

COOCH BEHAR— A Saga of Dreams and Resilience

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Nisith Pramanik

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by Nisith Pramanik

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To whom

who have sometimes stumbled upon a desperate search

Foreword

It is commonly assumed that individuals involved in politics would primarily engage in political activities. However, there are some remarkable political figures who, despite being deeply involved in politics, have also contributed something new to literature or other fields. When I began reading the manuscript of "Cooch Behar – A Saga of Dreams and Resilience", written by Nisith Pramanik, I was quite surprised by my first impression. Such a comprehensive portrayal is only possible when a politician is deeply connected to their homeland. What is even more impressive is how naturally the author has presented his vision to the public. I firmly believe that this book will be regarded as a special record in the political history of West Bengal and India.

Cooch Behar, located in the northern part of Bengal, is an important historical and cultural centre. Every inch of its land seems to hold a piece of history. From the era of kings and maharajas to becoming part of independent India, Cooch Behar has been enriched by its unique heritage and glorious history. The main goal of this book is to present every aspect of this traditional place to readers, allowing them to become

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familiar with its rich history and culture. While reading the manuscript, I felt that the author has successfully achieved this goal.

The history of Cooch Behar is not just significant for the local people, but for all of India. The book covers the reign of kings and maharajas, British rule, and the transition to being a part of independent India. Each phase and its impact on Cooch Behar have been discussed in detail. The author has attempted to present this important chapter of our nation's history from a new perspective.

Another key aspect of this book is Cooch Behar's cultural and social traditions. The way of life, festivals, customs, and rituals of the people here are symbolic of India's cultural diversity. The book tries to bring forth the cultural diversity and beauty of Cooch Behar, reflecting the dreams and struggles of its people. It has successfully showcased an ancient and ongoing culture to the entire country.

The book also provides a broad discussion on the economy and social structure of Cooch Behar. It highlights how people's lives here are shaped by agriculture, industry, trade, and other economic activities, and how economic challenges affect them. There is a detailed discussion on issues like youth unemployment, the lack of quality education, and the impact of modern technological changes.

The political and administrative aspects of Cooch Behar have also been covered thoroughly, with an in-depth focus on the roles of past and present state governments, the impact of political decisions, and the results of various political changes over time. Particularly, there is a detailed analysis of the lack of political will in the current state government and the vision of the BJP. The author's deep analytical skills and

Foreward

determination to build a bright future are very captivating.

One of the most serious issues in Cooch Behar is the problem of infiltration and the Rohingya crisis. This issue is not just important for Cooch Behar, but for the entire North-eastern region of India. The book delves deeply into the consequences of infiltration, such as population changes, social and cultural shifts, and security concerns. Government policies and responses to address this issue, along with what we can do, are discussed in detail.

The youth are our future, and this book includes a special chapter on the problems and potential of the younger generation. It discusses in depth issues such as the lack of quality education, unemployment, the lack of job opportunities, and the aspirations and dreams of young people. It also highlights the role of youth in shaping a better India and how their vision can be realized in the future. This chapter seems to be highly inspired by the ideals of Swami Vivekananda.

Overall, each chapter of this book delves deeply into various aspects of Cooch Behar. By bringing together history, culture, society, economy, politics, problems, and potential, the book attempts to present a complete picture that will captivate readers. I believe "Cooch Behar – A Saga of Dreams and Resilience" will become essential reading for anyone wanting to truly understand Cooch Behar in the coming days.

I hope this book will help readers to gain a deeper understanding of the rich history and culture of Cooch Behar and encourage them to think about the challenges and opportunities faced by the Rajbanshi community. Cooch Behar is not just a piece of land, but a priceless treasure of our nation, with stories and history hidden in every grain of

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its soil. The author, Nisith Pramanik, has beautifully presented this history in the context of the present day. He deserves praise and congratulations for writing such an extraordinary book. I hope his immense efforts reach readers of all levels.

I urge readers from all walks of life to read this book and strive to understand and connect with Cooch Behar's rich heritage and its current issues.



Dr. Ratan Ghosh

Prolific writer, Poet, Thinker & Educationalist

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Introduction

The mechanical civilization is controlled by non-mechanical humans, whose lives are scattered across many aspects. It would likely be a pointless discussion to argue which aspect is more important than the others. Every part of life holds equal significance. Among these, professional life stands out as a unique chapter for us. When choosing a profession, our preference sometimes matters, and sometimes it doesn't. It's not uncommon to begin in one profession and end up in another. The best connection happens when we realize which path is the best for us and then take the decision to follow that path with determination.

I was born in a small village of Bhetaguri in the Dinhata Sub-division of Cooch Behar district. Even though I initially chose teaching as my profession, I soon realized it wasn't my true path. I became determined to give my best through politics and embarked on a battle that, like any war, brought both gains and losses.

Among the many things I've gained, the greatest achievement is surely the honour of becoming the Minister of State for Home Affairs in the world's largest democracy, the Republic of India. The responsibility of maintaining the internal security of a country like ours, surrounded by both friendly and hostile

nations, with 140 crore people speaking 725 dialects and having countless needs and expectations, is undoubtedly a massive task. The past five years have passed like a dream but also in great busyness. While travelling from one end of the country to the other, following a great commander, there was no time for personal reflection or self-contemplation.

In the Ramayana, Lord Ram once told his brother Lakshman, "Even though Lanka is made of gold, I don't desire it. My mother and motherland are greater than heaven." Truly, there is no comparison to one's motherland. She is our eternal mother, the foundation of our history, present, and future. Even if my mother remains neglected and sorrowful, she nurtures us with all her strength. Cooch Behar, the sacred land, is my mother and my birthplace. Even though my mother has remained overlooked and sorrowful, the simple rice and rough cloth she has provided have always been my shelter.

Since childhood, I've had a deep love for reading. From *Chandmama*, *Anandamela*, *Pandav Goenda*, *Feluda*, to works by Rabindranath Tagore, Sarat Chandra, Bankim Chandra, Bibhutibhushan, Manik Bandopadhyay, Sukumar Ray, and other literary figures, my knowledge grew from reading their books. Even today, whenever I find time during flights or train journeys, I try to read something.

Dreaming is a natural tendency of humans. Some people dream, while others live to turn those dreams into reality. I, too, have cherished a lifelong dream and determination to present my vision of Cooch Behar to you through the ink of my pen. Even though the lack of time delayed this work, the fact that I could finally complete it will always remain one of my life's greatest achievements.