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Regmi Research (Private) Ltd
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Privileges of Gumba in Mugu

From (Prime Minister Jung Bahadur)
To Lt.-Colonel Gunjaman Singh Basnyat of the Jumla Office.

Tenzing Norbu Lama, Utken Tsundung Lama, Utken Gyalzen Lama, and others, residents of Mugu in Jumla, have submitted the following petition to the Kaushal office:-

Formerly, there were no villages and settlements in the land called Mugu. A Lama named Dharmaraja Parameshwara then came from Tibet and built two gumbas, known as Sarka and Latha, there, and thus made the jungle populous. He installed (images of) gods and goddesses there, and made many disciples.

Subsequently, a few families of Tibetans settled in Mugu, which thus became a village. The Raja of Jumla, Bahadur Shah, felt happy that a great Lama had come from Tibet to settle in his country. He granted a tract of land situated between Ratanpani and Tala to the gumba, with the following authority.

"Protect the forests around the gumba. No person shall kill the blue sheep (naur), musk deer and birds in these forests nor cut trees. In case any person commits any crime and takes asylum with the Lama at the gumba, he shall be pardoned, and shall not be captured. Funeral and other ceremonies, including ghewa, of people who die in the village of Mugu, shall be performed, and their disputes, as well as disputes among the disciples residing in the gumba, shall be disposed of by the Lama according to the authority (Thiti) bestowed on him. No duties shall be collected on supplies procured to meet the needs of the Lama and the Jhuma (?) of the gumba through yaks, sheep, and jhowa.d'

These arrangements were reconfirmed when (Mugu) was conquered by Gorkha.

Subsequently, Lt. Tul Singh Karki Chhetri was deputed to undertake a revenue settlement in Jumla. He scrutinized the royal order and other documents issued by the (displaced King of) Jumla and reconfirmed all the existing arrangements.

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In 1899 Vikrama (1842 A.D.), the gumba was destroyed by fire, along with all the royal orders and other documents, books, manuscripts, (images of) gods and goddesses, etc. The Lama then reconstructed the gumba, installed (images of) gods and goddesses, gathered disciples, continued the religious functions, and wished victory to His Majesty.

However, the documents were destroyed by fire, and the local villagers, as well as people from outside, cut trees in the forests belonging to the gumba. They hunt in these forests, kill blue sheep, musk-deer and birds there. When they are told not to do so, they start quarrelling, and do not obey. They even forcibly capture people who take asylum in the gumba. They harass us, demanding duties of food and other supplies procured to meet the needs of the Lama and the Jhumea.

In case lands donated by people formerly (to finance the) burning of lamps in the gumba cannot be cultivated for one or two years for any reason, the local villagers forcibly occupy such lands on the ground that these have remained uncultivated.

"Lands which had formerly been granted by the Raja of Jumla to finance the religious functions of the gumba. These lands had been reconfirmed in the course of a revenue settlement after the region came under the control of Gorkha. As such, outsiders should not be permitted to violate the religious functions and cause harassment. In case a fresh order is issued according to the law to continue the religious functions of the gumba, we shall wish victory to His Majesty and continue discharging these functions, performing the regular and ceremonial worship of gods and goddesses as usual.

"We refer as knowledgeable witnesses Mukhiya Dhara, Sira, Dharkya, Sonam, Thondung, and other residents of this village.

"The particulars mentioned above are correct. In case these are proved incorrect, we are ready to undertake any liability according to the law. We shall not file any complaint subsequently that I have any other facts or evidence to produce. If we do so, may such complaint be rejected."

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This petition was forwarded from the Kaushal office to the Sadar Dafdarkhana office. The officials of the Sadar Dafdarkhana office have reported the matter to us in detail through the Kaushal office.

You (that is, Lt. Colonel Gunjaman Singh Basnyat) are hereby directed to make inquiries about this complaint, and obtain a confession from the respondents, if possible. Otherwise, obtain a statement from the respondents, have the complainants and the respondents face each other, and dispose of the case according to the law.

Magh Sudi 11, 1928

(January 1869)

Regmi Research Collections, Volu 62, ppu 452-58u

Complaint of a Lama Priest in Atharasayakhola, 1891

From (Prime Minister Bir Shumshere),
To the West No. 2 Bakyauta Tahasil Office.

Dorje Lama has submitted the following petition:-

"In Samagaun village in the Kutan area of Atharasayakhola-Bhot, my family had been performing the priestly functions of members of our community from the time of an ancestor, Dupado Tashi Namgyal, to 1938 Vikrama (1881 A.D.). The villagers, on their part, had been performing their religious functions through us.

