

a short  
history of  
**Nepal**

NETRA B THAPA



# A SHORT HISTORY OF NEPAL

*by*

**Netra B. Thapa**

**RATNA PUSTAK BHANDAR**

**KATHMANDU**

1981

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Published by Ratna Pustak Bhandar,  
Bhotahity, Kathmandu, Nepal and printed at  
Claridge's Printing Works, 922, D. B. Gupta Road,  
Karol Bagh, New Delhi 110005. Printed in India,

*FOR*

**KING**

**CROWN**

*AND*

**COUNTRY**



## PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION

This is the re-revised and enlarged fifth edition of the book *A Short History of Nepal* in which more useful topics like the Sakyas of Kapilvastu, the confusion about Manadeva I and Manadeva III, Raghavadeva and the Nepal era, the Saptakutumbas or Satapatras of Patan etc. have been included. These topics, in addition to fascinating the general readers, will also help the students of the Certificate and Diploma level examinations.

It is my pleasant duty to record my gratitude for the kind help afforded to me by my sincere friends, late Mr. Mitra Lal Shrestha, late Mr. Chandra Bahadur Shrestha, Mr. Chittaranjan Nepali, and Rev. Father Marshall D. Moran S.J. who in 1953 encouraged me to write a short historical account of Nepal, which in course of time has increased in volume. I should also like to thank Rev. Father James J. Donnelly S.J. for pointing out numerous misprints and grammatical errors which unfortunately crept into the fourth edition through inadvertence and now in this edition have been rectified as far as possible.

Mr. N. S. Venkatakrisnan, M.A., LL.B. from Calcutta gave some valuable suggestions for the improvement of this edition, for which I am grateful to him. Nor should I forget to give blessings for the help I got from my grandson Mr. Ajit Barsimha Thapa who worked laboriously in the preparation of this edition.

At the end, Mr. Ratna Prasad Shrestha, proprietor of Ratna Pustak Bhandar, deserves thanks for his speedy interest in the publication and circulation work.

*Shree Vishalkuti, 1980*

NETRA B. THAPA





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# **A SHORT HISTORY OF NEPAL**

## **INTRODUCTORY REMARK**

The early history of Nepal is shadowy. In Nepal there must have been a Stone Age and a Copper Age as in Northern India. Excavations and researches will one day, we hope, bring to light many dark chapters of the early history of Nepal. There is no systematic presentation of historical events in their proper chronological order. Legends and fiction are mixed up with the tiny threads of history. It is hard to distinguish facts from fiction. It therefore awaits the energy and patience of keen intellectured scholars to glean out real facts and present them before the public. For the present we must study the legends as well as facts. Here we follow the version of Buddhist chronicles which are among the oldest existing materials regarding the history of the Valley of Nepal. Of course, there were many centres of culture in ancient Nepal, as is evidenced by the existence of relics (ruins of ancient buildings, and monuments on stone) at various spots in the Terai and in the Kathmandu valley, but on all these our Chronicles are entirely silent. The history of Nepal had been for a long time the history of the Valley though it may not be the oldest centre of civilization in the whole kingdom of Nepal today.

It is understood that historians approach historical events from their own point of view, selecting some events as important, others as unimportant; some finding as true, others as false; and they differ widely as to the causes and effects of historical events and movements. So, it is necessary to study the past from diverse points of view of many historians and note how conditions have changed since then.

**Netra B. Thapa**



## GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF NEPAL

Nepal, roughly rectangular in shape, is a Hindu Kingdom on the southern slopes of the Himalayas. It is sandwiched between the Tibetan autonomous region of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of India. It is nearly 500 miles long and 120 miles wide. It is predominantly a mountainous country with varied topographical terrain covering an area of 55463 sq. miles or 145,302 sq. km. out of which nearly 80% of its land is covered by hills and mountains and the rest by plains, lowlands and river valleys. It has a population of nearly fourteen million increasing annually by about 2.7%.

Three parallel mountain ranges of varying heights traverse the country from the East to West. The *Chure Range* in the South, the *Mahabharat Range* in the centre and the main *Himalayas* on the North are the main dividing features of the country, thereby creating the four major physical divisions, i.e. the Terai Region, the Duns or the Valleys, the Midland Regions, and the Himalayan Region.

The Terai Region is a swampy of malarious lowland with rich deposits of alluvial soil and a broad belt of forest. Between the Mahabharat range and the Chure range there are low valleys known as the *Duns*. The Midlands generally known as the *Pahad* lying North of the Mahabharat range and south of the main Himalayas, is the backbone of the country. The valleys of Bagmati are located in this belt. The *Pahad* region is extensively cultivated and is the traditional zone of the Nepalese settlement. The Himalayan region is full of snowclad peaks like the *Sagarmatha* (Mt. Everest), *Kanchanjunga*, *Makalu*, *Dhaulagiri* and *Anna Purna*, which lie to the north of the Mahabharat Range. There are passes like *Namjala*, *Mustang*, *Larke* in the west, *Rasuwa* and *Kodari* in

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the centre, *Walanchung*, *Hatia*, *Tiptala* and *Rakha* in the east which form the main trade routes with other parts of the country and with Tibet. All these routes are seasonal except *Rasuwa* and *Kodari*. These routes though seasonal have contributed much to the contact and economic interdependence among different groups not only in material goods but also in ideas and traditions as well.

Almost all the principal rivers in Nepal have their origin in the watershed in the Himalayas or in the high valleys. After collecting tributaries they flow southward through the foothills until they reach the ranges in the south. They are then deflected east or west until they force passages southwards finally breaking through the *Siwalik Range* into the Indian plains where they join with the Ganges. The *Mahakali* and the *Karnali* in the West, the *Sapta Gandaki* in the centre and the *Saptakosi* in the East are the three main river basins in the country.

The climate of the country varies according to altitude: Humid tropical climate in the Terai and Dun areas and the river valleys of the big rivers in the middle part, moist subtropical in the hilly regions, temperate climate in the higher hills and Tundra type of climate in the Himalayas. Broadly speaking one can experience here variety of climate within a short distance as one goes from the Terai to the Himalayan region. The mean temperature for the whole country is 60°F increasing from North to South and the average rainfall 60 inches decreasing from east to west. Winter rainfall occurs generally in the western part and decreases in an easterly direction.

Though there are deposits of copper, mica, iron, lead, gold, coal, cobalt and zinc in different areas, still they are not yet fully exploited.

As regards flora Nepal is rich in pine, fir, sal and other soft wooded trees suitable for match and paper industries.

This country is the home of a wide variety of wild animals and birds. In the Himalayan region there are varieties of deer, yak, sheep, ghoral, danfay monhal, in the hilly parts there are leopards tigers, bears, and in the terai region tigers, bears, elephants, rhinos, wild buffaloes are found.

Nepal is an agricultural country. More than 90% of the people follow agriculture. Cereal grains like rice, maize, wheat, millet, jowar, bajra, jute, sugarcane, oilseeds and various tropical crops are grown both in the terai and in the hilly parts. The northern



region grow barley, buckwheat and potatoes. There are many distinct and diverse peoples living in the country. In the Terai Maithil, Brahmin, Rajput, Bhuinyar, Kurmi, Teli, Tharu, Danwar, Rajbansi, Satar, Musalman, in the hilly region Newar, Rai, Limbu, Tamang, Magar, Gurung, Thakali, Brahmin, Chhetry and in the northern border Sherpa, Lhomi, Lopa, Baragaunle, Dolpomanangwa.

For the convenience of administration the country is divided into five development regions, fourteen zones which are in turn divided into seventy five development districts. The rural areas of the districts are further divided into about 2911 village-panchayats of roughly 2000 persons each. Besides these there are twenty three town-panchayats.

#### KATHMANDU VALLEY

The valley of Kathmandu is at an altitude of nearly 4500 ft above sea level. It is surrounded by hills and mountains on all sides. The prominent features are *Sheopuri* in the north, *Nagarkot* and *Sanga hill* to the east, *Phulchoki* and *Chandragiri* hills on both sides of the Bagmati Gorge on the south, *Dahachok* and *Nagarjun* on the west. On account of equable climate this valley became an attraction since the early days and successive immigrants of various ethnic groups settled here.

In the early dawn of history this valley was a lake. Later on this lake disappeared due to the filling in by the sediments denuded from the neighbouring hills rather than downward erosion of its outlet. The deposits of the black clayey soil even in the deep down of the earth here and other geological evidences prove its former existence.

**Origin:** There is an interesting legend regarding the origin of this valley. This was a lake in the pre-historic age. Varieties of aquatic animals lived in it and no lotus grew upon it. Long time ago **Vipasya Buddha**, one of the forerunners of Lord Gautam Buddha, came and chanted charms over a lotus and threw it into the lake. He prophesied, "when the lotus flowers, *Swayambhu* shall be revealed as a flame." Next came **Siki Buddha** who prophesied, "This shall be the delightful abode to the dwellers and a sweet place for pilgrims and tourists." The third Buddha **Viswabhu**

prophesised the prosperity of the valley as soon as a *Bodhisatwa* causes the land to appear above the waters. Later on, according to the Sanatanist, **Visnu** or **Krishna** and according to Buddhist, **Manjusri** assumed the form of *Viswakarma* and walked round the lake. Seeing that the waters of the lake could be drained off, he cut the mountain with his sword through which the Bagmati drains the water of the valley and its surface of good soil appeared. This was the beginning of the valley. The disciple of Manjusri, built the stupa of *Swayambhu Nath* with the overseeing eyes on the summit of the lotus hill.

### SOURCES OF THE HISTORY OF NEPAL

There is an absence of reliable written documents on the history of ancient Nepal, as the people of that time had neither any historical sense nor had a liking for records, for there had been many a rise and fall of different dynasties. However, there are large varieties of historical monuments, coins, temples, images of gods and goddesses, works of art, wood carvings, inscriptions and archaeological remains. These have become objects of study which throw light on the obscurity of the country's past enabling us to weave a continuous narrative about the life of the people from the earliest times.

The inscriptions supply geneologies of reigning kings, their activities and the reasons for the setting up of these inscriptions. They give the history of the architects who designed it, the priest who consecrated, the poet who composed and the scribe who engraved the letters. We can authenticate the dates by comparing the accounts given in the colophones and from those in the chronicles.

Many inscriptions found in the valley such as the inscription on the pillar at Changunarayan, Lazimpat, Pashupati, Bhaktapur, Patan, Lumbini, Dullu and at many other places have greatly helped in writing the history of the period they represent.

The religious texts like the Mahabharata, Ramayana and the Purans give some historical facts of the ancient period. In Mahabharata we find the narrative about a prince of Nepal who fought and died at Arjuna's side in the great battle field of Kurukshetra.

The Buddhist legend about the visit of *Ananda*, the disciple of

Buddha, deserve some attention. When he returned back from Nepal he told his disciples at Shrivasti that the Kingdom of Nepal is very cold and next to the Himalayas.

*Varamihara* who visited in the sixth century A.D. has mentioned Nepal, along with certain other principalities. In a Buddhist book *Mulasarvastivada-vinaya*, there is a story how Buddha persuaded some of his disciples not to enter Nepal as it was full of ferocious tribes.

Even the folk-lore and legends in which gods and demons mingle with authentic persons and myth and miracles merge with real events. There are chronicles of the country which give a continuous lists of the rulers with the length of their reign and dates of their succession recounting the achievements, real or imaginary.

*Huen Tsang* a Chinese pilgrim who visited in the seventh century has recorded that the Asoka pillar has been struck by lightning and split. The railings were set up by Asoka around the pillar. It gives us the historic and artistic value of such a discovery.

From the fifth century A.D. we get some written material, but they are vague and fragmentary descriptions.

We get many useful information from the writings of foreign visitors like *Kautilya*, a chronicler of the fourth century B.C. from India.

All these corroborate some of the details of the Vamsavali.

The archaeological department of His Majesty's Government is doing a wonderful progress in finding various vessels, utensils, images, coins of ancient period at Tilaurakot, Kapilvastu, Surkhet, Simraun Garh, Visalnagar and in many other places. The findings have contributed a lot to the history of ancient Nepal.

From the 18th century when the nation became unified under Prithvi Narayan Shah an accurate and detailed account of Nepalese history became possible. Even this deals very little with all parts of the country's scattered states which now form the Kingdom of Nepal.

## LEGENDARY AGE

The early history of Nepal is hidden in dim darkness. A glimpse of that period, specially that of the valley, may be obtained from the Buddhist chronicles and Nepal Mahatmya. *Swayambhu Purana* tells us the coming of **Manjusri Bodhisattwa** from China on a pilgrimage to worship *Swayambhu*. From the top of Mandapgiri (Nagarkot) he saw the flames constantly emanating from *Swayambhu* in the midst of the lake 'Nagarad'. He drained the water of the lake by cutting the lowest part of the mountain. Then a valley with good soil appeared and Manjusri went to worship *Swayambhu* and *Guheswari*. He is said to have founded a beautiful city *Manjupattan* midway between *Swayambhu* and *Guheswari*. He had a disciple named **Dharmakara** a kshatriya by caste to whom he made its ruler. This king organised the country with its commerce and culture. He had no issue, so he made **Dharmapal** his successor to the throne. This man Dharmapal seems to have come from Kshamavati with **Krakuchanda Buddha** in Nepal. Krakuchanda after his visit lived in the Sleshmantak jungle or Mrigasthali and worshipped *Guheswari* and *Swayambhu*.

The next king about whom mention is made is **Sudhanwa** the descendant of Dharmapal. He went to Janakpur to compete in feats of archery for the hands of Sita. During this Swayambar ceremony Sudhanwa was killed by **Kushadhoj** for some unknown reason and this Kushadhoj (brother of Janak) himself came to reign in Nepal. After him his descendants ruled the country for some years and then this dynasty became extinct.

During that time **Kanaka Muni Buddha** from Shovavati and **Kashyapa Buddha** from Varanasi came to Nepal on a pilgrimage.

Later Kanakamuni sent **Prachandadeva** king of Gaud (Bengal) to Nepal to worship *Swayambhu* and *Guheswari* and also to become the disciple of *Gunakar*, the disciple of Manjusri. It was he who covered the 'Flaming Image of *Swayambhu*' for he knew that the Kaliyug was coming. He thought this would save it from the gaze of the sin-ridden world. So he erected the stupa over it. Then he made five penance groves (Kuti) namely *Agnipur*, *Shantipur*, *Vayupur*, *Nagpur* and *Basupur*. Prachandadeva's son **Shaktideva** came from Gaud and made one of his relatives **Gunakamadeva** the king of Nepal. It is said that during his time there was famine. He approached *Shantisri* who with the help of Nagas got rid off this disaster, after which they had plenty of rainfall. The last king of this dynasty was **Singhaketu**. During his reign the country was flourishing in all directions. It had trade relations even with *Singhaladwip* (Sri Lanka). After him there was a long succession of kings. They came from Provinces of India such as Bengal and Madras. **Dharmdutta** of Conjeveram came with a conquering army. He is said to have peopled the country with the four castes of Hindus. It is also said that he built the most famous temple of *Pashupatinath*.

The Buddhist temple of *Bodhnath*\* is said to have been built by the son of a king who succeeded to the throne at not very distant date after Dharmdutta. After this **Vikramaditya** became king and was succeeded by his son **Vikram Kesari**.

### HISTORICAL AGE

**Nemuni\*\*** the patron saint of Nepal, preached his doctrine living at *Teku*, the confluence of the Bagmati and Visnumati. It was he who, by common consent, selected a pious cowherd to be the first king in the line of the cowherd dynasty. There were eight kings of this dynasty, **Bhuktaman** the first and **Yaksha Gupta** the last. In course of years pastoral dispute arose and this dynasty was replaced by the *Ahirs* or *Abhirs*, another shepherd race from

\*The temple of Bodhnath was built according to more credible legends by Mana Deva, son of Brisha Deva.

\*\*Nemuni is too shadowy a figure to be considered a historical personage. There is not a trace of evidence, except a baseless tradition to prove that he was at one time considered to be the patron saint of Nepal. Some believe that the country protected by Nemuni is know as Nepal,

India. In this dynasty also there were three kings; the last one was **Bhuban Simha** who was conquered by the Kiratis. These two dynasties are supposed to be the beginning of historical dynasty in the valley. Some think it to be highly absurd that they belong to imperial Guptas.

### ADVENT OF THE KIRATAS

After the Ahir or Abhir dynasty, the valley was occupied by the *Kiratas* who had invaded the country from the East and their capital was at *Matatirthaa* and *Thankot* was their resort. Nothing is known about these Kiratas in relation to ancient Nepal beyond the vague estimate of the Nepalese chroniclers. The Kiratas are referred in Mahabharata and Ramayana, where they have been taken as the dwellers of the N.E. Himalayas. The Pre-Kirata period is completely dark because no mention has been made in the *Upanisad*, or *Puran* etc. The same attitude is found with the *Jatakas* and *Nikayas*. There is complete silence about this country. The great epic calls it as Kirata Desha which might not be the valley of Kathmandu. It may be a country lying in the extreme east of the Himalayan foothills.

Certain historians are of the opinion that the *Newars* were the Kiratas and lived between Gandaki and Sunkosi. If this view is not correct Nepal had certain relations with Videya. As the Lichhavis had relations with Nepal, Videya had the link with the people of this country. Three main hoards of the Kiratas had invaded the valley successively, but it was supposed that it took place towards the year 700 B.C. The names of the kings appearing in the Vamsavali are 29 in number. They have a close affinity with the present day Kiratas, i.e. Kulung, Thulung and Yellung.

