

**Bag Size, Record Specimen and Masculinity: An Analysis of the Hunting  
Diary of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan of the Princely State of Cooch  
Behar.**

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**Introduction:**

This paper tries to answer some of the research questions like- How did Maharaja Nripendra Narayan imbibe the concept of masculine sports hunting? What was the nature of his hunting record keeping? How did the big bag sizes and the record specimens of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan's sports shooting become symbolic of masculinity?

The practice of hunting was there in ancient India.<sup>1</sup>In the medieval period, royal hunting became very popular.<sup>2</sup>The British had their own hunting tradition in England.<sup>3</sup>The colonizers in India had been attracted by the Indian royal big game hunting.<sup>4</sup>The work (Illustrations of Indian Field Sports) of Captain Thomas Williamson is an example of how the Indian hunting legacy was followed by the Europeans.<sup>5</sup>The colonial occupation in India opened up a new arena of hunting. The British and the Europeans got an opportunity to participate in non-artificial hunting. According to Mackenzie, 'The rediscovery of forests and mountains, particularly those in the genuine wild, brought

human beings face to face with, and forced them to participate in, nature in the raw.’<sup>6</sup>The British borrowed the practice of royal big game hunting from the Mughals and other Indian nobility. So, a new tradition of hunting emerged, blending the hunting traditions of England and India.<sup>7</sup>This new tradition of sports hunting had fixed some game ethics which made it different from Indian hunting tradition. The main points of distinction were the degree of violence and pain or suffering during the shoot and making the hunt a sport.<sup>8</sup>

According to Mackenzie, there was a deep influence of masculinity in colonial hunting. A tendency was seen by the colonizers 'to transform hunting into a predominantly male pursuit.'<sup>9</sup>Hunting was a symbol of the masculine identity of the British hunters in the colonial period.<sup>10</sup>By 1864, Walter Campbell, a British army officer, gave advice on Tiger hunting- 'face him like a Briton.' He represented Britishers as masculine or manly.<sup>11</sup>Bengal Army Captain Henry Shakespeare advised Britons' to wake up from bed and face the adventure and the dangerous thrill in hunting.<sup>12</sup>

Some of the Englishman hunters would practice Pig sticking as the masculine game in India. They would throw spear on wild Boar from horseback for the 'creation and reinforcement of colonial masculinity.'<sup>13</sup> Mrinalini Sinha highlights that there was a clear distinction made by the British between the colonizers and the colonised elites which constituted as the 'Manly Englishman' (colonizers) and 'Effeminate Bengali' (colonised) in 19th century India.<sup>14</sup> In the context of hunting, Bengali's were considered effeminate.

Williamson wrote in 1807, 'The weak timid Bengallee, for the most part, flies from the scene of horror...'<sup>15</sup> "Many Britons blamed rajas, zamindars, and other landed elites, generally perceiving them as lazy and indolent..<sup>16</sup>

The princely state of Cooch Behar which is situated in Northern Bengal took part in masculine sports hunting. Niladri Ranjan Roy relates Cooch Behar princely hunting with martialism.<sup>17</sup> Maharaja Nripendra Narayan of the princely state of Cooch Behar was one of the greatest Indian sportsmen. He was well known for his shooting world records.<sup>18</sup>

Many changes in the British policy towards princely states in India were seen after the rebellion of 1857-1858. The princes of India were seen as 'pillars of the imperial power' and 'honorary whites'.<sup>19</sup> The British ideologies like 'Colonial Stereotyping', 'Model', 'Modernity', 'Progressive' etc. had a deep influence over the princely rulers. The princely rulers tried their best to meet the British expectations and even surpass them. <sup>20</sup>

In 1773, through a subsidiary alliance with the British, Cooch Behar had become a feudatory state of the East India Company.<sup>21</sup> During the minority of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan, the state of Cooch Behar had been managed by the British Government.<sup>22</sup> The state of Cooch Behar was indirectly ruled by the British Government.<sup>23</sup> Nripendra Narayan came to Gaddi in 1863.<sup>24</sup> He was made the Maharaja Bahadur in February 1880. In 1884, the Viceroy declared the title of 'His Highness' and 'Bhup Bahadur' as a

hereditary family distinction.<sup>25</sup>Western education played a key role in the synthesis of masculine sports and game ethics among the hunters. The Maharaja got English education and adopted some of the British traditions and lifestyles. He studied at Wards Institute at Benares, Government College at Patna, Presidency College and even went to England for studies. St John Kneller was appointed as his guardian and English tutor in 1872.<sup>26</sup>The English education system developed the masculine traits and games ethics into Nripendra Narayan. According to Basudhita Basu, the games ethic had been implanted into the minds of the Bengali's through western education.<sup>27</sup>The institutions like Mayo College and Doon School were founded for the socialisation and development of the 'manly' behaviour of the sons of the Indian aristocracy.<sup>28</sup>