"In 1939 Vikrama (1882 A.D.) Sisang and Lhawang Lama, father and son, residents of the same village, created trouble, and I had a quarrel with them.

"Subsequently, they signed a bond written in Bhote characters, containing the following pledge: "We shall not create trouble any more. You may perform the functions of your disciples and Jajmans."

"My Jajmans in Sanagaun village also signed a document written in Tibetan characters, with the following contents: "We are satisfied with the sacerdotal functions performed by you, and will continue to accept you (as priest)."

"In these circumstances, Sisang and Lhawang Lama have no right to create trouble again.

"I therefore pray that the following order be issued in my name: "Your family has been performing priestly functions in the village of Sanagaun for the past nine generations, and the villagers too have been accepting you as priests and signed a document to this effect. You are therefore authorized to perform priestly functions in this village on an inheritable basis.

"I also pray that the following order be issued in the name of the ryots of Sanagaun village: "Do not have your priestly functions performed by others, but utilize the services of Dorje Lama as usual."

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"In case these orders are issued, I shall continue to perform priestly functions in the village, keeping my Jajmans satisfied, and wishing victory to the governmente

"According to Section 4 of the Law on Wearing the Sacred Thread, one should recite mantras as instructed by one's customary preceptor (Guru)

"Since (the people of Sanagaun village) have been Jajmans of my family for generations and since they have signed a document expressing satisfaction with my services, I herewith enclose a copy, in Nagari characters, of the original document, which is in Bhote characterse As Your Highness commandse"

The Adalat Goswara then forwarded the petition to (the Sadar Dafdarkhana Office) with the following note: "Subedar Pahal Singh Mahat has signed a memorandum in this office, according to which the Commander-in-Chief General has ordered that the petition be forwarded to the Sadar Dafdarkhana Office. Take action according to this order as well as the laws and regulations."

Since inquiries in the district must be made on this petition the petition should be sent to the West No. 2 Bakyauta Tahasil Office according to Section 11 of the regulations of the Sadar Dafdarkhana Goswara Office. The West No. 2 Tahasil Office should be ordered to make necessary inquiries and submit a report within fifteen days, excluding the time required for the journey, on the following matters:-

Whether or not the family of Dorje Namgyal Lama has been functioning for generations as priests in the village of Sanagaun in the Kutan area of Atharasayakhola.

Whether or not Sisang and Lhawang Lama of the same village submitted a complaint in 1939 Vikrama (1982 A.D.), and later signed a bond at the Jimmawal's Kachahari.

Whether or not the ryots of this village have signed a document to the effect that the family of Dorje Namgyal Lama has been customarily functioning as their priests, and that they are prepared to continue employing him as their priests

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Whether or not it will be appropriate to issue an order confirming Dorje Namgyala Lama as priest.

This memorandum of the Sadar Dafdarkhana Goswara has been approved by us (i.e. Prime Minister Bir Shumshere). The petition, along with the order mentioned above, shall accordingly be forwarded to the West No. 2 Bakyauta Tahasil Office.

Chaitra Sudi 13, 1947

(March 1891)

Regmi Research Collections, Vol. 62, pp. 90-94.

Function: of Gurau in Palung, 1850

From Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief General Jang Bahadur Kunwar Ranaji, Commander-in-Chief General Bam Bahadur Kunwar Ranaji and Second General Jaya Bahadur Kunwar Ranaji.

To the Mukhiyas, Mijhars, Gaurungs, Budhyaulis, Dhakres, Jhan-kris and other ryots of Setibanjar and Kalibanjar in the Palung region: Greetings.

Dware Shyam Sundar and the constables appointed in outposts under the Chisapani fort have submitted the following complaint: Formerly, Chepangs used to show respect for the position of Gurau and act according to his directives. As a result, tigers did not visit this area. But now the Gurau is dead. The villagers quarrel among themselves and let tigers come. Tigers have accordingly killed 200 or 300 cows in the region between Bhainse-Khani and Phera. In the village of Rajasta, 2 or 3 men have been eaten up by tigers. Villages are therefore becoming depopulated.

You are therefore directed to hold consultations at the village and choose a Gurau, who will then be given a Pagari (i.e. turban) by the Dware and constables. Act according to the directives of the Gurau. In case any person does not do so, but let tigers commit depredations, with the result that villages become depopulated, punishment shall be inflicted on your life and property.

Baisakh Badi 11, 1907

(April 1850)

Regmi Research Collections, Vol. 62, pp. 321-23.