The first king in their line was **Yalamber**, who established Kiranti dynasty in Nepal. He extended his kingdom from Tista of Bhutan to Trisuli in the west. The seventh king was **Jitadasti** who helped the Pandavas during the Mahabharata war. Buddhist tradition claims that **Gautam Buddha** visited the valley during the reign of **Jitadasti**.\* At that time Gautama made 1350 disciples

\*There are no proofs of Gautama's visit to the Valley, nor is there any reference to it in the historical legends or annals of Nepal. Likewise the Nepalese history is silent regarding Asoka's visit to the Valley. It is highly improbable that Asoka ever visited the valley. More unlikely still in the

among them *Sariputra*, *Maudagalyayana* and *Ananda* were famous. He visited the shrines of Swayambhu, Guheswari, Namuda Buddha and preached his doctrine.

Some historians surmise that in 249 or 250 B.C. during the reign of **Sthunok**, the fourteenth king of this dynasty; **Asoka** came to a pilgrimage to *Lumbini* in Nepal. To mark the birthplace of Buddha, Asoka got inscriptions engraved on rocks and pillars and set them up at *Rumindehi* the ancient *Lumbini* which is in Taulihawa, a district of Nepal. Later, he also came to the valley of Kathmandu and gave his daughter **Charumati** in marriage to **Devapala**. She settled near Pashupati and founded Devapatan in memory of her husband Devapala. She erected for herself a nunnery called *Charumati Vihar* now called Chabahil.

Asoka\* had left evidence of his visit by erecting four Stupas at the four cardinal points of Patan. After that both Buddhism and Hinduism flourished in Nepal.

The twenty eighth king **Patuka** had to leave Gokarna for *Shankhamul* due to the repeated attacks by the Somabansis of the west. Patuka is said to have built 'Patuka' for his residence. The ruins in mound form are still seen, which are supposed to be the palace of the kirantis.

### THE SHAKYAS OF KAPILVASTU

There was a king called *Birupluk* or Sujaat of the Iksyaku dynasty in the state of Kaushal or present Ayodhya. This king *Birupluk* had two queens and it is believed that according to the wishes of the younger queen, the four sons and five daughters of the senior queen were banished from the palace. These four princes and five princesses together with some of their followers travelled towards the foothills of the Himalayas and settled there permanently. Near the place where they settled was a jungle full of sal trees and nearby also lived a saint called *Kapil*. So this place was called Kapilvastu. It is often heard that sal is also called "saak" so therefore this Rajput dynasty came to be called the Shakyas of Kapilvastu. It was in this same Shakyas dynasty that

tradition that the four stupas at the four cardinal points of the town were built by Asoka. They seem to have been later creations that sprang up after the town had extended to its present boundaries. Some opine that the four Stupas were erected by the missionaries of Asoka in the second century B.C.

*Gautama Buddha* was born.

The eldest prince's name was Ulkamukh and he became the first king of this dynasty. It is said that between this king Ulkamukh and Jayasen or Dhanadurga (Siddhartha Gautam's great grandfather), there were 82010 kings. *Jayasen* or Dhanadurga's son Singhahanu married the princess of the Auleek dynasty of the state of Koliya. This princess was called Kanchana and she gave birth to *Suddhodhana*. He was carefully reared in the palace and given a good education. At the age of 18 he was married to two daughters of King *Anjaan* of the state of Koliya, namely *Mayadevi* and *Prajapati*. Mayadevi gave birth to Siddhartha Gautam in the Lumbini Gardens in the year 567 B.C.

The book 'Lalit Bistaar' describes the glory and advanced cultural life of Kapilvastu of that period. It is also mentioned that the palace of Kapilvastu was very beautiful with its decorated doors, windows, staircases, verandahs and temples; and these palaces of the Shakyas of Kapilvastu were known as *Dhratarashtra*. Owing to the popularity and glory of this city, the kings of the neighbouring states tried to conquer this beautiful city many times. However, Suddhodhana defeated his enemies. During Suddhodhana's reign the beauty of Kapilvastu was of a higher degree. Excavations in Tilaurakot reveals that there were ponds, gardens, roads, temples and towns. There used to be a council of about five hundred people to help in the local government of Kapilvastu. Both young and old took part in this council, which took place in their common Mote Hall at Kapilvastu. After *Gautama Buddha*, son of Suddhodhana, became enlightened he dedicated his life to the good of the people till his death in 487 B.C. *Ananda*, his disciple, announced the death of the Buddha in the Mote Hall of the Mallas of that area. Buddha's son *Rahul* also followed the footsteps of his father and became a monk, so in course of time the Royal house of Kapilvastu became weak. *Prasannajit*, the king of Kaushal, tried to conquer Kapilvastu, but became unsuccessful. Later Prasannajit's son destroyed this beautiful city of Kapilvastu and the Shakyas inhabitants of this place moved to other regions and became scattered. This is the last that we ever heard of any single and unified Shakyas community.



### LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF BUDDHA

**Siddhartha**, the son of Raja *Suddhodhana* and *Maya*, was born in the village of Lumbini in Nepal about 566 B.C. His mother died after seven days of his birth and he was brought up by his aunt and stepmother (*Prajapati*). Gautama got married at the age of sixteen to a beautiful girl named *Gopa* or *Yasodhara* from whom he had a son called *Rahul*. The vision of old age, disease and death made him realise this false and hollow world. One night he quietly left the palace at the age of twenty-nine to lead a homeless life.

After wandering in search for the truth of life for six years, he was still nowhere. He had studied the *vedas*, practised the most rigid penance for fifty days and yet he was where he had started from. He was about to give up but by instinct he sat under the shade of a *Bo tree*, and after some concentration of his mind, the truth flashed upon him. He was from then onwards called **Gautama Buddha**, the enlightened one.

He began to preach in the *Deer Park* near Sarnath and was able to gather five followers on his first day of preaching. Then for fortyfive years he devoted himself to the preaching of his doctrines. He formed the Buddhist Order of Monks, (*Sangha*) and at the age of eighty he died at *Kushi Nagar* in Gorakhpur area. Among his disciples *Sariputra*, *Maudgalyana* and *Ananda* were famous.

#### Teachings

Buddha taught his followers the four "Noble Truths" concerning suffering, the cause of suffering, the destruction of suffering and the way that leads to the destruction of sorrow. He preached that the way to its destruction was neither through the practice of sensual pleasure nor through the practice of self torture. There was a "Middle Path" called the "Noble Eightfold Path," which are :

- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| (a) Right Views       | (b) Right Aspiration    |
| (c) Right Speech      | (d) Right Conduct       |
| (e) Right Livelihood  | (f) Right Efforts       |
| (g) Right Mindfulness | (h) Right Contemplation |

From these "Noble Eightfold Path" one would have his eyes opened, would be bestowed with understanding, lead to peace of

mind, then to the higher wisdom and finally to full enlightenment of *Nirvana*.

He preached that for attaining salvation one had to observe the morality by abandonment of killing, stealing, incontinence, falsehood, slander, luxury, hankering for wealth, performance of bloody sacrifices, the worship of the Sun or the Brahma and sundry other practices. The next requisites were concentration and insight which would lead to enlightenment.

Before Buddha's death *Ananda* a disciple of Buddha, asked about the existence of God. Buddha denied it. It is believed that Buddha had really started his preachings as a revolt against the orthodoxal Hinduism which was beginning to be frowned by many due to its evil and corrupt practices.

#### CULTURE DURING THE KIRATS' RULE

The Kiratis were simple in their manner and customs. Wherever they move they carried a '*kike*' an early version of *Khukuri*. During the Kirati period art, culture and trade flourished. In those days Nepal had become a trade centre for the traders of distant countries like India, Tibet and China. This contact with foreigners led to the moral and material progress of the country.

Again the new intellectual awakening that was brought about by teaching and preaching of Buddhist religion influenced a great deal upon the religious and social life of the people.

Architecture and sculpture also received an impetus in a fair degree. If Kiratis of the legend are identified with Newars the Kirata rule may pass for a real self rule of the indigenous people. So it can be stated that the valley of Nepal had ceased to enjoy self rule as soon as the Kiratas disappeared from the scene. In short it may be said that the Kirati period forms the first of the milestones in the long march of the cultural history of the Nepalese people.

The last Kiranti king **Gasti** was defeated by a wave of another Hindu invaders. The leader of these invaders was **Nimisha\*** who founded the Somabansi dynasty round about 205 A.D. He ruled from Godavari. It was from his time that Godavari Fair began to be held in the Godavari pool in every twelve years. The four faced linga of Pasupatinath was erected by him.

According to wright's chronicle the fourth of this line **Psuparekshya** renovated the temple of Pasupati and gilded the roof. He is supposed to have revived the Pasupati cult which hitherto had been suppressed by the Buddhist. He introduced caste system into Nepal and divided into four orders of Hinduism.

According to the chronicles, the last king of the Somabansi was **Bhaskervarma** (280-305 A.D.) the great conqueror of India. Though Dr. Jaiswal holds him as Lichhavi, both the Somabansi and Sooryabansi were the early Lichhavis. The introduction of Hinduism was the major contribution of the Somabansi dynasty in Nepal wherein Bhaskervarma made Saivism the major belief.

#### LICHHAVI DYNASTY

In the ancient history of India the *Lichhavi* term appears in many forms, Lichhavi, Lechhavi, Lechhai and Nichhavi. The Lichhavis were a well known Kshatriya clan living in Videha with Vaisali as capital at the time of Gautama Buddha. **Ajatasatru** of Rajgriha diplomatically created disension among the Lichhavis

\*According to K.P. Jaiswal, Nimisha is the dynastic name. The first ruler of Nepal would be Manaksha or Mataksha.

and conquered them in the 5th century B.C. However, they were allowed to maintain their internal autonomy.

Later on, during the years of Kushan rule, out of fear of invasion the Lichhavis according to Jaiswal, migrated from their country to Nepal in 200 A.D. and in course of years they became very powerful.

From the inscription of Jayadeva II at Pasupati we can see that the Lichhavi had extended their Kingdom upto Puspapur (Pataliputra) and made it their capital. **Supuspa** was the king who ruled from Puspapur. Then we find the name of Jayadeva I in the inscription of Manadeva. He is supposed to be the founder of Lichhavi Kingdom in Nepal. His successor **Bhaskervarma**, the head of the then existing Lichhavi state, whose name is handed down to tradition as the conqueror of India, was the overlord of at least a major portion of North and north-eastern Gangetic basin. He became rich and very powerful. Even *Chandragupta* I married his daughter *Kumaradevi* which brought him strength and help to conquer the throne of Magadha. How powerful the Lichhavis were is also evidenced by the coin of Chandragupta I in which Lichhavyas and the figure of his wife Kumaradevi was also imprinted on the coins. *Samudragupta* also took great pride in calling himself the son of the daughter of the Lichhavis.

Bhaskeradeva possessed a vast wealth from his campaign, out of which he made the golden roof to the temple of Pasupati and kept Devapatan flourishing and named it 'Swarnapuri'. He had no son, so he appointed as his successor a Kshatriya named Bhumivarma (305 A.D.) of Suryabansi, who was an adopted son of Bhaskervarma fourth in succession after Manaksha. He had a palace at Baneswar.

**Haradutta** the thirteenth king of this line was a devotee of Visnu. The four Narayan temples of Changu, Visankhunarayan, Shikhanarayan and Ichangunarayan and also the Budhanilakantha was built by him. He made Vaishnavism the royal cult of Nepal.

For a long period of time there seems to have been a setback for the Lichhavi dynasty in which period the Gupta dynasty appears to have seized power and ruled for about 75 years. When **Manadeva** I came in power, Bhima Gupta was deposed and thus Nepal was brought under Lichhavi rule. He is considered to be the first historical ruler of Nepal. This Lichhavi ruler, Manadeva

reasserted the independence of the Lichhavi dynasty and struck copper coins called Mananka and this was the beginning of the numismatic history of Nepal. Managriha, Manavihar are also built by him.

Then during the rule of **Gunakamadeva**, who succeeded Manadeva, the same Gupta family came in power, asserted sovereignty, and managed to surface for about 50 years. King **Shivadeva I** finally drove them away by his prowess forever from the scene of Nepal with the help of Amsuvarma, and maintained peace and stability in his country and revived the lost glory of the Lichhavis. Because of his role in the re-establishment of the Lichhavi rule in Nepal, king Shivadeva I entrusted Amsuvarma with all power for conducting state affairs. As he was credited with the great victory over the Guptas, he started a New era which was brought to use during the coronation as Mahasamanta by Amsuvarma. Shivadeva ruled as a sovereign and Amsuvarma his son-in-law, as defacto ruler. Pasupati coins were started during the reign of Shivadeva which were used by the Lichhavis during their reigning period.

**Vrishavdeva** Contemporary of Amsuvarma succeeded Shivadeva I. He kept his kingdom secure and safe from the enemies. He was devoted to Vajra-Yogini. He is said to have built the temple of Dhanadeva at Chabel, a Chaitya of Bodhnath and a village Bandegaon on the way to Godavari. Shankaracharya, the great Vedantist and exponent of monism (advaita), was supposed to have visited Nepal during his reign and preached his doctrine by vanquishing the Buddhists. It was during this time that Vrishavdeva begot a son whom he named **Shankerdeva**. This king Shankerdeva offered the big iron Trisul named Manabegi which is at the northern door of Pasupati. Dr. K. P. Jayaswal's source regarded him as a second Shankaracharya for having revived Saivism at the cost of Buddhism. He abolished Monasticism and forced the Bhikhus to lead married life. He was a brave warrior and had noble qualities.

The version of Shankaracharya's visit during this time seems to be improbable as Shankaracharya flourished in the post Gupta Period in 788-820 A.D. in India.

**Dharmadeva:** He was a religious minded king and a strict follower of ceremonial acts (karmakanda). He extended his terri-

tory and kept the country free from troubles. His queen Rajyavati came from a high family and was endowed with high virtues. She was wholly responsible to mould good character and high quality of virtue to her son Manadeva.

**Manadeva:** He was the son of Dharmadeva. His mother Rajyavati was the illustrious woman, who nurtured Manadeva with keen interest. It was she who inspired him and paved good qualities of head and heart. At the death of her husband she was about to immolate herself on the pyre with her dead husband; but Manadeva implored her not to do so, as her presence would be an inspiration for his worldly affairs.

There are several monuments and inscriptions for the study of various stages of his reign. He ascended the throne while he was still young in age. The Thakuri governors of the eastern provinces rebelled and tried to be independent, but he was able to suppress all of them. He was a worthy king and a great warrior with organising capacity. Following the wise policy of Samudragupta, he returned the conquered territories to their rulers. He made them his vassals by taking tribute from them.

He had raised the standard of culture and literature in his kingdom and patronised Sanskrit. The Changuarayan Inscription is a master piece of literature which shows that Manadeva was highly educated. It is mentioned that he had a vast kingdom extending to the Tibetan side in the north and up to the Gandaki to the West. The state of the Mallas on the other side of the Gandaki river was under his control and his successful expedition against the mallas had been recorded in the inscription at Changuarayan.

It was Manadeva who named the lake now in the Tibetan side Mansarovar and the hills surrounding the lake as Mahadeva and Kailasparvat.

He was a Visnuvite so he revered and worshipped Changuarayan where he erected a stone pillar and inscribed in it records of his father's death and his successful expedition against the Mallas. In memory of his mother Rajyavati, who inspired and encouraged him, he had erected an image of Trivikrama Vamana (Visnu) at Lazimpat. He had also performed great religious sacrifices and gave rich gifts to the Brahmins. In spite of his being a Vaisnavite he was tolerant towards other religions and made endowments to

the Buddhists.

He also made Managriha as his residence and head quarters of the Lichhavi administration, which reveals the progress of art and architecture during his reign. He started monarchical rule and adopted the royal title as Bhattaraka Maharaja. He had a love for sculpture and architecture. He built the shrine of Changu-narayan, and renovated the Chakra-Mahavihar. It was during this Lichhavi king's reign that Nepal was a powerful and prosperous country. So, he earns the title of one of the most glorious kings in the history of Nepal.

**Mahideva:** Manadeva was succeeded by his son Mahideva. Though he had a rule of a short period; he is mentioned by Jayadeva II in his inscription at Pasupati. He was engaged in internal squabbles and was ousted by the Samantas.

**Vasantadeva:** He succeeded Mahideva. He styled as Paramadai-vatambhattaraka. He subjugated the neighbouring petty chiefs and kept peace and calm in the country. During his time the Gupta were in service under him, who in course of time controlled practically all the governmental activities.

**Note:** There is much controversy about the date of Changu-narayan Inscription which is dated Sambat 386. Which era does this Sambat refers to? Whether it is Saka era or the Gupta era or Lichhavi era. This is why there seems to be a confusion between Manadeva I and Manadeva III which awaits intelcted scholars to glean out real facts in order to find out the real crector of Changu-narayan Inscription. According to Dr. K.P. Jayaswal, it was Manadeva III, son of Dharmadeva, who is depicted in the Changu-narayan Inscription; and not Manadeva I who flourished before Vrisadeva and Shivadeva I. He gives as evidences, the Managriha Gate, Mane-swara, and Manavihar mentioned by Amsuvarma; the date in the Sumatitantra Saka 498 and the script on the Mananka coin which Dr. V. Smith says to be of the 6th century. These facts authenticates that there was an earlier Manadeva in 578 A.D. before Vrisadeva and Shivadeva.

