



HISTORY OF CONTRIBUTIONS OF NALANDA UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Nalanda University is one of the universities of India, knowing the history of which we will be proud to be an Indian. In the ancient times, many educational institutions were established by adopting the Vedic process, three of them were such which were counted among the oldest universities of India. Takshila, Nalanda and Vikramashila. Nalanda University of these three higher education in ancient India Education was the most important and well-known center of Nalanda University, the largest university of the time in Asia. According to historical evidence, the Nalanda University was founded by the mighty Emperor Kumaragupta of the Gupta dynasty in about 450 AD. Many travelers, including the Chinese traveler Hiuen tsang, have called the emperor Kumaragupta the founder of this university. This university is located near Patna, a village 88 kilometers south-east of today's Bihar state and 11 kilometers north of Rajgiri Nalanda. The word is derived from the Sanskrit language, it is derived from the Sanskrit word na alam da, which means that there is no restriction on the gift of knowledge, thus the naland means to impart knowledge. Its area was 10 kilometers long and 5 kilometers wide when Nalanda University was at its peak, around 10000 students from abroad were studying here and more than two thousand teachers were present here to teach them. Its special point was that any decision here was taken on the basis of everyone's consent i.e. here the democratic system was run. Students were provided free education here. Nalanda's library was called Chakla of Religion. It was the largest library in the world. By far the most prestigious and famous center was the building of this library was 9 storey Nalanda University library had 352 Names were Ratanganj, Rattan kept two reported and Ratna Sagar here 9000000 manuscripts and thousands of books. In which the world's rarest information was present, this center of knowledge flourished for 800 years but in the 12th century it suddenly got lost in the darkness of the past.

KEYWORDS : History and Nalanda University

INTRODUCTION

Nalanda University is one of the universities of India, knowing the history of which we will be proud to be an Indian. In the ancient times, many educational institutions were established by adopting the Vedic process, three of them were such which were counted among the oldest universities of India. Takshila, Nalanda and Vikramashila. Nalanda University of these three higher education in ancient India Education was the most important and well-known center of Nalanda University, the largest university of the time in Asia. According to historical evidence, the Nalanda University was founded by the mighty Emperor Kumaragupta of the Gupta dynasty in about 450 AD. Many travelers, including the Chinese traveler Hiuentasang, have called the emperor Kumaragupta the founder of this university.

Nalanda is considered the second largest university in the world after Takshila. It has been in the sleeve for 800 years. This university is located near Patna, a village 88 kilometers south-east of today's Bihar state and 11 kilometers north of Rajgir Nalanda. The word is derived from the Sanskrit language, it is derived from the Sanskrit word na lan da, which means that there is no restriction on the gift of knowledge, thus the Nalanda means to impart knowledge. Its area was 10 kilometers long and 5 kilometers wide. It had 108 hostels and temples, in its eastern part there was a system of students' living and reading and in the western part there was a system of worship and inspection.

This university got the full support of the north officers of Kumaragupta. All the ruling dynasties that came after the fall of the Gupta dynasty continued to contribute to its prosperity. It also got the help of the great ruler Harshavardhana and the Palas and local rulers and various regions of India. Along with this, it got grants from many foreign rulers as well, whose proof is found from the coins we got from Nalanda.

Our biggest source about Nalanda University, is from Chinese traveler Hiuen tsang's Biography. He remained in India for 15 years. He has told very well about the university. He spent many years in university as a student and then as a teacher. An excellent description of the teaching system is found in it, it is written that the whole management of Nalanda University was

done by the Vice Chancellor Chief Acharya, who was also a Buddhist monk. According to this, when Nalanda University was at its peak, around 10000 students from abroad were studying here and more than two thousand teachers were present here to teach them. Medicine and Ayurvedic etc. were taught in here.

The students studying here had not only learnt about Buddhism but also other cultures and religious beliefs, students got admission in this university with great difficulty because students had to take entrance test to get admission here. This was quite difficult due to which only the talented students could get admission. The students who came here had to learn Sanskrit language first, only then they could study further. It was very important to follow the rules of pure conduct and union. In the university, the Acharyas used to teach the scriptures through oral lectures, besides books were also explained. And Veda, Vedanta and numbers were also taught grammar, philosophy, astrology were under the syllabus of yoga and there were various streams of medical science. Its special point was that any decision here was taken on the basis of everyone's consent i.e. here the democratic system prevailed. Students were provided free education here. To study here students came from across the globe like from- Indonesia, Iran, Mongolia, Greece, China, Korea, Indonesia, Japan, Tibet, Persia.

Today, thousands of hostels are seen all over the world, but no one has ever wondered where the concept of hostel originated from? It was from this Nalanda University, it was the first international university in the world where hostels were available for students. They were together and their food and drink was provided free of charge, there were more than 300 rooms for the students to live in it. There were temples and a beautiful garden also. Besides this, many prayer halls, which gives us the idea of Guru -Shishya tradition. This was a university which was very well planned, spread in acres of land and is still a wonderful specimen of established art.

This place was a temple of knowledge, whose light illuminated the world. It had a huge library for thousands of students and teachers to study. Nalanda's library was called Chakla of Religion. It was the largest library in the world. By

far the most prestigious and famous center was the building of this library. It was 9 storey and had had 352 Names were Ratanganj, Rattan kept two reported and Ratna Sagar here 9000000 manuscripts and thousands of books in which the world's rarest information was present. This center of knowledge flourished for 800 years but in the 12th century it suddenly got lost in the darkness of the past.

