

CHAPTER - V

*HISTORICAL CO-RELATION OF
THE RULING DYNASTIES OF SAMATATA*

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Introduction

For the historical reconstruction, the epigraphs are the most dependable and informative material. Literary works also describe historical facts but unless they are substantiated and corroborated by epigraphic evidences (like copper plates, coins, epigraphs etc.) they can not be completely relied upon for historical reconstruction. Also for most of the dynasties we do not get contemporary literature. And whatever information we get from the so called historical works like Puranas and Epics can form only preliminary and very vague historical data, more likely than not to be changed or up turned or given up with the findings of epigraphical information. So, practically, inscriptions are the only reliable materials for the reconstruction of the dynastic lineage and ancient historical geography. We are here directly concerned with south- eastern Bengal or more exactly Samatata Mandala. When the inscriptions are found in any hill range or adjacent land they are grouped by their affinities and compared with each other as well as with inscription from other as places in the Bengal delta. They show the characteristics of the hill site, historical and political change of the governments, geographical references, religious relationship and cultural status of the different periods and dynasties. The most important problem is to identify the place names that are found in the inscriptions. From the data of the inscriptions regarding place names, only a rough framework about geographic situation of the ruling dynasties can be reconstructed. It is also difficult to define exact boundary of the villages, and the administrative centers, which are mentioned in the grants. The co-relation between space and time on the basis of political variations is very important for dating the different periods of the dynasty.

There are a total of 28 inscriptions related to the Mainamati Lalmai hill range or the adjacent area. They are discussed here for co-relating their data about the

LEGEND

- International Boundary ————
- District Boundary - - - - -
- District Headquarters ○
- River ~~~~~~

INDIA

INDIA

INDIA

MYANMAR

BAY OF BENGAL

1. VAINYA GUPTA A
2. VAINYA GUPTA B
3. DEVA KHAḌG A
4. DEVA KHAḌG B
5. DEVA KHAḌG C
6. - KHAḌG A
7. BALABHATTA
8. LOKANĀTHA
9. SRĪDHĀRANA RĀTA
10. ĀNANDA DĒVA
11. BHAVA DĒVA A
12. BHAVA DĒVA B
13. - DĒVA A
14. - DĒVA B
15. SRĪ CANDRA A
16. SRĪ CANDRA B
17. SRĪ CANDRA C
18. SRĪ CANDRA D
19. SRĪ CANDRA E
20. LAḌAHA CANDRA A
21. LAḌAHA CANDRA B
22. GOVINDA CANDRA
23. HARIKĀLA DĒVA
24. DAMODARA DĒVA A
25. DAMODARA DĒVA B
26. DAMODARA DĒVA C
27. DAŚARATHA DĒVA
28. VIRADHARA DĒVA

1. VAINYA GUPTA A
2. VAINYA GUPTA B
3. DEVA KHAḌḌA A
4. DEVA KHAḌḌ B
5. DEVA KHAḌḌ C
6. - KHAḌḌ A
7. BĀLABHATTA
8. LOKANĀTHA
9. ŚRĪDHĀRAṆA RĀTA
10. ĀNANDA DEVA
11. BHAVA DEVA A
12. BHAVA DEVA B
13. - DEVA A
14. - DEVA B
15. ŚRĪ CANDRA A
16. ŚRĪ CANDRA B
17. ŚRĪ CANDRA C
18. ŚRĪ CANDRA D
19. ŚRĪ CANDRA E
20. LĀḌAḌA CANDRA A
21. LĀḌAḌA CANDRA B
22. GOVINDA CANDRA
23. HARIKĀLA DEVA
24. DAMODARA DEVA A
25. DAMODARA DEVA B
26. DAMODARA DEVA C
27. DĀSARATHA DEVA
28. VĪRĀDHARA DEVA

ruling dynasties of Samatata Mandala. Twelve plates, out of 28, are recovered from Mainamati Lalmai area itself and rests were unearthed from the nearby areas. The only one inscription of Lokanatha of which geographic associations is not clearly mentioned in this grant is described here. But it was reported that it was found somewhere in the Tippera district. In the following pages the description of above mentioned plates are presented chronologically.

TABLE NO -4
FIND-SPOTS OF THE VARIOUS GRANTS

1	Vainya Gupta A	Gunaighar	Debidvar	Comilla
2	Vainya Gupta B	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
3	Deva Khadg A	Ashrafpur	Raipur	Narshingdi
4	Deva Khadg B	Ashrafpur	Raipur	Narshingdi
5	Deva Khadg C	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
6	- Khadg A	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
7	Bālabhatta	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
8	Lokanātha	-	-	Tippera
9	Srīdharāṇa Rāta	Kailan	Candina	Comilla
10	Ānanda Deva	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
11	Bhava Deva A	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
12	Bhava Deva B	-	-	Tippera
13	- Deva A	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
14	- Deva B	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
15	Srī Candra A	Pancasar(Rampal)	Munshiganj	Munshiganj
16	Srī Candra B	Kedarpur	Gosairhat	Shriyatpur
17	Srī Candra C	Dhulla	Singair	Manikganj
18	Srī Candra D	Edilpur	Gosairhat	Shriyatpur
19	Srī Candra E	Madanpur	Sabar	Dhaka
20	Laḍaha Candra A	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
21	Laḍaha Candra B	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
22	Govinda Candra	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
23	Harikāla Deva	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla
24	Damodara Deva A	Mehar	Saharasti	Candpur
25	Damodara Deva B	Sobharampur	Burichang	Comilla
26	Damodara Deva C	Nasirabad	-	Chittagunj
27	Daśaratha Deva	Adavadi	Munshiganj	Munshiganj
28	Vīradhara Deva	Mainamati	Burichang	Comilla

SECTION-I

RULERS OF SAMATATA AND GEOGRAPHIC REFERENCES IN INSCRIPTIONS

1. Vainya Gupta A

This copper plate was discovered at Gunaighar village, while carried out mud from a tank, about 18 miles to the north west of the Comilla town, a mile and a half to the south-west of Debidvar Thana (police station) It is 10¹/₂ inches long and 6¹/₂ inches width without a rim and is fairly thick. In the middle of the proper right of the plate an oval shape seal is affixed and a bull recumbent facing proper right. The legend on the seal read as *Māhārājā Śrī Vainya Gupta*. The plate is very corroded. It is written on both the sides but not full on the reverse. It consists of 31 lines in which 23 lines on the obverse and 8 lines on the reverse. It bears a number of cut marks of hitting. It was dated in numerical symbols. The last line of the grant is expressed as " *Sam 100 80 8 possyādi 20 4*". Such type of writing style can be easily indicated to the Gupta Era. The letters as well as the symbols mostly agree with those of the Gupta period. There fore, we can say that the grant was issued, on 24th day of the month of Pauṣa in the year of 188 Gupta Era, i.e. 508 A.D, from Kripura, which is not identified. The language of the plate is Sanskrit. The subordinate **Māhārājā Rudradatta** presented the request for an endowment of the Avaivarttikā congregation of monks belonging to the Āśrama Vihāra, dedicated to the Arya Avalokiteśvara, and headed by the Ācaryya Śāntideva. This Vihāra was then in course of construction by the king Rudradatta on behalf of that Ācaryya Śāntideva. The boundaries of the lands are separated by five parcels of uncultivated land to be held as a tax-free perpetual endowment. The total measure of lands is eleven Patakas situated in **Uttara Maṇḍalika**. It means, most probably, the northern side of Samatata Maṇḍala. It, therefore, seems that the lands were located near the find spot of the plate. Two plots out of the five were situated in the village named **Guṇikāgrahara**. The plate was found in the village **Gunaighar** near Mainamati

Lalmai hill range. Most probably, the village **Guṇikāgrahara** identifies with present Gunaighar. None of other place names can be identified yet. The ruler's order was given to his principal minister, the **Māhārājā Vijayasena**, who made it known to three prince ministers. The minister of peace and war, **Naradatta**, recorded the endowment. There is a particular interest, is the reference to the donated land being situated in the northern **Maṇḍala** of the Kingdom. **Bhattacharya** mentions that the main kingdoms of **Vainya Gupta** with the Headquarters were probably situated in the southern part of the District¹. The land is further located by a reference to the fields belonging to another monastery, the **Māhāvihāra**, and to a temple didected to **Pradyumneśvara**, the god of love. The endowment was intended to maintain the worship of the Buddha and to repair the cracks in the monastery, implying a brick structure.

The mentioned name of the government officers show an imperial bureaucratic government but the concentration of the officers is in the hands of a few persons, and the absence of any reference to a local government, such as was found in the Gupta inscriptions further to the west, suggests that **Vainya gupta's** rule was limited both in territory and trained administrators. For example, **Vijayasena** was designated not only as a messenger and principal feudatory but also as " The High chamberlain the officer in charge of elephants, the president of five Law court officers and president of city Governors."²**Naradatta** functioned both as the minister in charge of peace and war and as the principal scribe of the government³.

2. Vainya Gupta B

This plate was discovered at the lowest level of **Salvan Vihara** excavation. The plate is approximately of the same size as **Vainy Gupta- A** plate, measures about 10¹/₂ inches in length and 6¹/₂ inches in breadth. It is highly corroded and not in a good state of preservation. A seal is attached on the proper right measure 3⁵/₈ inches by 4⁵/₈ inches on its face. It bears an emblem of a recumbent bull facing proper right with a single inscribed line underneath. A number of latters could be read whose location in the line led to its reconstruction as *Māhārājā Śrī Vanya Guptasya*. This inscribed

line of the seal could be confirmed closely to that of the Vainya Gupta A plate inscription. No other information is available from this plate due to its corrosion.

3. Deva Khadga A

This plate was found at Ashrafpur village under Raipur police station. The village Ashrafpur is situated in 38 miles north, north-west from Comilla town and 30 miles north-east from Dhaka. The plate is 10 inches long and 6 1/2 inches wide. It bears a seal on the top of the middle. The image of a recumbent bull is depicted on the seal. It faced proper left. A single line of inscription was inscribed below the image of the bull. It reads as “*Srimat Devakhadga*”. It was recorded in the seventh regnal year, which through the identification of one of Devadhadga’s successors with the ruler of Samatata during the visit of Chinese pilgrim in 671 A. D.; can be plausibly dated in the mid-seventh century⁴. This copperplate grant was issued from Jayakarmant. It has been identified with the modern Baḍakāmtā, which lies five miles due west of Mainamati Mandir and one-third of a mile north of the Daudkandi road. Nine pāṭakas and Ten dronas of land were donated to the royal preceptors, Sanghamitra, who apparently was the head of four Vihāras and Vihārikas (large and small monasteries). The exact location of the land has not been identified, but references to Peranaṭana also occur in the second Ladaha Candra plate suggesting that the land lay close to the hills where both dynasties were ruled. Puradāsa, a devout worshipper of the Buddha⁵, wrote the order. The references to large and small monasteries indicate a sacred complex. It is particularly significant that two of the remaining Khadga plates were discovered from Sālvan Vihāra excavation. So, it appears that the location of the donated land may be some where in Mainamati-Lalmai hill range. Also of interest was the occurrence of the name Saṅghāmitra, which appeared as that of a poet in the anthology of Sanskrit poetry collected by the abbot Vidyākara⁶ in the eleventh century. If these are the references of the same person, then it is an evidence of an accomplished poet who also was the head of four monasteries and occupied an important position at the Khadga court. Judging from the inscription, the Khadgas were rulers of limited territory.

4. Deva Khaḍga B

This plate was found in association with the Deva Khaḍga A plate at Ashrafpur village under Raipur police station. It is a small plate, measuring $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and 6 inches broad. The grant was issued from the same centre, Jayakarmānta. The same type of seal was attached on the top of the middle of the plate. The grant was memorialized in favour of the name of Devakhaḍga. But his son, Rajaraja, granted the land. The account of Six patakas and Ten dromas of land was transferred to the monastery. Śrī Yajñavarman executed the grant. The grant is very similar to that of the Deva Khaḍge A plate.

5. Deva Khaḍga C

This plate was recovered from Sālvan Vihāra excavations. It is very badly corroded. The measurement of this plate is 10 inches long and 8 inches wide. A seal was attached on the top of the middle of the plate. An image of a recumbent bull is depicted on the seal. The direction of the bull is facing the proper left. A single line of inscription is engraved below the image of the bull. It read as "*Srimat Deva Khaḍga*". In the twenty-seventh line, there was a reference to the prince (Rajputra) Sri Balabhata. Nothing more is known from this plate⁷.

6. - Khaḍga D

This plate was discovered with Deva Khaḍga C plate in Sālvan Vihāra excavation. It is $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and 6 inches width. A seal was fastened in the top of the middle of the plate. It is also very badly corroded. No information could be granted from this plate⁸.

7. Bālabbhatta

The copperplate of Balbhata was recovered from Sālvan Vihāra excavation. This is a single plate engraved on both the sides. It is $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and $10\frac{1}{4}$ inches

width. A corroded and damaged round seal is attached to the top in the middle of the plate. It projects about $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches. It appears that a single line of legend was inscribed on it. But it is absent at present. It might be destroyed due to corrosion. The copper-plate contains 35 inscribed lines on the obverse and 11 inscribed lines on the reverse. Thus in all there are 46 lines in the grant. It was badly encrusted and the extent of the writing could not be clearly determined. The names of "Khadga" (L-3), "*Svāmi Devakhaḍga*" (L-12) and donor "*Rājaputra Bālabhaṭṭa*" (L-20) are read clearly in the document. The family of the Khadga kings belonged to *Kanvasakha* of Yajurveda. The father of Svami Devakhadga was simply a *Parameśvara*. The wonderful *Māhābhogaśrama*, eight viharas adorned with large number of white coloured "*Caityas*" were mentioned in the plate. 28 *pātakas* of land were granted from the capital city, Devaparvata and this gift were made for Lord Buddha, *Dharma* and *Saṅgha* and also for *Navakarmas*. The dutaka of the grant, *Srī Yajñavarmana* was a devout worshipper of Buddha. Bālabhatta's dates would fall in the last quarter of 7th century but before the Deva rulers of the eighth century.

8. Lokanātha

This plate was found somewhere in the Tippera district of SouthEastern Bengal. It is $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches width. Four Corners of the plate is missing. It is very badly corroded. The letters of some places are quite effaced and in others partly effaced. Owing to corrosion, decipherment of the plate is very difficult. The upper portion of the plate is comparatively thicker than the lower portion. The plate is very heavy owing to the weight of the heavy seal attached to the middle of its proper right. The seal bears an image of the goddess Lakṣmi or Sri, standing on a lotus pedestal and flanked by two elephants pouring libations from two jars lifted by their trunks. Two attendants seated cross-legged at the two sides of Laksmi. It is round in shape with a diameter of 4 inches. The reverse is depicted by a full-blown lotus. Beneath the *Gajalakṣmi*, there is a legend read as *Kumāramātyadhikaraṇasya*. The second legend reads as *Lokanāthasya*. It is on the smaller seal affixed on the right side of the image impression of Lakṣmi. It appears that the legend *Loknāthasya* is very similar to the

seal found on the plate of *Srīdhārāṇa Rāta* from *Kailān*. The plate is not in a good state of preservation. It is inscribed on both the sides. It consists of 57 lines of which 26 lines on the obverse and 31 lines on the reverse. The characters of the script belong to the northern class of letters of the 7th century A. D. The letters of this plate are similar to the *Banskhera*⁹ and *Madhuban*¹⁰ plates of *Māhārājā Harsha*, the plates¹¹ of the time of *Sasanka-Raja*, and the plates¹² of king *Bhaskaravarmanadeva* of *Kamarupa*. Dr. *Bhoch*¹³ remarks that the plate is written in characters of the 9th or 10th century A. D. approximately. But the writing style, of this plate is not appeared as in 9th or 10th century A. D. So, the plate appears to be dated in 7th century A. D. The language of the copper-plate inscription is Sanskrit. The form of the document is very peculiar. It begins with an address in prose. It has mentioned the account of the history of *Loknātha's* family.