According to Rajguru Hemraj Pande the date of Manadeva I is 576 A.D. from the palm leaf manuscript in his possession. He says it is this Manadeva who is mentioned in the Changu Inscription but Dr. K. P. Jayaswal disagrees this view on the basis of Changu-narayan Inscription and Pasupati Inscription of Manadeva, wherein the dates are 386, 413 and 427, Sambat. Like fleet Dr. Jayaswal thinks that the Sambat are of the Gupta Era, which begins from 319 A.D. Hence he places the date of Manadeva 705 A.D. to 732 A.D. ( $386 + 319 = 705$ ;  $413 + 319 = 732$ ),  $427 + 319 = 746$  A.D. and calls him Manadeva III and not Manadeva I of 576 A.D.

**Amsuvarma (588-643 A.D.)**

**Amsuvarma** was a Thakuri of a good family. Impressed by his virtue, ability and bravery king Shivadeva gave his daughter in marriage to him. He became the *Mahasamanta* a high feudatory of Shivadeva. In fact **Shivadeva** was a nominal sovereign and Amsuvarma a defacto ruler. When Shivadeva observed monastic life then only Amsuvarma seems to have laid claim to the style of a king and on the death of Shivadeva in 605 A.D. he became the sole sovereign and adapted the title of Maharaja. Combined with valour and statecraft, he was an able administrator and a worthy king, whose virtues had spread far and wide.

It is seen from his Harigaon (east of Bhadgaon) inscription that for administrative purpose he changed the seat of government from *Managriha* to *Kailashkuta*, an imposing building decorated with beautiful images with copper roof and big hall. He made it "the official seat of the official dictator."

Legendary tale speaks about the diplomacy of Amsuvarma who contracted matrimonial alliance with Tibetan king *Srong Tsang Gampo* by giving his daughter *Bhrikuti* in marriage. It was she who spread Buddhism in Tibet.

**Achievements:** According to *HuenTsang* Amsuvarma had attained a high military and literary glory. He had suppressed all the feudal lords (Samantas) who were liable to shake off the loyalty to their ruler if found weak. Amsuvarma was ruling the country in the worst days. Nepal Mahatmya mentions that he controlled the Himalayan territories lying between the Gandak and Dudhkosi. He was successful in keeping Harsha of India at arms length on one side and on the other he withstood the Tibetan menace of Srong Tsang Gampo and thus he kept aloof the banner of Nepal so high in this critical circumstance.

**Literature:** As a literary figure Chinese pilgrim opines that he had written a book on etymology. The great grammarian Chandravarma, a scholar of Nalanda University was patronised by him. He tried to banish illiteracy and sanskrit language flourished during his time.

**Character:** Amsuvarma endowed with all kingly virtues was a just and impartial ruler, and a true servant of the people with-



out political bias. He was a far sighted statesman, a good administrator with high moral strength and had a sense of public duty. Amsuvarma was a ruler without high orthodoxy and without vain glory. No self interest could touch his heart. Even Hiuen Tsang speaks of him as a person of high attainments and sagacity of spirit.

**Religion:** He was a Shaivite Hindu but religious persecution was not mentioned in his character. He was tolerant towards all religions. His contribution to Buddhist monasteries were equally magnificent. The title "*Pasupati Bhattaraka Padanudhyte*" adopted by him shows that he had formed devotion to Shiva and the cow was highly respected by him. As regards his political outlook and impartial feeling without religious prejudice, he ranks with Asoka.

It was during his time that Mahayana Buddhism, Gupta Script, Sanskrit literature and Nepalese artistic and architectural forms entered Tibet from Nepal.

**Economic Policy:** Amsuvarma's economic policy was based on the principles of benefiting the people of his kingdom. He paid great attention to the improvement of trade and commerce of the country. He had issued copper and silver coins which were the means of exchange in the commercial transaction. The country benefitted greatly by the trade passing between Nepal and Tibet and also the transit trade between India and Tibet.

Amsuvarma understood not only the importance of industrial advance but also the significance of agricultural prosperity, for which he made every effort to help the people by digging canals to irrigate the fields. The Government levied water tax on all users to meet the capital expenditure and upkeep of the canals. Besides land tax and water tax he had levied Mallakar for defence, luxury tax and also fines on offenders of five great crimes.

Amsuvarma was succeeded by **Udayadeva II**, the son of Sivadeva I. His reign was troubled one. He was driven away by **Jisnugupta** and placed Drubadeva, son of Sivadeva I on the throne to legalise his position, but himself became the defacto ruler. Like Amsuvarma he also got coins minted in the name of Drubadeva and his own side by side, which shows dual government at that time, one from Managriha and the other from Kailashkut Bhawan. He was neither a Lichhavi nor a Thakuri. He is thought to be an

Avir. He had a son Visnugupta as Yuvaraj.

### **Narendradeva**

The seventh king of this dynasty Narendradeva was the son of Udayadeva II. Udayadeva on being dispossessed of his sovereignty by Jisnu Gupta, had fled to Lhasa. **Narendradeva** with Tibetan aid overthrew the dictatorship of his enemy and recovered his ancestral power from the Abhir Guptas and ended the double rule of Jisnu Gupta. He was a wise and a good ruler much loved and respected by all. It was he who fetched *Matsyandranath*, the patron deity, from afar. His grandson **Jayadeva** speaks of him thus : "Narendradeva had an exalted idea of honour and all the kings prostrated before him". A Chinese mission visited Nepal for the first time in 643 A.D. which was received hospitably by the ruler. In 647 A.D. a second mission came under the leadership of *Wang Hiuen Tse* who wrote that every house had pictures of excellent design and beauty. His description about Narendradeva's palace shows that architecture had reached its zenith. From Nepal a mission was sent to China with presents and messages of good will.

A few years after the death of Narendradeva, mention is made about the second visit of *Shankaracharya*. But there is no tangible proof of the truth of this tradition. Perhaps the legend is something like that of Vikramaditya. The Buddhist of Nepal naturally hated Shankar because he had destroyed Buddhism in India. They gloried in saying that Shankar visited Nepal and Tibet too but was vanquished by the Nepalese and the Tibetan Lamas. So he was compelled to withdraw, meaning thereby that though Shaivism triumphed in India at the cost of Buddhism, the position of Tantric Buddhism remained unshaken in Nepal.

**Shivadeva II** (684-705 A.D.) Narendradeva was succeeded by his son Shivadeva II. He contracted matrimonial alliance with the king of Magadh in India by Marrying *Betsadevi* the daughter of king *Bhogavarma*.

**Jayadeva II.** After Shivadeva II, Jayadeva II became king. He married Rajyamati the daughter of king Sri Harsha of Assam. He was a learned king who could write Sanskrit poems with felicity and due regard to gramatical rules. He had left a geneo-

logy of the royal line of Lichhavis at Pasupati. In the stella at Pasupati he is said to have reached to the climax of power. This inscription is the most valuable monument from the historical point of view. During his rule the Tibetan people invaded Nepal but were repulsed. After him we find the name of Shankaradeva II, Vijayadeva, Manadeva II and Amrit whose reign was untroubled one. Then the Lichhivi dynasty began to decline.

**Baradeva** or **Aramudi** was a brave and a diplomatic ruler. During his rule he moved his capital and began to rule from Lalitapattan. *Jayapid* the king of Kashmir puffed with other conquest invaded Nepal in 782 A.D. Kalyana in the *Rajtarangini* has vividly described how Jayapid's troops were swept away by the ingenuity of Aramudi while they were crossing the river Kaligandaki near Ridi in Palpa. Jayapid was arrested and imprisoned in a far off fort. Later, he could escape at the cost of his minister, who came in search of him.

#### CULTURE AND PROGRESS DURING THE LICHHAVI PERIOD

During the days of the Lichhavis there was peace and prosperity in the country. The rulers were very tactful diplomats to check the foreign influence. In spite of their internal competition to have power, the administration was conducted by the rulers either singly or they followed the dual policy (*Duidha Rajya*). Throughout the period of the Lichhavis, monarchy was strong but there were the provincial governors or *Samantas* who conducted the administration following the principles issued by the central government. According to Bhandari a ruler was succeeded by the crownprince, the eldest son of the ruler himself and if they failed an issue, they could adopt a son and even regent was appointed to govern the country.

The theory of the kingship was based on the principle of making the people happy. They tried their best to have no taxation upon them in order to raise their economic standard. The distant conquered territories had to pay tribute to the central government and the ruler Amsuvarma was highly successful to keep Harsha at arms length and to check the Chinese menace by means of matrimonial alliance.

The main function of the king was to establish peace and order

in the country and in the time of war, he himself led the army in the battlefield. The policy of the government was fixed by him and he would give the final decision even in judicial matters. It can be marked that Dual government or *Duid Sasan* had started since the beginning of the Lichhavi rule, but there were signs of the weak government. From the various inscriptions we find that there were several dignitaries known as Samant, Maha Samant, Maha Dandanayak, Maha Pratihara, Dutaka etc. in order to carry on the administration efficiently. As this type of officials prevalent in Gupta India, it would not be an overstatement that the Gupta's method of administration had been copied by the Lichhavi rulers. Perhaps the Lichhavis had tried their best to keep up the standard of their government in equal footing like that of the Guptas ruling in India. The force of the Lichhavi government was the standing army mainly. As Nepal is a mountainous country they used horses, even some elephants like the Guptas had in India.

The main source of income of the government was taxation. The imported and exported goods had to pay custom duty. The vanquished countries had to pay tribute and war indemnity, while the *samantas* sent presents to the ruler. Even the cultivators had to pay their revenue. Traders were organised in guilds like the *Ratna Sangha*. Bands of merchants made daring expeditions to distant lands.

If we study the condition of Nepal during the days of the Lichhavis from political, economic, religious and social points of view there was peace and prosperity in the country and the people were very happy. It was the Lichhavi ruler who first introduced coinage system in Nepal. The golden coins, side by side with copper and silver coins, were in circulation for the transaction of business. Nepal adopted the name of *Pasupati* in her standard and coinage. The country had commercial relationship with the big neighbours India, Tibet and China. The rulers took deep interest in the construction of temples, stupas, monasteries, palaces like Managriha and Kailashkut. For the comfort of transport and communication they had paved roads with bricks. They offered golden spires and roofs to the temples of Gods and Goddesses. It shows that the financial condition of the government was very sound.

In the time of the Lichhavis arts and literature had made progress. Sanskrit language was prevalent and most of the inscrip-

tions were written in Sanskrit and used Gupta Script. The learned people were respected in the palace and courts. The court poets like Yama, Usana, Brihaspati and Anuparama flourished. In the science of medicine Chakrapani, the famous commentator of *Sushrut* and the learned Chandra Varma, a Nalanda university scholar flourished there. There was religious toleration and free discussion on religious creeds. Even in the same family they worshipped different deities as Manadeva revered and worshipped Visnu whereas his wives followed *Saivism*. King Vrisavdeva followed Buddhism but Narendradeva followed Saivism as well as Buddhism. Both Buddhism and Saivism and also *Tantric Buddhism* flourished in Nepal and there existed mutual good will and understanding.

In the time of the Lichhavis, literature, art and architecture had flourished. Sanskrit was the language of all the higher class people. Epigraphy attained perfection and Vedic astrology guided the life of the common people. The Lichhavi rulers were not devoid of their interest in constructing palaces and temples. The architectural style which is now known as *Pagoda style\** was widely in vogue that time. Even in sculpture they had made wonderful progress. The stone images of this period contain a great degree of artistic skill. They had built Managriha and Kailashkut Bhawan which were full of artistic work as the Chinese pilgrim observed and the temple of Changu Narayan is a testimony of their interest to leave historical background to the people of the country with their inscriptions. Moreover the rulers themselves were learned, the etymology of Amsuvarma was a proof of it. In short the Lichhavi period is aptly called the golden age in the history of ancient Nepal.

\*Some foreign writers thought that the Pagoda style of buildings are Chinese in model. But it has been definitely proved that the Pagoda style of building is a peculiar Nepalese art. The oldest known reference about 'Pagoda' in Nepal is in the Tang Annals at about the middle of the Seventh century A.D. The theory that culture and art came to Nepal from China is an unlikely and doubtful guess. It is possible that culture flowed out from India *via* Nepal. There is, however, a close cultural affinity between Nepal and China, which points to the ancient existence of a close relationship between the two States. It is the peculiar genius of the Nepalese that whatever Nepal borrows she gives it the stamp of her national spirit and gives out more than what she takes from abroad. The culture of Nepal in her palmiest days even enriched China.

After Jayadeva II we find the names of **Manadeva II**, **Rudradeva I**, **Vasantdeva**, **Vardhamanadeva**, and **Balideva** as rulers of the country. Then comes the name of **Raghavadeva** who found a ruling dynasty since 879 October by which date the Lichhavi dynasty came to an end and it is guessed that a new Thakuri dynasty was started. To commemorate this event Raghavadeva founded the Nepali era\* which begins from 879 A.D. or 937 V.S. According to Dr. Regmi the rulers after Raghavadeva were as follows:

		A.D.
Raghavadeva Nepali sambat	1-30	879-909
Jayadeva	30-40	909-919
Shankardeva	40-60	919-939
Sahadeva	60-61	939-940
Vikramadeva	61-70	940-949
Gunakamadeva II	70-115	949-994

**Gunakamadeva II (949-994 A.D.)** : He is said to have been a powerful and rich king. He founded at the confluence of Bagmati and Visnumati a town named *Kantipur*, modern Kathmandu after a big wooden house built out of one single tree. He is said to have originated the *Indrajatra* festival. He repaired the temple of Pasupati and made golden roof of *Vasuki* temple which lies to the northern part of Pasupati. He also initiated the practice of worshipping Lumadi, Rakta Kali, Kankeswari, Panchalinga, Bhairab and Manamaiju. He introduced Krishna Jatra and Lakhe

\*According to Bhandari's authority, Raghavadeva is not the founder of Nepal era.

Jatra. He also performed Kotihoma.

It is mentioned in the chronicle that **Bhojadeva** succeeded Gunakamadeva and reigned around 1015 A.D. The next ruler was **Laxmikamadeva** who ruled from 1024 to 1040 A.D. He ruled with peace but at the end of his rule there were some disturbances. It is said that he built Laxmi Bihar and also introduced the custom of worshipping virgin *Banda girl as Kumari*.

**Vijayakamadeva**, son of Laxmikamadeva was the last ruler of this line, but in some of the chronicles it is mentioned that **Jayadeva** succeeded Laxmikamadeva, as a ruler in Patan when there was disturbance and no central authority till **Bhaskerdeva** became king in the country. According to chronicles he was a *Thakuri* and rose to power by might and established *Nuwakote Thakuri dynasty* in the country. It is said that he built Navbahal and Hemabarna Bihar. Kirpatrick has mentioned him a feudal lord of Patan. A book written during his reign has been found, the date is 1047 A.D.

A Bengali Buddhist monk, *Atisha Dipankara*, visited Nepal in 1040 A.D. He is credited to have introduced the *Tantric* form of *Mahayana Buddhism* in Nepal.

Chronicles mention that there were five kings in this dynasty after Bhaskerdeva. **Baladeva** ruled from 1048 to 1061. He brought peace and plenty in the country and founded Haripur. He was succeeded by **Pradymnakamadeva** or Padmadeva who ruled for seven years. He had 'Paramabhattacharak' title before his name. He was followed by **Nagarjunadeva** and then by **Shankardeva**.

**Shankardeva** (1067-1082 A.D.) was the last ruler of the Nuwakote Thakuri dynasty. It is said that he was an illustrious ruler. He built *Nandikeswar* at Naxal and *Manohara Bhagabati*. The system of pasting Nagas and Basuki on the doors of Nepalese houses on the Nagapanchami day was introduced by him. In later chronicles it is said that he was a weak ruler as in his time the Buddha Margis wrecked vengeance on the Siva margis for the harm the former had received from the hand of Shankaracharya. At that time a large number of Brahmins were killed.

### Suryabansi Rajputs

During this time **Bamadeva** a descendant of Amsuvarma defeated Shankerdeva in 1080 A.D. He suppressed the Nuwakote Thakuries with the help of nobles and restored the old solar

dynasty in Nepal for the second time.

After Bamadeva, **Harshadeva** (1090-1096 A.D.) became king. He was not a strong ruler, so his feudatories asserted in their respective spheres of influence. After his death, for ten years the country was under the domination of the High Feudatories. They also quarreled themselves for power. Taking this opportunity **Nanyadeva**,\* a Karnatak king invaded Nepal from Simraoungarh and made his residence at Bhadgaon, but there is no tangible proof of his raids into the valley. It is also said that in the reign of **Harideva**, the last of the Nanyadeva's line, **Mukunda Sen**\*\* king of Palpa invaded the valley of Nepal proper. He plundered and destroyed many houses. Later on when a dreadful contagion broke out in his army he had to escape from Nepal and on his way he died at Devighat. But from chronological point of view this tale of his invasion seems to be improbable. If we are to believe the chronology of the Sen family, he flourished only in the fourteenth century A.D.

