissioner of Cooch Behar State on October, 1795. Smith followed the recommendations of his predecessor Bruce.¹⁷ The British Government wanted to settle the lands problem by granting *Pattas* to Ryots. It is true that the British Government had a sense of superiority in the field of administration and it wanted to prove its worth in making experiments in the revenue settlement. Cooch Behar was by all means, a State to introduce such a formula from colonial point of view.

After W. T. Smith, Ahmuty became Commissioner of Cooch Behar State in 1797. During his period, the land revenue of the State increased. Ahmuty followed the new system and wanted to ensure a stable economic condition of the State.¹⁸ He observed that the Ryots had no right to till the land permanently and this effected the gross income of the State as well as of the Company.¹⁹ In the given situation, Ahmuty encouraged Ryots to expand more cultivable lands and gave incentive to bring more and more lands under cultivation. He got huge response from the cultivators. At that time there was no system of measurement of lands. Ahmuty at first tried to measure the Ryots' holdings lands and gave *Pattas*.²⁰ According to Ahmuty, the annual settlement of revenue was not continuing well, so, he raised the term at least five years. It was the first time in History of Cooch Behar State when there was a valid register of the lands.²¹ During this period, the Government wanted to set up uniform pattern of revenue collection system in Cooch Behar State, and this principle was first reflected in their revenue settlement and collection. It can be noted here that from 1789 to 1800 Henry Douglas, C. D. Bruce, W. T. Smith, Richard Ahmuty, were successively posted in Cooch Behar, as Commissioners and neither any change nor any remarkable development could be seen in the administrative structure or system of Cooch Behar other than in the Revenue administration.

During the minority period of Harendra Narayan, the British officers controlled the administration of Cooch Behar State. The successive commissioners developed the revenue administration and revived the moribund economics of the State.²² The British Government withdrew the commissioner in 1801 and the State was handed over to Harendra Narayan. Raja of Cooch Behar State had appointed Kashinath Lahiri as Dewan of the state. Kashinath Lahiri praised the British administration and justice and their (British Officers) contributions to the development of the State.²³

When Lord Wellesley came to power, the British policy towards the Indian state changed radically. Lord Wellesley was basically haunted by an imperial design and his policy to Cooch Behar is a glaring example of his ambitious

plan on the excuse of improving the administration of the State. At that time the conflict was going on between the Raja and the Dewan of the State and on this question the peace of the State was hampered. In this situation, Lord Wellesley communicated his desire to Harendra Narayan to appoint a Commissioner to act in consultation with the Maharaja for the collection of public revenue, administration of justice and of the Police.²⁴ In January 1803, Lord Wellesley appointed Francis Pierard as a Commissioner for the Cooch Behar State. Harendra Narayan was reluctant to accept the arrangement because according to Rajah of Cooch Behar, it was the interference with the sovereign authority of the Raja. The British Government accepted “the Rajah of Cooch Behar as independent princes, subject only to the payment of the tribute” and deemed it inconsistent with “the dignity and however of the British Government to extend the regulations to Cooch Behar, in opposition to the inclinations of the Rajah”.²⁵ British Government wanted to establish with the concurrence of the Rajah for the important benefits, which must arise from the establishment of fixed laws and regulations in the territory of Cooch Behar State. After failure of the Pierard Mission, the British Government was appointed John French to act as a Commissioner of Cooch Behar in early 1805. John French’s primary objective was to establish with the concurrence of the Rajah, the Rule of law in Cooch Behar. At that time Lord Cornwallis became Governor General for the second time. Cornwallis followed the policy of non-intervention to the Native States. On the other hand, Harendra Narayan strictly followed his position. John French was failed in his efforts to convince the Rajah and was not able to deal with Cooch Behar administration. The British Government abolished the separate Commissioner’s office in Cooch Behar State. After that, the Collector of Rangpur was made responsible to see the British Policy in the Native State of Cooch Behar.

