



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**History**

**EXPLORATION ON OLD BED OF GANGES IN HASTINAPUR**

**KEY WORDS:** Budhi Ganga, Hastinapur, Painted Grey Ware, River Ganga

**Priyank Bharati**

Assistant Professor, Centre for Biological Engineering, Shobhit University, Adarsh Institutional Area, Babu Vijendra Marg, Gangoh, Distt. Saharanpur, U.P., India, Founder and Chairman, Natural Sciences Trust, Meerut

**ABSTRACT**

In Hastinapur, Old bed of river Ganga is known as Budhi Ganga. According to the archaeological evidences and Puranic literature, in the regime of Nichakshu (5<sup>th</sup> King after Parikshit) heavy flood in Ganges destroyed Hastinapur. Later on Nichakshu shifted their capital from Hastinapur to Kaushambi. Heavy flood shifted the route of River Ganga several miles towards the East. Everything was washed away in this flood. In this research paper we discuss about the recovery of Painted Grey Ware (PGW) sherds from the old route of Ganges.

**INTRODUCTION**

Hastinapur is situated in Tehsil Mawana of district Meerut (Uttar Pradesh, India). Most of the events related to epic Mahabharata have happened in Hastinapur. From Mahabharata Period to King Nichakshu Period Ganga flows near the mound called Ulta Khera or Pandav Tila or Vidur Ka Tila. According to Puranic literature, due to heavy flood in Ganges in the period of King Nichakshu the River Ganga shifted several miles from their old route (old route is known as Budhi Ganga). Fig 1 and 2 shows Ulta Khera Mound, Budhi Ganga and River Ganga (present route).

According to the Office of Divisional Director, Social Forestry Division, Meerut (Government of Uttar Pradesh) wide letter number 820/33-3 dated 17 August 2017 and Office of the Regional Forest Officer, Hastinapur Range wide letter number 79/2-1 (RTI) dated 28 August 2017, this Budhi Ganga is of Mahabharata period which flows near Ulta Khera Mound. Ulta Khera Mound was excavated by Archaeological Survey of India from November 1950 to March 1951 and second excavation was continued from end of 1951 till March 1952 [1]. Archaeological evidence shows that the mound Ulta Khera passes through several phases. To find out the traces of washed away material by the flood 6 borings of diameter 4 inches was also done by archaeological department at



**Fig 1:** Imaginary route of Budhi Ganga (old route of Ganges; in actual this route is in irregular form from Muzzafarnagar to Garhmukteshwar) and in blue colour the new route of Ganges. [Courtesy: Google map with minor modifications].



**Fig 2:** 3D Google Map of Ulta Khera Mound and River Ganga. In between Ulta Khera Mound and River Ganga there is Budhi Ganga (imaginary route created by us to show Budhi Ganga).

On the bank of Budhi Ganga Karna Ghat and Draupdi Ghat situated. [Courtesy Google Map, with some minor modifications]

the time of excavation near the Budhi Ganga in *Khadar* area [1].

Budhi Ganga flows in irregular stream parallel to Ulta Khera Mound at distance 1.5 km (approximately). Budhi Ganga flows from village *Deval* in District Muzzafarnagar (Uttar Pradesh) to *Nyabans* in Garhmukteshwar, District Hapur, Uttar Pradesh where they meet the Ganga River but now it is in the form of marshland not a continuous stream [2].

In the month of May-June this route is completely dried up (refer fig. 3). During monsoons this route gains some of the water from rain (refer fig 4). Due to the encroachment on the land of Budhi Ganga, water doesn't flow in continuous manner and become stagnant. This stagnant water made the Budhi Ganga swampy in nature. This swampy land is also the residence of migratory birds and Uttar Pradesh state bird Crane. Time to time some fairs are to be organized on the bank of Budhi Ganga by the residents of Hastinapur due to the religious beliefs [2].

On the bank of Budhi Ganga two Ghats i.e. Karna Ghat and Draupdi Ghat situated. According to local folks, these Ghats are the bathing places of Karna and Draupdi (refer fig. 2).