After Harshadeva we find the name of **Sivadeva**, the third (1098-1126 A.D.) as a ruler of the country. He was a strong and powerful king. In some of the chronicles we find that he built **Kirtipur** on a hill, roofed the Pasupati temple with gold, introduced copper coins alloyed with iron which has the figure of a lion and gold coins with the figure of Mahadeva embossed on them and constructed wells, canals and tanks at different places. He is said to have minted silver and gold coins called Shivakonka coins.

**Indradeva** succeeded Sivadeva and ruled till 1137 A.D., then **Manadeva** (IV) succeeded him and ruled till 1140 A.D. He is said to have abdicated in favour of his son. He became a monk and lived in Chakramaha monastery built by Manadeva I.

**Narendradeva II** succeeded Manadeva and ruled from Patan.

\* The invasion of Nanyadeva finds mention in some Nepalese chronicle. He may possibly have made a raid into the Nepal Valley but the story that he drove out the local Kings of the Valley and fixed his residence at Bhadgaon is entirely false. It is a fiction brought into history by later Kings of Nepal. There is a historical record that Chandeswar, a Minister of Shakti Singh, a descendent of Nanyadeva, made his escape into the Valley and lived as a protege of the king of Bhadgaon.

\*\*Mukunda Sen might have made a raid into Nepal. But there is no historical personage named Harideva. There is a tradition that the custom of making Hakuwa rice and Sinki began from this time.



As he had no heir to succeed, his line ended with him in 1146 A.D. Then a person of royal lineage named **Anandadeva** son of Simhadeva was chosen as a king in 1147 A.D. There was peace in the country during his rule. He was a devotee of God, so he built the temple of *Sivagla* in Bhadgaon with copper roof. He also built a water conduit near his palace. He protected his subjects by punishing thieves and trouble creators in the country. After a reign of twenty years he died in 1167 A.D. Anandadeva was succeeded by his brother **Rudradeva** in 1167 A.D. He followed the footsteps of his brother, as he also constructed many water conduits in Patan and Kathmandu. He also built a part of the palace Panchapuri. He had a son but died during his life time, so he was also succeeded by his brother **Amritdeva** in 1175 A.D. At the time of his reign calamities such as famine, epidemic of smallpox broke out for which people had to suffer. He was succeeded by his nephew **Someswardeva** in 1179 A.D. He built a big temple in Yodha or Yogha with beautiful carvings on it. During the later part of his reign there was famine due to which people were in disturbed condition. Taking this advantage **Ratnadeva** a feudatory lord raised his head for power. Someswardeva died in 1183 A.D. The line of the so called Vaisya Thakuri dynasty founded by Raghavdeva in 879 A.D. came to an end.

After the expiry of the Vaisya Thakuri Dynasty there were three rulers. The first one was **Gunakamadeva II** (1187-95 A.D.) while Gunakamadeva was ruling there were two other rulers inside the valley. They were **Laxmikamadeva II** (1193-97 A.D.) and **Vijayakamadeva II** (1192-1200 A.D.) was the last king of the Thakuri Dynasty.

After the downfall of this dynasty, the Mallas, the second Rajput dynasty a collateral branch of Amsuvarma ruled Nepal. The first one was **Arimalla** or Arideva. We now come to the conclusion that ever since the start of the New Era by Raghavadeva in the year 879 A.D. there were many dynasties. Historians have been mentioning Raghavadeva and his successors up to Bhaskaradeva as Lichhavi kings, whereas some have mentioned them to be Amsuvarma's descendants. Whether the Nuwakote Thakuries or the Suryabansis were of Amsuvarma's stock is yet to be decided.

D.P. Thapa opines that the period between 110 A.D. and 1200 A.D. covering almost 1090 years can be safely termed as the

Lichhavi Thakuri Era. This was the period which saw the rise and fall of the Lichhavis. It was an Era that produced some of the greatest kings and administrators in our ancient history.

### **Raghavadeva and the Nepal Sambat**

Different writers have different opinions about the origin of the Nepal Era. Gen. Cunningham holds the view that the Nepal Era was commenced during Raghavadeva's reign. Sylvin Levi, however, holds the view that the Nepalese, being superstitious, dropped the unlucky number 8 of the Saka era 801 and thus retained the number 1 as the new Nepali Era.

According to Wright's chronicle we have a mythical story about sand changing into gold during the reign of Anandamalla; and with this wealth Sakhwal, a cunning merchant of Kathmandu, paying off all the debts of the public, and thus introducing a new era. It is said that he took the permission of king Jayadevamalla for this. But this seems to be absurd to ascribe the origin during Jayadeva and Anandadeva's reign who were both born after three hundred years.

On the New years day of this Nepali Sambat, Newars of Kathmandu valley celebrate 'Mha Pooja'. This Pooja signifies an expression of thanks giving to God for having survived in body with safety and grace during the year past and also hoping to continue with better health and prosperity during the year just begun. This ritual shows that there was some great calamity or disaster befalling the country before the era started, which was so serious that those surviving thanked God. But we do not find any inscriptions or chronicles mentioning such a crisis in or before the year 879-886 A.D.

Levi suggests that a new era was commenced in 879 A.D. to mark the occasion of Nepal becoming independent of Tibet after a vassalage of nearly three hundred years. This is not true as Tibet was very powerful during Srong Tsong Gampo's reign, but in the last quarter of the 9th century Tibet had internal turbulence. So certainly it could not have overlorded Nepal. If Nepal had gained independence it might have been at least 30-40 years before 879 A.D. as Tibet disintegrated by 850 A.D.

It is presumed that a political event of national importance or the changing of a dynasty could have been the reason for such an occasion. If it is so, Raghavadeva must have been the first king of

this new Thakuri line.

After Amsuvarma the Thakuris lost power and it was not until 879 A.D. that they had regained it. The importance of this for the Thakuris must have been even greater because at first during Amsuvarma's time they were only regents or chief minister; but later (879 A.D.) they were placed in power as the sovereigns. Bendell says that Raghavadeva belongs to a new Thakuri line, not the Lichhavi. We have to accept that a new era was started in 879 A.D. and the fact that the ruling old dynasty had been replaced by a new one.

Dr. Kielhorn, after studying inscriptions and old manuscripts, calculated that the Newar Era was commenced from the 28th October 870 A.D. Therefore, we come to the conclusion that Raghavadeva founded a new era in October 879 A.D. to commemorate the occasion of the dynasty coming into power at the time.

**MEDIEVAL NEPAL:**  
**THE MALLAS**

Very little is known about the early history of the Mallas, however long before the time of Gautam Buddha, the Malla had their republican form of government at Kushinagar, Pawa and in the neighbourhood of Vaisali. Buddhist scripture tells us that even Buddha explained the importance of the land of the Malla kings to his disciple Ananda. It is recorded in the code of Manu that the Mallas were ranked beside the Lichhavis as one of the Kshatriya castes. The inscription in the temple of Changunaryan commemorates the triumphant campaign of Manadeva against mallapuri, the cities of the Mallas on the other side of river Gandak. Mention is made about the *Mallakar* in several inscriptions of the 7th and 8th centuries of the Lichhavis. This must have been a tax that the Mallas paid to the Lichhavis or vice versa. According to Dr. T.R. Vaidya it was the tax levied during the Malla Yudha (wrestling) or Bull Fighting.

Some of the people of Vaisali and Kusinagar might have migrated to the hills along the banks of Gandaki and settled there long before. In course of time there might have been a struggle between the Mallas of Gandaki and the Lichhavis of the Kathmandu valley and slowly the Mallas appeared in the Kathmandu Valley.

In some of the inscriptions it is mentioned that the village of *Chapagaon* was founded by two Mallas at the close of the 10th century. In the ancient treaties with the Chinese we find mallas as a class of people in the valley of Nepal.

The graffito of Ripumalla which is seen in the *Asoka pillar* at Niglihawa and Lumbini, and also the *Kirti Stambha* (stone pillar) at Dullu of the 12th century, where, the malla surname is

inscribed also give evidence that there were mallas long before them.

The Malla ruled in Tirhut before and after Nanyadeva. When they had turmoil and disorder in their country they might have found chance to infiltrate into the valley of Nepal. Towards the time of Lichhavis' downfall, the Mallas expanded their power and greatness in the valley and proclaimed themselves as the sovereign rulers.

All these give evidence that there were people called Mallas from the very early days. In spite of all these the Malla kings are known in the history of Nepal from the time of Arimalla from 1200 A.D. onwards. The malla kings ruled Nepal Valley for a period of 568 years after which the king of Gorkha Prithvi Narayan Shah unified the country into a greater Nepal.

#### **Arimalla or Arideva (1200-1236 A.D.)**

Mention is not made in the history of Nepal valley about the Malla kings before the time of Arimalla with the Malla surname. So he is regarded as the first Malla king of the Nepal Valley. With the advent of Arimalla a new dynasty had come to power. He began his rule from 1200 A.D. Before he came to power he had to face difficulties created by the warring princes and feudatories but he suppressed them with might and restored peace and order in the country after two decades of chaos and confusion. He died in 1236 A.D. leaving his son to succeed him.

It is said that whilst **Arideva** was engaged in his favourite past-time of wrestling he was informed that a son was born to him and he gave the name Malla\* to add after his horoscopic name, a baseless assumption.

**Abhayamalla**, born in 1216 succeeded his father in 1236 and ruled creditably till 1255 A.D. As his name implies he reigned fearlessly with authority though challenged by some discontent

\* The story that Arideva named his son 'Malla' in memory of the interesting event of the arrival of the news of the birth of his son Abhaya Malla while he was engaged in a game of wrestling (Malla yuddha) is groundless. The Mallas were a new ruling race who made their appearance in the history of the valley about a century before the introduction of the Nepalese era. Abhaya Malla's father is spoken of as Arimala in history, that is, the suffix Malla to the rulers of Nepal dates from the time of Arideva himself, and not from the reign of his son.

feudals. He patronised arts and literature and encouraged learned men to write books. Many books written during his reign are available. Even cultural and good-will missions were sent to Tibet and China.

A great earthquake, famine and an epidemic of smallpox took place during his reign. For the atonement he performed *Lakshahoma* and introduced the system of performing *Mahasnan* for Lord Pasupati.

### **Jayadeva and Anandadeva (1255-1258 A.D.)**

Abhayamalla had two sons Jayadeva and Anandadeva. **Jayadeva** succeeded his father in 1255 A.D. He is said to have ruled over Patan and Kathmandu while his brother **Anandadeva** was asked to rule from Bhadgaon. Anandadeva founded other small towns like Banepa, Dhulikhel, Sanga, Panauti and Chaukot outside the valley. He is said to have founded the Nepali Era\* in 1257, which has no base to believe.

Jayadeva had two sons both of which died during his life time, so he retired in favour of Jayabhimadeva.

### **Jayabhimadeva (1258-1271 A.D.)**

### **Jayasimhamalla (1271-1274 A.D.)**

**Jayadeva** was succeeded by **Jayabhimadeva** in 1258 and reigned till 1271. He is said to have opened the *Granary* of Panchapuri and made grains easily available to his people. He repaired the existing old canals to irrigate the fields. It was during his reign that the well-known artist *Arniko* led a team of eighty artists and went to Tibet on the request of *Kublakhan* who wanted to erect a Stupa. After completing the work in Tibet he was sent to China where he was promoted to the highest post in his sphere of work. It was he who raised the prestige of Nepal by introducing the Pagoda type of architecture.

Jayabhima was succeeded by his close companion **Jayasimha-**

\* The Nepal Era dates from Thursday the 20th of October, 880 A.D., during the reign of Raghavadeva. It has no connection at all with Ananda Malla. It may be that Ananda gave it wider circulation, but it is foolish to ascribe the origin of this era to a man born more than three hundred years after its introduction. Some say that Jayadeva Malla established the Newari Era.

**malla.** During his time people were happy. He was a devotee of Pasupati, whom he offered a gold waist band and made a chariot decked with different kinds of gems. He was deposed by a *coup de etat*. Even his son was not allowed to succeed on the throne.

#### **Anantamalla (1274-1310 A.D.)**

**Anantamalla** succeeded Jayasimhadeva in 1274. During his reign he had to face internal disorder and external invasion. Internal disorder created by the rival factions, even the feudatories were raising their heads to challenge the authority of the king. **Jayaditya** and his son **Jayasakti** helped him to crush the rebellion. Jayaditya was made crown prince but died during the life time of Anantamalla. The external invasion which he had to face was the *Khasia* invasion of *Jitarimalla* of the Karnali basin in 1287-88. His troops were encamping in *Sahme* (swayambhu area). Ananta's army fought bravely and killed many of the invaders. They fled but Jitarimalla invaded a second time and burnt many villages. Worshipping Swayambhu, Lokeswara at Bugma and Pasupati he returned to his country in 1288. In spite of the fact that the conquest was short lived, political solidarity was lost. It was during this time that the Khasias and the Tirhutes emigrated to the valley and settled. The Khasias cultivated the mountain slopes on the rim of the valley by clearing the forests and making the terraces to grow maize and millets.

When he was free from raids he worshipped Lord Pasupati and offered gold coin and at the four corners of the courtyard of the temple he set up golden flag staffs. Even the *Nandi Bull* was gilded. At Changunarayan also flag staffs were set up.

#### **Jayanandadeva (1310-1328 A.D.)**

#### **Jayarimalla (1328-1344 A.D.)**

**Jayanandadeva** son of Jayabhimadeva succeeded Anantamalla, though Jayarimalla was born to Anantamalla. But the real power was in the hands of **Jayarudra** son of Jayatungamalla, the collaborator of Jayasakti. After the death of Anantamalla there was internal disturbance and trouble created by courtiers for power but Jayarudra rooted out by killing many of the ringleaders and sending forces to the remote areas.

Jayarudra had to confront challenge by the Khasia rulers. It was during this time that *Ripumalla*, ruler of Karnali basin, attacked the Nepal valley and devastated temples and houses which after suppressing was restored in 1313.

He made Bhadgaon a centre of political activities and ruled from there.

Later, Jayanandadeva also was ousted and in his place he put **Jayarimalla**—son of Anantamalla, in the throne. During his rule Jayarudra and his successors had the real power in state affairs. After the death of Jayarudra in 1326 the actual power came first in the hands of his mother **Padmalladevi** and his wife **Devaladevi** who were assisted by powerful courtiers like *Anekarama Mahath* and *Abhcrama Mulami*. Rudramalla's wife was a brave and courageous woman. She began to rule with power as she was the mother of **Nayakadevi** the only surviving child of Jayarudramalla. She gave her daughter Nayakadevi in marriage to a chhetriya named Harishchandra. He was poisoned whereupon Nayakadevi married another Kshatriya prince named Jagat Simha, a Tirhute family. But this marriage happened to be short lived. Jagatsimha died in the prison where he was confined and Nayakadevi died after leaving a ten day old daughter, **Rajalladevi**.

It is said that during the turbulent time after the death of Rudramalla there was an invasion of **Adityamalla** a Khasia ruler of the west, and **Harisimhadeva** of Tirhut.

**Jayarajadeva:** Three years after Jayarimalla's death Jayarajadeva was enthroned in 1347, with the support of Anekarama and Devaladevi. The country was very much weakened due to internal feuds. It became difficult even to a powerful woman like Devaladevi to control the situation till the death of Jagatsimha. While she was engaged controlling the situation there was an external invasion by *Sultan Shamsuddin of Bengal*, who plundered the town and sacrilegged the temples of Pasupati and Swayambhu in 1349 A.D.\* During the time of Jayarajadeva there were two

\* An inscription at Patan has revealed that the muslims also attacked Patan and burnt the city almost reducing it to ashes. The chronicles mention that even Bhadgaon was destroyed. They created havoc and destroyed many houses, temples and places in the valley. They were ultimately forced to leave Nepal because of strong resistance from the people. This invasion did not influence the life of the people.



important persons to guide the king in state affairs. Anekarama Mahath and his son Jayasimharama. Jayarajadeva lived as a puppet king. It was Devaladevi who became the *defacto ruler* in the country in about 1354 A.D.

**Jayasthitimalla**, a descendant of Malla kshatriya of the western Nepal, who is supposed to have served Rudramalla's family, came to the court of Bhadgaon. Seeing him quite able Devaladevi settled her grand daughter Rajalladevi's marriage with him. Since then with the support of Devaladevi and western Malla rulers Sthitimalla got power in the state affairs. During that time Jayarajadeva died and his son **Jayarjunadeva** was placed on the throne in 1360. After the death of Devaladevi in 1366 A.D. Jayasthitimalla became the ruler of Bhadgaon and after four years he got power in Patan also. Due to his tact and powers he became an independent ruler.

### **Devaladevi**

**Devaladevi** was the wife of Jayarudramalla, who was the most powerful ruler in the first quarter of the 14th century. She had three children, two sons, and a daughter. Both of her sons died while her husband was still ruling. So on the death of Jayarudramalla in 1326 the only surviving daughter Nayeka Devi, who was looked after by Padmulladevi mother of Jayarudra was proclaimed as the rightful heiress to the throne of Bhadgaon.

In 1332 Padmulladevi died, so Devaladevi became the sole Regent of her daughter. When Nayekadevi grew her age, she was married to Harishchandra of Kasi (Benares). May be due to court intrigue Nayeka's husband was poisoned to death. Later on Nayeka was remarried to Jagatsimha, a Tirhute. This man worked as a prince consort and in due course even wanted to overshadow Devaladevi. At this Devala reasserted her rights of Regent and dominated Jagatsimha.