During the period 1805 – 1813, three successive Collectors of Rangpur – Archibald Montgomery, James Morgan and John Digby were the ex-office commissioners of Cooch Behar State.²⁶ They maintained the relations with Cooch Behar State from Rangpur. In this time, Nazir Deo or Dewan Deo made serious criminal charge against Cooch Behar Raj. Dewan gave the report to the British Government that huge number of corruption, anarchy oppression and bloodshed were going on in the state. The British Government sent John Digby to the Cooch Behar State to make investigation. He was treated with disrespect and hostility, the British Government became furious “to adopt immediate measures for restraining his (Harendra Narayan) vicious and depraved conduct, and asserting the right of the British Government to interfere in the internal administration of the affairs of Cooch

Behar.....for the prevention of anarchy, oppression and blood shed”.²⁷ We have said before that the relations between Rajah of Cooch Behar and Dewan were not so good. During this time, Harish Chakraborty, a *Pujari* or worshipper of idols was in the service of Dewan Deo. Maharaja of Cooch Behar became angry and Harish Chakraborty was imprisoned and later he died. Dewan Deo gave allegation that Harendra Narayan caused the death of Harish Chakraborty.²⁸ The Collector of Rangpur interfered enormously in the matter of Cooch Behar administration. The Commissioner gave more important position to Dewan than the Raja. On 7th August, 1813, a Government resolution was passed to follow the betterment of Cooch Behar administration. But their actual objective was to interfere the administration justice, the settlement and the collection of the revenue.²⁹

After that Lord Cornwallis revived the post of Resident or Commissioner in 1813 and Narman Macleod was appointed as Commissioner in Cooch Behar State on monthly salary of Rs. 1500. Macleod’s first target was to establish a rapport between the British Government and Harendra Narayan. J. Adam, secretary to the Government wrote a letter to Harendra Narayan that “The just attention and difference with which you have listened to the advice and representations of the Commissioner offered in the name and express authority, of the Government, the methods, which you have made, to continue to abide by it, combine to assure me that you are convinced of the sincerity with which the British Government has sought your welfare, and of your determination invariably to act in a manner to merit its confidence and friendship.”³⁰ Mutual trust and cooperation between Raja and British Government did not last long, Macleod interfered all the matters of administration time to time. For this reason, Raja of Cooch Behar was unwilling to help Macleod. The result, Mac leod could not be able to establish peace and prosperity. On the other hand, serious charges revealed against Harendra Narayan that Harendra Narayan met Raja of Nepal and they hatched conspiracy against British Government. But ultimately it was proved baseless and “the Government took the Commissioner to task for allowing himself to be carried away by false reports and rumours”.³¹

After this, there was a change in the British policy towards Cooch Behar and it was confined, “to abstain from all interference except in the form of advice and representation in the unlimited management of the affairs of Cooch Behar, and to restrict the powers of the commissioner to the exercise of diplomatic functions only”.³² It is significant here to note that J. Adam, ordered to Commissioner – “It is proper to observe that the less frequently advice is interposed, the more efficacious, generally speaking it is likely to

prove, and that it is therefore desirable to avoid as much as possible all interference in point of details, and matters of subordinate importance, which might be likely to produce irritation and disgust, and to reserve the full right and influence which the British representative must possess for occasions of moment. By adhering to these principles and by the observance of a mediate and conciliatory tone towards the Raja, it may be hoped that you will be able to establish an influence over his mind which will eventually effect a considerable amelioration of the system of his government and become productive of reciprocal benefit to himself and his subjects".³³

The British Government wanted to change the policy and try to follow the liberal policy towards Cooch Behar. After Macleod, David Scott took charge as a Commissioner of Cooch Behar State in 1822 and he was appointed as an Agent to the Governor General, the North-East Frontier. So, Cooch Behar affairs came under jurisdiction of his office. The Commissioner post was abolished. David Scott became the successor of British Agent. He was diplomatically dealing with the state of Cooch Behar. T.C. Robertson became the Agent in place of David Scott in 1830. The Agent of North East Frontier did not interfere in the internal affairs of Cooch Behar State.