When Nripendra was just 10 years old, he learnt shooting from Mr. Beckett, the Deputy Commissioner. He would go on shooting excursions and took part in Tiger, Buffalo and Deer shooting. Mr. Beckett observed in 1872 that 'The Raja seems very keen after sport now and begins to shoot very fairly. He seldom misses a bird sitting, and very often knocks one over flying.'<sup>29</sup>Nripendra assimilated himself with the colonial ideologies like 'Colonial Stereotyping', 'Modernity', 'Progressive' etc. He 'felt himself to be more at home in England than India.'<sup>30</sup>

The availability of numerous animals in or around Cooch Behar made it a distinct territory. The Terai was connected with the jungles of Cooch Behar up to Nepal. An ecological linkage was there between Jaldapara and Buxa. The same type of

connection was between the jungles of Buxa and Assam on the left bank of the Sankosh River.<sup>31</sup> According to Mahesh Rangarajan, Cooch Behar was '...a state in north Bengal with perhaps an unrivalled record of big game shoots in all of eastern India.'<sup>32</sup> Nripendra Narayan started the big game shooting in Cooch Behar with his guests. According to Gayatri Devi, 'It was my grandfather (Maharaja Nripendra Narayan) who started the tradition of big shoots in Cooch Behar.'<sup>33</sup> The feature of life in Cooch Behar - '...especially among British grandees, hundreds of whom sought invitations - were the shikars, or shooting parties.'<sup>34</sup> On 20th February 1892, E. H. the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Viceroy stated, 'Kuch Behar is famous for its sports, and I could not have a better mentor than your Maharaja.'<sup>35</sup>

Nripendra Narayan was a fine sportsman. He was very good at games like football, tennis, rackets, cricket and polo. But above all, he was famous for big game shooting.<sup>36</sup> The Maharaja mostly followed manly sports like hunting, polo, wrestling etc. The British considered games like polo or hunting as masculine sports. With the growing popularity of hunting in India, British sports like Badminton were considered effeminate by the British. Even in hunting, certain non-risky animal shooting like bird shooting was considered effeminate.<sup>37</sup> Maharaja Nripendra Narayan worked for the promotion of manly sports and exercises.<sup>38</sup> Even the educational institutions in Cooch Behar worked for the promotion of manly games among the students.<sup>39</sup>

The Maharaja adopted the British mode of sports hunting which followed game ethics. They introduced fair play or code of sportsmanship in hunting. These were suffering-free death or 'clean kill', refrain from indiscriminate slaughter, non-killing of undersized animals etc. in hunting.<sup>40</sup> The game ethics even allowed a sporting chance to the animals.<sup>41</sup> The Maharaja had secured the big bag sizes and the record specimen through masculine sports hunting following the game ethics.

Maharaja Nripendra Narayan wrote his hunting diary in 1908 titled "Thirty-seven years of big game shooting in Cooch Behar, the Duars and Assam: A Rough Diary" published by The Times Press, Bombay and dedicated this work to King Edward VII, Emperor of India. It deals with the shooting adventures of Nripendra Narayan and his hunting party from 1871-1907. During the 37 years, the Maharaja and his shooting party shot many big games. Maharaja Nripendra Narayan had given a list of his hunted animals and a description of the hunting experiences for each year in his diary.

**Bag Size:**

'The Globe', a newspaper reported on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1911, about Maharaja Nripendra Narayan as 'A man who killed 500 Tigers.' According to the newspaper, 'As a big game shot his reputation was worldwide and he had killed more than 500 tigers in addition to other giants of the jungle.'<sup>42</sup> But it was a false claim which was made to glorify the Maharaja as a famous hunter. Here, the number 500 is just a symbol of his identity.