A History of Land Tenures in Garhwal^x

(Continued)

The last settlement agreement contained a clause to the effect that each hissedar had the power to make over his land to a sirtan and to take it back from him. After the decision in the case of Lal Singh noted above, the Commissioner, Mr. Ross, issued a proclamation stating very emphatically that according to the Board's ruling the hissedar might "dispossess" (bedakhal karna) a sirtan whenever he pleased. A sirtan was further defined as any tenant not recorded as a khaekar at settlement. It was also added that when a tenant of long standing is "dispossessed" he is entitled to receive the value of any improvements made by him, and is not to be ejected till he received such in full. But this last condition appears largely to have escaped notice, and the curious spectacle was often seen of a tenant forcibly dispossessed without payment for improvements, suing to be reinstated and being told to sue for compensation. Should he sue for both at once, his restoration to his holding was frequently made contingent on the non-payment within a fixed period by the hissedar of the sum determined as cost of improvements, and in the event of payment of this sum the costs of the suit were sometimes thrown on the tenant. In another case tenants who failed in a suit to establish their right of occupancy in the land found a decree given against them for mesne profits from the date of the dismissal of their suit. There is even a case of the Commissioner's Court extant in which the plaintiffs, sirtans, on suing to be restored to the holding from which they had been ejected without payment of compensation, were told that as they had no right of occupancy they had no remedy in a Revenue Court (*Bijlia and others versus Mahendra Singh and others*, of Mirchora, Aswalsyun, 3rd May 1892). Mr. Ross never gave this interpretation to his proclamation to himself. In the case of *Rattanu versus Kaulu of Chamlan, Khatli*, the plaintiff, a sirtan who had been dispossessed, sued for reinstatement and got a decree. Mr. Ross upheld the decision observing: "They (i.e. plaintiff) have no legal right to maintain possession but they have full legal rights to recover compensation for the improvements they have made, and until such amount

^xE.K. Pauw, C.S., Report on the Tenth Settlement of the Garhwal District. Allahabad: North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government Press, 1896, Chapter II: Tenures. pp. 49-52.

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has been settled and paid into court they cannot be ousted" (15th August, 1885). The older procedure was similar. In the case of Kannu versus Debua, Panaun, Choprakot, the plaintiff, a sirtan, sued to be restored to his holding from which he had been forcibly ejected. He was given a decree for possession until he received the cost of improvements, and Sir Henry Ramsay upheld the decision (4th September, 1878). The hissedar was thus left to sue for ejection and determination of compensation, and the latter was assessed at Rs 465 to be paid in one month. In several cases of recent years the old procedure has been upheld e.g., Puniya versus Kundan Lal, Rail, pargana Pali, Almora (Colonel Erskine, Commissioner, June 20th, 1890), Deb Singh versus Asaru, Naugaon, Maundarsyun (Mr. Giles, Commissioner, August 10th, 1891) and Jogia Bhul of Bainali, Kairarau, Almora, versus Dungar Singh and others (Colonel Erskine, Commissioner, December 11th, 1893). In all these cases sirtans summarily and forcibly ejected were restored to possession. In the first of the three cases Colonel Erskine observed: "In my opinion a landlord cannot forcibly eject a tenant and thus throw upon him the onus of suing for the value of his improvements. If he does so, the tenant can sue for and recover possession under Section 9 of the Specific Relief Act. The proper course for a landlord to follow, if he desires to eject a tenant who will not vacate his holding, is to sue the tenant. In this suit any objection which the tenant may raise regarding his right to compensation for improvement can be gone into, and if the court finds that the tenant is entitled to compensation, it can fix the amount and give the landlord a decree for ejection of the tenant, subject to the prior payment of the sum assessed as compensation." Regarding the assessment of compensation, Mr. Roberts ruled as Commissioner that "the mere up-keep of the fields in the ordinary condition suitable for the cultivation of measured land is not a ground for award of compensation. Compensation can only be given for such improvements the full benefit of which the respondents have not reaped" (Pancham Singh and others versus Rishmu and others Dalagaon Khatli, 28th August 1893).

More than half of the sirtani holdings in Garhwal are held by literal sirtans, i.e., payers of the sirti or land revenue alone. This may result from an exchange of land for cultivation between hissedars, or from a hissedar cultivating in common waste. In other cases near relationship or friendship induces one man to give another some land to cultivate, or in new or unproductive villages he may be brought in to aid in the cultivation

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and so eke out the government revenue. Usually the feudal dues, bhent (consisting of Rs 2 on the marriage of a daughter), daski (a leg of every goat killed, a ser of ghi in Sawan and a basket of maize yearly), and in some cases also pathai (a nominal rent of one or two timasis yearly) are paid to the hissedar of the land even when no competition rent is taken. The competition rent where it exists is usually tihar or a third of the produce in good land and chautha or a fourth part in the inferior. In the best sera as much as a half is taken. Money rents are rare except among the tenants of tea planters. In Chiranga, Pindarwa I was told that four nalis to the rupee, or Rs 5 per acre, was the rent rate.

