



Nalanda: Overview to the Ancient Centre of Knowledge and Wisdom

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Antiquity:-

Nalanda is an ancient city in Bihar province, 40 miles from Patna was situated on the southeast side. Nalanda was a prosperous and, City during the time of lord Buddha. Lord Buddha had visited there many times and lived there. There was a large number of Buddhists in Nalanda and they had the immense faith in Lord Buddha.

Pravarik Bhavan was donated to Lord Buddha by a wealthy man named pravarik from Nalanda. Lord Buddha sometimes lived here. Nalanda was also the centre of Jainism. Once Tirthnhkar Mahavira states and Bhavan both stopped at Nalanda at the same time. Jain tradition that Mahavira lived at Buddha for fourteen chaturmas. Kapinak, the birth place of sariputra, a leading disciple of Lord Buddha is said to be closed to Nalanda, where he lived with eighty thousand monks. The birthplace of Maha moggalan, another prominent disciple of Lord Buddha is closed to Nalanda.

There used to be an amrai at Nalanda. It was a bought by 500 merchant for 1 million gold coins and offered to the tathagatas. The Tathagatas had taught. Dhamma here for three months. As a result, those merchants and others received qualifications, How did this place with ancient tradition get the name 'Nalanda'? There are different opinions about this.

How did the name 'Nalanda' come about?

Hu-en-tsang, a Chinese traveller wrote in his travelogue about Nalanda that this place used to be an amravana. It had a huge pool of water. There was a snake named Nalanda living in it so the place got the name Nalanda.

There is another legend about the name 'Nalanda' Tathagatas East once lived the life of Bodhisattva in this region and became the ruler of a great king of this region and established his capital at this place. Inspired by the ghosts, he always helped them. Because of these virtues, It was called unceasing charity. Whatever he gave or how much he gave was never enough. So the word Nalanda a combination of 'n+Alam+da' ('n' means 'no', 'alam'+means 'enough' and 'da' means 'giving' Nalanda'.

**Establishment:-**

Nalanda was of great importance to the Buddhist monks as it was the birthplace of sariputra and mahamoggalan, the chief disciples of Lord Buddha. who deoted his entire life to enforcing the Dhamma chakra of God. That emperor Ashoka established five monasteries Nalanda.

Shortly after Hu-en-tsang travelogue it is said that two monks named 'Sankara' and 'mugdalgomi' made the monastery huge, Acharya Nagarjuna received a scientific knowledge from Shankar Brahman here.

Nagarjuna and his disciples were both leaving in Nalanda. Due to it's high ancient tradition and the potential for urban development, the Buddhist Acharya Nagarjuna ordered his discipline Arya Deva to build a monastery at Nalanda. At the end of 4th century Ad AryaDeva built a monastery here and started teaching 'Buddhist philosophy' and 'Sadhana mehods with a few disciples.

Plants planted by Arya Deva blossomed in the next two- three centuries. When Hu-En-Tsang came here in the seventh century the Splendor of Nalanda Vihara caught their eye. The place of this monastery was space. There was a huge garden here. It had evergreen trees and vines. The park has many reservoirs and streams there were Lotus flowers of different colors in that reservoir. In such a pleasant environment, teaching and learning activities were going on here.

Hostel system:-

Hostels where arranged separately from masanga Rama because use to leave their the building where four stories high the building had 4000 rooms for accommodation and rs 1000 rooms for study each floor has a decorated terrace with the pillars slightly reddish in colour colourful light was reflected by special type of roof covering.

Nalanda University used to have to 10000 regular students always provided with a free accommodation means clothings medical treatment and education the living room had one or two oats for a sleeping and needs for lighting the distribution of these rooms was renewed every year one room of the singer only one side one of the features of Nalanda University is that it is a mention that there will be in the university after 14 years along with the development of Mahayana ideology Nalanda also started developing.

**Large Books Museum:-**

Large books museum was the considered to be the life blood of the university in ancient times the library of Nalanda University was known as 'DharmaGanj'. This museum was the external reach library Dharam Ganj library had three spacious and tall buildings. On all these three book museum buildings one Ratnodhoti second is RatnaSagar and third Ratnaranjak.

There were beautiful names Ratnodhoti had nine floors while the other two buildings had six floors each. Experts from Buddhist text and other technical text were carved on the walls of this multi story building. Thousands of manuscripts and books on various subjects were preserved in the library. Some of the books in the library were handwritten and taken to China and Tibet. There were innumerable Granth Ratna in all the grantha books museum. Many Bhikkhus were hired just to produce the manuscript. Hu-en-Tsang sat here for 2 years, coping only. He copied 657 text and took some metal relics and idols of Lord Buddha with him to China. Teachers and students were constantly writing new books in Nalanda. From this it is clear that the art of writing was well developed at that time.

Itsing a Chinese traveler came to India in the 7th century. He took had studied Buddhism or at Nalanda University. In his collaboration with Itsing. There were scholars like Shantrakshi. Itsing 'Ratnodadhi' 400 from the Granthsangrahalaya into Chinese and took them to his country. Many manuscripts from Nalanda University have been found in the Cambridge and London museum.

Nalanda University has made significant contribution in the development of knowledge. In the field of jurisprudence, Nalanda and Mithila competition were going on for 700 years. The teachers here wrote thousands of books and made thousands of intelligent students proficient in various branches of knowledge. He created new ideas of knowledge and character and give new inspirations. Like such a vast ocean, library in Nalanda dharmganj unique whole of Asia.

Disciplined life in Nalanda:-

As Nalanda University is a hostel the Guru shishya relationship was close. The Guru would take care of his discipline like his own children and the students respected the guru with all their might. The rules of conduct and interrelationship of Guru-Shishya were fixed. Anyone who violated these rules was expelled from the university.

The rules in Nalanda were very strict and the rules were followed properly by the monks and students. Sleeping, getting up, eating, studying, teaching, worshipping were done at the



sound of bales. The faith and respect towards the Guru was a matter of admiration. The life of every Lerner is a life of purity. Asceticism and penance. Collectively here there was a separate hall for a Dhamma discussion, Dhamma preaching, seminar. In which up to 2000 Bhikkhu students could sit collectively.

The life of these weld to do people in Nalanda is a natural, restrained and displained the only proof of this is that in the long life of this monastery for 700 years not single disciplined monk went here. All the people of India consider and follow the Monks in the monastery.

The fall of Nalanda University:-

Nalanda University has been at the peak of its glory for 800 years due to its open shelter of great ruler, character and intelligent faculty efficient management extensive teaching facilities, science environment and general Outlook but after sometime Nalanda started the declining and in the course of time Nalanda faill due to various reasons.

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