The number of tigers was a matter of masculinity, competition, prowess, courage, prestige, pride and an example of excellent skills to be considered as a famous hunter. A good bag and record specimen was gradually becoming desirable to sportsmen. The princely states protected certain animals to get a big bag and good trophies. 'As bag sizes and record specimens began to matter, more refined techniques of management came into play.'<sup>43</sup> In general, when a British hunter professed to kill large numbers of big game, it was considered as a 'sporting' triumph, while native hunters were recast as 'poor slaughter.'<sup>44</sup> James Outram (1803-63) was a British East India Company army officer in Khandesh, he shot 191 Tigers, 15 Leopards, 25 Bears and 12 wild Buffaloes.<sup>45</sup> As a colonial stereotype, some of the princely rulers followed British sports hunting. 'In fact, in their zeal for large bags, many princes outstripped their British masters...' The largest British bag holders before 1900 were George Yule (400 tigers) and Montagu Gerrard (227 tigers). Some Indian rulers like the ruler of Udaipur and the Raja of Gouripur had a bag of 500 each. A total of 600 tigers were shot by the Nawab of Tonk. Ramanuj Saran Singh Deo shot 1100 tigers.<sup>46</sup>

The Maharaja of Bikaner killed 143 Tigers up to the year 1930. The Maharaja of Datia killed 780 Tigers. On the other hand, Maharana Fateh Singh of Mewar followed the game ethics such as sparing female, immature animals and other ordinary animals. But his record specimens were not in the world record books. He bagged 375 Tigers, 991 Leopards and 990 wild Boars. He speared another 275 wild Boars from horseback.<sup>47</sup>

The big bags were important in hunting. But it became more important to follow the game ethics under the British sports hunting. Strict adherence to the game ethics was a prominent feature of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan's shooting that is why he was regarded as the first in reputation as a sportsman among the ruling chiefs of Indian (Says a London Exchange).<sup>48</sup>

Nripendra Narayan was very anxious to get big games. As Sunity Devee writes, 'Later in the evening my husband (Maharaja Nripendra Narayan) talked to the "shikari," who told him where to look for a big game.'<sup>49</sup> Maharaja Nripendra Narayan shot many animals. He and his hunting parties had shot - 365 Tigers, 311 Leopards, 207 Rhinos, 438 Buffaloes, 48 Bisons, 133 Bears, 318 Barasinghs and 259 Samburs.<sup>50</sup> These same calculation has been put forward by Niladri Ranjan Roy<sup>51</sup> and Swapankumar Roy.<sup>52</sup> But this calculation is not accurate and complete. At the time of making the total of all the hunted animals, there were some mistakes. The Maharaja had skipped or ignored to calculate Hog Deer, Antelope, Pig and other animals in the total sheet. According to Arupjyoti Saikia, Maharaja Nripendra Narayan (1871-1907) shot not less than 370 Tigers, 208 Rhinoceros, 430 Buffaloes and 324 Barasingh.<sup>53</sup>

The total number of big games for the thirty-seven years have been found - 371 Tigers, 319 Leopards, 207 Rhinos, 439 Buffaloes, 53 Bisons, 138 Bears, 324 Barasinghs, 267 Samburs, 296 Hog Deers, 31 Antelopes, 241 Pigs.

Year	Tiger	Leopard	Rhino	Buffalo	Bison	Bear	Barasingh	Sambur	Hog Deer	Antelope	Pig
1871	5	2	2	5	0	0	10	0	30	7	0
1872	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1873	5	0	4	9	0	0	12	0	23	2	0
1874-1876	28	8	5	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1877	16	6	15	34	0	0	13	32	49	1	18
1878	4	4	11	10	0	0	5	1	7	0	6
1879	2	9	11	20	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
1880	15	2	7	21	0	1	0	10	9	1	0
1881	4	15	8	21	0	4	0	15	9	0	0
1882	5	8	8	34	0	3	0	39	18	3	19
1883	6	14	7	25	1	2	14	4	10	2	9
1884	4	8	19	5	0	1	12	10	16	2	22
1885	12	2	10	20	0	5	5	5	12	0	1
1886	13	7	18	17	1	5	18	6	9	0	3
1887	10	37	4	6	0	2	5	13	11	1	3
1888	6	8	0	4	0	0	4	0	0	1	1
1889	9	11	5	9	1	8	6	3	2	2	1
1890	21	11	6	16	1	7	5	7	5	1	9
1891	12	8	5	15	1	3	27	28	6	4	20
1892	5	12	6	15	0	2	30	1	4	2	18
1893	11	6	7	11	1	4	35	13	15	0	18
1894	9	25	5	16	0	1	8	4	5	0	11
1895	20	3	9	30	1	11	16	15	7	0	4
1896	11	3	7	7	4	8	5	2	3	2	6
1897	5	3	1	7	0	6	11	10	1	0	6