This document was issued thorough *Sāndhivigrahika* *Prasantadeva* by King *Lokanatha*. The donee was *Mahāsāmanta* *Pradosasarman* who made an application through King's son, prince *Lakṣminatha*. The plots of lands were granted in the forest region in the *Suvvūṅga Viśya*. *Pradosaśarman* desired to construct a temple for estolation of an image of *Ananta-Narayana*. The amount of lands allotted individually and, in some cases, jointly, is also clearly mentioned in the document. First king's name of the plate is partly effaced which ending in the word *nath* comes from the good family of the *Sage Bharadvāja*. The next King *Srīnatha* (son of *-natha*) was a feudatory ruler acquired much fame in the field of battle. His son, *Bhavanatha*, was religious minded. Wife of his brother's son, *Gotradevi*, gave birth to a worthy son, *Lokanātha*. The significant fact is mentioned in verse 9, that a king named *Jivadharāṇa* made over his won *Viśaya* (district) and army without engaging in further battle to *Lokanātha*. Son of *Loknātha* is prince *Lakṣminatha*.

The grant recorded in the 44 regional years in the month of *Phālguna* and given to *Pradosaśarman* for accruing of merit to his parents and to himself and to *Bhagavān Ananta-Nārayana*, and to the *Brahmins*.

9. Sridhārna Rāta

This plate was traced at Kaliān village, 18 miles SouthWest of Comilla and 13 miles due west of the Lalmai Railway Station, under the Candina Police Station of Comilla district. The proper right of the plate is broken.

It shows that the finder cut the plate due to his curiosity and was gone to goldsmith for testing whether it is gold or not. Or it was cut accidentally while digging the earth. The plate is $10\frac{17}{20}$ inches long and $8\frac{3}{20}$ inches broad with lettering inscribed lengthwise and the scale marked on the proper right. The seal is circular in shape with a diameter of $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches; but there is a projecting knob at its outer end. The seal is depicted by the goddess Lakṣmi standing on a full-blossomed lotus and flanked by two elephants pouring libations. Below the elephants are the figures of two devotees. It is very similar to the seal discovered on the plates of Lokanātha and Maruṇḍanātha¹⁴. There are two inscribed lines below the Gajalakṣmi read as 1. *Srimatsamatateśvarapadanudhyātasya* and 2. *Kumaramātyadhikaranasya*. Another line, afterwards embossed horizontally on the seal just to the right of the figure of Lakṣmi, reads *Sri Sridharanaratasya*. It is also noted that the Tippera grant of Lokanātha also mentions a line reading *Kumaramātyadhikaranasya*. The names of Lokanātha and Sridhārana Rāta were written on the seals indicate that they had countersigned the original document afterwards incised on copperplate. The signature of the king was essential for the documents. Although it was only rarely reproduced on the plates on which charters were afterwards copied, because the latter bore the royal seal indicating the king's sanction. Local rulers of ancient Bengal, however, usually issued charters with their won seals and without any counter signature of the ruler of the country. The importance attached to the counter signature by Loknatha and Sridharana Rata may suggest that they were feudatory rulers risen to an almost independent status and that they were eager to demonstrate their absolute authority over particular regions in defiance of the overlord¹⁵.

The plate is not in a good state of preservation. Some portions of the plate are very corroded. It is engraved on both the sides. It consists of 19 lines of which 28 lines

on obverse and 21 lines on the reverse. The language of the record is Sanskrit prose and verses.

The date of the grant is mentioned as "on the seventh *tithi* of the bright half of the month of Srāvan in the eighth year of the sovereignty over Samatāṭa and many other countries, which has been received from the grace of the feet of the father," i.e. in the eighth regnal year of the king Srīdhārana of Samatāṭa¹⁶. Comparative study of the Tippera grant of Lokanātha and Kailān grant of Srīdhārana Rāta indicate that Jivadharana Rata, father of Sridharana Rata, was a contemporary of Lokanātha. Lokanātha appears to have flourished about the third quarter of the seventh century A. D. So, it may be suggested that Sridharana Rata is roughly dated in the third or fourth quarter of the seventh century A. D.

The charter was issued from Devaparvata under Samatāṭa Maṇḍala. The minister for peace and war, Jayanatha, requested that 25 patakas of land be distributed as endowment in the following fashion - $4\frac{1}{2}$ patakas to a Buddhist monastery, 13 patakas to thirteen Brahmins, and $7\frac{1}{2}$ patakas to be held by Jayanatha. The entire land lay within the administrative districts of Guptināṭana and Pāṭalāyika under the jurisdiction of the prince minister of Devaparvata. A later plate, one of Laḍaha Candra's also transfers property in Guptināṭana. There is no further information about the monastery or Brahmins relevant for this study.

10. Ānanda Deva

The copper-plate grant of Ānanda Deva was recovered during the excavation at Sālvan Vihāra along with some other plates. It is a single copper-plate grant engraved on both the sides. It measured $10\frac{5}{8}$ inches by $8\frac{1}{8}$ inches. A seal is attached to the top middle of the plate. It projects about $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The seal of *Dharmacakramudrā* was engraved on it. Below this representation, it bears a legend read as "Sri Vaṅḡlamṛgaṅksya" (the moon of Vaṅgal). This plate contains of two documents. The first one is of Ananda Deva, which consists of 37 lines on the obverse and 5 lines on the reverse. An another endorsement of Bhavadeva was engraved on the reverse,

which consists of 9 more lines. Thus there are in all 51 lines in two documents. The plate is not in a good state of preservation. Many portions of the inscription are indistinct and illegible.

The royal pedigree opens with Śāntideva followed by his son Viradeva. Viradeva's son by Somadevi was Ānanda Deva. Ānanda Deva was a Dvija (twice born) by birth. Vasantapur was the newly constructed capital and Devaparvata might be the old capital city Ānanda Deva had to abandon old Capital City due to the invasion of a strong enemy force. This document was issued in the 39 th year of the reign of Ānanda Deva. Probably, it was the latter part of his reign. His son Bhava Deva issued the second document on the reverse of this copperplate in the second year of his reign. It was issued from Devaparvata. So it appears that the old capital situated at Devaparvata was regained within a short period either by Ānanda Deva himself or by his son Bhavadeva.

The donor of the land was *Paramasugata Parames'var Paramalohattaraka. Māhārājādhirāja* Śrī Ānanda Deva. In total $7\frac{1}{2}$ patakas of land was donated for the temple, built probably by the donee Jalabhuti. The land was situated within Peranātana Visaya under world famous Samatata. A short history of Jayabhuti and his forefathers is beginning from Puṣyabhuti. Puṣyabhuts son Somabhuti left his native land Oddayana and at first settled in Maghadha, from where he again migrated to Bengal. Somabhuti was rewarded and settled probably as a feudatory chief by Samācaradeva at Sālihradapattana. Somabhuti's son was Sikharabhuti, his son was Ratnabhuti, and whose auspicious born eight issue was Jayabhuti. It is noted from the Ghugrahati and Nalanda copper-plates of Samacaradeva dated in 6th century A. D. Maharajadhiraja Samacaradeva was contemporary of Somabhuti, and Somabhuti's great grandson Jayabhuti was a contemporary of the donor king Ananda deva. So, the king, Ananda deva may be dated in last quarter of the 7 th century or beginning of the 8 th century A. D. Divakara was the *Mahāpratihara* and *Dutaka* of the grant. The grant was dated 39th regnal year on the 12th day of Bhadra.

11. Bhavadeva A

This grant was recorded on the vacant space of the reverse of the Ananda Deva copper-plate grant. There are in total 14 lines on the reverse side of which 9 lines were engraved in Bhavadeva A grant. This grant was issued from Devaparvata (the illustrious camp of victory). Bhavadeva was designated by *Parameśvara Paramabhātāraka Mahārājādhirāja*. His father was *Paramasaugtata* (the most devout worshipper of Lord Buddha) *Mahārājādhirāja* Anandadeva. The dutaka of this grant was *Mahāsāmantadhipati* Śrī Nandadhara. He places the prayer of Jayabhuti to the king. The donees of both the documents of this plate are Jayabhuti. It appears that Jayabhuti was one and the same person of both the grants. Three pāṭakas of land were donated in Peranātana Vaiṣaya by the king in connection with a Vihārika (small monastery) probably established by Jayabhuti, in the name of Tri-ratna i.e. Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha. The land was granted on the 13th day of the month of Bhadra of the 2nd regnal year of the king, Bhavadeva. Bhavadeva may be dated in 8th century A.D.

12. Bhavadeva B

The findspot of this inscription is unknown. But it was found in somewhere of the Tippera district. The inscription was written on both the sides of a single copper-plate. It is $11\frac{1}{8}$ inches by $8\frac{7}{8}$ inches. A round seal was attached to the top, measured $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter. It bore a *Dharmacakra Mudrā*, which flanked by two deer. The wheel is endowed with a pedestal below and an umbrella above. There is a single line inscribed below the wheel. It reads as *Śrī Abhinava-mṛgaṅka*. At the bottom of the seal there is the emblem of a full-blown lotus with a lotus bud on a curved stalk on either side. The face of the seal is encircled by a depression beyond which, is a raised rim. A circle of beads decorates this rim. This beaded border is encircled by another rim. The plate is very badly corroded. There are altogether 64 lines of writing, 34 on the obverse side and 30 on the reverse side of the plate. This inscription was issued

from Devaparvata situated in somewhere of Mainamati-Lalmai hill range. The language of the inscription is Sanskrit.

The grant mentions the king named Viradeva. Viradeva's son was Anandadeva and Anandadeva's son and successor was Bhavadeva. The donor king, Bhavadeva is designated as a *Paramasaugata* (i.e., a devout worshipper of Buddha), *Paramesvara*, *Paramabhattachāraka* and *Mahārājādhirāja*. He is also said to have meditated on (or to have been favoured by) the feet of *Mahārājādhirāja* Ānanda deva who was his father and predecessor. The name of the grandfather of applicant is not clear due to corrosion of the plate. Applicant's father's name is Ādityadāsa and applicant's name is Vibhutidasa was an official of the king who had great confidence in the former. Vibhutidasa approached *Mahāsāmanta* Nandadhara with a request to submit his prayer to the king Bhavadeva. King Bhavadeva was requested by *Mahāsāmanta* Nandadhara to make a grant of 7½ palatakes of land in favour of the Ratna-traya of the *Vendāmati-Vihārika*. The expression of *Ratnatraya* indicates the Buddhist trinity of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. The expression *Vendāmati-Vihārika*, probably, means the Buddhist monastery located in an area called Vendāmati. The 7½ patakas of land is divided in four different plots. The 2½ patakas of land is situated at *Vāhakakhaṇḍa* in *Vendāmati* within the *Peranātana* *Viṣaya*. The other three plots, probably, situated in the same *Viṣaya*. The ruler, Bhavadeva, instructed Nandadhara to execute the transfer of property and transfer was recorded by Brahmadasa on the copper-plate.

The grant was recorded in the second regnal year of the king, on the 18th day of the solar month of Vaisakha. The characters belong to the East Indian variety of the Northern Alphabet and may be assigned on palaeographic grounds to the seventh or eighth century A.D. A study of the characters of the Kailān plate of Śrīdhārāṇa Rāta¹⁷, Tipperaplate of Lokanatha¹⁸, Ashrafpur plates of Devakhadga¹⁹ suggests that the characters of the copper-plate of Bhavadeva may be assigned to a date later than that of Lokanatha, Śrīdhārāṇa Rāta and the Khadga kings Devad Khadga and Rājārāja, all of whom flourished in the later half of the seventh century. So, the king, Bhavadeva, may be dated in the eighth century A. D.

13. - DEVA (?) A

This inscription²⁰ was recovered during excavation at Sālvan Vihāra. The measurement of the plate is $16\frac{3}{4}$ inches long and $10\frac{1}{4}$ inches width. It was engraved on both the sides. It had 34 lines on the obverse side and 19 lines on the reverse. A seal is attached to the top center of the plate. The seal bears *Dharmachakra Mudrā* flanked by two deer, as on the other Deva plates. The plate is very badly corroded. No other information is available from the plate.

14. - DEVA (?) B

The Deva B plate²¹ was discovered during the Sālvan Vihāra excavation association with the Deva A plate. It is a small plate measuring $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches width. The plate consists of 20 lines on the obverse and 6 lines on the reverse. The *Dharmachakra Mudrā* was affixed on the top of the middle of the plate. Two deer flank it, as on the other Deva plates. This plate is also highly corroded. No information is traced from this plate also.

15. Srī Candra A

The copperplate of Srī Candra A was found in the village of Pañcasar of the Munshigunj district in the possession of one Yadunath Banik. But the original findspot of the plate appears to have been somewhere in Rampal, one and half a mile from the village of Pancasar where it was recovered in course of digging the land. This is a single plate engraved on both the sides. It is $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and 8 inches width. A seal is attached on the top middle of the plate. It projects about $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The seal is engraved by *Dharmachakra Mudrā*, which is flanked by two deer. This is the emblem of the wheel of Law. Such type of seal is affixed on the seal of the Pala copper-plate. The border of the seal is highly decorated. There is a legend, below *Dharmachakra Mudrā*, which reads as Srī Candra Devah. The plate consists of 40 lines of which 28 lines on the obverse and 12 lines on the reverse. The size of the letters is $\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

The inscription describes the genealogy of Candra family. It mentions that one Purna Candra, was born in the family. His son was Suvarṇa Candra. His son, Trailokya Candra, was the supporter of Harikela, and become king in Candradvipa, which may be identified with Bakergunj. The wife of Trailokya Candra was Srī Kāncan gave birth a son named Sri Candra. He was designated with *Paramasaugata Paramesvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*.

The grant records one pataka of land at the village of Nehakasthi in the Nanya Mandala of the Paundrabhukti. This grant was issued from Vikramapura. The Donee was the *Santivarika* Pitavāsagupta Śarman. He was the great grandson of Makkadagupta, grandson of Varahagupta and son of Sumangalagupta. They belonged to the *Sanḍilyagotra* and the *Pravara* of the three *Rsis*.

The characters are a type of Northern Nagari. It is similar to the Copper-plates of the later Pālas. The language of the inscription is Sanskrit. The inscription did not mention the date of donation. According to palaeographic consideration, it may be dated in 10th century A.D.