Nayekadevi was expecting a baby and her mother was waiting for a male child to place on the throne. Howsoever, the opposition party placed **Pasupatisimha** on the throne when Jayarajadeva died in 1344 A.D.

There was internal dissensions, strifes and revolts and external invasion as well; but Devaladevi with the good support of Anekarama controlled the whole situation.

Nayekadevi died after leaving a ten day old daughter Rajalla-

devi. Soon after Devaladevi imprisoned Pasupatisimha and proclaimed Rajalladevi to be the successor of the throne.

In 1354 when she found a match to her grand daughter Rajalla, she gave her in marriage to Jayasthitimalla. In the beginning it was due to Devaladevi that Jayasthiti became the subsidiary ruler in Bhadgaon and co-ruler in Patan.

This bold and courageous lady who was really the uncrowned monarch dominated the state affairs for nearly three decades and died in 1365 A.D.

### INVASION OF HARISIMHADEVA

When Jayanandadeva and Jayarudra were ruling in the valley of Nepal **Harisimhadeva**, the sixth descendant of Nanyadeva used to rule in *Simraungarh*. At that time the Muhammadan Sultans of Delhi were powerful and ruled the whole of northern India. They did not know that a small kingdom of Simraungarh was flourishing inside the jungle. *Gayasuddin Tughlak* invaded Bengal and on his way to Delhi he invaded Tirhut and laid a hard seize on Simraungarh. From there, unable to resist Harisimhadeva, he fled to the hills of Nepal.

During that time the valley kingdom was very much disturbed by external invasion of Ripumalla and internal troubles created by the warring nobles and courtiers for gaining powers. The valley was divided into city states. At such a critical time Harisimhadeva, who had fled from Simraungarh came to live near Panauti. Eventually he entered into the valley in 1324 and settled at Bhadgaon where he made a beautiful temple of Taleju Bhawani. Since then Taleju seems to be the royal deity of the valley rulers. Taleju temple are all inside the royal residential compound in Kathmandu, Patan and Bhadgaon. This is one of the unforgettable contributions of Harisimhadeva.

The entrance of Harisimha was a landmark in the history of Nepal for it introduced a new system of administration, and brought a new culture. He also established a new Karnatak dynasty. It is also mentioned in the Vamsabali that people belonging to several castes such as Deobhaju, Bhandel, Acharya, Vaidya, Dhobi, Khadge came with him. These castes are still existing in Nepal in one form or another.

As a result of Muslim invasion in Tirhut and for fear of being

molested, several *Buddhist monks* and *Maithil Pandits*, with their holy scriptures and valuable books, had entered Nepal. Nepalese had ever exhibited their liberality by welcoming these refugees whose valuable contact was a blessing in disguise to the country as they could improve their religion, language and culture.

When he heard the news of the Sultan's return, he went back to his country after making his son Matisimha the king of Nepal. This king was assisted by the high officials who came with Harisimha. But the tradition that he conquered the valley or settled in it has no foundation in fact.

Some say that he might have fled to Khandar, then a principality in Sarlahi and from there to *Tinpani* (now Sindhuli) which has been evidenced by ITIHAS PRAKASH MANDALI. Even the inscription of Pratapmalla at Hanumandhoka mentions about his stay in Panauti. He occupies an important status in the history of Nepal for all the Malla rulers after Jayasthiti attribute themselves as the descendant of Karnatak ruler Harisimhadewa. Bendall and Patech have refused to accept Harisimhadewa as a conqueror of Nepal. He was only a refugee.

#### CONDITION OF NEPAL IN THE PRE-MALLA PERIOD

After the end of the Lichhavi period, a period of darkness set in literature and art steadily declined. Towards the beginning of the fourteenth century Nepal had to encounter several calamities. The power of the central government began to dwindle. Provincial governors began to assert their sway due to dissension among the successors of the Lichhavi dynasty. Between 1000 to 1200 A.D. there was continuous rise and fall of different groups of rulers.

There were also several earthquakes which devastated the country. Taking advantage of this chaotic condition invaders like Jitari Malla of the Karnali basin and Samsuddin of Bengal appeared in Nepal and roused a terrible havoc by plundering the town and sacrileging the temples of Pasupati and Swayambhu.

Again the kingdom of the valley seemed to be under a process of disintegration. There was a likelihood of breaking struggle between Patan and Bhadgaon. Nuwakot had thrown off the Malla yoke. Banepa, Pharping and other principalities were assuming independent status. The civil war was about to break when in the

mean time there appeared a saviour of Nepal in the person of **Jayasthiti Malla**, descendant of Malla kshatriya of western Nepal, who is surmised to have served Rudramalla's family. Beginning his career as the consort of a ruling queen, he soon became the acknowledged sovereign of Nepal and subjugated all the vassal chieftains. He thus restored the political unity of Nepal and made it a strong centralised state. He also tried to reorganise the society on the model of the code of Manu and effected many administrative reforms.

**JAYASTHITIMALLA**  
(1354-1395 A.D.)

Jayasthiti, a man of good personality and endowed with tact, appeared in Bhadgaon in 1354 A.D. Historians surmise that he must be of high lineage whose ancestors might have been some feudatory malla kshatriya of West Nepal, while others take him as the off-spring of the Tirhute malla kshatriya who was the descendant of *Shyamsimha*, the last king of Karnatak. When he was in the valley he might have served Jayarudra's family and Devaladevi might have observed in him qualities of head and heart to challenge with disruptive elements in the court politics which made her inclined to give her grand daughter in marriage to him.

After the death of Jaya Rudramalla his wife Devaladevi was all in all and ruled as a regent of her daughter **Nayeka Devi** the only surviving successor of Jaya Rudramalla. While she was ruling, the Mallas of the Karnali region were very powerful. They had set their eyes on the valley kingdom. On the other hand the Tirhutes were also increasing their power of influence. So, Devaladevi wanted to create a balance of power by giving in marriage her grand daughter to Jayasthitimalla of the far west country. **Nayekadevi** had already died and **Rajalla Devi** had become the successor of the throne.

After the marriage with **Rajalladevi** Jayasthiti became the prince consort. He took overall control and ruled as a regent of his wife. Then he became the subsidiary ruler of Bhadgaon and a co-ruler in Patan when a weak king **Jayarjuna** was ruling.

After the death of Devaladevi in 1366 A.D. he became the ruler of Bhadgaon and after four years he got power in Patan also. Later-on in 1382 when Jayarjuna died, he became the sovereign ruler of Nepal.

A grand assembly of all the nobles and courtiers of the country was held in the royal palace where everyone paid homage to him.

He restored peace and order in the country by crushing the lawless and turbulent local chieftains, but there were some powerful feudatories like Jayaramasimha and Madanasimha of *Palanchok* who could have opposed him. But a diplomat and tactful politician like Jayasthiti won them over to his side. Thus he maintained his suzerainty in all parts of the country by his skilful tact and founded a new line of dynasty which ruled the country for nearly four hundred years.

Wright's chronicle and documents of Jayasthiti's time speak of him as a "legislator who codified the whole structure of the Nepalese society in a strictly orthodox Hindu frame". The social and religious laws and customs of Nepal, in which civic regulations, classification, measurement of land and weights and measures and division of cast system were based, were codified. He was a great builder of temples and a patron of art and literature who encouraged men of learning. Though a *saivite* he patronised all sects and endowed riches to Buddhist shrines.

He is considered to be one of the most illustrious and greatest kings of Nepal. He died in 1395 A.D. leaving three sons, **Dharmamalla, Jyotirmalla and Kirtimalla.**

#### REFORMS OF JAYASTHITIMALLA

Jayasthitimalla legislated many rules and made a number of notable reforms which laid the firm foundation of social structure in Nepal which still exists with some modifications.

#### **Social Reforms\***

All his social reforms were based on the noble code of manu's Varnashrama.

\* Jayasthiti Malla was a zealous upholder of Sanatan Dharma and a staunch supporter of Brahmanism. It seems that during this period the social organisation of Nepal had been weakened perhaps due to the growth of Tantrik Buddhism. As a zealous champion of Brahmanism, he could not tolerate this state of affairs and reorganised the society on the basis of Manu's code. But Dr. Regmi holds his view that the caste system in Nepal is not solely introduced by him. It existed long before that the preceptor of Jayasthiti was a brahmin who died in 1385,

- (a) The Brahmins were divided into Pancha Gauda and Pancha Dravid. They were allowed to pursue other occupations besides their daily religious worship and receiving of alms.
- (b) The Newar society was also organised after the caste rules. They were divided into the Acharyas, Vaidyas, Shrestas and Daibagyas. The other were classified according to their trades and professions such as artisans, braziers, goldsmith, masons, astrologers, washermen etc. divided into 64 subdivisions.
- (c) The others were further subdivided into thirty six castes. The scavengers and the coblers were declared as untouchables.
- (d) If a man married a woman of a lower caste, he would be converted into the caste of the woman he had married.
- (e) The people of different castes had their own professional dresses.
- (f) Men of the lower castes were allowed to put on beautiful dresses with a few restrictions.
- (g) Butchers had to put on cloaks with long sleeves.
- (h) The sweepers had to go barefooted, bareheaded and bare ears. They had to live in mud huts with thatched roofs. They had to show respect to the people of the higher castes.

Besides these he had made rules about food, dwellings, birth, death and marriage.

### Religious Reforms

Jayasthiti Malla was a religious minded man. He made many temples and edifices. In memory of his wife, who died in 1389 A.D. he built the temple of *Rama* with *Lova* and *Kusha* at Pasupati on the left bank of the Bagmati. He established many images of gods and goddesses at Patan. He also founded the trust for the daily worship and maintenance of *Gokarneswar* and *Gorakhanath*. He performed Koti Homa and contributed riches to Buddhists shrines and respected the dieties.

### Literary Achievements

During his reign, literature flourished. Sanskrit was used for all the religious texts and poems composed by his royal poets. Ramayana was written and named *Bhairabananda* and enacted for the public. He showed taste for history as well,

### **Financial and Other Reforms**

He introduced the system of fines for small offences, as a form of punishment.

His land reforms were based on the division of land into four categories. The best land measuring 47 yds. 6" was equal to the second grade of 54 yds. 6" which was also equal to the third grade of 64 yds. 6" in one ropani. He introduced the system of measuring lands and houses. He also introduced reforms in weights and measures.

Due to all his reforms, Jayasthiti Malla has been regarded as a very able king. People are of the opinion that his real name is Thiti malla derived from all his activities in standardising the system of the country. His name occupies a very high position in the history of Nepal.

### **Dharmamalla, Jyotirmalla and Kirtimalla (1395-1428 A.D.)**

After the death of Jayasthitimalla in 1395 the country was ruled by his three sons, **Dharmamalla**, **Jyotirmalla** and **Kirtimalla**. They had a joint rule of the country. They just remained sovereign. The country was in the hands of the powerful ministers who dominated the whole affairs. Later on they could get rid of these overshadowing personalities and ruled independently for thirteen years. During this time *Madansimaharama* and *Saktisimharama* enjoyed even Chinese recognition as they were ruling Banepa, Palanchoke and Chautara which touched Tibet.

Historian conjecture that after the death of Rajalladevi Jayasthiti retired from active life and asked his three sons to have a collegial rule without dividing the country. Even after the death of their father they might have continued to rule jointly for there were powerful ministers who wanted to overshadow them.

This collegial rule lasted till the death of Dharmamalla. Kirtimalla was already dead. So **Jyotirmalla** alone had to rule the country. He was strong enough to do away with the ambitious ministers in 1409 and assumed the supreme and sole authority.

Jyotirmalla was a man of religious impartiality. Though a follower of Visnu, he restored the shrine of Swayambhunath. He repaired the temple of Pasupati and performed Kotihoma. He was a learned man and had composed a treaties called *siddhisara*. He was also a good musician. He slackened the land tax. There was



peace and tranquility during his reign. He died in 1428, and was succeeded by Yakshamalla.

### **Yakshamalla (1428-1482)**

Yakshamalla succeeded his father Jyotirmalla in 1428 A.D. He had already gained experience in administration during the days of his father. So he was able to rule with no apparent difficulty. Among the Malla kings he was considered to be the most brave and distinguished person. Many Vamsavalis show that he was a great army commander.

He was a great conqueror. Having conquered and subdued all the territories within the valley, he turned his attention beyond. Kirpatrik says that his boundaries to the east extended upto Morang, in the west to Gorkha, in the north to some parts of Tibet Digarcha and Bodhgaya in the south. Though his domination to Bodhgaya is doubted, it may be that he went on a pilgrimage to Gaya. It is certain that Yakshamalla extended his kingdom into a big one.

King Yakshamalla was a devoted *Visnavite* and equally a devotee of Pasupatinath. It was he who began the tradition of the worship of Pasupati by the *Bhatta Brahmin* of south India. For this he had brought four such Bhattas and even today, Pasupatinath is worshipped by the Bhattas.

He was considered a great builder and a devotee who made the image of *Minanath* now called Yamaleswar in the north side of Ranipokhari. He also renovated and raised the temple of *Dattatraya* in Bhadgaon. He went on a pilgrimage to many religious places. He even went on foot to *Gosainthan* where he distributed alms to the poor. He was tolerant to all other religions as he revered the Buddhist deities and made endowments to Buddhist shrines and Vihars.

He was a great patron of arts and learning, evidenced by many books in sanskrit and newari written during his time are still existing in the government library. He had a deep love of dramatic performance as he himself witnessed plays being staged on different occasions.

To make his subjects happy and prosperous he constructed canals, water conduits and did many benevolent works. It is said that the ditch and wells around the four gates of Bhadgaon were built during his time. Some Historians think that Yakshamalla

committed one fatal mistake before his death. This belittled his greatness as this mistake was the cause, due to which the Malla kings were destined never to rule the valley again and were to be conquered by the Gurkhas under Prithvi Narayan Shah. Yakshamalla divided the valley among his sons. Thus Bhadgaon, Kantipur, Patan and Banepa emerged as independent, but weak city states at a time when they should have been united. Thus Yakshamalla has been held responsible for the downfall of the Mallas. Even the kingdom of Patan later fell in the hands of Siddhinarsing due to the division of strength.

Yakshamalla was survived by six sons, Rayamalla, Ratnamalla, Ranamalla, Arimalla and Purnamalla, and also a daughter. Perhaps in the beginning they seem to have ruled jointly but three of them had each set up themselves independent principalities. According to Kirpatrik's chronicle Rayamalla was assigned the principality of Bhadgoan, Ratnamalla obtained Kingdom of Kathmandu, Ranamalla founded another kingdom in the east with his capital Banepa. A son-in-law of Yakshamalla overran Patan. Taking advantage of these fraternal disputes, vassal princes around the kingdom vigorously asserted their authority and declared their independence. Thus the vast dominion of Yakshamalla was disrupted soon after his death.

These divided kingdoms lived in a state of internal struggle. Jealous amongst the rulers for over 150 years, became the cause of ruin of the mallas till 1768, when Prithvinarayan came to subdue and combined them into one strong state. Thus, because of their own mistake the mallas ceased to be the masters of the fertile and happy valley of Nepal.

**Rayamalla**

Rayamalla, the eldest son of Yakshamalla, ascended the throne of Bhadgaon in 1481 A.D. Some historical facts present that for some time he seems to have ruled jointly with his brother. He was skillful in archery. During his reign Taudi Dhan Bajracharya built the Buddhist monastery called *Chaturbarna Bihara* dedicated to *Padmapani Lokeswar*. Prof. Bhandary conjectures that he ruled till 1512 A.D.

**Bhubanmalla**

After the death of Rayamalla his son Bhubanmalla ascended the throne. Wright's chronicle presents the name of Subarnamalla as the successor but sound support is not yet available.

During the partition of the kingdom **Ranamalla**, son of Yakshamalla, got Sanga and Banepa as his share. He died without a heir, so Sanga and Banepa were merged into Bhadgaon. Other principalities like Thimi, Nakadesh Bode, Sankhu and Changu were under Bhadgaon.

Bhubanmalla had a taste for music and dance. It was he who started the *Navadurga* dance in Bhadgaon and *Mahalaxmi* dance in Bode. A great famine occurred during his time, so many people had to scatter for settlement in other countries.

**Jitamalla and Pranamalla**

On the death of Bhubanmalla his two sons Pranamalla and Jitamalla ruled jointly. After the death of Jitamalla, Pranamalla ruled independently till 1547 A.D.

**Viswamalla**

Viswamalla sat on the throne after his father's death. He and his wife Gangadevi were religious minded. so he with the advice of Ratnamalla, the king of Kantipur, had built temples and consecrated the images of *Narayana* on all the four sides of Pasupati temple. The *Datatraya temple* which was made by Yakshamalla in 1427 A.D. was raised to three storeys and the *Sannyasi sadhus* were made incharge of the temple. He provided trust fund for its upkeep and daily expenses. He built a monastery called *Poojahari Math* with beautiful lattice windows carved with peacock figures.

**Trailokyamalla**

After the death of Viswamalla his son Trailokyamalla ascended the throne. His brother Tribhubanmalla was a good wrestler. One of his inscriptions mention that he with his mother and brother jointly ruled till 1603 A.D. After that he seems to have ruled independently.

During his time Siva Simha the ruler of Kantipur attacked and captured Sankhu which was under Bhadgaon, but Sivasimha could not retain it long.