In 1834 Captain F. Jenkins became the British Agent in North East Frontier and Cooch Behar State was also under his jurisdiction. Captain F. Jenkins visited as the Commissioner to the Cooch Behar State in 1836, 1841, 1847 and 1849 successively. F. Jenkins was a liberal British Agent and he had seen all the matters in Cooch Behar State sympathetically. First of all Jenkins appreciated Sibendra Narayan's efforts towards the reorganization of the State economy. Jenkins remarked that the State witnessed the "great increase of Population and extension (sic) of cultivation during his reign."³⁴ The British Government could not fail to take note of Jenkins's assessment and the Court of Directors came to the conclusion that there could not be any considerable "mis-Government" at Cooch Behar.³⁵ Sibendra Narayan cleared all the arrears of tribute, which encumbered the state. First of all he gave attention to revenue matters and to the improvement of his state. Sibendra Narayan did not confine his attention only to the revenue matters but he also established 'Raj Sabha' in 1840, the highest Court of the state. He introduced western education in Cooch Behar. Sibendra Narayan's personal interest in the prohibition of *Sati* did evoke a favourable response from the British Government which in a letter to Jenkins admitted, ".....it is gratifying to the Government to find the Rajah so well disposed to conform in this respect to the benevolent intentions of the British Government for the general abolition of this is human rite"³⁶ The prohibition of *Sati* came into

effect so late as in 1849 after the death of Sibendra Narayan.

Sibendra Narayan's health condition gradually deteriorated and it also affected the internal condition of the state. This situation led to the increasing influence of the bureaucracy in the state affairs. This had even drawn the attentions of Jenkins and he reported to the Government that - "The Rajah, I am sorry to say, is very inattentive to business, partly owing to sick ness, and has entrusted all the affairs of his Raja to two or three Bengalees, who, I fear, commit much injustice" ³⁷ Superintendent of Darjeeling, Campbell charged the Native Government of Cooch Behar of inefficiency and mismanagement contining and he sent letter to Jenkins why he reserved about his role.

Campbell addressed to Government of Bengal to interfere in Cooch Behar matters about the bureaucratic norms.³⁸ Bhandaree Aye (claim her, step mothers of Sibendra Narayan and a widow of Harendra Narayan) wrote letter to the Governor General that the inefficiency of Brojendra Narayan, corruption of public servants, anarchy, internal feud and total law-less-ness were continued in the state. She also wrote to Campbell her doubt about the efficiency and neutrality of Jenkins.³⁹ Government of Bengal wrote to Governor General about the gross maladministration in Cooch Behar State. Incidentally the report of Government of Bengal presented the matter in the style that "..... the management of Cooch Behar during the Rajah's minority, the failure of the Agent to visit that little citation last season, and the insufficiency of that officer's reports, in consequence of that failure, and for the failure of the chief officers of that state to visit him, leaves the Deputy Governor unable to form a satisfactory opinion. His Honour has seen with much pain the evidence, which the papers before him seen to afford of gross maladministration in Cooch Behar.....The Government cannot but look with society to the receipt of the Agent's report, after he shall have made his long Projected visit to Cooch Behar, and His Honour would recommend that the visit should be made without further delay. The Government will look to him for an unbiased account of the real condition of the country, and for mature advice in respect to its future administration during the Rajah's minority". ⁴⁰

Government of Bengal ordered to Jenkins to prepare a genuine statement about the condition of the princely State of Cooch Behar. Because Government of Bengal gave top priority about the opinion of Jenkins. Jenkins visited the Cooch Behar State in February, 1849 and he found that the complaint against mal-administration of the State as false and baseless. Government of Bengal accepted the Jenkin's report on the condition of