16. Srī Candra B

The copper-plate of Sri Candra B was recovered from the village of Kedarpur situated in the present Shariyatpur district. It is a single plate inscribed on one side only. It is an incomplete grant. The plate is 8½ inches long and 7½ inches width. A seal is attached to the top of the centre of the plate, which is circular in shape. The seal is engraved by *Dharmacakra Mudrā* which is flanked by two deer as on the Srī Candra A plate. A single line of inscription is below the *Dharmacakra Mudrā*. It reads as Srī Srī Candra Devah. Beneath the inscribed line is floral motif as decoration. The plate consists of 18 lines engraved on the obverse. The language of the plate is Sanskrit. The donor king Sri Candra was designated by *Parama Saugata Paramesvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja* is evidently of the same as Sri Candra A plate. This plate was also mentioned the genealogy of the Candra family from Purna Candra to Srī Candra as like as Srī Candra A plate. This plate is not mentioned the date of

donation and donated land. The grant was issued from Vikramapura. The characters of the inscription are thoroughly same as like as the Srī Candra A plate. So, it may also be dated in the 10th century A.D.

17. Srī Candra C

The copper-plate grant of Srī Candra was found at Dhullā in the district of Manikganj. It is a single plate. The measurement of the plate is $8\frac{5}{8}$ inches in length and $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches in breadth. A seal was affixed at the top of the middle of the plate. It is 3 inches in length and $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in breadth. The well-known *Dharmacakra Mudrā* is engraved on the seal. Two deer flank it. The circular surface of the seal is $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter. The plate consists of 47 lines, of which 23 lines on the obverse and 24 lines on the reverse. Many portions of the plate are badly corroded.

This plate is also given the genealogy of Candra family. Purna Candra was born in the family and originated from Rohitagiri may be identified with Mainamati-Lalmai hill range. It is also mentioned that Purna Candra's son Suvarṇa Candra became a Buddhist. His son Trailokya Candra was a powerful king. He is compared to Dilip. He was made himself as the lord of Candradvīpa, which may be identified with Bakerganj, is situated in present Barishal Division. He was the support of Harikela king. Harikela may be identified with the present Sylhet division, which is situated to the north-eastward of Comilla town. Trailokya Candra's queen Sri Kancana gave birth to Srī Candra. In this grant, Sri Candra was designated as the imperial titles *Paremasvara Paramabhattachāraka Mahārājādhirāja*. Trailokya Candra was designated as *Parmasaugata Maharajadhiraj*. So, it shows that both of them were independent rulers and Trailokya Candra was the first independent ruler of Candra family. The grant was issued from Vikramapura identified with present Vikramapura near Dhaka City.

The five plots of land were granted by this document. The first plot of land, measured 4 halls, was situated at a village named *Durvāpatra* in *Khediravilli Viṣaya* of *Vallimundā Maṇḍala* under *Paṇḍrabhukti*. The second plot of land, measured 3

halls, was situated in an area named, probably, Nondiyajo- Jayastara. It may be situated in same Visaya. The third plot of land, measured 3 halls, was located in the village of Tivaravilli in the same area. The fourth plot of land measured 2 Halas and 6 drones were situated in a village named **Parkaḍimuṇḍa** in **Ikkādasi Viṣaya** of the **Yolā Maṇḍala**. The fifth plot of land, measured 7 halls, was situated in the village named Mulapatra. It may be situated in Yola Mandla. Altogether 19 Halas and 6 dronas of land were granted by the king. The donee *Śantivārika* Vyasagangā Sarman was a Brahmin. He belonged to the *Vardhakaśikagotra* and the *Kaṇvasākha*. He was the great grandson of Nandaganga and son of Vibhuganga. The lands were granted for performing four homes in connection with a rite called *Adbhutasānti*. The king in the name of Lord Buddha made the grant for the increase of merit and fame of his parents and himself.

The grant was recorded on the 18th day of month *Asvina* in the 8th regnal year of donor king, in presence of all royal officers those were mentioned on the other copper plate grants of Śrī Candra Deva.

The language of the grant is Sanskrit. The characters of the grant are resembled with the inscription of King Śrī Candra, those were found at Rampal and Kedarpur. All these three grants were issued from Vikramapura on palaeographic consideration, the Buddhist king Sri Candra, who belonged to the Candra dynasty, ruled over South East Bengal, flourished in the 10 th century A. D.

18. Sri Candra D

This plate was found at Edilpur in Shariyatpur district. It is about 8 inches long and 7 inches width. A seal was affixed on the top of the plate. *Dharmacakra Mudrā* engraves it. as like as other plates of Sri Candra. It is a single plate inscribed on both the sides. The grant consists of 36 lines. The prose portion of the record states that it was issued from Vikramapura by the *Paramasaugata Parameśvara Paramabhāṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja* Śrī Candradeva who meditated on the feet of his father, the *Mahārājādhirāja* Trailokya Candra deva.

The king Srī Candra donated a piece of land. It was situated in village of Leliyā in the Sataṭapadmāvati Viśya of Kumāratalāka Maṇḍala.

The language of the grant is Sanskrit. The characters of the scripts are evidently same of the others grants of Srī Candra. So, this grant also may be dated in 10th century A. D.

19. Srī Candra E

This copper-plate grant of Srī Candra was discovered in the village of Madanpur, near the old famous village of Sabhar in the district of Dhaka. The village, Madanpur is situated about 15 miles north-west of the city of Dhaka. It was found while the earth was being dug for the foundation of a wall.

This is a single plate engraved on both the sides. The measurement of the plate is $8\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length and $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth. It bears a seal attached to middle of the top. It is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches. *Dharmacakra Mudrā* such as engraves the seal found on the other copper-plates of Sri Candra. The inscription consists of 42 lines of which 23 lines on the obverse and 19 lines on the reverse. It is written in Sanskrit language. It may be noted that the first 8 verses of this plate are identical with the 8 verses of the Rampala plate of Srī Candra.

The historical informations are found in this plate. The first verse describes with devotion to the Buddhist “Three Jewels” i.e., Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha. King Srī Candra was designated by the royal title, *Paramasaugata Paramesvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*. The ruling Candra dynasty was originated from a locality of Rohitagiri is identified with Mainamati-Lalmai hill range. This grant is also mentioned the genealogy of Candra dynasty. From this inscription, it appears that the first nobleman in the dynasty, named Puṇa Candra, became very famous; his name could be “read on the pedestals of images and (stone) pillars of victory and copper-plates in which new epigraphs were inscribed.” Such type of description is interpreted in verse 2 of this inscription. Puṇa Candra’s illustrious son, Suvarṇa Candra, was known in the world as Buddha. So, it appears that, he was the first in the dynasty to

embrace Buddhism. But Purna Candra and Suvarṇa Candra were not described as a king. Son of Suvarṇa Candra, Trailokya Candra, was mentioned in all the records, became the first independent king. Most probably, Vikramapura was his capital. He was the king of Candradvīpa and was the supporter of Harikela king. Candradvīpa was known as Bakla Candradvīpa in mediaeval period. Bakla Candradvīpa²² comprised within its boundaries, some portion of the modern districts of Bakerganj, greater Khulna and greater Faridpur. Trailokya's wife was SriKāñcana who gave birth to her illustrious son Śrī Candradeva.

Moreover 8 drones of land was granted to a Brahmin, named Sukradeva. This land was situated in a locality called *Vanigaṣāgara-saṁbhaṇḍāriyaka* in *Yolā Maṇḍala* under Paundrabhūkti. Sukradeva was the son of Hara, grandson of Varāha and great grandson of Mahādeva who himself was born in the family of three *Somapitin* Brahmins named Mākha, Rāma and Dhruva, having the three well-known *pravaras*. This copper-plate grant was issued from Vikramapura. The land was dedicated to the name of Lord Buddha, according to law of *Bhūmicchidra*, dully-touched water, for the increase of merit and fame of donorking's parents and himself. The grant was recorded in presence of all royal officers and approved by the *Mahāsāndhivigrahika* and *Mahākṣapaṭalika* as like as the other grants of Sri Candradeva.

The grant was recorded on 28th day of month of *Mārgga-śirṣa* in the 46th regnal year of King Sri Candra Deva. The characteristics of this inscription are resemblance to other inscriptions of Śrī Candradeva. So, this grant also may be dated in 10th century A. D.

20. Laḍaha Candra A

This copper-plate of Laḍaha Candra A was found accidentally in a mound called Cāpatra Mudrā in an area of Mainamati-Lalmai hill range.

A seal is attached to the middle top of the plate. This seal is engraved by a *Dharmacakra Muṛṭā*, which is flanked by two deer. This type of seal has been found in

other Candra plates, e.g. Sri Candradeva. A single line of inscription is found in the seal below the *Dharmacakra Mudrā*. It reads as “*Srī Laḍaha Candradevaḥ*”. Lower portion of the seal has a floral motif. It is a single copper-plate grant inscribed on both the sides. The grant consists of 62 lines of which 31 lines on the obverse and 31 lines on the reverse. The inscription was issued from Vikramapura, located about 40 miles west-south-west of Mainamati and 24 miles east-south of the centre of Dhaka City.

This grant has mentioned the genealogy of Candra dynasty and its geographical position. The king, Trailokya Candra, the crest jewel of Vaṅga, was the leader over the world. His son, Srī Candra, the gold of gold, was the shelter of the great rulers of the earth and the possessor of endless resources. His son, Kalyān Candra, sanctified both the families i.e. paternal and maternal. He was virtuous by nature and whom the good people like the sacred current of the three streams (i.e. Ganges or The Trisrota River) served. His dear wife, Kalyāna Devī, was the daughter of a rich merchant and was of uncommon beauty. She gave birth to a son named Ladaha Candra. The king Ladaha Candra went to Varanasi. He bathed in the waters of the Ganges to free from sins. The king was designated by the royal title, *Parameśvara Paramabhāṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*. He was a Buddhist but devoted to Hindu Religion.”

The donated lands were situated at Pattikeraka in Samatāṭa Maṇḍala under Paṇḍrabhūkt. Three separate pieces of land were granted in the name and to the god Srī Laḍaha Mādhava by the king Srī Laḍaha Candradeva. First plot of land, measuring $5\frac{3}{4}$ dronas, was situated in the village of Phullahada. Campāvani called the plot of land. The second plot of land, measuring patakas, $4\frac{3}{4}$ dronas 5 yaṣṭhi two bindus and 3 kakas, was situated in the village of Vappasimhavoraka, relating to (the village) Dollavāyika. The third plot of land, measuring 3 patakas. 9 dronas and 1 kākas, was situated in the village of Mahadeva together with the market of Dhritipura and relating to (the village) Guptinātana. All together 11 pātakas $19\frac{1}{2}$ dronas 5 yaṣṭhi 2 bindus and 4 kakas of land were recorded on 30th day of the month Jyaṣṭha in the 6th regional year of Srimad Laḍaha Candradeva, in presence of all royal officers which were approved by *Mahāsāndhivigrahika* and *Mahākṣapatalika*. The lands were granted for the increasing of merit and fame of his parents and himself.

The language of the inscription is Sanskrit and the characters of the inscription are resembled with the other Candra inscriptions. The king Srī Candra, grand father of Srī Laḍaha Candra, was dated in the 10th century A. D. From the analysis of the Candra copper-plate inscriptions, it appears that Laḍaha Candra may be dated in the beginning of the 11th century A. D.

21. Laḍaha Candra B

The Laḍaha Candra B plate was found accidentally in a mound called Carpatra Mura, in an area of Mainamati-Lalmai hill range, associated with the Laḍaha Candra A plate. A seal is fastened on the top centre and resembles closely to the seal of the plate. It is also a single plate engraved on both the sides. This grant consists of 60 lines of which 30 lines on the obverse and 30 lines on the reverse. This grant is also issued from the camp of victory, Vikramapura, generally identified with the ruins of Vikramapura²³.

The genealogical portion of this B plate is similar to the Laḍaha Candra A plate. The 8 patakas and 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ dronas of land was granted to **Srī Laḍaha Mādhava Bhaṭṭāraka** by the king Laḍaha Candra, in presence of all royal officers and respected persons for increasing merit and fame of his parents and himself. This land is situated at Peranatana Visaya in Samataṭa Maṇḍala under Paunḍrabhūkti. The image of Lord Vasudeva was erected at Pattikeraka by Laḍaha Candra himself, which bore the name of Sri Laḍaha Madahava Bhattaraka. In this plate, the king Laḍaha Candra was designated as *Paramasaugata Parameśvara Paramabhāṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*. He was the devout worshipper of Buddha but he had great devotion to the Hindu Gods. The plates A and B indicate that Laḍaha Candra himself performed more Hindu rites than Candra kings. It is also noted that Laḍaha Candra A and B plates started with the salutation to Lord Vāsudeva while rest of the Candra plates (before Laḍaha Candra) begun with the praise of Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha.

The land was recorded on 30th day of month Āṣāḍha in the 6th regional year of King Laḍaha Candradeva. *Mahāsāndhivigraḥika* and *Mahākṣapaṭalika* approved it. This “B” plate was recorded after two months of “A” plate.

The language of this plate is Sanskrit. Both the plates of Ladaha Candra were written in verses and prose. The characters are the same as given in other Candra plates²⁴. Banerji²⁵ did the comparative study of these scripts. On palaeographic consideration and discussion with the article of Majumder and Banerji, this plate may be dated in the beginning of 11th century A. D.

22 Govinda Candra

The copper-plate of Govinda Candra was discovered accidentally at Cāṛpatra Murā of Mainamati-Lalmai hill range. A seal is attached to the top centre of the plate. It is round in shape but slight projection is also observed to the top of the seal. This seal is described as *Dharmacakra Mudrā* in the inscription. Two deer like other Candra plates flank this *Dharmacakra*. A single line of inscription is noticed on the seal. It is read as Srī Govinda Candra Devah. This is a single plate engraved on both the sides. There was a text of 29 lines on the obverse and 29 lines on the reverse. The plate consists of verses and prose. It was issued from the camp of victory, Vikramapura.

The genealogical informations are found in the inscription. The leader of the kings of the earth, Srī Candradeva, was born in the family. He was *Paramasaugata* i.e. great devout worshipper of Buddha and was famous by his pure merits that had spread upto the farthest end of the globe including mountains and oceans. His son, Kalyān Candra, was Bali by dint of his sacrifice and was Yudhisthira by his truthfulness and was mighty Arjun by dint of his heroism. He was very powerful king, made the river Lohitya redoubled by the tears densely dropping down from the eyes of the Mleccha ladies who were agitated owing to the killing of their husbands. The king snatched away the army consisting of elephants, horses and foot soldiers in the battlefield, made the face of the king of Gauda bend down under the weight of shame for a long while.

His son, Laḍaha Candra, lord of the earth, known for morality and who was kind to his people. He went to Vārānasi and bathed in Gaṅges and was donated gold to the Brahmins. His beloved queen, was Saubhāgya Devi, who was dearly loved just as the goddess of fortune is to Hari and the goddess Parvati to Śhiva. She gave birth to Govinda Candra on an auspicious day and in an auspicious moment. He was compared with Mahasena i.e. Karttikeya. He was the embodiment of Dharma, the store of forgiveness, the protector of the people, the object of virtue and the abode of Laksmi. He was designated as *Parmeśvara Paramabhattachāraka Mahārājādhirāja*.

