

Cooch Behar Merger Agreement :

Agreement made this twenty eighth day of August 1949 between the Governor General of India and His Highness the Maharaja of Cooch Behar.

Whereas in the best interests of the State of Cooch Behar as well as of the Dominion of India it is desirable to provide for the administration of the said State by or under the authority of the Dominion Government :

It is hereby agreed as follows :~

Article - 1 :-

His Highness the Maharaja of Cooch Behar hereby cedes to the Dominion Government full and exclusive authority, jurisdiction and powers for and in relation to the governance of the State and agrees to transfer the administration of the State to the Dominion Government on the 12th day of September 1949 (hereinafter referred to as 'the said day').

As from the said day the Dominion Government will be competent to exercise the said powers, authority and jurisdiction in such manner and through such agency as it may think fit.

Article - 2 :-

His Highness the Maharaja shall continue to enjoy the same personal rights, privileges, dignities and titles which he would have enjoyed had this agreement not been made.

Article - 3 :-

His Highness the Maharaja shall with effect from the said day be entitled to receive for his lifetime from the revenues of the State annually for his privy purse the sum of Rupees eight lakhs fifty thousand free of all taxes. After him the privy parts will be fixed at Rupees seven lakhs only. this amount is intended to cover all the expenses of the Ruler and his family, including expenses on account of his personal staff, maintenance of his residences, marriages and other ceremonies, etc., and will neither be increased nor reduced for any reason whatsoever.

The Government of India undertakes the said sum of Rupees eight lakhs fifty thousand shall be paid to His Highness the Maharaja in four equal installments in advance at the beginning of each quarter from the State Treasury or at such Treasury as may be specified by the Government of India.

Article - 4 :-

His Highness the Maharaja shall be entitled to the full ownership, use and enjoyment of all private properties (as distinct from State properties) belonging to him on the date of this agreement.

His Highness the Maharaja will furnish to the Dominion Government before the 15th September 1949, an inventory of all the immovable property, securities and cash balances held by him as such private property.

If any dispute arises as to whether any item of property is the private property of His Highness the Maharaja or State property, it shall be referred to a Judicial Officer qualified to be appointed as High Court Judge, and the decision of that Officer shall be final and binding on both parties.

Article - 5 :-

All the members of His Highness' family shall be entitled to all the personal privileges, dignities and titles enjoyed by them whether within or outside the territories of the State, immediately before the 15th day of August 1947.

Article - 6 :-

The Dominion Government guarantees the succession, according to law and custom, to the Gaddi of the State and to His Highness the Maharaja's personal rights, privileges, dignities and titles.

Article - 7 :-

No enquiry shall be made by or under the authority of the Government of India, and no proceedings shall lie in any court in Cooch Behar against His Highness the Maharaja, whether in a personal capacity or otherwise, in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by him or under his authority during the period of his administration of that State.

Article - 8 :-

(i) The Government of India hereby guarantees either the continuants in service of the permanent members of the public services of Cooch Behar on conditions which will be not less advantageous than those on which they were serving before the date on which the administration of Cooch Behar is made over to the Government of India or the payment of reasonable compensation.

(ii) The Government of India further guarantees the continuance of pensions and leave salaries sanctioned by His Highness the Maharaja to servants of the State who have retired or proceed on leave preparatory to retirement, before the date on which the administration of Cooch Behar is made over to the Government of India.

Article - 9 :-

Except with the previous sanction of the Government of India no proceedings, civil and criminal, shall be instituted against any person in respect of any act done or purporting to be done in the execution of his duties as a servant of the State before the day on which the administration is made over to the Government of India.

In confirmation whereof Mr. Vapal Pangunni Menon, Advisor to the Govt. of India in the Ministry of States has appended his signature on behalf and with the authority of the Governor General of India and Lieutenant Colonel His Highness the Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur, Maharaja of Cooch Behar, has appended his signature on behalf of himself, his heirs and successors.

Jagaddipendra Narayan
Maharaja of Cooch Behar

<p>V. P. Menon Advisor to the Govt. of India Ministry of States</p>