<b>1898</b>	7	22	6	1	1	2	12	12	6	0	4
<b>1899</b>	6	7	9	27	6	4	23	2	4	0	6
<b>1900</b>	17	19	1	3	1	10	9	10	8	0	6
<b>1901</b>	11	5	4	5	15	3	11	10	6	0	7
<b>1902</b>	24	2	6	15	18	9	2	5	6	0	1
<b>1903</b>	13	28	0	1	0	15	20	0	9	0	16
<b>1904</b>	10	13	0	0	0	6	3	5	6	0	18
<b>1905</b>	16	3	1	0	1	4	1	1	0	0	1
<b>1906</b>	12	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
<b>1907</b>	17	7	0	5	0	10	2	0	0	0	5
<b>Total:</b>	371	319	207	439	53	138	324	267	296	31	241

So, in most instances, it differs from the summary made by the Maharaja. The above summary has been made by collecting data from the tables at the bottom of each year's shooting total. The additional shots which the Maharaja or without Maharaja his hunting party got have also been included here.

The hunting descriptions or the day to day bags of the Maharaja also differ from the hunted animals provided in the table at the bottom of every year's shooting. The Maharaja wrote in his hunting diary about the day to day activities of hunting. But in some cases, his account was very ignorant towards a few specific animals. He ignored such animals which were small and not dangerous. He has not properly provided enough details of these animals

in the descriptions. In some cases, he had provided exact details but in most of the cases, he just quoted a few of them or didn't even mention them at all.

It has been observed that sometimes the day to day hunting description doesn't mention 'in addition' shoots. But it was enumerated in the total sheets every year. The Maharaja himself or some other hunters went out around their vicinity for a short hunting trip without having any huge hunting party or lavish arrangements. These small shoots or in addition shoots were added to the yearly summary without mentioning any details in the day to day hunting descriptions.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to check whether the total hunting account in the day to day descriptions do match with the total number of the hunted animals in the table provided for every year. Here is a summary of the shoots mentioned in the descriptions.

Year	Tiger	Leopard	Rhinoceros	Buffalo	Bison	Bear	Barasingha	Sambu	Hog Deer	Antelope	Pig
1871	5	2	2	5	0	0	10	0	30	7	0
1872	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1873	5	0	4	9	0	0	12	0	30	2	0
1874-1876	20	8	5	24	0	0	Some	Some	Some	Some	Some

1877	16	6	15	16	0	0	Some	Some	Some	Some	Some
1878	4	4	16	21	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
1879	2	9	11	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1880	15	2	6	20	0	1	0	0	4	0	0
1881	2	15	8	21	0	0	0	10	3	0	5
1882	5	8	9	31	0	1	0	37	15	0	4
1883	6	14	7	25	1	3	14	4	10	0	0
1884	4	8	23	7	0	2	3	Some	Some	Some	Some, 3
1885	14	3	13	25	0	7	0	0	0	Some	0
1886	12	7	18	23	1	1	2	0	1	0	0
1887	8	35	4	6	0	2	0	0	3	0	0
1888	6	15	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1889	10	10	4	9	1	6	1	0	0	0	0
1890	18	10	4	11	2	7	0	1	0	0	0
1891	12	8	5	15	1	3	1	4	3	0	1
1892	5	10	6	14	0	2	22	1	2	2	9
1893	10	6	9	11	1	5	21	8	2	0	0
1894	9	25	5	13	0	1	3	0	0	0	2
1895	18	3	9	29	1	10	0	7	0	0	0
1896	11	3	5	7	3	10	1	1	0	0	2
1897	5	3	2	7	0	5	2	0	0	0	4
1898	7	22	6	3	1	2	4	7	0	0	1
1899	6	7	6	21	6	5	10	1	0	0	2
1900	17	19	1	3	1	10	6	6	1	0	1
1901	11	5	4	5	15	3	7	7	2	0	0
1902	22	2	6	14	21	9	0	1	2	0	0