Two pāṭakas of land was donated to Nattesvara Bhattaraka at an area of Saharatalaka in Peranatana Visaya of Samatata Mandala under Paundrabhukti, for the increasing of merit and fame of the king's parents and himself, as long as the Sun, Moon and the Earth endure, according to the law of *Bhūmicchidra*, dully touched water, in presence of all royal officers and respected persons.

The plate bears no date but the king Govinda Candra ruled over Samatata at least 23 years²⁶. The language of this inscription is Sanskrit. The characters of this script are same to the script of the copper-plates of Laḍaha Candra. So the independent king Govinda Candra, most probably, ruled over Samatata in the second quarter of 11th century A. D.

23. Harikāla Deva

The copper-plate of Raṇavaṅkamalla Harikāla Deva was discovered in digging earth for the repair of the highway through the Mainamati hills in the district of Comilla. The find spot of the plate is about 5 miles to the west of the town of Comilla.

The plate is 11 inches in length and 9 inches in breadth. It bears a symbol of the royal dynasty to the top centre of the plate, measuring 2 inches in height. It was "an abrupt bend allowing room to a figure coarsely delineated and apparently intended to represent a temple"²⁷. It consists of an arch and inside, probably, a crown. This is a single plate engraved on one side. It consists of 24 lines, which are composed in verses and last three lines in prose. There is no reference to a centre of issue. The actual

endowment was made by Sri Dhadi-Eba, son of Hedi-Eba, the chief cavalry officer of Harikāla Deva, on his own authority. This chief officer of the horses, continuously stationed in the greatness of the supreme element, the master of the worlds, always shines in the politics of charming courses and in the activities of the Sahaja cult. He gave the property to the small monastery dedicated to the goddess Durgottāra, a form of the Buddhist goddess Tara. This monastery was built in the city of Pattikera. It was apparently situated somewhere in the Mainamati-Lalmai hill range where the plate was discovered. The inscription records a grant of land measuring 20 dronas in a village named Bejakhaṇḍa in the city of Pattikera. The writer of the record, one Medini-Eba makes no secret of the fact that the inscription is in nature of a praise of a family to which probably he himself belonged.

The plate was inscribed in the 17th regnal year of the glorious king Raṇa-vaṅkamalla Harikāla Deva in the Śaka era 1141 (i.e. 1220 A. D.), on the 26th day of the month **Phālguna**.

It was unique for a royal officer to transfer property in his own name without securing his lord's permission. The implication is that Srī Dhāḍi-Eba enjoyed the tax revenue from this parcel of land as a hereditary right that could not be resumed by his lord and therefore Srī Dhāḍi-Eba was at liberty to dispose of revenue yield as he wished without reference to Harikāla Deva. Also of interest is Srī Dhāḍi-Eba's name.

The extraordinary nature of the three names of the grantor 'Dhāḍi-Eba', his father 'Hedi-Eba' and the writer 'Medini-Eba', all apparently belonging to the same family deserves more than a passing notice. All the three names are entirely unknown in any Indian dialect as far as we know. It appears that a respectable family of Arakanese origin which settled and survived in the 12-13th century A. D. in the District of Tippera, at present Comilla. For, 'ba' and 'ya-ba' (modified to 'e-ba') are not difficult to trace in Burmese names even now²⁸. Finally, the dedication in favour of a female goddess by a follower of the *Sahajapath* of Buddhism is suggestive of the development in Buddhist practice in the region around the hills.

The language of the inscription is Sanskrit. The grant is dated in 1220 A. D. So, the king Raṇavaṅkamalla Harikāladeva came to power in the beginning of the 13th century A. D. i.e. in 1203 A. D.

24. Damodaradeva A

The copper-plate of Damodaradeva was found in the village of Mehar, Sahrasti Police Station of Candpur district some 18 miles south-south-west from Mainamati-Mandir. It was found while digging a ditch to a depth of about 8 feet. It was cut partly from its lower edge.

This is a single plate engraved on both the sides. The grant consists of 43 lines of which 24 lines on the obverse and 19 lines on the reverse side. It is 11 inches in length and 9 inches in breadth. The upper edge of the plate was curved upwards, measuring 3 inches in height, to provide room for "A figure of Viṣṇu either riding on Garuda, his traditional vehicle, or in the angry attitude of staying a fallen foe, and on the reverse side, a rayed disc of the sun set upon and inside a crescent" ²⁹. The images of both the sides are installed on a disposed pedestal. It appears that Viṣṇu is supposed to be in his **Puruṣottama** or **Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva** form. He shows a strong fighting pose. It may be also that the images of obverse side represent a wrestling duel between Kṛṣṇa and the demon **Cānura**. The representation of Viṣṇu on **Garuda** or of **Mādhava** over powering **Cānura** is certainly symbolical of the *Vaiṣṇava* faith of king Damodaradeva. N. G. Majumdar suggests that this dynasty "professed the *Vaiṣṇava* faith like the Varmanas and the Senas." ³⁰

The grant mentions the genealogy of the Deva family. Purusottama was the progenitor of the Deva family. He is called a "leader of the Deva family" in the plate. It appears that he was not a ruler. His son was Madhusudana, was "the lord of the earth", "Moon in the ocean of the Deva dynasty" and famous with having "snatched away the wealth of the enemies in war." ³¹

He is designated with Narpati in the Chittagong copper-plate. His son was Vasudeva, was also called "lord of the earth" and a great "archer". He was a scholar in

all the *Sastras* and foremost in military skill. His son, Damodardeva, was designated with the title of Gajapati and *Arirāja-Cānura-Mādhava*. In the Chittagong plate³² he was titled “overlord of all kings” and defeated many kings and brought them under subjection. The three plates of Damodardeva (i.e. from Mehar, Sobharampur and Chittagong), indicate that his kingdom was extended atleast over the three districts of greater Comilla, Noakhali and Chittagong.

All together 16 plots of land, together with the annual income amounting to 100 puranas were granted to 20 Brahmins in this charter by the donar king Damodaradeva. The best Brahmins Kapadi of the *Sāvarṇya gotra* received the Charter from the king Damodaradeva. The name of the 20 donee Brahmins are as follows: Srī Kāpadika, Srī Saṅkaka, Srī Sudoka, Srī Kalemika, Srī Tarapate, Srī Paṇḍoka, Srī Dedaka, Srī Sudoka, Srī Keśava, Srī Bramoka, Srī Siroka, Srī Dharanika, Sri Panduka, Sri Sonkoka, Sri Prajāpate, Srī Nathoka, Srī Visvarupa, Srī Madhoka, Srī Sripate and Srī Srīvatsa. Some of these mentioned Barhmins are distinguished by the *gotras* to which they belonged and some by villages from which they came. Three *gotras* namely *Sāvarṇay*, *Bharadvāja* and *Atrey* and villages Kanyāmāla, Purvagrāma, Siddhālogo, Diṇḍisa and Keśarakona are mentioned.

The recorded land of this grant is situated in the village of Mehar belonging to the Vāyisāgrāma Khaṇḍala (sub-division) included in the Pāralāyi Vaiṣaya in Samatata Maṇḍala under Paṇḍravarddhanabhūkti. The Mehāragrāma of this copper-plate grant may be identified with the Mehar village of the greater Comilla district, at present Chandpur district where the grant was discovered in order to digging the earth.

The grant is also mentioned three nearest royal officers of Damodaradeva. The illustrious Gaṅgadharadeva was the honest courtier and resourceful to Damodardeva. Munidasa was *Mahāsāndhivigrahika* and Dalaeva was *Mahākṣapatalika* of the King Damodardeva, were joined with the king in the recorded work of merit.

The date of issue of the grant is the 22nd day of the month Jyaistha in the 4th regnal year of the king Damodara and 1156th year of Saka era i.e. 1234 A. D. So, the king came to the power in 1230 A. D.

The language of the script is Sanskrit. It has close similarity with the other plates of Damodardeva and some of the Sena inscriptions. It is noted that the Senas held supremacy over the region of Vaṅga including Vikramapura, by that time, the Devas were ruling in Samatata. It also appears that the river Meghna was the western boundary of the Samatata Maṇḍala. It is also notable from the Mainamati copper-plate of Ranavankamalla Harikāla Deva that the king Harikāla Deva came to the power in some area of Samatata Maṇḍala in 1203 A. D. It appears that the king Vāsudeva, the father of king Damodara Deva, was at least contemporary of Ranavaṅka Malla. Harikāla Deva.

25. Damodara Deva B

This copper-plate grant of Damodara Deva B was discovered in the village of Sobharampur under the Burichong Police Station in the district of Comilla, while digging earth.

This is a single plate engraved on both the sides. It is 10¹/₄ inches in length and 9 inches in width, having semi-circular projection on the top centre of the plate, which is 2 inches in height. This space is depicted by the simple double line disc of the Sun inside the Crescent on the obverse and the human figure on the reverse. This depiction is different from that of the Chittagong³³ and Mehar³⁴ plate of Damodaradeva. In both the plates the human figure is found on the obverse side only. There is no pedestal, below the images of Sun-Moon and human figure, as we find in the Mehar plate. The Sun is also not rayed. The engraved figure of the reverse side is not clear. The inscription consists of 35 lines of which 22 lines on the obverse side and 13 lines on the reverse side.

The very beginning verse is in praises of Viṣṇu's sharp nails, which tore a sunder the chest of the demon-chief (Hiranyakasipu). It suggests the Vaiṣṇava faith of the king Damodara Deva. This grant is also mentioned the pedigree of the Deva family. The progenitor of the Deva dynasty was Puruṣottama. In the Mehar plate, he is

called "*Dev-anvayagrāmani*", i.e. "leader of the Deva family." It appears that he was not a king. His son, Madhunsudana described as lord of the earth and "*Devavams-odadh-indu*", i.e. "Moon in the Ocean of the Deva dynasty". He snatched away the wealth of the enemies in war. It shows that he was very powerful king in the Deva family. His son was Vasudeva, was the lord of the earth and a great archer. He was also a powerful king. His wife was queen Mitradevi gave birth to a Damodara Deva. He was 'well versed in polity', and also bore the title of *Gajapati*. In Chittagong plate, he was designated as "overlord of all kings", and defeated many kings and brought them under subjection. In Mehar plate, he bears the title of *Gajapati*. In Chittagong plate, both these titles are not mentioned. So, it appears that Damodar Deva may be suffered a setback towards the close of his reign. The minister Gautamdatta, *Mudrādhikarisaciva* of the king Damodaradeva, devoted to the feet of Śrī Gautama. Śrī Gautama, probably, refers to the Buddha. So, from this idea, Minister Gautama was a devout worshipper of Lord Buddha.

All together 15 dronas of homestead land were granted to two Brahmins named Kaushika and Devarata of the *Agnivesyagotra* by the king Damodara Deva. The lands were situated in three villages named **Sundaraya Disaga** and **Vandura** in the **Cāṭihāra Khaṇḍala** within the **Midilli Viṣaya** in the **Samatāṭa Maṇḍala** under **Paundravarddhanabhūkti**. The village called **Sundaram** is situated adjacent to the village of **Sobharampur** where the plate was found. The village **Sundaram** could be identified with the village **Sundaraya** one, out of three villages found in the copper-plate grant.

The grant was recorded on 15th day of the month Asadha in the 6th regnal year of his victorious reign and 1158 year of Saka era i.e. 1236 A. D. Therefore. This grant was presented after two years of the Mehar plate of Damodra Deva.

The language of the inscription is Sanskrit. The characteristics of this grant have close similarity to the other plates of Damodra Deva and some of the Sena inscriptions³⁵. From Mehar plate and Sobharampur plate of Damodra Deva clearly

indicate that **Pāralāyi Viṣaya** and **Midilli Viṣaya** were under **Samatata Maṇḍala** where Damodra Deva was ruling.

26. Damodara Deva C

This copper-plate grant was found during re-excavation of a pond at the village of Nasirabad near the Chittagong City. This is a single plate inscribed on both the sides. It consists of 41 lines of which 18 lines are engraved on the obverse and 23 lines on the reverse side. The grant is 7½ inches in length and 7 inches in width. The top centre of the plate was curved upwards, measuring 1½ inches in height to provide room for the figure of a crescent surmounted by a Sun on the obverse and the figure of Viṣṇu riding on Guruda on the reverse³⁶. This representation suggests the Vaisnava faith of the king.

This grant is also mentioned the genealogy of the Deva dynasty. Puruṣottama was born in the family of the moon. His son was king Madhusudana. His son was Vāsudeva and Vāsudeva's son was Dāmodara Deva. The official seal suggests the representation of Viṣṇu on Garuda and the names of all four generations are synonymous of Viṣṇu. In the point of view, Deva dynasty was in *Vaiṣṇava* sect. Majumdra also concluded that they professed the *Vaiṣṇava* faith like the Varmans and the Senas.

Altogether, 5 dronas of land were granted to the Yajurvedi Brahmana Pṛthvidharasarma by the king Damodara Deva. Three dronas of land were situated in the village of **Kāmanāpindiyaaka** in **Ḍaṁbarāḍama** and two dronas of land were situated in the village of **Ketaṅgapāla** in **Ḍaṁbarāḍama**. The village called **Ketaṅgapāla** may be identified with the modern **Ketaṅgyapādā**³⁷, forming a part of the village of Hashimpur, P.S. Patiya and bounded on the north by the Maracchara Pukhariya, on the southern bank of the river Sankha.

The language of the inscription is Sanskrit and the characteristics of the inscription are proto Bengali. It has close similarity to the other inscription of Dāmodara Deva and the inscriptions of Varmanas and Senas.

The grant was recorded in the Śaka era 1165. It is equivalent to 1243 A. D. . The grant did not mention the day, the month and the regnal year of the ruler king Dāmodara Deva. According to the Mehar plate and the Sobharampur plate, the grant was issued in the 13th regnal year of the king Dāmodara Deva.

27. Daśaratha Deva

The copper-plate grant of Daśaratha Deva was found in the village of Ādāvādi of Vikramapur in the district of Munshiganj. This is a single plate measuring 11³/₄ inches in length and 8³/₄ inches in breadth. There is a seal on the top centre of the plate. It bears an image of Nārāyaṇa holding his usual attributes, conch shell, disc, mace and lotus in four hands. The grant is inscribed on both the sides. It consists of 55 lines of which 26 are engraved on the obverse and 29 lines on the reverse.

The plate was issued from Vikramapura. The income of the land distributed to the Brahmins came to about 500 Pūrāṇas. The names of the donee Brahmins are Sandhyākara, Śrīmākri, Śrīśakra, Śrīsugandhā, Śrīsoma, Śrīvadya, Śrīpandita, Śrīmandi, Śrīrāma, Śrīledhu, Śrīdakṣā, Śrībhaṭṭa, Śrībali, Śrīvāsudeva and Śrīmiko. Bhattasali³⁸ identified some place names, which were mentioned in this plate. These are given below.

Antarāvati is identified with modern Ādāvādi, Bāndikhāndi with modern Bāinkhada, Nayanāva with Nayana, Muladava with mal, Vādāila with Bhaṅgāniyā, Gaṇāgrāma with modern Gaṇāisār respectively.