The acquisition of an occupancy tenure by sirtans is now usually obtained by registered deed, accompanied by the payment of a premium (bhent or jotai) to the hissedar, the amount of which is usually about half the selling value of the land. At the time of settlement, however, occupancy tenures are created by the hissedar and sirtan agreeing that the latter shall be recorded as a khazekar in the new papers. From a decision of Sir Henry Ramsay (Sarbal Singh versus Rattan and another, Hitoli Aswalsyun 1866) it would appear that the hissedar is not subsequently entitled to rescind the bargain then made.

The padhan, from the fact of the government revenue being paid through him, was also known as the malguzar. Where the same cultivators held land in several villages situated close together, all were usually included in one engagement, and only one malguzar was chosen for all. The principal village in which the cultivators or most of them resided was known as the asli, or original village, and the minor villages as laqqa, or attached. In some cases, however, the same malguzar was appointed for two distant villages, as, for instance, for the reason that the lease of the second village had once been issued in his name. In this case one of the residents of the latter village was usually appointed by the malguzar, with the consent of the District Officer, as his agent or mukhtyar. A similar agent was appointed in cases where the malguzar was a minor or a woman. Neither of the two latter descriptions of persons would have been appointed by Mr. Traill, and, considering the duties that have to be performed, the appointment of women to the post is certainly curious, and the mukhtyar's position in such cases is the subject of the most objectionable intrigues. But with the tendency of the Garhwali to convert all offices into private property, the position of padhan has come to be

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looked on more or less as an adjunct to the deceased's land, and the claim has been somewhat weakly given into by District Officers. The purchaser at auction or otherwise of the padhan's land almost invariably claims the office along with it. In both cases the mukhtyar is considered competent to perform all acts for the real padhan, though his liability to be ousted at the will of the latter prevents his holding the same authority or prestige. In other cases, where villages were held entirely by khaekars, as it was necessary that the rent of Khaekar should be paid to a hissedar and the revenue paid by the hissedar to government, it was impossible for a khaekar to be appointed malguzar, and therefore a non-resident proprietor had to be appointed to the post. Owing to the under-proprietary right in this class of villages, and the fact that the hissedar, having no cultivation there could not become resident, a special official chosen from among the khaekars with the title of ghar padhan was appointed for the collection of the land revenue. He, as a rule, enjoys the padhanchari land, and pays the government revenue direct to the patwari, paying the hissedari dues alone to the proprietors. The position was originally one of considerable independence, but the tendency has been to class the ghar padhan more and more with the ordinary mukhtyar. In the case of Uttimu versus Mahendra Singh of Baret, Talla Kaliphat, the plaintiff, a ghar padhan, sued to recover the padhanchari land from the padhan's brother who had ejected him. The Senior Assistant Commissioner (Mr. Gardiner) dismissed the case, on the ground that the padhan agreed to live in the village in future. Sir H. Ramsay restored Uttimu. He held: "Respondent is padhan in another village and he cannot live in two villages. Appellant was made ghar padhan after Mr. Beckett had ascertained all the circumstances of the case, and I see no reason for setting aside his decision." He also observed: "Such cases could not be set aside by the padhan agreeing to stay in the village. He would come for six months and go away again." "If the padhan has the right to take the land he will say he can appoint his own ghar padhan" (17th August 1866). The inference of the last remark is that the padhan had no such power. A judicial decision to the same effect is not wanting. In 1880 the khaekars of Kimotha petitioned that the malguzar lived in the next patti, and that one of their own number, Tara Datt, might be appointed ghar padhan. This was done despite the protestations of the padhan, and Sir Henry Ramsay confirmed the appointment (11th November 1880). After the departure of Sir H. Ramsay, however, the authority of the ghar padhan was considerably curtailed, and when in 1885 a

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displaced ghar padhan sued the malguzar for restitution, Mr. Ross, the Commissioner, ruled: "The regular padhan with consent of all the khaekars has appointed respondent a ghar padhan and no one can interfere" (Thobu versus Madhavanand, Beri Tall, Sili Chandpur, 15th August 1885). In the case of Tej Singh versus Padam Ram of Kot, Khansar, in which the plaintiff, the former ghar padhan, obtained an order against the padhan, disallowing the latter's appointment of a new man, Mr. J.R. Reid, Commissioner, ruled: "I understand that the appellant still remains the responsible padhan of the village and that the ghar padhan is only his agent or deputy. I don't see why he should be compelled to employ as his agent or deputy a man whom he doesn't wish to appoint or trust. Order cancelled. The man appointed as ghar padhan will be appointed if fit. The ghar padhan's tenure of office can only extend as long as his principal's, who if he is removed will be accompanied by his ghar padhan to his old position. The responsibility of the original padhan in such villages, though it may exist nominally is such a remote contingency as to be practically negligible. The name of the ghar padhan is invariably, and that of the agent or mukhtyar usually, entered in the revenue papers and no alteration can be made in the case of even the latter without reference to the District Officer."