<b>1903</b>	14	21	0	1	0	11	9	2	5	0	7
<b>1904</b>	10	12	0	0	0	6	2	5	6	0	5
<b>1905</b>	15	7	1	1	1	6	1	1	0	0	0
<b>1906</b>	12	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
<b>1907</b>	18	7	0	6	0	11	4	0	0	0	0
<b>Total:</b>	354	317	214	428	56	134	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

The day to day hunting accounts or descriptions of the number of hunted animals have been summarised in this calculation. It also differs from both summaries. The reference of Tiger, Rhino, Buffalo, Bison and Bear are found mostly in the day to day descriptions. But in the case of Leopards, additional Leopard shoots are found. The number of additional Leopard shoots has been enlisted in this table though sometimes it is not found in the day to day descriptions. According to William K. Storey, among the big game hunts, lions and tigers were the most dangerous animals. Even buffalo, leopards, rhinoceros and elephants were dangerous to hunt.<sup>54</sup> Nripendra was very interested in shooting dangerous animals.

The overall summary making for Barasingh, Sambur, Hog Deer, Antelope and Pig is found very difficult and uncertain in some cases. In most cases, the numbers in the day to day description were very less than the numbers provided in the table. Alongside, the Maharaja has not provided the exact number of shots or a computable number for some years. For example, in 1874-1876 he wrote, 'The smaller game it is impossible to compute.'<sup>55</sup> In 1877, it is written, '.... the total bag being five Tiger (one 10 ft. 2 ½ in.), ten

Rhino, thirteen Buffalo and a big bag of Hog Deer, Antelope and some Pig.<sup>56</sup> Even in 1884, ' We got one Bear, a fair number of Hog Deer, a few Sambur and some Pig.'<sup>57</sup> On 1<sup>st</sup> May 1900, a newspaper reported that 'The Maharajah of Cooch Behar's shooting camp has broken up and Lords Hyde Stavordale and the Earl of Suffolk returned to Calcutta. The excellent sport was had all along the line; and the bag comprised eighteenTigers, tenBears, three Leopards, one Rhino, one Gaur, threeBuffaloes, twenty-nineSambhur and Deer and nearly two hundred and fifty head of small game.'<sup>58</sup>

So, it is a difficult task to draw out the exact number of animals written in the day to day description for some specific animals like Barasingh, Sambur, Hog Deer, Antelope and Pig. Here we can observe two types of attitude regarding the recording of hunted animals i.e. emphasising certain games and ignoring some others. Mostly the dangerous or fatal animals were emphasized. On the other hand, those that were ignored were mostly innocent animals or not very dangerous.

Nripendra and his hunting party had made record bags even in a single day shooting. The record for single-day Tiger shooting was made in 1907. The party shot 7 Tigers.<sup>59</sup> Both the year- 1886 and 1899 gave 5 Rhinos each.<sup>60</sup> Nripendra and his party had obtained the largest Buffalo bag of 8 in a single-day in India (1895).<sup>61</sup> The single day record of the Bison shooting was made in 1902. The hunting party had shot 11 Bison.<sup>62</sup>

Some princely rulers protected rare species from total elimination.<sup>63</sup>The protection was given to certain animals in Cooch Behar as well. The Maharaja shot several female Rhinos in the beginning. But later on, female Rhino shooting was strictly prohibited in Cooch Behar.<sup>64</sup>