The inscription is dated in the 3rd regnal year of Daśaratha Deva and the 21st day of the month of Kārttika

28. Vīradhara Deva

This copper plate of Viradhara Deva was found accidentally at Carpatra Mura in Mainamati Lalmai hill range. It is 11 inches in length and 9 inches in breadth. A seal is depicted to the top centre and on both the sides of the plate. It is mentioned as **Viṣṇucakra Mudrā** i.e. the wheel of Visnu. It contains three concentric circles and 8 spokes like leaf. A pair of conch is on both the sides of the wheel. At the end of the text is engraved the figure of a running dog. This is a single copper plate inscribed on both the sides. It consists of 23 lines of which 11 inscribed lines on the obverse side and 12 inscribed lines on the reverse side. The place of issue was not stated, but the regnal year of fifteen was recorded. The grant did not mention the genealogy of the king. Altogether, 17 *pāṭakas* of land were granted for the illustrious Lord Vāsudeva, in the form of *Srī Laḍaha Mādhava* by name, by the king *Srī Vīradharadeva* for the increasing of merit and fame of his parents and ownself, up to the time of the Earth, the Sun and the Moon endure, according to the law of *Bhūmicchidra*, dully touched water. The first plot out of two plots of donated lands, was situated in the village of *Meśvavarttā* and *Adhavasā* connected with the district of *Vātagaṅgā* in the Division of *Samatata* under the (province of) *Paundravarddhanbhūkti*. The second plot of land was situated in (the village of) *Nāroraka* connected with the district of *Gangamandala*. The second plot of land appears to be situated in the same Division and the same Province.

The whole inscription was written in prose and the language is Sanskrit. The grant was recorded on 9th day of the month **Kārttika** in the 15th regnal year of the ruler king *Srī Vīradharadeva*. The characteristic of the inscription is proto-Bengali. It resembles the scripts of Bodhagaya inscription of *Lakṣmana Sena*³⁹ and Gaya inscription of *Govinda Pāla* of 1175 A.D.⁴⁰. According to *Majumdar*⁴¹, *Viradhara Deva* is dated to be a later king of Deva family. Later Deva family was ruling in *Samatata Mandala* during the last part of the Sena rule. The date mentioned in this grant is not related to any known era. There is no other information to help for establishing the date of *Viradhara Deva*. The scripts of *Harikalādeva*⁴² and *Dāmodaradeva*⁴³ are closely

resembled with the scripts of this plate. Harikāladeva and Dāmodaradeva may be come in to the power in 1203 A.D. and 1230 A.D. accordingly. So, this grant might be dated in the thirteenth century A.D. On palaeographic consideration this plate could be dated to 13th century A. D.

The Chittagong copper-plate⁴⁴ and Mehar copper-plate⁴⁵ of Damodara Deva and the Pakamoda copper-plate⁴⁶ of Daśarath Deva son of Dāmodara Deva disclosed the genealogy of the Deva family. After Daśaratha Deva, the genealogy of the family is unknown. The grant of Vīradhara Deva did not mention the genealogy of his family. The king avoided the royal titles and epithets used by the kings of extensive domains. He did not acknowledge his subordination to any lord. There was no reference to any governmental officers or procedure for processing the inscription. Therefore, the king Viradhara Deva was, probably, a small local ruler in Samatāṭa Maṇḍala. It also appears that Vīradhara Deva may have assumed his power after Daśaratha Deva.

TABLE NO -5
RULERS AND GEOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

SL.	Name of the rulers	Discovering place of the copper-plates	Measurement of the plate in inches	Language	Issuing Place	Total amount of donated lands	Recipient	Datation
1.	Vainya Gupta A	Guṇāighar	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	Sanskrit	Kripura	11 Pātakas	Monastery	6 th Century A.D.
2.	Vainya Gupta B	Sālvān Vihāra	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	"	-	-	-	-
3.	Deva Khadga A	Āshrāfpur	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	"	Jayakarmānta	9 Pātakas, 10 dronas	Monastery	7 th century A.D.
4.	Deva Khadga B	"	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 6	"	"	6 Pātakas, 10 dronas	Monastery	"
5.	Deva Khadga C	Sālvān Vihāra	10X8	"	-	-	-	-
6.	* Khadga D	"	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 6	"	-	-	-	-
7.	Bālabhatta	"	13 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 10 $\frac{1}{4}$	"	-	28 Pātakas	Monasteries	"
8.	Lokaṇtha	Tippera	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	"	-	The plots of land	Temple and Brahmins	"
9.	Srīdhārana Rāta	Kailān	10 $\frac{17}{20}$ X 8 $\frac{3}{20}$	"	-	The plots of land	Temple and	"
10.	Ānanda Deva	Salvān Vihāra	10 $\frac{5}{8}$ X 8 $\frac{1}{8}$	"	Vasantpura	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ Pātakas	Temple	7th -8 th century A.D.
11.	Bhava Deva A	"	-	"	Devaparvata	3 Pātakas	Monastery	8 th century A.D.
12.	Bhava Deva B	Tippera	11 $\frac{1}{8}$ X 8 $\frac{7}{8}$	"	-	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ Pātakas	Ratnatraya	"
13.	* Deva (?) A	Sālvān Vihāra	16 $\frac{3}{4}$ X 10 $\frac{1}{4}$	"	-	-	-	-
14.	Deva (?) B	-	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 2 $\frac{3}{4}$	"	-	-	-	-

TABLE NO -5

SL.	Name of the rulers	Discovering place of the copper-plates	Measurement of the plate in inches	Language	Issuing Place	Total amount of donated lands	Recipient	Datation
15.	Srī Candra A	Rāmpāl	9½ X 8	"	Vikramapura	1 Pāṭakas	Sarman Pitavasa Gupta	10 th century A.D.
16.	Srī Candra B	Kedarpur	8½ X 7½	"	Vikramapura	-	-	"
17.	Srī Candra C	Dhullā	8⅝ X 7¼	"	Vikramapura	19 Halas and Dronas	Sarman Vgasaganga	"
18.	Srī Candra D	Edilur	8 X 7	"	-	A plect of land	-	"
19.	Srī Candra E	Madanpur	8¼ X 6½	"	-	more than 8 Dronas	Brahmin, Sukradeva	"
20.	Ladaha Candra A	Cāptra Murā	-	"	Vikramapura	11 Pāṭakas, 19½ Dronas 5 Yaṣṭhis, 2 Bindus and 4 Kakas.	Shrine	11 th century A.D.
21.	Ladaha Candra B	"	-	"	-	18 Pāṭakas, 37½ Dronas.	-	"
22.	Govinda Candra	"	-	"	-	2 Pāṭakas,	-	"
23.	Harikāla Deva	Mainamati	11 X 9	"	-	20 Dronas	Monastery	13 th century
24.	Dāmodara Deva A	Mehar	11 X 9	"	-	4 11/16 Dronas	20 Brahmins	"
25.	- B	Sobharāmpur	10¼ X 9	"	-	15 Dronas	2 Brahman	"
26.	- C	Chittagong	7½ X 7	"	-	5 Dronas	Brahman	"
27.	Dasāratha Deva	Ādvādi	11⅓ X 8¾	"	Vikramapura	500 Pūrānas	Brahmans	"
28.	Vīradhara Deva	Cāptra Murā	11 X 9	"	-	17 Pāṭakas	Shrine	"

SECTION-II

DYNASTIC CHRONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF INSCRIPTIONS; SAMATAṬA

The early history of Samataṭa Maṇḍala is, still not clear to us. There is no epigraphic evidence about the people who first ruled or lived in this area. The classical epics and religious treatises refer to it as *Āryans-Paṇḍava-Varjita-deś*. The Pūrāṇas indicate that the king Suhma, a descendant of Yayati and son of King Bali, ruled over the kingdom of Suhma named after him. It has been identified with Tippera⁴⁷. The Epic Mahābhārata describes that Bhīma attacked in the East and "subdued the king of Sukhma and the Mlecchas who dwelt on the shores of the Ocean"⁴⁸. However, the kingdom of Tippera east of the Meghna, was not mentioned before the 6th century A. D. According to Rajmala written by Babu Kailash Chandra Singh, the kingdom of Tippera was founded by Tripura, grandson of Yayati.

However, now it has come to light from some epigraphic evidences that many dynasties ruled over Samataṭa Maṇḍala from 4th century A. D. to 13th century A. D. We have a number of references about Gupta, Rāṭa, Khadga, Bhadra, Deva, Pāla, Candra, Varman, later Deva and Sena dynasties. Most of them ruled over Samataṭa Maṇḍala directly and some like Palas ruled indirectly. From the evidences of the copper plate inscriptions, in ancient times, Bhukti consisted of Maṇḍalas, Khaṇḍalas, Viṣayas and small unit Gramas. At present Mainamati is a village under the district of Comilla. It is situated to west of Comilla town. It appears that Komalā of Vāyu Purana (II ch. v. 369) and Kiāmoloṅkiā of Yuan Chwang⁴⁹ refer to the same area. This Kiamolongkia is identified with present Comilla was situated in Samataṭa Maṇḍala.

1. Gupta Dynasty

The name Samatāṭa first appeared in the Allhabad Posthumous stone pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta⁵⁰. It was mentioned about the middle of the fourth century A. D.

The independent existence of various territoris in Bengal of Gupta Empire in 4th century A. D. came to an end. But the whole of Bengal with the exception Samatāṭa was definitely incorporated in the Gupta Empire by the time of Samudra Gupta⁵¹. The northern Bengal formed an integral part of the great Gupta empire down to the end of 5th century A. D. is known to us by the Dāmodarpur copper-plate of Budha Gupta⁵². The Dāmodarpur copper-plate inscriptions⁵³ clearly indicate that there was a powerful ruling Gupta dynasty at Kotivarsa Visaya i.e. the tract of contury constituting the northern part of the modern district of Rajshahi, the southern part of the Dinajpur, Rangpur, Bogra, and the district of Malda under the Paundravarddhanabhūkti from 124 G.E. to 214 G.E. i.e. 443- 533 A.D. A Gupta copper-plate has been discovered from Gunāighar. It is a village, which is situated to the 18 miles north west of Comilla town. This is the plate of Vainya Gupta. It shows that Vainya Gupta ruled over Eastern Bengal in 508 A.D⁵⁴. The reading of the Gunaighar copper-plate of Vainya Gupta alongwith Dāmodarpur copper-plate⁵⁵ of Gupta dynasty indicates that "south-eastern Bengal was included within the Gupta empire up to the first decade of the 6th century"⁵⁶. The Gunāighar grant of Vainya Gupta was issued from the Kripura. The findspot of the plate is near to Mainamati-Lalmai hill range. Most probably, the village Gunikāgrahara of the grant can be identified with the village Gunaighar. Another copper plate grant of Vainya Gupta was also found in Sālvan Vihāra excavation. But it is highly corroded. Therefore, no information is available from this inscription.

It is unknown to us the history of Samatāṭa in the 5th century A.D but it is now clear that latter half of the 5th century A.D and the beginning of the 6th century A.D, North Bengal was under the independent Gupta empire. From the Gunaighar copper-plate of Vainya Gupta, it is noted that towerds the beginning of 6th century A.D

Gupta Empire showed visible sign of disintegration. This is apparent from the fact that King Vainya Gupta (507-8 A.D) succeeded in carving out for himself a virtually independent Kingdom in Eastern Bengal. It is testified by his copper plate grant issued from his "Victorious Camp" at Kripur in Comilla. But no other information regarding the extent of his domain or the length of his reign is available from any other sources.

The famous Chinese traveller, Yuan Chwang, visited Samatata in between 637-39 A.D.⁵⁷. A number of epigraphical records and the description of Yuan Chawang indicate to the existence of a Bhadra⁵⁸ royal family who ruled in Samatata in the first half of the 7th century A.D. Yaung Chawang did not mention the rule of Gupta dynasty in Samatata Mandala and no epigraphic records of Gupta dynasty have been found from 7th century A.D. The Allahabad inscription of Samudra Gupta, therefore, indicates political relation with Samatata Mandala in the middle of the 4th century A.D.

A number of copperplate grants found from Kotalipada in the present district of Gopalganj and one in Bardwan district (W.B.). A large number of gold coins discovered from Sabhar (Dhaka), and Kotalipada. All the documents testify to the existence of three independent and powerful kings of South-East Bengal, named Gopa Candra, Dharmāditya and Samacār Deva who ruled in the first half of the sixth century A.D.⁵⁹. The title all these kings assumed *Mahārājādhirāja*. According to Majumdar⁶⁰ that Gopcandra was earlier and then Dharmaditya and Samacar Deva. They ruled approximately between 525 and 575 A.D with the margin of a few years both at the beginning and at the end. Mahārājā Vijaya Sena was a vassal chief of Gopcandra. So, it seems to appear that Gopcandra, Vainya Gupta and Vijay Sena were contemporary. But it is not clear that what was the relation between three powerful rulers and Vainya Gupta. Most probably, they ruled over greater portion of Vaṅga and some portion of Samatata.

2. KHAḌGA DYNASTY

Altogether total five copper-plate grants of the Khadga 'dynasty have been discovered, two of them from Ashrapur village, situated in 38 miles north-north-west from Comilla Town and three of them from Sālvan-Vihāra of Mainamati hill range. These findings support that the western side and the eastern side of the Meghna river i.e. western part of Vaṅga and Samtāṭa were under Khadga dynasty.

Ashrapur grants of Devakhadga issued from Jayakarmānta is identified with the modern Baḍakāmta, which is situated in Debidvar Thana of Comilla district, and five miles due west of Mainamati Mandir of Mainamati-Lalmai hill range. Jaykarmānta, at least, was the "Camp of Victory" of Khadga dynasty.

The Ashrapur grants and Deulbadi Śarvvāni image inscription⁶¹ inform the genealogy of this dynasty to us. The lord of the kings and the founder of the line, Khadgodyma, his son Jata Khadga, his son Deva Khadga, and his son, prince Rājārāja (Bhatta) were informed to us. There is no doubt that Rājabhaṭṭa of Seng-Chi, Rājabhadra of Manjusrīmulakalpa and Rājārāja bhatta of the Ashrapur grant, all the three names are of one. He was the son of Devakhadga and can be dated in second half of the 7th century A.D. From description of Yuan-Chwang and Seng-Chi, it is strongly suggested that the Buddhist religion had become popular during the rule of Rājārājabhāṭṭa. It is said to the Ashrapur grant of Rājārājabhāṭṭa that the great lord of the kings⁶² donated a piece of land. It indicates the feudatory character of the Khadga kings, but it is not clear that who was the great lord of Khadga kings.

The copper-plate grant of Bālabhatta is very badly corroded. The seal, which was attached on the top of the plate, has a similarity with the seal of other Khadga plates. The name of Svāmi Devakhadgea inscribed in line-12 and the name of the donar Rajaputra Balabhatta in line-20. Because of the corrosion of the plate it is not clear that what is the relation between Deva Khadga and Bālabhatta. The study of the Khadga plates and the accounts of the Chinese travellers, it is surmised that Bālabhatta might be identified as a successor of Rājārāja bhatta. His capital city was

situated at Devaparvata from where the 28 patakas of land were granted. So, it might be suggested that the first capital city of the Khadga situated at Jayankarmānta and later on, it was shifted to Devaparvata. Devaparvata might be situated in somewhere of Mainamati-Lalmai hill range.