The padhan's remuneration consists of the padhanchari land where such exists or in cases where its revenue is less than five per cent. of that of the village, of a cess on the revenue up to this amount. The padhan is also exempted from personal service as a coolie, a distinction much prized throughout the district.

The power of the thokdars was much broken down at last settlement. Mr. Beckett says: "They were at first revenue as well as police officers. Their revenue duties were transferred to padhans; and as police they were found to be much worse than useless. As it paid them best always to let off a criminal they generally made themselves so obnoxious that in 1856, the Senior Assistants of Kumaun and Garhwal drew up a joint memorandum recommending that this class of officials should be relieved of all police duties, and as far as possible be absorbed on casualties occurring, or at the next settlement." Accordingly at Settlement numbers of thokdars were struck off and the remuneration of the rest fixed at the rate of three, six or ten per cent. on the government revenue instead of the dues in kind previously taken. The Kumaun officer who recommended the abolition of thokdars was Sir Henry (then Captain) Ramsay; but in

1874 he wrote: "Since that time I have been compelled to change my views... It was absolutely necessary to maintain thokdars as far as possible, to ensure the due performance of police duties on the part of padhans. The abolition of the office of thokdar, which had existed so long, would be very unpopular with all except the democrats, who, more than others, required to be kept in check ... Some of these thokdars are gentlemen ... They occupied a feudal place in the estimation of their subjects."

At present the thokdar's duties are chiefly ornamental, though he is supposed to supervise the padhans in their work as police. The office is therefore strictly hereditary and descends by the rules of primogeniture. But if there is no direct heir, one of the same family, usually the nearest relative, is appointed. The claims of women to thokdari rights, though advanced as in the case of padhans, are disallowed. The thokdars comprise representatives of the best old families only, and are the only men who have any pretence to be called the aristocracy of Garhwal. They are no longer, however, the feudal magnates of former times, and in fact are of very little more consequence than other cultivators. But they are the only body who preserve Garhwal society from one dead level and as such deserving of continuance. Their dignity is somewhat increased by their position as police officers being held to entitle them to the possession of arms free of a license.

The principal families at present are the Bartwals of Nagpur, the Kunwars of Chandpur, the Aswals of Sila (Talla Salan) and the Bhandaris of Chauthan. The Sajwans of Sabli and Khatli, and the Payal Thakurs of Ganga Salan, the Kophola Bishts of Barahsyun, the Rautelas of Kauriya, the Jhinkwans of Nagpur and the Butola Rawats of Badhan are also much respected families though their heads have not the same prominence as the above. They are all Rajput castes.

(To Be Continued)

The Downfall of Bhimsen Thapa^x

By

Baburam Acharya

Bhimsen Thapa was at the climax of his career at the beginning of A.D. 1832. Although he was called General, he had become dictator, thanks to the support of 6,000 troops under his command. He was called Mukhtiyar, but poets, ministers and the British used to call him Prime Minister. The members of the Council of Ministers constituted 28 years previously during the rule of Rana Bahadur Shah had become powerless and had become merely his advisors. They included Guru Ranganath Pandit and Kaji Dalabhanjan Pande. After the death of Chautaria Prana Shah in 1829, his son, Fatte Jang Shah, succeeded him as Chautaria. The services of these three persons were confirmed every year during the annual Pajani. On this occasion, other Chautarias, Kajis, Sardars, etc were dismissed, appointed or transferred so as to give an opportunity to others. Bhimsen Thapa had appointed only his brothers, relatives and trusted persons as officers in the army. He appointed his brother Ranabir Singh Thapa, as Commanding Colonel, and his nephew, Mathbar Singh Thapa, as Colonel. The services of Ranabir Singh Thapa and Mathbar Singh Thapa, and that of Captains and other officers, used to be reconfirmed every year. Old and sick servicemen used to be dismissed during the Pajani. Bhimsen Thapa appointed his relatives only as Governors of Palpa, because four battalions had been stationed there. Pushkar Shah, Daksha Shah and Jyan Shah used to be appointed as Governors of Doti-Accham by rotation because two battalions had been stationed in Silgadhi, the headquarters. The high-level officials of old elite families, such as the Pandes and the Basnyats, used to be sent to the districts by rotation as administrators. The people were suppressed under the military rule. Tranquillity prevailed in the country, because no one had courage to rise against the government. Relations with the British, the Shikhs, and the Chinese were good.