**Jagatjyotir Malla (1613-1637 A.D.)**

After Trailokyamalla his son Jagatjyotir Malla ascended the throne. He was a highly religious minded man. The *Adhi Bhairab Jatra* (fair) which is observed on the first day of Baisakh every year at Bhaktapur was introduced by him. The *Bhairab Temple* was also built by him.

There is a legend that he used to play dice with the goddess *Tulaja Bhawani*. One day in course of the game being absent minded he thought her to be a beautiful girl and seeing his perverted mind the goddess disappeared never to be seen again.

He was a highly learned man, who had been credited with *Hara Gauri Biwah*, *Kunja Bihari Natak*, collections of *Slokasar* and *Sangitsar*. Sanskrit and Newari languages flourished during his reign. He was not only a literary figure but also a patron of art and music and a good astrologer too.

He is said to have introduced Indian coins inspite of violent protest against it. He died in 1637 A.D.

He was a contemporary of Jahangir the Mughal Emperor. The

fresco painting which is in the Bhaktapur museum shows his patronage in painting arts.

### **Nareshmalla**

Nareshmalla ascended the throne after his father's death. During his reign Pratap Malla the king of Kantipur attacked Bhadgaon and occupied some parts of it. One of his inscriptions mention that Nareshmalla presented an elephant to Pratapmalla. He ruled till 1644 A.D. He had set up a good museum of wood carvings, sculpture and metal works in the *Sadashiva chowk* of his palace.

### **Jagatprakash Malla**

Nareshmalla crowned his son Jagat Prakash in 1644 A.D. From the beginning of his reign he had able ministers like *Dhana Sing Bhaju*, *Biswabhari* and *Chandra Shekhar*. He was the first king of Bhadgaon who circulated silver coins after minting in his own kingdom in 1645 A.D.

Pratapmalla with the help of Srinivasmalla, the ruler of Lalitpur, attacked Bhadgaon three times. In his last attempt he subjugated Nala and some of the forts. Pratapmalla even destroyed the big *Tabapokhari* (tank) and brought the figure of the hooded serpent and the images of gods and goddesses to decorate his palace museum.

Jagatprakash was not disheartened, he tried to win over Srinivas on his side and was able to recapture the lost principality and forts.

### **Jitamitra (1673-1696 A.D.)**

Jagat Prakash died in 1672 and his son Jitamitra ascended the throne. He was assisted by his brother Ugrammalla in the state affairs, and also by his able minister *Bhagirami*. He was simple, able and a just ruler. He made rules for the use of water of the canals for irrigating the fields. His people had to use the water by turn irrespective of high or low; any one breaking the rule was punished and people were compelled to work one day in a year for the maintenance of the canals.

He was also a highly religious minded man. He had constructed two storeyed inns in front of his palace for the travellers, where he consecrated the golden image of *Mahadeva* and in another inn with *Narayana*.

Like his fore fathers he had literary taste and had written dramas entitled *Jaimini Bharat* and *Ashwamedha* in sanskrit. He has displayed his love of artistic beauty in the entrance to Kumari-chowk with marvelous wood carvings, and inside the chowk goddess *Chandi* in different poses, the stone tap with *intertwined group of eleven snakes* and a museum of gods and goddesses in rows with different poses. The credit for artistic beauty of Bhaktapur Darbar which is very much praised by foreign tourists goes to him. Powel writes "Bhadgaon Darbar is a vast storehouse of the treasure of Newari arts". During his time all the three kingdoms had unity among themselves except for a short time.

### **Bhupatindra Malla**

Bhupatindra Malla was the greatest among the kings of Bhaktapur. He was the son of Jita Mitra Malla. There is a story which tells as to how he became king. The king Jitamitra had two wives and Bhupatindra Malla was from the first queen. The younger queen wanted her own children to get the throne and so she secretly ordered some dacoits to take Bhupatindra to a forest and kill him, but they did not kill him and just left him there. He was found and brought up by a carpenter who had come to gather some wood. He grew up to be a very skilled carpenter and one day when he had gone to work in the king's palace, he was recognised by his father and proclaimed as the crown prince. After his father's death he became the king in 1696. It is probably due to his skill in the trade of carpentry that led him to construct such temples and buildings during his time.

Bhupatindra Malla became famous because of his contribution of art to Nepal. His famous palace with 55 windows in Bhadgaon is still standing. That palace is supposed to contain 99 courtyards and beautiful baths. In this palace he had made one window with glass panes acquired from his Indian friend. The gate is a solid example of art and architecture of his time. It is highly admired by the foreign visitors to Bhaktapur. One can see even today the brass statue of his with folded hands in a sitting posture set up on a stone pillar before his palace.

His next important construction is the temple of *Nyatapola* in Bhaktapur. It is a colossal temple of six storeys and a dream of the architects. It is so proportionate from all angles that one can simply admire its beauty. The images of Jayamal Patta, lion,

*griffins* and *elephants* on both sides of the steps of the temple speak of his high excellence of sculpture. He constructed many other relics and temples but the above two are the most important of them all. It is believed that since he was the contemporary of Sahajahan of Delhi that is how he got the inspiration for the construction of such beautiful works of architecture.

During his reign Bhaktapur was flourishing and the people enjoyed peace, prosperity and happiness. To be able to construct such massive buildings one needs good architects, money and co-operation from the public. This seems to have been fulfilled during his reign.

He was an ambitious ruler so he made daring raids into the neighbouring states but his attempts were foiled.

### **Ranajit Malla**

Ranajitmalla ascended the throne of Bhaktapur during the time of his father Bhupatindramalla in 1722 A.D. He was the last independent king of Bhaktapur in his line. As Raja Prakash, the king of Patan, was pious and simple, the *six Pradhans*, who were better known as the king makers, blinded one of his eyes due to which he died some times after. These Pradhans placed Ranajitmalla on the throne of Patan also. But after a year they did not like the unyielding ruler like Ranajitmalla so he was dethroned from Patan.

During the time of Narabhupal Shah *Prithvi Narayan* had stayed as a guest for three years in Bhaktapur. Prithvi had made a tie of friendship with Bir Narsimha the eldest son of Ranajitmalla.

Ranajit was fond of collecting rare and precious things. In the palace he added many courtyards and doors, among which the entrance door is artistically very beautiful. He wished to erect a stone pillar for which he requested skilled labourers from Kathmandu. Jayaprakash was envious for this, so he secretly instructed the workers to break while erecting. They did as instructed. Ranajit was very sad for this. But later on he got it joined and erected. He had hung a large and big bell at the Annapurna temple of Bhaktapur.

To improve his financial condition he used to import silver from Tibet and send the minted coinage in exchange.

During his time there was struggle among the three kingdoms, feud between Jaya Prakash and Ranajit, anarchy prevailing in

Patan, faction in the Kathmandu palace, and quarrel among Ranajit's sons resulting the murder of Bir Narsimha.

From Nuwakot Prithvi Narayan was watching all these situations in the valley. In such a vital moment he attacked in 1768 A.D. and defeated Kathmandu and Patan whose rulers took refuge in Bhaktapur. After some months the Gorkha troops invaded Bhaktapur in which Ranajit surrendered in 1769 and was sent to Kasi to pass the rest of his life as requested.



**RULERS OF LALITPUR****THE SAPTA KUTUMBA OR SATAPATRAS AND THE PRADHANS OF PATAN**

We get various views from the chronicles and other ancient sources about the independent status of Patan. Some say it was independent ever since Harisimha's time; some mention that Yakshamalla gave the city of Patan to his daughter as a dowry, and still some say that it became independent during Ratnamalla's reign in Kathmandu. Shiva Simha is said to have established his sovereignty after performing Lakshyahom and various other Poojas; which shows that Patan was independent of Kathmandu before Shiva Simha Deva. The feudatories or the Satapatras were enjoying semi independent status since quite a long time. Among them mention is made about Jayasimha, Kirtisimha, Kusumsimha, Visnusimha and Purander Simha, before Shiva Simha's reign in Patan.

The inscriptions made by Jayasthitimalla show that these Saptakutumbas (traditional seven families or Satapatras) of Patan had been conducting the administration of the local self government ever since these early years. Their political existence was present during and after Jayasthiti's reign but nothing is known about their origination or even why and how they were widely known as political heads. Their families were of the Vaisya caste following Saivite and Visnuvite religion. In the inscription made by Visnusimha it is said that his mother (Kusumsimha's wife) was of this Vaisya caste also. They were the ancient Vaisya Thakuries of Nepal. In the inscription dated 1427 A.D. five names of these men are mentioned viz. Sri Rajsimhamallavarman, Sri Udayasimhamallavarman, Sri Jayadharmallavarman, Sri Rudrasimha-

mallavarman and Sri Jayabhimamallavarman.

### **Visnusimha**

Visnusimha realised the weakness of the central authority due to separatists tendencies among the sons of Yakshamalla, so he asserted the authority strongly and became an independent ruler of Patan. According to the Chinese account he ruled till 1555 A.D. After him there was the joint rule of his three sons Narasimha, Uddhavsingha and Purandarsimha till 1569 A.D. Among these three brothers Purandarsimha seems to have ruled the longest upto 1597 A.D.

It is said that these Saptakutumbas of Patan were tolerant towards all religions though they worshiped Shiva and Visnu mostly. They also worshiped Ram, Yuddhisthira, Arjun, Karna, Ganesh, Laxmi, Indra etc. (Gods and heros of the Epic Age). According to Uddhav Singh's inscription in the museum, these Saptakutumba were patrons of Arts and literature. They were also excellent at fighting with the various weapons of that time. Gradually, the sons and descendants of Visnusimha lost all of their powers owing to their weakness in governing. Therefore, the Pradhans of Patan became powerful and started to rule at the power behind the throne.

### **Harihar Simha Malla**

It was during the rule of Purandarsimha that Shivasimha Malla, the king of Kathmandu, took Patan easily and merged it with Kathmandu. He sent his son Hariharsimha Malla to rule Patan as a governor. According to Vamsavali Hariharsimha had some friction with his father, so he declared himself independent. But soon after he died in 1618 A.D. and his son succeeded him. According to Prof. Bendall it was only during Siddhinarsimha's reign that Patna became wholly independent from Kathmandu since 1618 A.D.

### **Siddhi Narasimha Malla (1618-1661 A.D.)**

Siddhi Narasimha Malla ascended the throne of Patan in 1618 A.D. after the death of his father Harihar Simha. He ranks foremost among the rulers of Patan. He was a very wise, religious and a kind hearted king. He built many temples, water-spouts, and ponds. Besides these, he built Buddhist stupas, *Chaityas* and *Vihars*,

Among the religious edifices that he built, the *Krishna Mandir* is a master piece of the Malla architecture. It has twenty one golden spires and pictures carved on stone, showing important events of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. It is a relic of which Nepal can be proud of. He also built the temple of *Tulaja*, his family goddess, within the compound of his residence. He was really a great devotee with a staunch faith in God.

On the inauguration day of the Krishna Mandir, Pratap Malla of Kantipur attacked Patan, but he was driven back by the ministers with the help of *Damar Shah* of Gorkha.

In commemoration of this happy event he performed Koti Hom sacrifice, made gifts of wealth to the Brahmins and the poor.

He altered and added some portions of his palace and made it magnificent. In memory of his mother, *Lalmati*, he dug out the beautiful pond which is now within the Zoo.

He was not only a great supporter of art and architecture but also a well wisher for the happiness of his subjects. He made over 2,400 houses for the people to live in.

He had a great taste for drama and music. So many religious and social plays were enacted.

During his reign, trade between Patan and Tibet flourished and was competing with Kathmandu. He made friendly relations with the king *Ramashah* of Gorkha and conducted trade between them.

A kind pious hearted as he was, spent most of his time in religious observances, and in the end abandoned the worldly affairs, led the life of an ascetic, went on a pilgrimage and never returned.

### **Srinivas Malla (1660-1684 A.D.)**

Srinivas became king when his father abandoned worldly life and went on a pilgrimage. At that time Pratapmalla was ruling Kantipur and Jagat Prakash Malla in Bhaktapur. As in the past there was struggle among these rulers. Pratapmalla with the help of Srinivas attacked Bhaktapur three times. But their alliance did not last long.

Later, Srinivas sided Jagat Prakash. So Bhaktapur recaptured the villages taken by Pratapmalla. As a result, the highways connecting Lalitpur and Bhaktapur were opened from all sides. At this Pratapmalla signed a treaty with Srinivas Malla.

Some times after Pratapmalla, Srinivasmalla, Jagat Prakash,

Digvijaya Sen of Tanhun and Prithipati Shah of Gorkha made a treaty of alliance and attacked Makawanpur which compelled Suva Sen of Makawanpur to enter into that alliance.

On the occasion of his son's "*Bratabandha*" Srinivas invited all the rulers of alliance to his capital and prevailed upon them to sign a treaty of alliance whereby the members of the alliance promised not to go into war with league members.

He was a man of religious temperament. He restored and reconstructed the *Degutale temple*, the *Machhendra temple* and made trust fund for its expenses. He built the famous *Bhimsen temple* near his palace and made his palace temple three storeyed.

He gave permission to his minister *Bhagirath Bhaiya* to build the three storeyed temple of *Mahadeva* in front of his palace.

He seems to be tolerant in other religions as it was during his reign the *christian* Father Gruber appeared in his kingdom also.

He was a lover of art, literature, dance, and well versed in music. He was a far-sighted king with manly virtues who in the later part of his reign circulated coins in his name imprinting *Nepaleswar* on it.

He, visualising domestic feud, abdicated the throne in favour of his son Yoganarendra Malla in 1684 A.D.

### **Yoganarendra Malla (1684-1705 A.D.)**

Yoganarendra wished to get the throne during the life time of his father. The main cause was the rising power of Chautara *Bhagirath Bhaiya*, which he could not bear. He left his palace and began to do business with other merchants.

The far-sighted Srinivas Malla realising this, enthroned him in 1684 A.D. At the time of coronation of his son, Srinivas invited the rulers of Bhaktapur and Kantipur, which indicates that there was unity among the three city states.

After his accession to the throne he removed Bhagirath Bhaiya and ruled the country with peace.

Tension in the valley arose when the powerful *Chautara Laxmi Narayan* of Kantipur raised the question of Bhagirath Bhaiya. Under this baseless protest Kantipur attacked Bhaktapur. Yoganarendra took the side of Kantipur and went with Bhupatendra Malla to attack Bhaktapur.

Laxmi Narayan betrayed Lalitpur by not giving the land which they were to get. Later, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur made an alliance

and they singled out Kantipur.

Yoganarendra made good relations with Gorkha and Makawanpur. During this time there seems to be stable government in Lalitpur.

Like his predecessors he was religious minded and tolerant to other religions. He made rich endowments for *Taleju Bhawani*, *Machhindranath* or *Lokeswara* and *Harisiddi Devi*. He built the *Manimandap* (Sahutepati or Sohrakhutepati) for astrologers gathering to fix the date of Machhindra Jatra. He also consecrated the image of *Bhairab* with *Sakti* and performed *Kotihoma*. He started the *Bhimsen Jatra* in Patan.

He was a lover of music. In one of his coins he has imprinted him as '*Sangitanavaparagata*' (well-versed in the art of music) and in another '*Nepalachudamani*.'

It is mentioned in the Vamsavali that one of the ministers of Bhaktapur poisoned him to death while he was in Changu with his wives. His dead body was brought to Lalitpur to burn in which his twenty one wives self immolated themselves as *Satees*.

#### CONDITION IN LALITPUR AFTER YOGANARENDRA'S DEATH

Yoganarendra died without a legitimate heir to the throne of Lalitpur. So for many years there was disorder in Lalitpur. Both Kantipur and Bhaktapur coveted to dominate over it. On the other hand the ministers in Patan became powerful enough to enthrone and dethrone the rulers. They became a sort of '*king makers*'. After the death of Yoganarendra the ministers nominated **Lokaprakash Malla** on the throne. Even the Regent queen of Kantipur came with her nine year old king **Bhaskermalla** to claim for the throne but all opposed her. She was made captive and set free after five days. After him they nominated **Indramalla**, nephew of Yogaprakash and then by **Birnarsimha**.

During that time from the source of Prof Bhandary we also find **Yogamati** daughter of Yoganarendra, quite powerful. Due to her relation her husband **Birnarsimha** was placed on the throne by the ministers, but she divorced him and she made **Mahendramalla**, her step brother, king of Lalitpur for whose case she got support from *Tanahun* and *Gorkha*. He was only five years old, so she became his *Regent*. She made friendship with the king of Gorkha and was able to use the coin of Mahendra malla in Gorkha for

transaction. It is from this time that the Gorkhals call *Mahendra-mali* for the silver coin. **Riddinarsing** succeeded Mahendra malla and after his death Yogamati wished to enthrone **Mahendrasimha** (Bhaskermalla of Kantipur) but other ministers wanted Ranajit-malla, king of Bhaktapur, to be placed on the throne of Lalitpur. So there was tussle between the ministers and Yogamati. Ultimately she was clever enough to win them over. In the mean time Ranajit came with an army to attack Lalitpur but she arrested him and was set free on payment of penalty of Rs 16,000 and two elephants. A month later, she called Mahendrasimha (Bhaskermalla) and enthroned him. He ruled both Kantipur and Lalitpur till his death in 1722 A.D.