It is not clear to us that what was the boundary of the Khadga kingdom. But it can be suggested from the epigraphic description and image inscription that the Khadgas ruled over both the bank of the river Meghna.

In all probabilities, it appears that Khadgas were dated in between the second quarter of the 7th century to an end of the 7th century A.D.

GENEALOGICAL LINEAGE OF THE KHADGA DYNASTY

- 1) Śrī Khadgodyama
- 2) Śrī Jata Khadga (Son of -1)
- 3) Śrī Deva Khadga (Son of -2)
- 4) Śrī Rājarāja (Bhaṭṭa)(Son of -3)
- 5) Śrī Bālabhaṭṭa (Son of -4?)

3. BHADRA DYNASTY

The famous Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang visited Samatata in between 637-639 A.D.⁶³. He mentioned that the country Samatata was an important kingdom. There were about 30 **Buddhist Saṅghārāmas** (Monasteries) with about 2000 monks. It is also mentioned that Brahmanical temples were also numerous⁶⁴. From his description, we also know that his teacher and head of the Nalanda Mahāvihāra, *Ācāryya* “Silabhadra was a scion of the Brahminical royal family of Samatata”⁶⁵. He

was head of Nalanda Maha-Vihara in about second quarter of the 7th century A.D. We find also from the description of Beal Samuel that "South-west of the convent of Gunamati about 20 li. we came to a solitary hill on which is a convent called (the Saṅghārāma of) Silabhadra (Shi-lo-po-to-lo). This is the convent, which the master of Śāstras after his victory caused to be built out of the funds of a village, which were given up. It stands by the side of a single sharp crag like a stupa. It contains some sacred relics of Buddha. This master of Śāstras belonged to the family of the king of Samatāta (San-mo-ta-cha), and was of the Brahman caste" ⁶⁶. From this description we can easily understand that Śilbhadra, the principal of Nalanda University, was Brahman by caste and latter on he converted himself to the Buddhist faith. It is likely to think that after his convert, he became the principal of Nalanda University in about the second quarter of the 7th century A.D and before that he was living in Samatāta in the beginning of the 7th century A.D. He must have been sufficient advanced in age before he was raised to his exalted position. Sircar says that "there is absolutely no doubt that the typical Buddhist name Śilbhadra (literally one who is good in regard to the ten Śīlas or Buddhist precepts of morality) was adopted by the Brahman only after he had renounced his original Brahmanical faith and had been initiated into Buddhism"⁶⁷. Some scholars suggest that the existence of Bhadra dynasty was over Samatāta in the seventh century. From the references of Yuang Chwang's account, the Manjusrīmulakalpa and the Khalimpur plate would go to indicate the existence of three Bhadra Kings in Samatāta. It is also mentioned in Yuang Chwang's description that there was a king in Samatāta from the Brahman family of Śilabhadra. But he did not mention the name of the king. So, it may suggest the feudatory character of the former's position. Paul⁶⁸ thinks that the Bhadras and Khadgas ruled in Samatāta at the same time. Bhattasali mentioned that "Śilabhadra was a Khadga, and those who kept alive the name of Khadgas in later times tried in their way to emulate their illustrious predecessor by noble deeds of piety and benevolence"⁶⁹. There is also a possibility, which suggests the identification of the Bhadra kings with the Khadgas of Samatāta. It deserves particular attention to the Asrafpur plates of the Khadgas are surmounted by a seal, which contains in high relief of a bull couchant. We find that the seals of the Pālas and Candras bear the *Dharmacakra Mudrā* but the deals of the

Khaḍgas show Śaivite symbol. The image of the bull on the the copper-plate grants and the covering of the Śarvvani image with gold leaves by the queen of Deva Khaḍga, Pravāvatī may be explained by the fact that the Khaḍgas could not forget their association with Śaivism i.e, Brahmanical faith. So, it can be strongly suggested that the Khaḍgas were formerly Brahminical Hindus and became Buddhist later on. From the accounts of Yaung Chwang and the epigraphical records, it is likely that before the visiting of Yuang Chwang Samatata was ruled by the Khaḍgas and it was continuing over the 7th century A.D. In all probabilities, it may be suggested that the family was originally known as Khaḍga and when the name and fame of Śīlabhadra was fully well-known in the Buddhist world, the family also become known as Bhadras and due to this Rājabhṭṭa was called Rājabhadra in Manjusrīmulakalpa, in verse 868⁷⁰.

From I-tsing's accounts, it has come to light that fifty-six Chinese pilgrims came to India in the second half of the seventh century. One of them was Shen-chi, found the throne of Samatata occupied by the King "Rājabhṭṭa"⁷¹.

4. NĀTHA DYNASTY

The Tippera copper-plate grant of Lokanātha⁷² shows that the Nātha dynasty ruled over some part of the Eastern Bengal in the second half of the seventh century A.D. From the copper-plate grant of the Khaḍge dynasty, it appears that the Nātha and the Rata dynasties were feudatories of the rulers of Khaḍga dynasty. From the use of the title *nṛpa*, it appears that Loknatha was a local chief not an independent ruler. He was not also designated as *Mahārājādhirāja* like other Gupta and Candra rulers. The learned editor of the *Epigraphia Indica* remarked that "From the opening words it would seem rather as if the documents were issued from the office of *Kumāramātya* of Lokanātha's overlord and only countersigned by Lokanātha himself"⁷³. Basak suggests that "during the Gupta age, the title *Kumāramātya* used by officers of state was found to have been applied also to feudatory (*Samanta*)

chiefs, just as the word *Sāmanta* generally used by feudatory chief was also sometimes used with other titles by officers of state. So, the word *Kumāramīya* in the opening prose portion of this inscription refers to the feudatory chief Lokanātha himself⁷⁴.

The genealogy of the Nātha family was mentioned in the grant of Lokanātha. The first name of the family, mentioned in this plate, is partly defaced and end in the ward Nātha. According to Niharranjan Roy, Śiva Natha was the founder of the family (Baṅgālir Itihās: Ādiparba, P-366). Most probably, he was the first king of the Nātha family. His son, the next king named Srīnātha, was a feudatory ruler. He acquired much fame in the field of the battle. His son was Bhavanātha. He was the devout worshipper of the religion. He forshook his royalty in favour of his brother's son who again obtained by his wife Gotradevī a worthy son Lokanātha. Lokanātha's maternal grandfather, Keśava was a Parasava by caste. The first ancestors of Lokanātha were Brahmanas, but his maternal grand father had not a pure Brāhmaṇa origin. It may be suggested that his Brahmana father married a *Śūdra* wife and he was, therefore, known to have been parasava. The use of this term in this inscription is very important. It shows that the *anuloma* marriage in Hindu society in the 7th century A.D. was prevalent.

The significant fact mentioned in the plate that the king named Jivadharāṇa made over to Loknātha. This Jivadharāṇa most probably, was the father of Srīdharāṇa Rāta. If it is correct, then the father of Srīdharāṇa Rāta was contemporary of Lokanātha. It is also appeared that Jivadharāṇa occupied Lokanātha's kingdom.

Basak read the copper-plate grant of Loknātha⁷⁵ and it was dated in the month of Phālguna in the year of 44. On palaeographical grounds, he suggested that it belongs to the Harsha era, corresponding therefore, to 650 A.D., i.e., two years after the death of King Harsha⁷⁶. D.R. Bhadndarkar⁷⁷ suggests the date of this grant “was at least 144 and not 44”, and refers it to the Harsha era. He pointed out from the use of the letter “*dhika*” before the letters signifying 44. Therefore, it is equivalent to 750 A.D. Both the scholars are referring it to be the Harsha era. On the remarks of

Bhandarkar, Basak again mentions that “it could as well be argued that the date is 344 *"sambat"*, and the reference should in that case be to the Gupta era, as in Vainya Gupta's Tippera plate, and therefore, it is equivalent to 663-64 A.D.⁷⁸. But the grant mentions *"Catus-catvārimṣatsamvatsare"* i.e. the 44 regnal year. There is no doubt that the grant was issued in the 44th regnal year of the king Loknatha. Bhandarkar and Basak, both of them referred it to the Harsha era. But the grant itself does not mention either the Harsha era or any other known era. It is well-known that the copper-plate grant of Candras mention only the regnal year of the ruling kings and not any other known era. It is well known that the copperplate grants of Candras rulers mention only the regnal year of the ruling king and not any other known era in their charter. On the other hand, the copper-plate grant of Raṇavāṇkamall Harikalādeva issued, in the 17th regnal year of the king refers to the Saka era 1141. So, in this case it is easy to calculate the known Śaka era 1141, which is equivalent to 1219-20 A.D.

On the palaeographic consideration of the copper-plate of Lokanatha and a close study of the Rata⁷⁹ and Khedga⁸⁰ copper-plate, it appears that the grant may be dated in the second half of the 7th century A.D.

GENEALOGICAL LINEAGE OF THE NĀTHA DYNASTY

- 1) Śrī Śīva Nātha
- 2) Śrī Srinātha (Son of -1)
- 3) Śrī Bhava Nātha (Son of -2)
- 4)----- (Brother's Son of -3), Gotra Devi (wife of 4)
- 5) Śrī Lokanātha (son of "4 and wife Gotra Devi")
- 6) Śrī Lakṣmi Nātha (son of 5)

5. RĀTA DYNASTY

The history of the Rāta dynasty is known from the Kailān copper-plate inscription of King Śrīdhārāṇa Rāta⁸¹. This grant bore the name of the three rulers of Rata dynasty named by Samatateśvara Śrī Jivadhārāṇa Rāta founder of the Rata dynasty his son Śrīdhārāṇa Rāta and his son prince Vāladharāṇa Rāta.

The name of the king Jivadhārāṇa was mentioned in the copper-plate grant of Lokanātha and he made over a Visaya and army without engaging in further battle to Lokanātha. So it is clear that he was the lord of Samatata and was the very powerful ruler. There is no room for doubt that Jivadhārāṇa was the contemporary of Lokanātha. So the king may be dated second half of the 7th century A. D. His son Śrīdhārāṇa Rāta was designated as "*Prāpta pañca mahāśabda samatateśvara*". The epithet "*Prāpta pañca mahāśabda*" perhaps indicates his feudatory character. Some scholars interpret the title as indicating the enjoyment of a combination of five officials possessing designations beginning with the word *Mahat*; they are *Mahāpratihara*, *Mahāsādhivigrahika* and *Mahāśvaśālādhikṛta*, *Mahābhandaḡārika* and *Mahāsādhānika* (c.f. Rajatarangini, IV, verses 140 -43, 680). It is also noted that the king Śrīdhārāṇa Rāta was not designated as *Mahārājādhirāja*. It is also noted that the king Śrīdhārāṇa Rāta was not designated as *Mahārājādhirāja*.

It is difficult to identify the overlord of the Rātas. From the Ashrafpur grants of Devakhaḡa, Sālvan Vihāra grants of Bālabhatta suggest that in the second half of the 7th century the Khaḡa dynasty was very powerful in Samatata Maṇḡala. Ashrafpur grants were issued from Jayakarmānta. It has been identified with the modern Badakāmta that lies five miles due west of Mainamati Mandir. So, it can be suggested that Jayakarmānta was the Capital City of the king Devakhaḡa. The grant of Bālabhatta was issued from the capital city of Devaparvata which perhaps located in somewhere in Maimati-Lamai hill range. It is probable that the Khaḡas ruled over Vaṅga and latter Devakhaḡa extended his power over Samatata. Some scholars⁸² say that Rātas were feudatories of the Khaḡa ruler of Samatata. In all probabilities, it

appears that Rāta and Nath rulers were feudatories of the Khadga rulers. It is noted that the Khadgas were the Buddhist.

The granted 25 pātakas of lands were situated in the districts of Guptināṭana and Patalayika under Samatāṭa Maṇḍala. The king Laḍaha Candra also donated land in Guptināṭana area. The 13 patakas land out of 25 pāṭaka lands was granted to a Buddhist monastery. I would like to draw attention that the Rāta dynasty was in *Vaiṣṇava* sect. They had great respect to the Buddhism or they were influenced by the powerful Khadga kings.

From I- tsings⁸³ accounts, it is known to us that fifty-six Chinese Buddhist pilgrims came to India in the second half of the 7th century. He came to India in the last quarter of the seventh century. The pilgrim Sheng-chi found the throne of Samatāṭa ruled by the king Rājabhāṭṭa. Most probably, the ruler of Samatāṭa Rājabhāṭṭa is same to the King Rajaraja or Rajarajabhāṭṭa, a son of Devakhadga of the Khadga dynasty Sheng-Chi also mentioned that 4,000 Buddhist monks are said to have been living at the capital of Samatāṭa during the rule of Rājabhāṭṭa. The famous Chinese pilgrim Yuan chwang visited Samatāṭa about 638 - 39 A. D. He found only 2,000 Buddhist monks in Samatāṭa. The great increase in the number of Buddhist monks in that country, in the later half of seventh century should probably be explained by the conquest of Samatāṭa by the Khadgas who were Buddhist.

From the above description, it appears that the Rāta king Jīvadhāraṇa and his son Srīdhāraṇa and the Khadga king and his son Rājarāja or Rājarājabhāṭṭa all of them may be dated about the second half of the seventh century A. D.

GENEALOGICAL LINEAGE OF THE RĀTA DYNASTY

- 1) Srī Jīvadhāraṇa Rāta
- 2) Srī Srīdhāraṇa Rāta
- 3) Srī Vāladhāraṇa Rāta

6. DEVA DYNASTY

Altogether, four copper-plates consisting of five grants have known to us, three of them from Sālvan Vihāra of Mainamati and one from somewhere in Tippera. One of them from Sālvan Vihāra consists of two grants of which one of Ānanda Deva and another one of his son Bhava Deva.

Two plates from Sālvan Vihāra were found in very damaged condition associated with the plate of Ananda Deva. Association and depiction of seal, it appears that both of the plates were issued by the Deva dynasty. Epigraphic records refer to that Deva dynasty ruled over at least Samatāṭa before the Candra rulers and after the Candra rulers. Ananda Deva and his son Bhava Deva were the rulers of the early Deva dynasty.