The Maharaja and his party shot many other animals during the thirty-seven years. Though the number of small game was very few in Cooch Behar, it had some rare species too among these animals. According to W.W. Hunter (1876), 'Small game is scarce, consisting chiefly of a few partridges, wild duck etc.'<sup>65</sup>The total shoots were as follows- Fish: NA (1877, 1885, 1886, 1890: Some; 1881: 26; 1882: 4; 1883: 50; 1901: 5 and 1888: 76 lbs), Panther: 7 (1879), Pea-Fowl: 1 (1884), Partridge: 2 (1884, 1904), Porcupine: 2 (1884, 1899), Python: 8 (1884, 1888, 1899, 1903, 1905, 1907), Barking Deer: 4 (1886, 1889, 1891), Kakur: 5 (1887), Crocodile: 3 (1889, 1906), Pigmy Hog: 5 (1891, 1899, 1900), Curious Animal (Having both the characteristics of Sambur and Barasingh: 1 (1892), Black Buck: 1 (1896), Wild Dog: 2 (1897, 1901), Civet Cat: 1 (1897), Boar: 8 (1898, 1903, 1905, 1907), King Cobra: 2 (1900, 1904), Pigeon: 1 (1901), Black Leopard: 2 (1899, 1904), Bird: 1 (1904), Hare: 1 (1904), Albino Buffalo: 1 (1903). An Albino White Tiger skin was presented to King Edward VII by the Maharaja.<sup>66</sup>

The Maharaja had shot a good number of animals almost every year. The overall bags for thirty-seven years were also very respectable. These numbers are symbolic for the Maharaja to express himself as an example of masculine sportsmen.

### **Record Specimen:**

The size of the hunted animals was a concern to the sportsmen. According to Julie E. Hughes, 'Size mattered to colonial Rajputs and Britons.'<sup>67</sup> Om Prakash opined, the size of the hunted was also a symbol of the status of the hunter.<sup>68</sup> Mr. Alfred Ezra remarks about the big game shooting in Cooch Behar, Assam, and the Bhutan, Duars, 'At such close quarters the sportsman can pick and choose his head, only shooting something that is worth having a trophy.'<sup>69</sup> Fiona Mani says, 'Hunting trophies were symbolic emblems of men's masculinity.'<sup>70</sup> The hunting 'trophies' adorned the walls of Indian princes and colonial higher officials.<sup>71</sup> Some of the old photographs of the royal palace of Cooch Behar show hunting trophies on the walls.<sup>72</sup>

The Maharaja was very interested in recording the largest animal. The weight and size of the animal were measured in the hunting ground. The measurement of size was preferred more than the weight of the animals. The weight measurement mainly started from 1890. There are few instances where the size of animals has been measured in hands.

The Maharaja hunted many record-sized Tigers. While shooting in Assam in 1902, the largest Tiger had been found. Its was - total length: 10 ft. 5 in., body length: 6 ft. 11 in., girth behind shoulder: 51 in., biceps: 26 in., forearm: 18 ½ in., round head: 36 in., height: 41 in., weight: 504 lbs., length of dry skull: 15 ½ in. Even the second largest Tiger was also found in Assam (1894). The measurement of this Tiger was - total length: 10 ft. 3 in.,

body length: 7 ft. 1 ½ in., girth behind shoulder: 52 in., biceps: 29 in., forearm: 19 ½ in., round head: 36 ½ in., height: 41 ½ in., weight: 487lbs., length of dry skull: 15 ½ in. The third-largest Tiger was found in Cooch Behar (1890). It had a total length: 10 ft. 2 ½ in., body length: 7 ft. 0 in., girth behind shoulder: 48 ½ in., biceps: 26 ½ in., forearm: 20 in., round head: 38 ½ in., height: 39 ½ in., weight: 500lbs., length of dry skull: ...

The record was also set in the case of the Tigress. The largest Tigress was found in Assam (1902). The measurement was- total length: 9 ft. 5 ½ in., body length: 6 ft. 2 ½ in., girth behind shoulder: 42 in., biceps: 20 in., forearm: 15 in., round head: 34 in., height: 35 in., weight: ..., length of dry skull: ...<sup>73</sup>

The Maharaja gave a list of his Tiger shoots (1887-1897) to W. S. Burke when he was conducting the Asian Tigers.<sup>74</sup> His Tigers were in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> positions respectively in Rowland Ward's book (1892).<sup>75</sup> He had maintained 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> positions in Rowland Ward's book (1896). In skull measurement, his Tiger stood 1<sup>st</sup>.<sup>76</sup> Maharaja's Tigers had got 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 49<sup>th</sup> positions in Rowland Ward's book (1899). The same Tiger skull of 1896 was in 1<sup>st</sup> position.<sup>77</sup> In the record book of Rowland Ward (1907), the Maharaja of Cooch Behar had got 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> positions respectively in Tiger shooting. He was in 1<sup>st</sup> position in Ward's record book in the matter of skull.<sup>78</sup> A Tiger trophy signified the achievement of a lifetime for many.<sup>79</sup> He had shot some of the best Tigers. The Maharaja of Cooch Behar held a special place among the world records for Tigers.