Cooch Behar State. He observed with satisfaction about the improvement of agriculture and growth of population and that the Ryots had no allegation against the authority. Jenkins mentioned the lapses in to the administration of the state and the excesses were committed by the Regent, Brojendra Narayan. When he submitted his report to the Bengal Government and he recommended the appointment of British Resident who would advise the Regent in his capacity as a Commissioner. The result the native administration of Cooch Behar controlled properly. But the Bengal Government did not accept any substance in his suggestion.⁴¹ The Government of Bengal highlighted all the demerits related with Cooch Behar affairs was responsible the Governor General on the North East Frontier to the Government of India Government of Bengal wanted to take over the administration of Cooch Behar during the minority of Narendra Narayan. For this situation, Cooch Behar came under dual responsibility. Bengal Government suggested to Government of India some possible matters which should be relieved that (i) ordinary administration of Cooch Behar state (ii) Agent of the Governor General, North East Frontier should undertake Government of Bengal temporarily.⁴² Government of India accepted the suggestion of Government of Bengal and Jenkins, Agent of the Governor General of India came under Government of Bengal was satisfied with the role performed by Jenkins. Jenkins observed all the matters about Cooch Behar was concerned. According to Jenkins "the general administration, though marked by occasional abuses, appears, on the whole, a fair specimen of native rule, and the great increase of cultivation and the increase of the Ryots,are indicative of progress and wellbeing".⁴³ British Government not only observed the general administration of Cooch Behar State but was also interested to give western education for Cooch Behar Raja. In general view the Agent of Cooch Behar wanted to spread English education all over the State.

In 1860, Jenkins made his tour to Cooch Behar State. He was fully satisfied at the administrative and Economic development of the State.⁴⁴ In 1861, Jenkins retired from his service but he was Agent of Governor General of North East Frontier for a long time.

After Major Jenkins, Hopkinson became the British Agent of Cooch Behar matters in 1861. Raja of Cooch Behar always trusted to the British Government and Cooch Behar State could not involve itself in sepoy mutiny. The British Government was forced to pursue a soft policy towards the native states after the mutiny. The 'Doctrine of Lapse' policy was withdrawn.

The British Government gave recognition to Nripendra Narayan as next king of Cooch Behar State in January, 1864.⁴⁵ Colonel J.C. Haughton, Governor General's Agent, North East Frontier took charge of the state from Hopkinson during the minority of Nripendra Narayan, as commissioner of the Cooch Behar state in February, 1864. The British Government took responsibility in providing care and education of the young Maharaja, for the security of the tribute and for the defence of the Bhutan frontier.⁴⁶ The Commissioner of Cooch Behar State had full authority of the entire administration in all its branches, except, in regards to certain specified points, such as the grant of lands, pensions and gratuities and the confirmation of capital sentences. It is also said that no change in present arrangements would be made without the sanction of the Government.⁴⁷ Colonel Haughton was continued in his duty still 1873. During this time, British Government also appointed one Deputy Commissioner in Cooch Behar to follow all the matters properly. H. Beveridge was the first deputy Commissioner in Cooch Behar State. One thing is that Colonel Haughton was not only an able man of administration but also could judge the matters on the State properly.

According to Dalton (Deputy Commissioner of Cooch Behar State) "Colonel Haughton appeared to have always exercised the full powers than confided to him and to have done so with a judgment and ability, which combined with the personal interest. Which he displayed is all, even the most trivial matters connected with the administration, fully justified the confidence reposed in him and ingurated that system of judicial and political reform and financial development, which is the hands of his successors have made Cooch Behar what it is."⁴⁸ Colonel Brance took charge in absence of Colonel Haughton in June, 1865 until his return on December, 1866. In 1873, when Colonel Haughton left the Cooch Behar, Richardson and Metcalfe became as Commissioners upto March, 1874. Then W. J. Herschel was appointed Commissioner and continued his post till 1875. When F.R. Cockerell became Commissioner for one year and Cockerell was the first Commissioner of the Rajshahi and Cooch Behar Division. Lord H. Browne succeeded as Commissioner in 1876 and continued to be at the head of the Cooch Behar administration till the Maharaja attained his majority on October, 1883.