The four generations of Deva family have come to light from the copper-plates of Ānanda Deva and Bhava Deva. First predecessor was Śānti Deva. But it is not clear to us that what was the royal status of Śānti Deva. From the plate of Bhava Deva, it appears that Vīradeva son of Śānti Deva, was the first king of Deva family. The king Vīra Deva resembled *Acyuta* i.e. Viṣṇu in the matter of subduing mighty foes. His son Ānanda Deva was designated as *Paramasaugata Parameśvara Paramabhāṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*. His son, Bhavadeva was also designated as the same. From the epigraphs of Khadga, Nātha and Rāta, we know that these dynasties do not bore the designation as *Paramasaugata Parmaśvara Parmabhāṭṭāraka Mahādhirāja*. So, this title shows the independent character of Ananda Deva and Bhava Deva. In the prose portion of the plate of Bhava Deva- B mentions that the king Bhavadeva was requested by *Mahā-Sāmāntādhipati* Nandadhara to make a grant of 7½ pāṭakas of land in favour of the *Ratnatraya* of the Vendāmati Vihārika, and also in the 'A' plate the king was requested by *Mahasāmāntādhipati* Śrī Nandadhara. So, it might suggest that both of them are the same. So, it appears that there were feudatory kings under Bhavadeva. In the grant of Ānandadeva, 7½ patakas of land were granted to the temple and the grant was issued from the 'Camp of Victory', Vasantapur in the 39th regnal of the king. In the grant of Bhavadeva (reverse side of

the plate Ānandadeva), three patakas of land were granted to small monastery from the 'Camp of Victory', Devaparvata in 2nd regnal year of the king. Bhavadeva -B plate was also issued from Devaparvata in the 2nd regnal of the king. It is noted that this plate was issued before 4 months of the Bhavadeva-A plate. Anandadeva's grant indicates that Vasantapura was the newly constructed capital city. The king Ānandadeva had abandoned the old capital city due to the invansion of the strong enemy force. This fact clearly indicates that the old capital city was situated at Devaparvata, which was regained within a short period either by Anandadeva himself, or by his son Bhavadeva. The donee of Ānandadeva plate, is Jaybhuti and in the Bhavadeva plate is Jayabhuti. The donees of both the grants are most probably the same person. The donee of the Bhavadeva -B plate is Vibhutiḍāsa.

The charcters of the three grants belong to the East India variety. The characters of the Tippera plate of Lokanātha, the Kailān plate of Srīdhārana Rāta, the Ashrafpur plates of Deva Khadga and his immediate successor Rājarājabhāṭṭa and Mainamati plate of Bālabhāṭṭa appear to suggest that all of them flourished in the latter half of the seventh century A. D. On palaeographic consideration, these grants are earlier than the grants of Deva dynasty. It is noted that Samacardeva (6th century A. D.) of the copper-plate of Ghugrahati⁸⁴ and Nalanda, was a contemporary of Somabhuti and Somabhuti's great grandson, Jayabhuti was a contemporary of the doner king Anandadeva. In all probabilities, it appears that the Deva dynasty ruled over Samatāṭa in the 8th century A. D.

GENEALOGICAL LINEAGE AND THE SUCCESSORS OF DEVA DYNASTY

1) Srī Śānti Deva

2) Srī Vīra Deva (son of -1)

Somadevī (queen of 2)

3) Srī Ānanda Deva (son of -2)

Svamāṅgadevī (queen of 3-?)

4) Srī Bhava Deva (son of -3)

GENEALOGICAL LINEAGE OF THE DONEE FROM THE GRANT OF ANANDADEVA

- 1) Srī Puṣyabhuti
- 2) Srī Somabhuti (son of -1)
- 3) Srī Śikharabhuti (son of -2)
- 4) Srī Ratnabhuti (son of -3)
- 5) Srī Jayabhuti (son of -4)

GENEALOGICAL LINEAGE OF THE DONEE FROM THE GRANT OF BHAVADEV

- 1) Srī Āditya Dāsa
- 2) Srī Vibhuti Dāsa (son of -1)

7. CANDRA DYNASTY

From the ten copper-plate grants of the Candra dynasty, it has come to light that the mentioned dynasty ruled over Candrdvīpa, Harikela, Samatāṭa, Vaṅgāla and Vaṅga from last quarter of ninth century to second quarter of eleventh century A.D. Dhaka plate of Kalyān Candra and Paścimbhāg (Sylhet) plate of Srī Candra, are not described here because most of the data are found other plates of Candra dynasty, those are mentioned in this chapter.

The Candra dynasty receives prominent mention of the land of Lama Taranatha, though there is no sufficient evidences to prove its existence from sixth to eighth century A. D. in South-Eastern Bengal. Now, we know that the rulers of Candra

dynasty ruled over Arakan region in the seventh century A. D. or even earlier. The existence of a line of Candra kings for 19 generations, on a stone pillar, found on the platform of the Sitthaung Temple at Morhaung in Arakan⁸⁵. Their names end on Candra and an account of nine of them ruling from 788-957 A. D.⁸⁶. According to Taranatha, the Candra dynasty ruled in Bengal before the Palas and the names of all the mentioned by him prior to Gopala end in Candra. From Taranatha's account, it has come to light that the five generations of Candra dynasty⁸⁷ ruled over Bengal. Their names are given below.

- 1) Simha Candra
- 2) Vāla Candra (son of -1)
- 3) Vimala Candra (son of 2)
- 4) Govinda Candra (son of 3)
- 5) Lalita Candra (son of 4)

It has also said by Taranatha "Govinda Candra ascended the throne about the time when the great Buddhist teacher Dharmakṛti died. As Dharmakṛti was a disciple of Dharmapala who was a professor in Nalanda at the time when the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Trang visited it Govinda candra reign may be seventh century A.D. As his successor Lalita Candra ruled for many years, his death and the end of the Candra dynasty may be placed about 725 A. D."

Some scholars have tried to identify with Candra dynasty of Taranatha's Account and the Candra dynasty of Mainamati copper-plate grants. The present copper-plate grants of Candra dynasty indicate that the Candra ruled over Samatāṭa approximately in between 900 - 1050 A. D.⁸⁸.

The historical information of Candra dynasty from inscription is given below. From the copper-plate grants of Sri Candra, it has come to light that a person named Purṇa Candra was born in the family of Candra rulers. He was the founder and at least

a powerful chief of Rohitagiri. Bhattasali identifies the Rohitagiri with the Mainamati Lalmai hill range. Further discussion about Rohitagiri will be given in the chapter VI. Ganguly remarks that "Purna Candra, a sicon of the royal family of Rohitagiri, accompanied by the Pratiharas to Bengal, and got the charge of the administration of the Dacca Division from them"⁸⁹. But there is no record in favour of this point that the Candra rulers of Samatata i.e. of East Bengal were the feudatories of Gurjara Pratihāras. Rampal copper-plate of Śrī Candra (V-2) shows that the name of Purna Candra was engraved on the pedestals of idols, on Victory Pillars and on copper-plates. So from this evidence, we can tell without any doubt that Purna Candra was not only a founder of Candra dynasty but also a king of Rohitagiri region. Dr. Bhattasali suggests that "Purna Candra was neither of royal birth nor of pure caste"⁹⁰. But this plate indicates that Purna Candra was born in the line of Candra kings and was well known on the earth.

From the Rampal, Kedarpur and Madanpur plates of Śrī Candra, we get the information about the illustrious Suvarṇa Candra who was the son of Purna Candra and he was the devout worshipper of the hare Jataka of Lord Buddha. Dr. Basak suggests that "Purna Candra's illustrious son, Suvarṇa Candra, was the first in the dynasty to embrace Buddhism"⁹¹. According to Verse 3 of Rampal plate, there is no doubt that Suvarṇa Candra was a well-known Buddhist in the world. In the light of Rampal plate, Majumdar⁹² concludes that until Suvarṇa Candra's time the family followed Brahmanical religion but henceforth the family was undoubtedly Buddhist. From the Rampal, Mandanpur, Kedarpur, plates of Śrī Candra, Mainamati plates of Laḍaha Candra and Govinda Candra, it is undoubtedly true that Suvarṇa Candra, Trailokya Candra, Śrī Candra, Kalyāṇ Candra, Laḍaha Candra and Govinda Candra were the followers of Lord Buddha. But there is no evidence that Purna Candra and his forefather came from Brahminical faith. Purna Candra and Suvarṇa Candra were not titled with *Parameśvara Paramabhāṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*. Therefore, it is more probable that both of them were the local and small rulers of Rohitagiri region. Hence, R.C. Majumdar⁹³ took them to be "petty local rulers".

Rampal copper-plate of Śrī Candra shows that Trailokya Candra, son of Suvarṇa Candra, who purified both the families (i.e. paternal and maternal), was very powerful king, like Dilip, in Candradvīpa. Paścimbhāg copper-plate of Śrī Candra indicates that Trailokya Candra was designated with *Paramasaugata Parmeśvara Parmabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*. This designation shows the independent power of the king Trailikya Candra. Sircar suggests that “Trailokya Candra was apparently the ruler of Candradvīpa as a feudatory of the Harikāla king”⁹⁴.

Rampal copper-plate of Śrī Candra (V-5) mentions that Trailokya Candra was the support of the royal glories smiling with the royal umbrella having the symbol of the kings of Harikala. Therefore, there is no room for a doubt that Trailokya Candra was the first independent king in south-east Bengal of Candra dynasty. Mr. basak also appears that “Trailokya Candra, with his title *Mahārājādhirāja* in all the records became the first independent king, ruling probably from Vikramapura as the capital of his kingdom”⁹⁵. From the study of the plates, it appears that Candradvīpa was the first capital city and most probably Vikramapura was the Capital City of the king Trailokya Candra at the end of his reign. Majumdar⁹⁶ and Paul⁹⁷ suggest that Trailokya Candra was at first king of Harikela and from there he extended his power to Candradvīpa. Basak⁹⁸ seems that Trailokya Candra was at first king of Candradvīpa but later became the ruler over the whole of Harikela. Sircar seems that “Trailokya Candra was not a king of Harikela but was the ruler of Candradvīpa, i.e. Bakla-Chandradvīpa in the present Bucker gunje district owing allegiance to or allied with the king of the country called Harikela”⁹⁹.

It is a very controversial matter owing to its unavailable information that Trailokya Candra was at first a king of Candradvīpa or overlord of Harikela king. But from the copper-plate grants of Sri Candra, it has come to light that Trailokya Candra ruled over Candradvīpa and subjugated Harikela. It is probable therefore, that Purna Candra and Suvarṇa Candra was the king of Rohitagiri i.e. Mainamati-Lalmai area respectively. That is why, it is comparatively easy to become an overlord of Harikela king first [i.e. According to Kesava’s Kalpadrukosa, Harikela or Harikeli was the name of the Sylhet (Śrihaṭṭa) region]. After winning that region, Trailokya Candra

became a king of Candradvīpa with help of the king of Harikela. Majumdar¹⁰⁰ indicates that Trailokya Candra and his son Sri Candra were not only independent but very powerful kings who fought successfully against the Kamboja rulers for a long period and ruling in Harikela and Candradvīpa.

Majumdar¹⁰¹ suggests that Candradvīpa was the home territory of Candra dynasty. But from the rampal copper-plate and Madanpur plate clearly indicate that Rohitagiri area was the homeland of the Candra dynasty.

The Paścimbhāg plate (Shylet) of Srī Candra, informs us that Trailokya Candra conquered Samatāṭa, where Lālāmvi forest and the glorious city Devaparvata was situated. It is also mentioned that Lālāmvi forest was close to Devaparvata. Lālāmvi may be identified with Lalmai hills which was densely wooded and Devaparvata may be identified with Mainamati's palace Mound, which is situated at the northern tip of Mainamati-Lalmai hill range. This Devaparvata was also mentioned in Deva copper-plates. It was the capital city of Deva dynasty.

Bhattacharya¹⁰² identifies Rohitagiri with Mainamati-Lalmai hill range. Rohitagiri could be identified with Lalmai. But Sircar¹⁰³ identifies Rohitagiri with Rohtasgrah in Bihar. It appears to be wrong. There is no evidence that the Candras ever ruled in that area.

From the Rampal copper-plate and Sylhet copper-plate of Srī Candra and Mainamati copper-plates of Ladaha Candra indicate that Trailokya Candra was a king of Candradvīpa, conquered Samatāṭa, subjugated Harikela, became the sole ruler of Vaṅga had a contest with the Gaudas and struggled against the rulers of the Vindhyās and against the Mālaya.

From Kedarpur plate (V-5), it is indicated that "Who, possessing desire to win over this earth bounded by four oceans not greedy of worldly objects, extinguished the five of his enemies in the battles by the water of creeper-like sword."

Mainamati copper-plates of Laḍaha Candra indicate that Trilokya Candra was the leader of the circle of the earth, who was not small had great purity, was dispeller of hunders of terrors, of good character, attratced by good qualities and most auspicious.

The wife of Trilokya Candra bears the name of Srī Kāncana in Rampal plate and Srī Kāncikā in Sythat plate. **Parameśvara Paramabhāṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāji** Srī Candradeva was born by her. Srī Candra was great, both in the field of war and peace.

From Rampal and Madanpur plates of Srī Candra, he is known as "having put the enimies in jails and having made the earth decorated by a single umbrella". The entire grants praise his fighting genius. From Mainamati plates of Laḍaha Candra, it is noted that "who made the vow of the shedding of tears for the eyes of the ladies of the lord of Prāgjyotiṣ uninterrupted and made the sprouts of the lower lips of the ladies of the harem of the Gauda king, with the buds of smiles dropped". This is to show that Srī Candra was a very powerful and great warrior, who defeated the lord of Prāg-jyotiṣ. From the Sylhet plate, we know that he conquered Kāmarūpa and advanced to the banks of the river Lauhitya (Brahmaputra) and Puṣpabhadra and even to the foot of the Himalayas. So it is clear that he had launched a succesful invansion in every direction. From the Dacca copper-plate of Kalyān Candra, we get proper names of the defeated rulers.

Srī Candra, "who was moist (i.e. soft) in the act of washing away the fear of Prithavipāla, was hard and enterprising in the churning of Govarnna, was great in the great festivity or re-instating Gopala was a protector of sacrifices (or vows) in returning the queen of Ratana Pala, who was easily defeated, and whose arm was the univarsal support of the virtuous and receptacle of various sentiments"¹⁰⁴. It shows that Srī Candra was the power of revolt againts, the authority of the palas.

The copper-plate inscriptions of Srī Candra were found in Rampal of Munshiganj, Madanpur of Dhaka, Kedarpur and Edilpur of Shariyatpur, Dhulla of

Manikgang, Pascimbhag of Sythat districts. All the grants were issued from the “Camp of Victory”, Vikramapura.

It is, therefore, indicated that all the area, where these plates were found, were under the powerful king Śrī Candradeva. From the above discussion, it has come to light that the king Śrī Candra ruled over greater Brishal, Dhaka, Commilla and Sylhet region. He defeated the rulers of Gauda and Prāgjyotiṣa, reinstated Gopala II (on the thorne) and restored the Captive Pāla queen. He conquered Kāmarūpa and advanced to the banks of the river Louhitya and Puṣpabhadra and even to the hill of the Himalayas. According to the Madanpur plate, Śrī Candra ruled over that area at least for 46 years.

The long reign of Sri Candra came to an end with the succession to the throne of his worthy son **Parameśvara Paramabhattachāraka Mahārājādhirāja** the illustrious Kalyāṇ Candradeva. The only one Dhaka copper-plate¹⁰⁵ of Śrī Kalyāṇ Candra was come to our knowledge. The plate is dated in 24th regnal year of King Śrī Kalyāṇ Candradeva. This plate praises only the noble qualities of the king Mainamati plates of Ladaha Candra (V-7) indicate that he was famous for his pure and bright qualities, which were the ornaments of the three worlds and was held on the high heads of the great kings. Verse-8 gives the detail of his fighting glories. It mentions that he "who created a large flow the mass of tears in the eyes of Mleccha-women, and rendered the moon-faces of the Gauda-women bereft of the moon-light of smile, and who spread these eight directions with his never diminishing spot-less fames like the rays of the moon bright on account of the despersal of clouds". This verse clearly mentions that Kalyan Candra faced two enemies i.e., the Mlecchas and the Gaudas. This fact is further confirmed in the Mainamati plate of Govinda Candra in verse-VII. It records that he, "who redoubled this great river called Lauhitya by the thick flows of tears shed from the eyes of the Mleccha-women distressed by the killing of their lord; and who made the lord of the Gaudas low-faced by shame by having forcefully made captive his great army of elephants, horses and foot-soldiers in the battle field for a long time."

