Abstract

The executive order of presumably King G#rv##a, of which this is a copy, empowers R#mananda B#### of Patan to exercise overseership of the Luth#ma Gu#ha and its endowments, consisting of sixty-nine ropan#s of land.

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3.

#r# Matsyendra[n#tha] - 1
... written letter.

Hail! A rukk# of the venerable supreme king of great kingsⁱⁱ

#ge: To R#m#na#da B####, a resident of Mah#buddha at Oku B#h#la #ola in Patan. To the gu#ha 3 established by your ancestor J#var#ja B#### when he offered a golden *vim#na* 4 to the chariot of 1 (i.e., Matsyendran#tha) were added further rice field plots with money left over after it completed its tasks. It is learned that you (i.e., the *gu#ha* members) have been tending to those plots as well. It is also learned that up to the present you have been renovating the *vim#na* whenever it is damaged. You still enjoyed [the fruits of] the *gu#ha* for two or three years after [the start of] our rule. Earlier during [the Gorkha troops'] blockade of the region 6, when you took to Bh#dag#u#, in order to hide them there, the documents relating to the donation of the *gu#ha*, [the documents] were grabbed by Bho#y#s. However, it is learned that the well-informed among the twenty-four thousand 7 [households/people] know [that you are the rightful overseers of the *gu#ha*]. Later, when the *ij#r#* [system] was instituted, you gave up the plots but did not give up the regular duties [of the *gu#ha*]. It is [further] learned that you still had to renovate [the *vim#na*] whenever it was damaged, even after the *ij#r#* [obligations on the part of the *gu#ha*] had been forgiven, and that you were unable to make use of the *gu#ha* established by your ancestors.

4.

This document is a copy of an executive order seemingly issued by King G#rv##ayuddha to R#m#nanda B#### of Oku B#h#la in Patan. It grants R#m#nanda and his fellow *gu#ha* members the right to retain overseership of the Luth#ma Gu#ha and its land endowments. It was issued in response to a petition by R#m#nanda and is mentioned in a note appended to document E_2253_0015B. There is a gap of one year between this and the previous document in E_2253_0015B, leading one to believe that R#m#nanda had to wait that long to get this *rukk#* issued.

R#m#nanda apparently did not possess any proof of his right to the Luth#ma Gu#ha. As the document mentions, this was because his papers were taken by Bho#es when he fled to Bhaktapur during attacks by Gorkhali troops in Patan. The king, however, acknowledges his right to the *gu#ha* based on information obtained from the general public. No names of suppliers of such information are mentioned, nor does the document provide any details about the Bho#es who took the documents. If the ethnonym Bho#e refers to Tibetanid peoples, it is puzzling how they could have overpowered R#m#nanda in Bhaktapur, which was still ruled by a Newar king. One may also assume that the documents were taken while he was on his way to Bhaktapur.

The document lists 14 pieces of plots amounting to 69 ropan#s as the endowment of the gu#ha. Although some of the place names cannot be identified, it is likely that all the plots were in or around Lalitpur district. It is interesting to note that Bruce Owens's study during the 1980s found 36 ropan#s of land remaining with the gu#ha (see Owens 1989: 274). This was only half of the original amount of land mentioned in the current document. Owens further mentions that the "gu#hiyar complains of having difficulty extracting the gu#h#'s share of the proceeds from its tenants" (ibid.).

The document has a note appended at the end which mentions that Am#l# #a#khadhara had asked the gu#ha members to verify their status through Patan's notables. It is interesting that an am#li could object to a right already granted by the king. Could a local authority overrule the king's order? Or was this merely a bureaucratic formality?Commentry iv

Notes

- i. The text written in the right margin has been blacked out with ink.
- ii. The name of the king is not mentioned here, but it is evident from the date of the document that it was G#rv##ayuddha Vikrama ##ha (r. 1799-1816). He ruled under the regency of Queen Lalita Tripura Sundar#.
- iii. Footnote commentary: interesting very gutha tugha.
- iv. This is a commentary footnote