^xBaburam Acharya, "Bhimsen Thapako Patan." (The Downfall of Bhimsen Thapa). Pragati, Year 2, No. 4. No date (1955 ?), pp. 115-122.

King Rajendra Bikram Shah was 18 years old at that time. His two queens, Samrajya Laxmi and Rajya Laxmi, were junior to him by one year or eighteen months. He had two sons from Queen Samrajya Laxmi, and one daughter from Rajya Laxmi. The widowed consort of King Rana Bahadur Shah, Lalita Tripurasundari Devi, held the reins of power. She retained the royal seal, but Bhimsen Thapa used to send her official documents in the name of King Rajendra. She had to affix the royal seal on these documents without any objection, because she could do nothing against Bhimsen Thapa. Even then, Bhimsen Thapa used to keep Ranabir Simha Thapa always inside the palace, lest any one should instigate King Rajendra and his grand-mother. Ranabir Simha never left the Queen and King Rajendra even when they gave audiences to the nobility. King Rajendra was not aware of this surveillance, because Bhimsen Thapa had made him timid by denying him appropriate education. However, his clever wives used to complain to him to get rid of the hold of Bhimsen Thapa and Lalita Tripurasundari Devi. The palace of Bhimsen Thapa was bigger and more beautiful than the royal palace. Members of the nobility thronged at the palace of Bhimsen Thapa. This made the young queens of King Rajendra furious.

Bhimsen Thapa had closed all sources of information to the royal palace. However, one source remained open. Ten days' leave was granted to the female attendants and maid-servants of the royal palace every month during their menstruation. They then used to talk about virtues and shortcomings of Bhimsen Thapa. The young queens began to alert King Rajendra, hearing reports that the brave Damodar Pande had been put to death, and the eyes of Birabhadra Shah had been taken out and his property confiscated, by Bhimsen Thapa. Lalita Tripurasundari Devi died in April 1832 of cholera, which had broken out in epidemic from Kathmandu. Her death paved the way for the downfall of Bhimsen Thapa. Samrajya Laxmi tried to get rid of Bhimsen Thapa after taking possession of the royal seal, as she realized its importance. Ranabir Simha Thapa, who had been appointed to look after Samrajya Laxmi, began to instigate the queen with the hope of becoming Mukhtiyar or Prime Minister himself. When Bhimsen Thapa came to know of this, he ordered Ranabir Simha Thapa not to indulge in such activities any more. Ranabir Simha Thapa thereupon resigned and began to live at Sipa, situated at a distance of 20 miles from Kathmandu. Bhimsen Thapa on his part began to live in a bungalow situated near the royal palace. Meanwhile, King Rajendra fell ill and his queens did not allow the royal physician, Ekadeva Upadhyaya, to treat him. King Rajendra's

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mother, Siddhilaxmi, had died a few days after her failure to wrest power from Bhimsen Thapa. There had been rumors that Bhimsen Thapa's obedient physician, Ekadeva Upadhyaya, had poisoned her. However, Samrajya Laxmi and Rajya Laxmi had no courage to speak about this openly. Bhimsen Thapa too became alert. The Pajani of A.D. 1833 was conducted at the discretion of Bhimsen Thapa. However, Bhimsen Thapa was taken by surprise when King Rajendra did not reconfirm his services. King Rajendra intended to appoint Pushkar Shah, a relative of Samrajya Laxmi, as Mukhtiyar in place of Bhimsen Thapa. Samrajya Laxmi and Pushkar Shah could do nothing because of the military power of Bhimsen Thapa, and thus the services of Bhimsen Thapa were reconfirmed after a few days. In A.D. 1832, when the chief administrator of Palpa district, Bakhtwar Simha Thapa, died, his son, Trivikram Simha Thapa, became acting chief. Bhimsen Thapa had no trust in him, hence he appointed Ranabir Simha Thapa to that post and sent him to Palpa after conferring on him the title of Junior General in March 1833.