There is no room for doubt that the term Mlecchas were the people of Kāmrūpa, those were lived on the bank of the river Lauhitya i.e., present Brahmaputra.

Srī Kalyānadevī, the wife of Srī Kalyān Candra, was the daughter of a rich merchant. She, the queen, gave birth Ladaha Candra, the highest of kings. He was the successor of his father, Srī Kalyān Candra. There is no record that the king ever invaded any region or kingdom. He was very religious minded and highly popular to his subjects. Mainamati inscriptions of Ladha Candra (V-11-15) indicates that he bore all good qualities, attained highest level in various sciences and sub-sciences in a few days only, well-known for rise of his prowess and the hero of the great drama called 'Protection of the world'. Mainamati three inscriptions of Candras praise his virtuous deed. He went to Vārānasi, the abode of lord Śambhu, bathed there in the gangetic waters for removing his sins and gave away gold in the hands of the Brahmins (Mainamati plate-V-16-17). Ladaha Candra himself was Buddhist but he was very believe to Hindu God and Goddess. His grants were inscribed with the salutation to lord Vasudeva and he went to Hindu holy places for removing his sins and all the heroic characters were compared with the Hindu God and goddess and the land was granted for the temple of lord **Ladaha Mādhava-bhaṭṭāraka** at Pattikera. Ladaha is the name of the king and Mādhava means Lord Kṛṣṇa. There is no record that Kṛṣṇa (the incarnation of God Viṣṇu) is designated ever as **Ladaha Mādhava**. It is probable that Ladaha Candra, himself, erected the image of lord Vāsudeva, therefore, was designated as **Ladaha Mādhava Bhaṭṭāraka**.

Sri Ladaha Candra himself was designated as *Parameśvara Paramabhāṭṭāraka, Mahārājādhirāja*. He was an independent ruler. Mainamati copper-plates of Ladaha Candra indicate that the king ruled at least for 6 years. The Bharella Nartteśvara image inscription refers that the king ruled at least for 18 years.

Alam suggests that "Mahipala-I (988-1038 A.D) of Gauda, his contemporary, after restoring the Pāla rule put a halt upon the military conquest of the Candras. But he did not disturbed Ladaha Candra considering the help extended to them in time of distress by Srī Candra"¹⁰⁶. Ladaha Candra went to many holy places within the Gauda Empire. Therefore, it indicates that there was a good political and socio-cultural relation between the kingdom of Ladaha Candra and the kingdom of Gauda king.

The wife of Laḍaha Candra was Saubhāgya Devī, who gave birth to illustrious Govinda Candra. From the plate of Govinda Candra (V-13) it shows that, “Govinda Candra, himself, was Saktiman (i.e. Kārttikeya). By the rise of that (king) of great army, this world became reposed, the science were learnt by him with ease in childhood only within a few days and he was well studied in the science of elephants, horses, carriages, and learnt all the arts”. In the verse-14, it is also mentioned that “only this single king is praised in every direction, in every house, everyday by the people with joy, with eagerness, with horipilation as Dharma incarnate, as the Ocean of tolerance, as protector of the subjects, as an object of welfare, as the abode of riches, adn as unrestrained lustre”. In verse-16, he was blessed that “May lord self born produce profuse bliss, may lord Hari bestow steadiness of his body and Lord Hara destroy the opponents”.

The grant opens with three jewels i.e., Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha. The king was Buddhist but he was great devotion to the Hindu God and Goddess like the king Laḍaha Candradeva. He and his forth-father compared with the Hindu God and Goddess. The king granted two patakas of land to Nattesvara bhattaraka (i.e. dancing from Śiva). From these evidences, it is not difficult to think that by that time, Brahmanical faith was come to light and Buddhism was going far ahead.

Srī Govinda Candra was designated with *Paramesvara Paramabhāṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*. It shows that he was an independent king. He was the successor of his father Laḍaha Candra deva. The plate is not dated. A Suryā (Sun-god) inscribed image was discovered in district of Noakhali. It mentions that the image caused to be made by Laksmidina in 12th regnal year of the Lord Srī Govinda Candra. Another inscribed image of Vāsudeva was recovered in the district of Munshiganj. It indicates that the image of lord Vāsudeva caused to be made by Gaṅga Dāsa in the 23rd year of illustrious Govinda Candra. From these evidences, there is no doubt that the king Govinda Candra ruled at least for 23 years. The Triumalai¹⁰⁷ inscription clearly shows that Govinda Candra was ruling over Vaṅgāla-deśa in 1021-23 A. D. But it is uncertain that whether this date refers to his early carrier or later years of his reign. The environmental situation of Southern Bengal is mentioned in Triumalai inscription.

Hultzsch says that “Vaṅgāla-desā, where the rain-wind never stopped, (and from which) Govinda Candra fled, having descended (from his male elephant; elephants of rare strength and treasures of women, which he seized) after having been pleased to put to fight on a hot battle-field Mahipala, decked (as he was) with ear-rings, slippers and bracelets” ¹⁰⁸. It indicates that Govinda Candra was also contemporary of Mahipala. There is no doubt that this Mahipala was the Mahipala-I, who ruled over Varendra (i. e. North Bengal). From the Triumalai inscription of Rājendra Chola, it has come to our knowledge that Govinda Candra was defeated by him in 1021-23 A. D. It is also clear that the very powerful king Rājendra Chola did not come to invade Vangal-desa for ruling but came for winning the victorious glory. After the tough fighting with Mahipala-I, he went to his kingdom.

From a contemporary book Śābdapradīp of Surapala, we know that Rajendra Chola invaded to Vangalades in the early years of Srī Govinda Candra’s reign. On the basis of these evidences, Chowdhury¹⁰⁹ suggests that Govinda Candra was ruling from 1020 A. D. According to the Vāsudeva inscribed inscription, Srī Govinda Candra ruled at least 1020-1043 A. D. The date of previous rulers at Candra dynasty might be calculated in chronological order from the date of Govinda Candra.

According to the Bharella Nartteśvara image inscription, the king Laḍaha Candra ruled at least from 1002-1020 A. D. According to Dhaka copper-plate of Kalyāṇ Candra, he ruled at least from 978-1002 A. D. According to Madanpur copper-plate of Srī Candra, who ruled at least from 932-978 A. D. For the lack of information, now, it is uncertain to decide the date of three generations i.e. Purna Candra, Suvarṇa Candra and Trailokya Candra. From the above mentioned analysis, it has to say that from beginning of the 10th century to first half of the 11th century, (i.e. 900 to 1050 A. D.), the Candra rulers ruled over Vaṅga, Vaṅgāla, Candradvīpa, Samatata and Harikāla region independently.

How the Candra dynasty came to an end, is not certainly clear to us. But the fact indicateds that the ruling Candras appears to have been destroyed by the invasion of the Kālāchuri Karna (1041-1070 A. D.). It appears that Kalachuri Karna invaded to

South-Eastern Bengal and defeated the king of that region. From this fact, most probably, Govinda Candra was the last ruler of Candra dynasty.

TABLE NO - 6

GENEALOGICAL LINEAGE OF THE CANDRA DYNASTY

SL. NO	Name of the Kings	Name of the Queens	At least ruling years	Duration of the rules
1	Srī Purna Candra	-	-	-
2	Srī Suvarṇa Candra(son of -1)	-	-	-
3	Srī Trailokya Candra(son of -2)	Srī Kāncana Devī	-	900(?)-932
4	Srī Srī Candra(son of -3)	Srī Varṇā Devī	46	932-978
5	Srī Kalyāṇ Candra(son of -4)	Srī Kalyāṇa Devī	24	978-1002
6	Srī Laḍaha Candra(son of -5)	Srī Saubhāgya Devī	18	1002-1020
7	Srī Govinda Candra(son of -6)	-	23	1020-1043

8. LATTER DEVA DYNASTY

The copper-plate grant of Raṇavaṅkamalla Harikāla Deva was first noticed in 1803 A. D. and due to this, the historical importance of Mainamati-Lalmai area has come to light to us from that time. The inscription mentioned the name of a city, Paṭṭikera, where the monastery was built and dedicated to the Buddhist goddess **Dūrgottāra**. The name Paṭṭikera is also noticed in the copper-plate grants of Sri Ladaha Candradeva who is dated in the beginning of the eleventh century A. .D. Goddess **Dūrgottāra** is the form of Tara. It is named in the *Sāadhanamāla* as **Dūrgottārini-Tāra** (*Sāadhanamāla*, Vol-I, P-237-8). The city of Paṭṭikera was apparently situated somewhere in the Mainamati-Lalmai hill range where this copper-plate grant was discovered. The donated property was situated in the village of Bejakhaṇḍa. It is not definitely identified now. But there is a village named Bejabādi near the feet of the hills on the west. It might be identified with the village referred to in the plate¹¹⁰.

The Horse officer Dhādi-Eba donated the inscriptin records a grant of land measuring 20 dropas. It is clear that the gift of the land was made neither by the sovereign monarch nor by a vassal. It was unique for a royal officer to transfer property in his own name without securing his lords permission. The implication is that Srī Dhādi-Eba enjoyed the tax revenue from this parcel of land as an hereditary right that could not be resumed by his lord and therefore, Sri Dhādi-Eba was at liberty to dispose of the revenue yield as he wished without reference to Harikāladeva.

The position of the early Devas even as regards their suzerainty over the whole of the district of Tippera is rendered anomalous by the Mainamati copper-plate grant of Raṇavaṅkamalla Harikāla Deva recorded in the 17th year of his reign which corresponded to the year 1141 of the Śāka era. It is equivalent to 1219-20 A. D. This date of the king shows that he was not a contemporary of both the grand father and the great grand father of Dāmodaradeva.

He was at least a contemporary of Vāsudeva, father of Dāmodaradeva. where precisely Harikāladeva's reign ended or what happened to his line, we can not say now. It also appears from the grant that he ruled a small portion of Samatata area. It is also not clear that what was the relation between Harikāla Deva and rulers of Dāmodara's family.

The founder of the Deva family was named by Puruṣottama is the synonym of lord Viṣṇu. The plate mentioned that the royal family is claimed to have descended from the Moon. It is not mentioned in the plate that what was the royal status of Puruṣottama but it appears that he was the powerful person of the Deva family. His son, Madhusudhana was designated only the litle Nṛpati in the Chittagong plate of Dāmodaradeva. Therefore, it shows that he was the feudatory king of some area of Samatata Mandala. His son was Vasudeva was the lord of earth. He was known to be "Versed in all the *Śāstras*, and foremost in military skil. In the Chittagong plate, he is described an one whose feet were rubbed by the foreheads of princes bowing down to him in homage. It appears that king Vāsudeva imposed his authority over the neighbouring chiefs and thus led the way for the rise of his son Dāmodara Deva. In the

Mehar plate he bears the title of *Gagapati*. In Chittagonj plate, he is called “over lord of all kings” and in verse 4 and 5 of the same plate he is said to have defeated many kings and brought them under subjection. In Sobharampur plate, he is designated as *Gagapati*. He is also called *Ariraja Canura Madhava*. The Pākamorā copperplate of Dasarathadeva, son of Damodaradeva, praised his father as a renovator of his kingdom¹¹¹. From all the designation, it suggests that he was a very powerful king but not an independent king. He never titled in any plate as *Parameśvara Paramabhāṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*.

It is also plausible explanation that when the Deva dynasty was reigning in the Samatāṭa area by that time the Sena dynasty held supremacy over the region of Vnga including Vikramapura and Navya under Pauṇḍrabhūkti. From this inference, it appears that the river Meghna was the western boundary of the Deva kings.

The representation of Viṣṇu on Grauda or of Madhava overpowering Canura is certainly symobolical of the Vaiṣṇava faith of King Dāmodara Deva. Dr. Majumdar identified that the family of Damodara professed the Vaisnava faith like the Varmmans and the Senas¹¹². It is also noted that all the ending names of Deva family are the synonym of Viṣṇu. It is, therefore, clear that the Devas are the *Vaiṣṇavas*.

The Chittagong copperplate was issued in the Saka era 1165, in the 13th regnal year of the king Dāmodara. The Sobharampur copper-plate was issued in the Śaka era 1158, in the 6th regnal year of the king Damodara. The Mehar plate was issued in the Śaka era 1156, in the 4th regnal year of the mentioned king. From these evidences, it is proved that the king Dāmodara Deva came to the power in the 1152 Śaka era. So, it is equivalent to 1230 A. D. Therefore, the Deva dynasty ruled over Samatata in the 13th century A.D.

The illustrious Daśarathadeva was titled of *Parameśvara Paramabhāṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*. He is also designated with *Aśvapati-gajapati-narapti-rājatryadhipati, Somavaṃśapradīpa Pratipannakaranna Satya-vratagaṅgeya Saranāgata-vajrapañjara*.

It is mentioned in the plate that the king obtained the kingdom of Gauda (Gauḍarājya) through the grace of Nārāyaṇa. Most probably, it was happened after collapse of the Sena power. From his title and the description, there is no doubt that he was the very powerful king and later on, he included Vikrampura area with his kingdom Samatāṭa. That is why, he issued the charter from the Vikrampura.

After Daśaratha Deva, the genealogy of the Deva family is incomplete. Another copper-plate grant of Vīradhara Deva was issued in the 15th regnal year of the king. But the grant did not mention any known era and the predecessor of Deva family. Majumdar suggests that the king Vīradhara Deva was a later king of Deva family¹¹³. From the study of Deva plate, it appears that Vīradharadeva was the successor or a contemporary of Dasaratha Deva. It is noted that the *Viṣṇu Cakra Mudrā* was engraved on the grant and described in the plate of Viradhara deva. So, he was also a worshipper of Viṣṇu like as other Deva rulers. Bhaṭṭācharjee¹¹⁴ mentioned that total 34 pāṭakas of land were donated. But the grant clearly indicates in line two and in line four on the reverse side that twelve patakas of land were granted in the district of Vāṭtaganga and five pāṭakas of land in the district of Gaṅgā Maṇḍala in the division of Samatāṭa under Paundravarddhanabhūkti. All together 17 pāṭakas of land were granted.

GENEALOGICAL LINEAGE AND SUCCESSORS OF LATER DEVA DYNASTY

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1) Puruṣottama | 1) Raṇavaṅkamalla Harikāla Deva. |
| 2) Madhusudhana (son of - 1) | |
| 3) Vāsudeva (son of - 2), Mitratdevī (wife of -3) | |
| 4) Dāmodaradeva (son of - 3) | |
| 5) Daśarathadeva (son of - 4) | |
| 6) Vīradharadeva (successor or contemporary of - 5) | |

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