After Mahendra Simha **Yogaprakash Malla** was placed on the throne by Yogamati. She was the main pivot of power, who under her regency could put seven personages on the throne of Patan as its king. After her removal the notorious SIX Pradhans better known as 'king makers' controlled the throne of Patan.

#### **Visnumalla (1786-1801 A.D.)**

Visnumalla, the nephew of Indramalla, succeeded Yogaprakash. He was brave, fearless and at the same time kind and religious minded. He built the temple of *Aryalokiteswara*, where he himself brought some bricks for the construction of the temple. At this, all the people of Patan helped in the work. He also built temples and inns at *Sankhamul* and consecrated the image of *Visnu* in the temple. He offered a big bell to please his family goddess.

There was drought and famine in his kingdom, for the remedy of which he performed '*Purascharan* and *Nagasadhan*'.

When Rajya Prakash, brother of Jayaprakash, was banished from Kantipur, he went to take refuge in Lalitpur where he was received by Visnumalla and adopted him as his successor.

#### **Rajya Prakash Malla (1795-1808 A.D.)**

After the death of Visnumalla, Rajyaprakash malla ascended the throne of Patan. Almost all the successors after Yoganarendra died within a short period of reign. No one was a legitimate successor, and all were without any gut to control their ministers, rather they had to depend on their mercy. This instability of the throne invested supreme power to the ministers or *Pradhans*.

During this period Rajya Prakash Malla, a simple and religious

mindful man became king. He could not control the ministers nor could he get public support. The ministers taking advantage of his simplicity deprived him of his eye-sight and he died soon after.

### **Biswajit Malla (1809-1815 A.D.)**

After the death of Rajyaprakash the **Pradhana** (ministers) among whom specially *Kalidas*, *Bhinkhwa* and *Dhanavanta* began to make kings to their choice. According to Prof. Bhandary these ministers put **Biswajit** on the throne when Rajya Prakash died. Biswajit became an eye-sore to these Pradhans. So they killed him at the door of Taleju on the pretext of having illicit connection with the daughter-in-law of one of the powerful ministers.

### **Ranajit Malla**

After Biswajit, the Pradhans (ministers) consulting among themselves went to the king of Bhaktapur and declared Ranajit Malla as the king of Lalitpur also.

In Kantipur king Jayaprakash Malla was furious with Lalitpur for they gave protection and made king to his banished brother Rajya Prakash, who was again deprived of his eye-sight due to which he died. So, in order to revenge he made a treaty with Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha.

Then, the murder of Biswajit Malla and enthronement to his old enemy Ranajitmalla on the throne, added flame to the fire to Jayaprakash's anger. On the other hand Bhaktapur also had given asylum to Jayaprakash's another brother Narendra Prakash and some of the villages occupied by Bhaktapur was not returned to Kantipur. Jayaprakash could not bear all these, so he made preparation for an attack against Lalitpur.

In Lalitpur Ranajit Malla could not control the disordered political situation. Meanwhile, the Pradhans were aware of Jayaprakash's preparation for an attack against them. Visualising that Jayaprakash may change his mind and not attack Lalitpur, they removed Ranajitmalla from the throne. But this did not bring any change to Jayaprakash. He attacked and arrested the six notorious Pradhans, had them beg in the street and imprisoned them. Later, they promised to help him and were released.

### **Jayaprakash Malla**

Jayaprakash, the king of Kantipur, was declared king of Lalitpur

also. He was a man of strict nature and hot temperament, so the wicked ministers were afraid of him. They showed their loyalty out-wardly, but secretly they were plotting against him and at last when Jayaprakash had gone for a ceremonial bath at Teku (the confluence of the Bagmati and the Visnumati) the wicked ministers drove him to Kantipur.

### **Dala Mardan Shah**

King Prithvi Narayan Shah was arranging to consolidate the valley states together with all the scattered states of Nepal into one united kingdom. So, he was blocking the inlet passes from Nuwakot to bring economic crisis in the valley. Visualising this, the Pradhans approached Prithvi Narayan Shah to request him to ascend to the throne of Lalitpur. But the far-sighted Prithvi showed unwillingness and sent his brother Dala Mardan Shah with them.

Dala Mardan Shah was placed on the throne of Patan. The ministers were in the impression that after the enthronement of Dala Mardan the economic condition of the valley specially that of Patan would improve, but to the contrary it went from bad to worse, as they found that he was helping Prithvi Narayan secretly. So these fickle Pradhans removed Dala Mardan Shah and placed Tej Narasimha Malla, a descendant of Biswajit Malla.

### **Tej Narasimha Malla**

Tej Narasimha Malla was placed on the throne of Lalitpur in 1765 A.D. He ruled for nearly four years as a puppet in the hands of the wicked ministers.

When Prithvi Narayan Shah invaded and captured Kantipur the wicked Pradhans were trying to hand over the kingdom of Patan to Prithvi Narayan. Being aware of this, Tej Narsimha Malla, to save his life, went to hide himself at the *Taleju Temple* where Jaya Prakash was hiding. When *Tula Ram Pande* encircled the temple, both Tej Narsimha and Jaya Prakash fled to Bhaktapur. Prithvi Narayan Shah captured five out of the six Pradhan traitors, who were so powerful that "even Jayaprakash and Dala Mardan Shah were unable to hold the throne once the Pradhans had turned against them." He bound their hands and feet and killed them.



**Ratnamalla (1484-1520 A.D.)**

Yakshamalla had consolidated all the valley states into one kingdom and made Bhaktapur as his headquarters. In Lalitpur and Kantipur he had feudatory Thakurs to conduct the internal administration.

After the death of Yakshamalla, his sons ruled jointly for some time. Later, separatist tendencies arose among them and Ratnamalla, who was active and a clever diplomat with great ambition came to Kantipur. He was able to win over one of the *twelve Thakurs*, who invited the other eleven Thakurs in a feast and poisoned them to death. Some times after, he also killed this traitor and cleared the powerful Thakurs who were virtually its masters. He, thus, established an independent kingdom of Kantipur in 1484 A.D.

Though the feudatories of Kantipur were rooted out, still there were *Thakurics in Nuwakot* who were more dangerous and were trying to become independent. He attacked Nuwakot and defeated them.

He afterwards had trouble with the '*Kakus*', a Bhutiya tribe who came in swarm and created trouble. They were suppressed and driven out of the valley with the help of the *Sen ruler of Palpa*. The Khasas and Magars who came with the troops of Palpa got land from the king for settlement.

It was during his reign that the *Muhammadans* for the first time were allowed to settle in the valley when they came as refugees from India. Of course, muhammadans had appeared in the valley when *Shamsuddin Ilias of Bengal* had invaded and made terrible havoc in 1349 A.D.

He set up *Dakshinkali*, *Saptarisi* and *Astamatrika* images at Pasupati which shows his religious mind.

With the help of the people of Kantipur and Lalitpur he brought copper from the mines of Chitlang and minted copper coinage. He ruled for thirty-six years and died in 1520 A.D.

### **Suryamalla (1520-1529 A.D.)**

After the death of Ratnamalla his son Suryamalla became king in 1520 A.D. During his time he included Changu under Kantipur which belonged to Bhaktapur. He started the Ratha Jatra of *Bajrayogini* at Sankhu for the first time.

### **Amarmalla or Narendramalla (1529-1560 A.D.)**

Amarmalla or Narendramalla was the same person named differently. He succeeded his father in 1529. He was brave, religious and a lover of arts and architecture. He extended his kingdom by merging many areas like Bandegaon, Thecho, Hari-siddi, Luvu, Chapagaon, Lele, Pharping Khokana, Thankot, Dharmasthali, Tokha, and Gokarna.

He built many temples of Gods and Goddesses. He started the God and Goddess dances like *Harisiddi Jatra*, *Trisuli Jatra*, and *Manamaiju Jatra* and for the first time he started the *Kankeswari Jatra*. He was a learned man who knew astrology, medicine and literature.

### **Mahendramalla (1560-1579 A.D.)**

Mahendramalla succeeded his father in 1560 A.D. He was a devotee of Tuleja Bhawani. Instead of going to Bhaktapur for worshipping Tuleja he built the big temple of *Tuleju* in the northern part of his residence and also *Pasupati*, *Mahendreswari* on the other side of the temple. He improved the town by allowing the public to construct tall buildings. Trade flourished in Kantipur. To increase the population he gave lands to the needy and made settlement.

He was the contemporary of Humayun and Akbar. He went to see Humayun, the then emperor of India. He also had friendly relations with Tibet.

It was for the first time the silver coin with better design and finish was circulated in Kantipur, which is better known as '*mahendramali*'. The minting work was started by him in the

valley. He imported silver from Tibet and coined with alloy and exchanged and made 24 p.c. profit. Later, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur also began to mint.

He had good friendship with *Trailokya Malla* of Bhaktapur. All the city states of the valley were in good terms. He died in 1579 A.D.

#### **Sadasivamalla** (1580-1589 A.D.)

Sadasiva Malla became king after his father in 1580 A.D. He was a man of wanton character. All his subjects were unhappy with him. He used to let loose his horses in the corn fields. A lustful king as he was, he corrupted many beautiful girls. So people were against him. Once, while he was in Manohara side he was captured and beaten and was driven away from the kingdom. He took refuge in Bhaktapur. Realising his corrupt habit, he was captivated by the king in one of the courtyard of the palace. Now this courtyard is called *Sadasiva Chok* where one can see curious wood carvings and many images of god and goddesses.

During his reign there was a *Vikshu* named *Jibraaj* who went to Gaya for a pilgrimage. He was very much impressed by the Buddhist temple of Gaya. When he came back he built the remarkable temple of *Maha Buddha* in Patan. His reign period was 1580-1589 A.D.

#### **Sivasimhamalla** (1589-1618 A.D.)

After the banishment of Sadasiva Malla his brother Sivasimha Malla became king. During that time the feudatories or the *Satapatras* were conducting the internal administration of Lalitpur. **Bisnusimha** one of the *Satapatras* (seven feudatories) had already declared Lalitpur with its surrounding areas an independent kingdom. It was during Bisnu Simha's descendant **Purandarsimha** that Sivasimha conquered the kingdom of Lalitpur and made under him. He sent his son **Harihar Simha Malla** to rule Lalitpur as a governor. Sivasimha Malla and Hariharsimha Malla had a clash, so the former in his fury cut-off Harihar Simha from the role of succession and appointed his grandson Laxmi Narsimha heir to the throne of Kantipur.

He was a wise statesman, brave and religious minded. His queen *Ganga Rani* was still more religious than him. She had created one jungle garden with trees and fruit trees. At present it is

known as *Ranibari* which lies to the north of the Indian Embassy. She renovated the temple of Pasupati, Changu Narayan and the Swayambhu stupa.

### **Laxmi Narsimha Malla (1618-1641 A.D.)**

After the death of Sivasimha his eldest grandson Laxmi Narsimha Malla ascended the throne of Kantipur. Some historians opine that he built the wooden temple of *Gorakhnath*. It is called *Kastamandir* or the temple of wood. Kathmandu, until that time, was known as Kantipur. But it was called *Kastamandapa* several centuries ago, for the name Kathmandu existed even at the time of Narendradeva in 1143 A.D. So it is wrong to attribute him as the founder of *Kastamandapa*. He ruled from 1618-1641 A.D.

He was fortunate to get among his ministers **Bhim Malla**, a man of intellectual calibre. The king relied on him very much. This man did much for establishing good relations between Nepal and Tibet. He also prevailed upon the ruler of Tibet to make treaty on commercial relations. He caused to open 32 *Kothis*, Commercial emporiums, in Kathmandu and conducted trade with Tibet. Nepalese were allowed to live in Tibet for trade, but if he dies there without a heir to his property, it should go to the government of Nepal. During his good administration he extended the kingdom upto Kutu. He had a mind to make his master a sovereign ruler of the whole of Kathmandu valley. In spite of his sterling service to the king and country he became a victim of the jealous opponents, who poisoned the ears of the king that he with the help of the Tibetan ruler is trying to usurp the throne for himself. The king without any thought believed this false allegation and he was killed. But later on the king repented very much. Some historians have said that he became insane\* as a result of the cruel assassination of Bhim Malla. Because of this he was confined for sixteen years. During this time Pratap Malla looked after the

\*The story that Laxmi Narsingh became insane as a result of the cruel assassination of his able and competent minister Bhim Malla cannot be accepted as true. Laxmi Narsingh had a tinge of insanity even during the time of his grandfather. It is recorded in history that in his youth he showed signs of insanity and his pious grandmother had adopted several measures for the cure of her grandson's malady. Laxmi Narsingh, though a ruler with a feeble brain, was lucky enough to enjoy the service of an able minister to

state affairs and afterwards declared himself the king in 1641 A.D.

### **Pratapmalla (1641-1674)**

Pratap Malla was the ablest amongst the rulers of Kantipur. He had experience in administration as he was entrusted to handle the state affairs while his father was in confinement for sixteen years. He was a brave, religious and learned king. He was an authority in the art of warfare, religion, and music. He had assumed the title of "*Shree Shastra Sangitadi Sakala Vidhya Parag Maharajadhiraja Nepaleswar etc.*" He seems to have sung his own panegyrics full of empty yauntings.

He got married to two girls from Bihar and from his two queens, he had seven sons, Bhupendra, Chakrabartendra, Mahipatendra, Nripendra, Parthibindra, Sudernarayan and Suratsahi.

He was a clever diplomat because sometime he used to invade Bhadgaon with an alliance with Patan and sometime vice versa. He had even defeated the Gurkhas who had come under Dambar Saha to help the rulers of Patan. Pratap Malla even conquered as far as Kuti in Tibet. This shows that he was a great conqueror.

Pratap Malla was a religious minded king and so he constructed many temples. To ward off evil spirits he erected the *Hanumana idol* at his gate for which his palace is known as *Hanuman Dhoka*. He is noted for his construction works around his palace in Hanuman Dhoka quadrangle.

He is believed to have known fifteen languages. In Hanuman Dhoka there is a stone inscription with different languages. It is doubtful as to whether he really knew all these languages but it is quite evident he had some knowledge of them. He had also composed a few poems in Sanskrit language and was very fond of music and dancing. It is believed that he also knew classical dance. He preserved the classical language and culture at a time when they were declining out in India as a result of alien rule.

It was during his reign that Swami Gyana Nanda and Lamba Karna Bhatta visited Nepal. The king seeing their intelligence,

whom he owed much for the prosperity of his dominions. But he laid the axe at his own foot by murdering his best well-wisher. This shows that in the latter part of his reign Laxmi Narsingh grown so far in insanity that he lost all power of judgement and even went to the length of murdering his ablest minister. Seeing his insanity get worse his son Pratap Malla put him to confinement and began to rule over the dominion on his behalf.

wisdom, and learning, asked them to stay in Nepal. He learnt the *Tantrik Sastra* from Lamba Karana Bhatta and Jamuna Guvaju.

Like Akbar he used to listen to all the faiths. Though Pratap Malla was a Hindu, he was tolerant towards the other religions. He even reconstructed the shrine of Swayambhunath. He gave permission to the Roman catholic mission to stay in his kingdom. He made the beautiful Krishna Mandir in front of his palace. He also restored the shrines of Basuki Bhimsen, Taleju, Degutala etc. The stone statue with his family and his sons in front of Degutale as well as the statue at Pasupati were erected by him. He had installed the image of *Kal Bhairab* which had been found in Nagarjun. It was during his reign that Gujeswari was discovered where he built a temple and setup the images of different gods and goddesses.

Pratap Malla was a highly sensual man because there is a belief that he went into repugnance in Pasupati, after the girl with whom he had sexual intercourse, died because she had not attained her maturity.

Pratap Malla was a highly eccentric man\* because he once abdicated in favour of his sons who reigned for one year. His second son died on the second day of his reign. Pratap Malla's wife was very sad for the loss of her son, so Pratap Malla constructed *Rani Pokhari* in memory of his wife, and he set up a statue of himself with his deceased son and another son Mahipatendra on an elephant, which we can see in the Southern side of Rani Pokhari.

After his death, his son **Nripendra Malla** ascended the throne in 1674.

### **Nripendra Malla (1674-1680 A.D.)**

If we see the stone pillar of Pratap Malla among the surviving sons *Mahipatendra's* name comes first than that of Nripendra.

\*The charge of eccentricity laid against Pratap on the ground of a curious arrangement according to which he temporarily abdicated his throne in favour of his sons by some writers is quite false. It was the custom of the Malla ruler ever since the time of Jayasthiti Malla to associate the royal titles and dignities. In accordance with this prevailing fashion he awarded the title of the Maharajadhiraj to his second son Chakravartendra Malla (his eldest son Rupendra Malla had died in boyhood). Coins were also issued in Chakravartendra's name. He predeceased his royal father.

Prof. Bhandari presumes that Mahipatendra might be from the youngest queen and Nripendra from the eldest queen. Due to the influence of the youngest queen Pratap Malla might have made Mahipatendra his heir to the throne inspite of his being junior in age. The neighbouring kings thought it injustice to break the roll of succession, so they supported the case of Nripendra and they themselves came to Kantipur and enthroned him in 1674.

He was only twelve years at that time, so *Chikuti*, the former minister of Pratap Malla who had taken refuge in Lalitpur was made the Chief Minister to look after the state affairs. He became all in all and appointed his relatives in higher posts.