Although a British resident had been functioning in Kathmandu ever since A.D. 1816, the British were not allowed to interfere in the politics of Nepal. Their activities were confined to hunting in forests around Kathmandu Valley, and enjoying the beautiful scenery of the Himalayas. When Sir Herbert Maddock returned from Kathmandu in early 1833 after living here for one year, B.H. Hodgson was appointed to replace him. Hodgson had studied the geography and languages of Nepal while working for eight years as assistant resident. Thus he was specially acquainted with the Nepalis. Bhimsen Thapa had acquainted Hodgson with his troubles when his services were not reconfirmed at the Pajani. Samrajya Laxmi too had sent messages to Hodgson with the aim of getting rid of Bhimsen Thapa. However, Hodgson tried to take advantage of this rift and ignored these messages. Foreseeing harm to himself from this mutual rift, Bhimsen Thapa began to take the advice of King Rajendra and Samrajya Laxmi in state affairs.

King Rajendra took over charge of Defense, Finance and Foreign Affairs, while Samrajya Laxmi looked after the portfolios of justice, Audit and other civil affairs. But King Rajendra was just like a slave of Samrajya Laxmi, hence she usually used to look after the departments handled by King Rajendra. Notwithstanding this, she could not reject the decisions of Bhimsen Thapa because of his military strength. Even then, the state affairs ran smoothly through mutual consultations for three years.

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When a major earthquake caused a heavy loss of life and property in September 1833, King Rajendra, Samrajya Laxmi, and Bhimsen Thapa concentrated their attention in relief measures. A letter from Ranjit Singh of the Punjab was received in December 1833. King Rajendra and Bhimsen Thapa then sent emissaries not only to Lahore but also to Burma and Iran. It was proposed to send Mathbar Simha Thapa similarly to King William IV in London. Bhimsen Thapa therefore conferred on Mathbar Simha Thapa the title of Junior General and created a new battalion called Singhanad under his command in November 1834. Ranobir Simha Thapa, who had been sent to Palpa, was given the title of Full General. Bhimsen Thapa also appointed the 16 years old nephew of Mathbar Simha Thapa, Sher Jung Thapa, as Commanding-Colonel. Bhimsen Thapa thus again strengthened his position and insured tranquillity for two years.

When Hodgson raised the question of concluding a commercial treaty, with the intention of taking advantage of the rift between Samrajya Laxmi and Bhimsen Thapa, the latter agreed. However, many drafts of the treaty were rejected because no agreement was reached on the terms. In view of this, Hodgson concentrated his attention on replacing Bhimsen Thapa by Fate Jung Shah, so as to serve the interests of the British government as well as of himself. After the date for Mathbar Simha Thapa's departure for London had been finalized, King Rajendra and Queen Samrajya Laxmi, who were very happy over the new development, conferred the title of Commander-in-Chief on Bhimsen Thapa in October. Mathbar Simha Thapa left for London in November. He was accompanied by 650 soldiers up to Calcutta, with 21 officers and Jamdars to accompany him to London. At that time, the post of Governor-General was vacant in India. Sir Charles Metcalfe was then functioning in this post in an acting capacity. He accorded a splendid reception to Mathbar Simha Thapa when the latter reached Calcutta. However, acting on a communication received from Hodgson, Sir Charles Metcalfe refused to grant a passport to Mathbar Simha Thapa to enable him to visit London as ambassador. He took Mathbar Simha Thapa's letter of credence, and personally despatched it to London. At this time, both the King and the people of Nepal were deeply under the impression that the British were friends of Bhimsen Thapa, and that he had been preserving the independence of Nepal by maintaining friendship with them. But the nature of the friendship between Bhimsen Thapa and the British was exposed when Mathbar Simha Thapa returned to Nepal in March 1836 without attaining success in his mission. It was a great error on the part of

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Bhimsen Thapa to have sent Mathbar Simha Thapa without securing a passport for him. This blunder hastened his downfall.

Bhimsen Thapa had reluctantly appointed Rana Jung Pande, son of Damodar Pande, as Captain at the special request of Ranabir Simha Thapa. The arrogant Mathbar Simha Thapa was so jealous of Rana Jung Pande that he did not even return the salute presented by the latter. For this reason, Ranajung Pande was waiting for a suitable opportunity to bring about the downfall not only of Mathbar Simha Thapa, but also of Bhimsen Thapa, in order to avenge the murder of his father and elder brothers. He was maintaining secret contacts with Queen Samrajya Laxmi in this regard. Within a few months after Mathbar Simha's return from Calcutta, his elder sister-in-law, a widow with whom he had an illicit affair, gave birth to an illegitimate child. Rana Jung Pande spread rumors about this incident in public, and Mathbar Simha, in order to save his face, went Borlang in Gorkha on the pretext that he was ill. Bhimsen Thapa then appointed Mathbar Simha Thapa as Governor of Gorkha, so that this scandal might be hushed up. Meanwhile, Queen Samrajya Laxmi was feeling furious because Mathbar Simha Thapa had squandered Rs 150,000 in entertainments in Calcutta, notwithstanding the fact that there was a shortage of funds in the royal treasury. Bhimsen Thapa deposited the amount with the government and confirmed his position by satisfying Samrajya Laxmi. But he became militarily weak when the army, magazines and arsenals, which had been under the command of Mathbar Simha Thapa, were transferred to others.