Now the question arises that there are many stories about why this great university was destroyed. In the sixth century, Hindustan was called the golden bird. Hearing this, Muslim invaders used to come here, one of these Turkish ruler was Bakhtiar Khilji who destroyed and burned Nalanda University. As a result millions of books were burnt to ashes, the library here was so huge that it took 6 months to extinguish the fire here. A story is told behind the burning of Nalanda that once Bakhtiyar Khilji fell very ill and his own Hakim was unable to cure his illness. Someone suggested him to get treatment from Acharya Shilabhadra, head of Ayurvedic department of Nalanda University, but the pride of Bakhtiar Khilji disallowed him to do so. He wondered why he would get his treatment from a non-Muslim and he also wondered how he could have more knowledge of Indian Vedas than his own people, yet he had to call him. But Bakhtiar Khilji placed a condition in front of him that he will not eat any Indian medicine but still he wanted to be treated somehow, otherwise he would kill him. Acharya thought of a trick and reached Bakhtiyar Khilji with the Quran on the second day and asked to read 5 pages of the Quran daily for 5 days, after doing this, Bakhtiyar Khilji got cured after 5 days. Actually Vaidya had put a medicine on the pages of the Quran which while turning turning the page using his saliva used to go in his mouth and he was treated like this, but instead of accepting the favor of Acharya and Nalanda, he got angry and his pride was hurt. He thought that the knowledge which was not with his officials, how could that remain with filthy Indian people and he reached Nalanda. After reaching there, he was shocked at the sight of so many universities and so many books, seeing this splendor of India envied him and this out of jealousy, he set the entire Nalanda University on fire where thousands of monks got killed. At that time many Buddhist monks ran away from here, hiding in their clothes many books hence they were able to save a few books. But Alexander Karto's answering works got the library repaired and the Nalanda building rebuilt.

Nalanda University was many times ahead of its time and far ahead of our thinking, it lost a lot of knowledge in the form of burnt books. According to records, Nalanda University was destroyed three times by the invaders but was completed only twice, in which the first destruction was during the reign of Alexander Gupta. And the second destruction was done by horses in the seventh century, and this time Harshavardhan completed the complete repair work and the third destruction was done by Bakhtiyar Khilji, which completely destroyed Nalanda. Burning of Nalanda University was India's biggest loss which could never be replenished.

Nalanda in Present times

The University of Nalanda as we have come to know from the above text has had the glorious past, much advanced and much prior to the eminent centers of learning like Oxford and Cambridge. Nalanda University was nested by thousands of scholars from all over Asia before it was destroyed in 1193. A few Indians like the Nobel prize winner Amartya Sen have come up with the idea of reviving the glorious monument of Nalanda into yet again a center of knowledge and excellence presenting before the world this University with a new backdrop and new building but very much imbed with the culture of India, the smell of its tradition, and the fragrance of ethical values.

Establishing a new Nalanda

There is a proposed plan to establish new Nalanda

international University which will be a residential University harboring top students and researchers from around the globe on a site which is in close vicinity to ancient Buddhist institution in the Indian state of Bihar. This new University will be multifarious including humanity, substantial development, Oriental languages, economics, management and Asian integration as the main streams. Many people are skeptical about how many international University will setup and flourish in an underdeveloped area but the founders are very confident about their Idea and their concept. Sen has replied to this notion by saying that they will not take 200 years but only a few decades to make this university a global institution in art and education, despite the fact that they will have to begin from a scratch. Many South Asian nations like India, China, Japan, Thailand, Singapore are joining hands to revive the university which will still be based on the vision of old Nalanda and the idea has been backed by East Asia summit which includes countries like Australia, New Zealand, Russia and US.

The proposed site for the new University is 10 kilometres from the ancient side at a place called Rajgir. It will host international staff and international students. According to Prof Sen there will be active co-operation with Yale's school of forestry studies, Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University department of history, Seoul University in South Korea and Peking University in China'.

We as a student of history are proud that our governance is taking this international leap to boost India's higher education sector which has been underestimated and undermined than other Asian countries including China. Mr. Sen quotes that the new University will be very much Asian in inspiration and motivation but not in terms of knowledge, expertise, or personal involvement and he shows that the knowledge imparted here will be workable not only in Asia but also in Africa & Latin America. Dalai Lama at Jaipur international festival in Rajasthan once stated that the source of all Buddhist knowledge comes from Nalanda and the new Nalanda has promised to match this intellectual regard but it will not be a religious institution; rather it will take up the principles which are universal. Nalanda has been and will be related to secular studies, public health, interest in logic, astrology and mathematics along with the languages. There have been serious severe doubts about how the university will succeed in a rural backdrop but as we see and we know that every new innovation has to face severe criticism and doubts from the people until it creates a name and let itself stand with the head held high in the universe. We hope that the university will become a means to develop the region with 60 surrounding villages and improvement of their livelihoods in agriculture and tourism and will enable the state of Bihar to catch up with the rest of India. Initial steps have already been taken like a large amount of infrastructure has been planned for Bihar including roads and international airport at Gaya with the Bihar State Government fully committed to the university project. We really hope that the dream comes to reality and our past Glory is restored in a more dignified form than it was in historic times.

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