H. Beveridge, the first Deputy Commissioner of Cooch Behar, who took charge on the 4th November, 1864, was succeeded by T. Smith on the 1st May, 1866 and made over charge to Captain W. Lance in 1868. Captain Lance was relieved by W.O.A. Beckett on the 22 December, 1870, whose term was succeeded by Smith, who returned to Cooch Behar in February 1872 and remained to 11th April 1875, when Captain Lewis went on 6 months leave in

April 1876 and Mr. J G B T Dalton was appointed to officiate and subsequently confirmed in the post. When he went on privilege leave, Captain Evans Gardon officiated till his return on December, 1882.

The British Government tried to form administrative arrangements when Nripendra Narayan became the Maharaja of the State. The Commissioner of the Rajshahi and Cooch Behar Division framed a memorandum of administration and it was adopted by His Highness. A Council of State was established in 1883 with His Highness as President, and three members namely – the Superintendent of the State, the Dewan and a judicial Officer. It is said that in absence of President on the day “the Superintendent will act as vice President of the Council”.⁴⁹ The Superintendent supervised directly and controlled all the departments. He was appointed justice of the peace with-in the State for the trial of European British subjects intruding the laws of the country.⁵⁰

From 1883 to 1913, Lieutenant Colonel A. Evans Gordon, E. E. Lowis, D.R. Lyall, Major J. R. C. Colvin, E. L. L. Hammond, A. W. Dentith, B. Ghose were appointed Superintendents of the State and Vice President of the State Council. Incidentally none of them had brought about any significant change of the administration of the State rather were ornamentals to look after the affairs of the State as a whole.

The term of Mr. Dentith’s appointment as Superintendent of the State and Vice President of State Council, having expired on the 22nd April, 1913, His Highness was pleased to appoint E. W. Collin, ICS to the post with the approval of His Excellency the Governor of Bangal in Council.⁵² The Government of Bengal in their order No. 646 PD; dt 2nd May, 1912, vested the Commissioner of the Rajshyee division with the powers of a political Agent for the State of Cooch Behar for the purpose of the provisions of the Indian Extradition Act., 1903 (XV of 1903).⁵³ The Government of India in their letter No. 5300 P, dt. 8th November 1912 were pleased to order that Magistrates or Officers exercising magisterial powers in Native States shall be regarded as Magistrates for the purposes of Rule 4 of the Rules under the Indian Security Act, 1886.⁵⁴

The post of the Superintendent of the State was abolished under His Highness orders on 1st June, 1916. His Office since then was styled Office of the General Department of the State and the Vice President of the State Council was placed in charge of controlling over all the Departments.

Millingan (1920-1923), Major Charles Terench (1923-1926), Colonel Hutchinson (1926-1931), Major K.A.G.E.Gordon (1931-1934), Colonel J.A.Bret (1934-1936), J.D. Taison (1936) were incharge but they had only supervised the departments under their jurisdiction.

His Highness the Maharaja Bhup Bahadur was invested with full ruling powers on the 6th April 1936 by His Excellency the Right Hon'ble Sir John Anderson, Governor of Bengal, who came to Cooch Behar for the purpose.⁵⁵ L.G. Wallis was appointed Vice President of State Council up to the 21st November, 1939. Government of India maintained the Residency system till 1947. Change of new format partially His Highness the Maharaja Bhup Bahadur, as President consisted of Rai K.C. Ganguli Bahadur, Acting Vice President and Revenue Member. The Chief Minister was appointed to be the Ex-Officio Vice President of the State Council.

In the meanwhile, however, there was a change in the format of the State Council of Cooch Behar. The State Council was named as State legislative Council in 1940 in which His Highness the Maharaja Bhup Bahadur was designated as President. The post of the Vice President was given to the Revenue member who virtually got the portfolio of the Cheif Ministership of the State. As a whole the political agents controlled all the matter not only external but also internal.

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