The growing expenditure on the army incurred by Bhimsen Thapa was then reviewed. All government servants had been given lands in lieu of emoluments. They used to collect rents from the people amounting to more than twice the prescribed remuneration. For example, a captain appointed on a remuneration of Rs 4,000 used to collect Rs 8,000 or Rs 9,000 (Rs 100,000 at present prices). But the number of captains was not more than thirty. King Rajendra and Queen Samrajya Laxmi granted authority to Ranganath Pandit to rectify these irregularities, and reduce the area of land assigned to government servants. Ranganath accepted this task because even the royal preceptor, Chautarias and Kajis did not get more remuneration than a captain.

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At the beginning of A.D. 1837, people had thought that the Prime Ministership of Bhimsen Thapa would not last long. Ranabir Simha Thapa requested King Rajendra for an audience with the intention of being appointed Prime Minister. Probably, Rana Jung Pande had given this advice to the palace. Samrajya Laxmi wanted the Thapas to assemble in Kathmandu, and therefore summoned Ranabir Simha Thapa. Bhimsen Thapa felt happy, because he failed to understand the motives of his brother. He left for Borlang in April for religious ceremonies after handing over charge to Ranabir Simha. In fact, he went there to placate Mathbar Simha Thapa and bring him to Kathmandu. Samrajya Laxmi granted permission to Bhimsen Thapa to go to Borlang and bring Mathbar Simha Thapa back. Although the army had come under the control of King Rajendra and Samrajya Laxmi, they did not trust it, and therefore created the Hanumandal battalion under their command. In the meantime, they appointed Rana Jung Pande as Kaji and then as their Personal Secretary (Hajuriya), and restored the lands confiscated from his father. Rana Jung's brother Ranadal also was made a Kaji and appointed as Governor of Palpa. Bhimsen Thapa and his brothers continued in their posts. For six years, Bhimsen Thapa had been living in a bungalow near the royal palace. He used to go to his home only to have his meals. However, inasmuch as Rana Jung Pande had now assumed this responsibility, Bhimsen Thapa was finding it difficult to see King Rajendra and Queen Samrajya Laxmi in person and represent his problems to them. Queen Samrajya Laxmi, not content with the humiliation of Bhimsen Thapa, was searching for a pretext to have all his property confiscated. On July 24, her 6-month old child named Devendra Bikram Shah died of natural causes. The Queen then framed a case to the effect that Bhimsen Thapa had poisoned her child with the help of a physician. King Rajendra too supported the charge, and the following day he ordered the Hanumandal Battalion to arrest Bhimsen Thapa at his residence. Bhimsen Thapa was imprisoned. So were his brothers and nephews. Bhimsen Thapa was thus divested of his Prime Ministership, to which he had been appointed in 1804. The wave of unrest that began with the termination of Bhimsen Thapa's 34-year old Prime Ministership lasted nearly ten years, and ended only after Jung Bahadur seized power.

Punishment to Jaisi Brahman for Taking Liquor
(Summary)

From Prime Minister (Jung Bahadur),
To Dharmadatta Padhya, Bichari of the Majhkirat Adalat

Chhabilal and Rangalal Jaisi Pokhryal of Khamtel have submitted the following petition to the Itachapli Adalat:

"In 1889 Vikrama (1832 A.D.), Vidyapati Dhungana, of Dumre village in Rawa, had lodgedna complaint to the effect that Raghunandan Pande, a Jaisi Brahman living in the same village, had taken liquor in 1879 Vikrama (1822 A.D.)n. The property ofn Raghunandan Pande was therefore confiscatedn

"The complainant had stated that the sons and daughters (of Raghunandan Pande), born before the year 1879 Vikrama (1822 A.D.), were pure. Accordingly, all relatives granted them expiation (Patiya)n and have been maintaining commensal, marital, and other relations with them for the past 20 or 25 years.

"Siddha Jaisi and Balu Jaisi Dhakal, sons of (Raghunandan Pandens) sister, had also been maintaining such relations with usn. Now, however, they have refused to have commensal relations with usn. Since they have no right to donso, we pray that justice may be done according to the law."

The petition has been referred to us through the Kaushal office. Dispose of the matter according to the law in the presence of both partiesn

Poush Sudi 5, 1921
(December 1864)

Regmi Research Collections, Vol. 21, pp. 12-14.

(S.B. Maharjan)