The best specimen of Leopard was found in 1885 (8 ft. 4 in.). There were other best leopards- 8 ft. 2 ⅓ in. (1890), 8 ft. 1 ½ in. (1883 & 1906).<sup>80</sup>The total length of the best Leopard was- 8 ft. 4 in. This Leopard was in 2<sup>nd</sup> position.<sup>81</sup>He held 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> positions in Rowland Ward's book (1896).<sup>82</sup> The record book was once again dominated by the Maharaja. The specimens of Leopards shot by the Maharaja had secured 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> positions respectively in Rowland's record book (1907).<sup>83</sup>

The largest Rhino was shot in 1895. The total length between sticks: 12 ft. 9 in., length of body between sticks: 11 ft., girth: 119 in., height at shoulder: 19 hands ¼ in., length of horn: 13 in. A similar Rhino was obtained in 1902. The total length between sticks: 12 ft. 9 in., length of body between sticks: 10 ft. 5 ½ in., girth: 118 in., height at shoulder: 17 hands 1 in., length of horn: 12 ⅓ in. He shot a cow Rhino in 1895 whose length of the horn was 16 ¼ in. It was the best specimen in respect of horn.<sup>84</sup>In 1885, his 13 ft. 2 in. Rhino surpassed the record in Rowland Ward's book which was 12 ft. 10 in.<sup>85</sup> His one-horned Rhino was placed 7<sup>th</sup> in Rowland Ward's book (1896).<sup>86</sup>Cooch Behar was one of the best places for Rhino shooting. The cow Rhino with a 16 ¼ inches horn was a record.<sup>87</sup> In Rowland Ward's record book (1907), two Rhinos shot by the Maharaja had got 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> positions respectively.<sup>88</sup>

In the case of Buffaloes, the measurement of the horn was given more importance. In 1886, he had got a finest cow Buffalo whose total length between sticks: 12 ft. 2 in., length of body between sticks: 9 ft. 6 ½ in., girth: 96 in., round neck nearest shoulder:...round

neck nearest head:... height: 17 hands.,horns tip to tip round outside curves: 11 ft. 6 ½ in., base of horn:15 ½ in. In 1902, he had found a cow Buffalo of horns tip to tip round outside curves: 10 ft. 11 ¼ in., base of horn:10 ⅔ in. He gave this specimen to the Natural History Museum, South Kensington.<sup>89</sup>His Buffaloes were in 7<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>positions in Rowland Ward's book(1896).<sup>90</sup>There were four Buffalorecords in the big game records of Rowland Ward shot by the Maharaja. His finest Buffalowas in 9<sup>th</sup>position in the record list (1907).<sup>91</sup>

The biggest Bison was shot in 1899. The total length between sticks: 12 ft. 3 ¾ in., length of body between sticks: 9 ft. 6 ½ in., girth: 124 in., height at shoulder: 18 hands 3 ¾ in., height at bump: 20 hands ¼ in., horns tip to tip round outside curves: 76 ½ in., base of horn: 20 ½ in., widest splay: 39 in., between tips: 26 ¼ in. The finest horn was found in 1902. This Rhino had horns tip to tip round outside curves: 84 in., base of horn: 21 in., widest splay: 43 in., between tips: 31 ¼ in. The best cow Rhino was shot in 1902. The horns were tip to tip round outside curves: 73 ¼ in., base of horn: 13 ½ in., widest splay: 29 in., between tips: 10 in.<sup>92</sup>In 1891, a Bison (12 ft. 2 ½ in.) shot by the Maharaja was in the second position in the Rowland Ward's record book.<sup>93</sup>His two Bisonwere in 6<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>positions respectively in Rowland Ward's book (1896).<sup>94</sup> In 1899, two of his Bisons got 11<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>positions in the record book (1899).<sup>95</sup>The Bison shot by the Maharaja of Cooch Behar stood 51<sup>st</sup>position in Rowland Ward's book (1907).<sup>96</sup>