**Fig 3:** Dried Budhi Ganga at Hastinapur in the time of May-June [June 15, 2019]



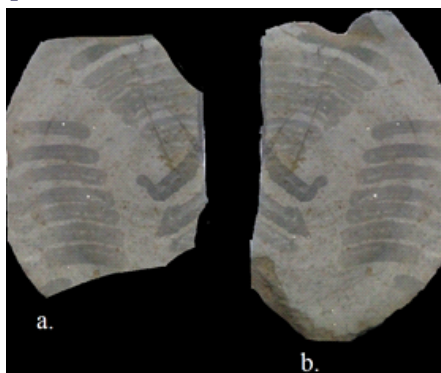
**Fig 4:** Budhi Ganga in the time of Monsoon [July-Aug 2018]

**Exploration on Budhi Ganga, Hastinapur.**

From this old route of Ganga, we explored some potsherds of Painted Grey ware [Refer Fig 5]. Previously we found these types of potsherds of Painted Grey Ware from Ulta Khera Mound [3].



**Fig 5: Potsherds of Painted Grey Ware from Budhi Ganga, Hastinapur**



**Fig 6: a. Potshard from Ulta Khera Mound and same type of potshard (b) recovered from Budhi Ganga.**



**Fig 7: Rice husk was used in some of the Painted Grey ware (?) potsherds.**



**Fig 8: PGW potsherds recovered at Budhi Ganga**

**CONCLUSION**

In the time of Nichakshu, the flood in Hastinapur was so fierce that almost everything in Hastinapur was destroyed in the flood, due to which Nichakshu had to make Kaushambi its capital. After this flood River Ganga changed its path. After the excavation of the 1950s, Mahabharata evidences were never discovered near/on the bed of Budhi Ganga. All the attention has not been given at the places between the old Ganges and the Ganges (new route after flood, present route), the discovery is a distant subject.

In the report of Hastinapur excavation (1950-52; published in Ancient India no 10 and 11), author of the report fails to mention the type of pottery found in the borings done in Khadar area near Budhi Ganga. He only mentioned that ancient pottery was found mixed with river pebbles at certain depth. Potsherds of Painted Grey Ware at the upper stratum of Budhi Ganga are really a shocking thing for us. It may be the first time that sherd of Painted Grey ware is recovered from Budhi Ganga at Hastinapur. It will be a mere chance, that some time before we found one sherd of PGW from Ulta Khera Mound and the part (?) of same shard we recovered from Budhi Ganga. In 1991, PGW was also reported at nearby villages on the bank of Budhi Ganga in district Muzaffarnagar. But researcher did not show any PGW pottery evidence at Budhi Ganga.

For the first time (?), rice husk was seen in some of the potsherds of Painted Grey Ware which were recovered from upper stratum of Budhi Ganga in Hastinapur.

If there is research on the sites between the old Ganges and the Ganges, then some evidence may be found at the time of the King Nichakshu or earlier. In the previous excavation done in year 1950-52 we did not reach the Mahabharata period, we had only met the evidences of the flood coming in Hastinapur. We can also say this because after the King Parikshit, the fifth king has been a Nichakshu and according to Purans, we have known that Dwapar era was over in the reign of King Parikshit. If we want to reach Mahabharata period, then we cannot ignore the River Ganga in Hastinapur.

**Conflict of Interest**

Nil

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Author is thankful to Lord Shri Krishna for providing the vast knowledge on the concerned topic. Author is also thankful to his father Mr. Brahampal Sing, Advocate. Author is thankful to Shobhit University, Gangoh and Natural Sciences Trust, Meerut for providing financial help.

**REFERENCES**

1. B. B Lal (1985), Excavation at Hastinapur and other explorations in the Upper Ganga and Sutlej Basin 1950-52: New light on the dark age between the end of the Harappa culture and the early historical period. Ancient India Bulletin of the Archaeological Survey of India, Number 10 and 11 (1954-1955). Reprint Edition 1985, pg 5-151.
2. Priyank Bharati (2018), Historical Places of Mahabharata in Hastinapur: Past and Present Status, International Journal of Basic and Advance Research, ISSN 2456-1372 (O), volume 4 number 3. pg 54-72
3. Priyank Bharati (2019), Discovery of Castle remnants in Hastinapur, Research Monograph, Copyright Protected, pg. 1-20
4. Om Prakash Srivastava (1991), An archaeological study of district muzaffarnagar, Ph.D Thesis. <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/52447>