The finest Bearwasfound in 1903. The total length was: 7 ft. 1 in., length of body: 6 ft. 7 in.,girth: 50 in.,biceps: ... forearm: ..., head: ..., height: ..., weight: ... The second-largest

splendid bear was shot in 1890. The total length was: 6 ft. 10 in., length of body: 6 ft. 2 in., girth: 54 ½ in., biceps: 26 in., forearm: 18 ½ in., head: 35 ½ in., height: 36 in., weight: 423lbs.<sup>97</sup> His 6 ft. 3 in. Bear skin had got 5<sup>th</sup> position in the record book of Rowland Ward (1892).<sup>98</sup> The Maharaja's Bear secured 28<sup>th</sup> position in the record book (1907).<sup>99</sup>

In the matter of Sambur and Barasingh weight was preferred. In 1893, he found a 53 stone 1 lb. Sambur and a Barasingh of 42 stone.<sup>100</sup> A very big 700 lbs. (51 stone) Sambur was shot in Cooch Behar.<sup>101</sup> The Maharaja shot a Marco Polo's Sheep (Ovis Poli) in Great Pamir plateau in Central Asia and positioned 4<sup>th</sup> in the record book (1899).<sup>102</sup>

### **Masculine Traits:**

There are some specific traits that differentiate masculine and feminine characteristics of a human being. We may consider strength of will, ambition, courage, independence, assertiveness, aggressiveness, hardiness, rationality, ability to control emotion etc. as masculine traits.<sup>103</sup> Masculine characteristics like thought quicker than action, love of activity and motion, coarseness, vigour and virility, hardness of head and heart, practicality, creativeness, unemotionality, interested in opinions, coarse vices, aggressiveness, love of conquest, ruggedness and forcefulness, despotism etc. are very different from feminine traits.<sup>104</sup> Basically the male role characterised as aggressive, achievement oriented and emotionally inexpressive.<sup>105</sup> Physical strength, competition and violence are considered as masculine virtues.<sup>106</sup> A man with negative feminine traits

like weak, passive, slavish, weepy, wishy-washy, seductive, flirtatious, vain, chatter-box, silly, sentimental, naive, moody, petty, prudish, manipulative, complaining, nagging, pouty, smothering, spiteful are considered as feminine.<sup>107</sup>

The big bag sizes and the record specimens of the Maharaja sports hunting had reflected some of these masculine traits. The masculine traits of the Maharaja especially competition, courage, ability to control emotion, vigour and virility, ambition, love of conquest, achievement, aggressiveness etc. were represented by his big bag sizes and record specimens. These bag sizes or record specimens were the symbols of his masculine sports hunting.

Most of the colonial hunters used to display their hunted animals to present themselves as masculine sportsmen. The display of trophies or hunting photographs on walls, exhibition of trophies, giving trophies to the natural history museum, publication of the bag sizes and the record specimens in books, journals or newspapers etc.<sup>108</sup> were the medium to express their masculinity. All these activities asserted their masculine identity. The size and number of animals were very significant to them. Nripendra Narayan was very cautious to prove himself as a masculine sportsman. He published his record specimens in some of the world record books. He gave some of his specimens to the natural history museum.<sup>109</sup> The exhibition of trophies was also organised.<sup>110</sup> Unlike other princely rulers, his bag size was not very large, but his specimens acquired best

positions in the world records. He gave his hunting another dimension by following the rules of the game ethics. He followed the game ethics from the very beginning of his hunting expeditions. According to Tina Loo, a trophy is a masculine object and the process to obtain it is also a masculine project.<sup>111</sup>The process of securing such big bags and record specimens by the Maharaja was also masculine project. The bag sizes and the record specimens were the symbols of his masculine sports hunting. It is interesting that he had secured such big bags and record specimens within the contour of game ethics.

**Conclusion:**

To sum up, it can be said that Maharaja Nripendra Narayan imbibed masculine sports hunting ideology from western education. He mostly preferred to hunt dangerous animals. Some of the non-dangerous animals like Barasingh, Sambur, Hog Deer, Antelope and Pig have not attracted enough attention. The big size of bags and the record specimens played a key role in the sports hunting of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan. The big size of bags and the record specimens were the symbol or the evidence of his masculine traits as a sports hunter. Following the game ethics, he secured such huge bags and record specimens. He had got a number of best record size animals and some of the best positions in the world record books.

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