It was in his time, one of the citizens named Bhawani Shanker got permission from Nripendra Malla to offer a *small golden bull* to Pasupati Nath. This golden bull is still seen by the side of the big golden bull. Nripendra Malla died at his teenage in 1680 A.D.

#### **Parthibendra Malla (1680-1687 A.D.)**

Parthibendra the youngest son of Pratapmalla was enthroned by Jitamitra, king of Bhaktapur and king Srinivas of Lalitpur in 1680, after his brother's death. Parthibendra being of tender age, Chikuti was appointed as Chief Minister again.

Like his father, Parthibendra was a lover of poetry and had composed several poems which are engraved in many inscriptions. He renovated some of the temples at Pasupati for which he himself brought roofing bricks from Devapatan. Seeing this all the people of Kathmandu helped to bring all the bricks in the same day for the construction.

When Chikuti, rose in full power, other courtiers became envious of him and revolted that Chikuti mismanaged the state affairs. At this Chikuti fled to Buddhasing village in the west. After five days king Srinivas came to Kantipur and appointed, *Laxminarayan* as chief chautara. Laxminarayan also being very ambitious began to rule like Chikuti and fermented the politics of Bhaktapur by raising the baseless question to entangle Bhagiram the Chief Minister of Bhaktapur. Later he displeased Srinivasmalla also. This shrewd, cunning and ruthless minister destroyed all rivals at the court. He realised that he could do nothing till Parthibendra is on the throne. He poisoned Parthibendra and spread the news that Chikuti was the culprit, for which Chikuti was killed.

**Bhupalendra Malla (1687-1700 A.D.)**

After the untimely death of Parthibendra Malla his son Bhupalendra Malla became king at the age of eight. Laxminarayan was again appointed as the Chief Minister to carry out the state affairs as the king was merely a boy.

At that time Mahipatendra was hiding at Devapatan. Laxminarayan suspected that he might harm him. So, he was cruelly put to death. As the king was merely a boy and having cleared Mahipatendra and Chikuti, he became all in all in the state. He attacked Bhaktapur with the help of Lalitpur raising the baseless question about *Bhagirath Bhaiya*. King *Yoganarendra* became angry for not getting out of the attack as promised. So in the same year Lalitpur with Bhaktapur attacked Kantipur. The Khasas entered into the house of Laxmi Narayan. He fled to the palace but was caught and killed below the Degutale.

Afterwards all the kings of the valley made treaty of friendship and ruled peacefully.

Bhupalendra Malla was religious minded and a poet himself. His mother had set up the big *Shiva temple* in front of *Gaddi Baithak* and he himself erected *Garudh* just behind this temple. He repaired the temple of Changunarayan and Pasupatinath and also performed Kotihoma at Pasupati. He went on a pilgrimage to Gosainthan. He started the *Jatra of Swetavinayaka*. There was unity among the three kingdoms of the valley. So he went on a pilgrimage to Haridwar. On his way to Haridwar beyond Ayodhya he died in 1700 A.D.

It was during the reign of Bhupalendra that Laxmi Narayan, in order to wipe the sin which he committed, erected the temple of Yogeswara, now known as *Jaisideval*. He also performed Kotihoma.

**Bhasker Malla (1700-1722 A.D.)**

Some months after the death of Bhupalendra, his son Bhasker Malla, a mere lad of four years, ascended the throne. So *Bhuban-laxmi*, the mother ruled as regent of this boy. When he grew in age, he became luxurious and spent most of his time with his queens.

Once he went with king Bhupatindra Malla of Bhaktapur to catch elephants in the Terai jungle. He captured eleven elephants. Since then he assumed the title as '*Gajapati Mahindra Simha*'.



A pleasure loving king as he was, had some Indian *muslims* as his favourite. This was not liked by his courtiers and revolted under the leadership of Jhagal Thakuri. At this the muslims left Kantipur.

According to legend he observed Dasai during an unlucky month for the punishment of which a great plague broke out in the valley in 1792 A.D. and many people died including the king. One Christian named *Emenoyal Frer* came via Tibet in 1719. He had recorded that the epidemic caused the death of 20,000 men. When he came, there were five Capuchins in Patan.

### **Jagaj Jaya Malla (1722-1734 A.D.)**

Bhaskermalla died without a heir to the throne. So all the queens of Bhasker consulted together and put Jagaj Jaya Malla, the son of Mahipatendra Malla, on the throne.

There was a drought for one year. In order to propitiate he started the system of offering *Mahabalibhog* to Pasupatinath. He made endowments to Pasupati. He built the temples of *Radha-Krishna* and *Maha Visnu*. He was a devotee of Guheswari.

People were not allowed to cut the wood from the area which he had afforested. He minted coins in which he had his name on one side and on the other his grand father Mahipatendra's. He had five sons **Rajendra Prakash, Jaya Prakash, Rajya Prakash, Narendra Prakash** and **Chandra Prakash**. He died in 1734 A.D.

### **Jayaprakash Malla (1734-1768 A.D.)**

Jayaprakash Malla was the most unlucky king of Kantipur though he was brave and very self confident. He had to face many difficulties immediately after his succession to the throne. The courtiers, his second queen, his two brothers and the Gorkha king were all against him. He was a very strict man and so his courtiers wanted to replace him with his own brother Rajya Prakash, who had also begun to conspire against the king. On account of this, Jayaprakash drove away his brother who went to Patan and became the successor of *Visnu Malla*. The courtiers and *Kasi Ram Thapa*, Governor of Nuwakot, conspired and tried to put Narendra Malla, his younger brother, on the throne. They were successful to make him the king of Deopatan but Jaya Prakash took immediate action and his brother fled to Bhaktapur, where he died. Kasi Ram Thapa returned to his home at Panga.

The Durbar officials had won over his wife as a result of which the king had to take flight from his palace. His eighteen months old child was proclaimed king. For some days he was driven from place to place and at last he came to Guhyeswari where he gathered some men for his protection. While he was there he received sacred thread from his mother Kumudini Rani. The officials were trying to drive him from there also. But he went with his men to fight with the rebels where the people greeted him as their legitimate ruler. He was, therefore, able to inflict a defeat on the Durbar officials and returned to his palace. He hanged the Kazi who placed Jyoti Prakash on the throne, and some were imprisoned including the queen.

Thus subduing the internal troubles he now looked upon the external affairs. He first called a loyal council of good men. The Gorkhas were on the look out to attack his kingdom, by blocking the valley from trade with Tibet. Jaya Prakash raised an army to drive Prithvi Narayan Shah from Nuwakot. Kasi Ram Thapa was called back and was appointed as the commander of the army and was sent to fight with the Gorkhas. At this time Jaya Prakash's army was defeated. Because of this defeat Kasi Ram Thapa was very ashamed and did not appear before the king. Jaya Prakash suspected that he had played the traitor in surrendering Nuwakot. The king killed Kashi Ram Thapa, in spite of his protestation of innocence at Gaurighat where he had gone to change his sacred thread on the Janaipurne day. This led to more enmity between the king and the courtiers. *Parsu Ram Thapa*, commander of the army in Bhadgaon, went over to the side of Prithvi Narayan to avenge his brother's enemy. From that time Jaya Prakash's fortune began to decline.

At that time Jaya Prakash invaded Patan and imprisoned and made the six Pradhans beg in the streets because they had blinded his brother who died afterwards. This was also a great mistake Jaya Prakash committed because the six Pradhans went over to the side of the Gorkhas which was a cause of the fall of the valley kingdom. There was a rift among themselves when they should have presented a united front to the Gorkhas invasion.

Jaya Prakash had engaged Indian soliders as he did not trust his own people. He had to pay them and the money was exhausted. He therefore spent a great deal of the treasures of the temples and took forced loans for which he had become very unpopular.

The internal quarrel weakened the power of defence, and helped the invaders. Petty quarrels continued to embitter the relations among the three city states. He wisely foresaw the necessity of a united front of the Malla kings against the Gorkha aggressors, but he could not gain the co-operation of his brothers, so being desperate he asked the East India Company for help. The British company sent a force under *Captain Kinloch* to oppose the Gorkhas advance but Prithvi's army defeated the company's troops and even looted their arms and ammunitions which proved to be of great help. Jaya Prakash then lost hopes and awaited for the coming storm of the Gorkhas.

The Gorkhas were encircling the valley from outside and were checking the import of the commodities into it. This economic blockade caused great distress to the people.

In 1768 A.D. when Jaya Prakash was observing the *Indrajatra* the Gorkhas attacked and after a short resistance he had to take flight to Patan. Due to the tyranny and selfish motive of the *Six Pradhans* the people of Patan had lost their militant spirits and yielded easily before the enemy, when Jaya Prakash and Tej Narsimha Malla, the king of Patan fled to Bhaktapur after the fall of Patan into the hands of the Gorkhas. In Bhadgaon also he fought with great courage and determination and was killed by a bullet. Legend tells us that before his death he asked Prithvi Narayan for his umbrella and his sandals which was refused then but only promised after seven generations.

Thus ended his long struggle against his own courtiers, his own queen and against the Gorkhas. He was a brave and self-confident king but a very unlucky one indeed.

Thus "the stupidity of Ranajit Malla, the hautiness of Jaya Prakash Malla and the duplicity of Tej Narsimha Malla" were responsible for the downfall of the valley kingdoms which were under the Mallas since 1200-1768 A.D.

**CONDITION OF NEPAL  
UNDER THE MALLAS****Social, Economic, Political and Religious**

Nepal had made all round progress under the Mallas. They developed trade and industry, religion and culture. In the field of art and architecture they had reached to a high level of perfection. The Mallas were absorbed into the Newar community and gradually merged into Newar society.

In those days the Hindus and the Buddhists lived in a friendly manner. There was the harmonious religious blend of the two creeds. Though the Mallas were *Shaivites* and *Vaisnavites* they were tolerant to Buddhism.

The Buddhist priests had fallen from the hard rules of the *Sangha*. The monks were demoralised and were burdened with family affairs. They were more or less inclined to Hinduism and followed some trades for living. Among them some worked in gold and silver. The Banras, Acharyas and monks were at the head of the society. The merchants, masons, coppersmiths and others who worked on metals and carpenters were classed according to their profession. Hard manual work was left to the farmers called *Jyapus*.

In this way castes, based on callings, came into existence among the Buddhists. The civil code framed by Jayasthiti Malla was much to the benefit of the society as a whole. As it was primarily based upon occupation it contributed the growth of cottage industries in the valley and the goods so produced were exported to Tibet and India.

**Religious and Political**

The Mallas were Hindus following Saivite and Visnuvite cult but they showed tolerance to Buddhism also. People of both

creeds worshipped the same idol with their own rituals. Gradually the Buddhist came under the Hindu influence. They took to idolatery and observed Hindu festivals and ceremonies. Buddhist savants came to the valley from Tibet and India. They preached Buddhism. Most of the people followed *Vajrayana* cult which is tinged with *Tantricism*. These Buddhist of *Vajrayana* cult equally worshipped Saivite and visnuvite gods. Many dieties of tantric cult, particularly the eight Kalikas, Matrikas and Kumaries became dominant. But towards the close of the Malla rule Buddhism showed a sign of decay. People were god fearing, superstitious and believed in ghosts and spirits. It is to ward off evils Pratap erected Hanuman at the gate of his palace.

The early Malla monarchy was based on the divine right of kingship who assumed the title of *viruda*, incarnation of Visnu. The kingship was hereditary. They had joint rule of brothers also. They had feudal type of administration where the *Samantas*, *Pradhans*, or *Mahamatyas* became powerful defacto rulers.

In the Malla period the *Muslims* were allowed to settle in the valley when they came as refugees from India. They came with their religion. They were not allowed to convert Hindus nor to slaughter cows. They could not spread beyond a narrow circle. Roman catholic mission were also allowed to settle in the valley whom the Malla kings have granted Birtas. The catholic mission had secured many converts.

The domain of the Mallas had reached its greatest extent during the reign of Yakshamalla and was very powerful. It became politically weak after him. Torn by hatred and jealousy his sons and descendants fought among themselves seeking the ruin of the other. Even ministers were absolute and all in all. There were plots and conspiracies among the chiefs, nobles and courtiers.

### Arts and Architecture

It was in the realm of arts and architecture that the Malla period showed its glory and greatness. The Malla kings tried their best to beautify artistically their respective kingdoms. The Mallas were builders of temples, religious edifices, monuments and stupas which bore marks of rich architectural skill of exquisite beauty and high finish. Wood carving and sculpture had also reached the high level of perfection. Houses were built of bricks of good quality called '*Chikan Appa*' (oil brick) and courtyards were paved

with squared bricks called *Telia Et*.

Both Hindu and Buddhist arts were fused together to enrich the Nepalese art, which marked by religious motif. Beautiful idols and images of gods and goddesses were made and religious paintings were produced which drew people's faith to the sublime. In the mean time drama, music, rhapsody and high learning were in flourishing condition. The literature of this period is rich in erotic sentiments.

### **Trade and Industry**

Trade and industry had also improved in a high degree under the Mallas. The civil code of Jayasthiti Malla had made the industry thrive and made the unemployment problem unknown in those days. The economic condition was, therefore, good. Precious metals like gold and silver were brought from Tibet and cotton, salt and herbs were imported from outside. The Malla kings minted coins for commercial transaction which fostered trade. The Nepalese had reaped the full benefit of the trade treaty made by Bhimmalla with Tibet, which came under commercial domination of Kathmandu. So the trade and commerce was in a very flourishing condition and merchants were rich, so much so that it roused greedy eyes of its neighbours. *Kashmiri muslims* came for trade in the Malla period.

### **Literature**

Nepal under the Mallas had also achieved a good progress in literature. For education people used to go either to the monks in the monasteries or to the houses of learned Brahmins. Most of the Malla kings were highly educated. They were great poets, astronomers and writers of high excellence. They produced dramas, religious plays, poetry and other literary works. Pratapmalla of Kathmandu and Jagat Jaya Malla of Bhadgaon are spoken of as authors of excellent books. Pratap even excelled for his love of music and classical dance.

The Newari language was also developed in a high degree. There were no printing presses, so books were written both in Sanskrit and Newari manuscript form, spending more time and labour. Only the rich could afford to have them. The literary activities covered a wide range of subjects from Tantricism to technical arts,

In the beginning of the fourteenth century Alla-uddin Khalji, the Sultan of Delhi, invaded and besieged Chitor Garh. The Rajputs with their women fought bravely for resistance, but were unsuccessful. At last they were compelled to leave the country to protect their religious integrity. They scattered and some of them entered into the hilly regions of Nepal.

According to the genealogy of the Sen family, two nephews *Jilarai* and *Ajilarai* of Chitra Sen, the king of Chitor entered with some of their troops into the Bhabhar area in the western part of the Gandaki river. They served under a ruler who had his capital at Rajpur. In course of years one of the two became the ruler of that place.

After that Tulasen, Dhalabhanjan Sen, Gajapati Sen, Chandra Sen and Mukunda Sen I were the successors. But according to Hamilton's chronicle **Rudra Sen** the son of Chandra Sen, the king of Chitor entered into the hills of Nepal and founded the Palpa royal dynasty. He constructed a fort in the plains of Madi, and lived in peace and harmony with other neighbouring states. His regnal period was 1483-1518 A.D.

#### SEN RULERS OF PALPA

**Rudra Sen** was succeeded by **Mukunda Sen I** in 1518 A.D. He was a powerful king whose power of influence extended to a greater part of the hilly regions beyond the east of Palpa. He helped Ratnamalla, the king of Kantipur, when there was trouble created by a horde of *Kakus*, a Bhutiya tribe. He had established trusties (Guthis) and constructed many temples.

There is a legend about the tradition of making Hakuwa rice and Sinki from the time of the invasion of Mukunda Sen when his troops made a terrible havoc so much so that people even did not get time to thrash rice out of paddy and collect radish in proper manner. At that time there was a clash between Vijaya Narayan, the king of Bijayapur and his Kiranti Sardars. Being aware of this situation King Mukunda Sen sent his brave and ambitious son, **Lohangga** to invade Morang, and on his march he conquered many principalities and reached on the bank of the Kosi river. At the very time he reached there, the ruler of Bijayapur died and getting help from the Kiranti sardars, he easily occupied Morang. After his conquest he placed the Kirantis to conduct the state affairs. Thus the kingdom of Mukunda Sen extended to the far east upto the present boundary of Nepal. He made friendly treaty with Gulmi and Arghakhanchi.

Before he retired he made the same mistake, as Yakshamalla, by dividing his Kingdom to his sons as follows:

- Palpa* to his son Manikya Sen.
- Butawal* to his son Binayak Sen.
- Tanahu* to his son Bichang Sen.
- Rising* to his nephew Ram Sen.
- Morang* to his son Lohangga Sen.
- Rajpur* to his grand-son Chandra Sen.

Mukunda Sen was not only a brave conqueror but also fond of learning and a devotee of Vishnu. After dividing his kingdom to his sons and nephews he spent his life as a saint in Deoghat. So he is known as *Muni Mukunda Sen*.

### **Manikya Sen**

After Mukunda Sen his eldest son Manikya Sen ascended the throne of Palpa which had become quite small due to division. Mukunda Sen's another son Binayak Sen received Butawal. When Manikya Sen died without a heir to the throne Palpa was merged into Butawal by his descendant. **Amber Sen**, with Tansen as its capital.

Amber Sen was succeeded by **Gandharva Sen**, then by **Udaya Sen** or **Udyet Sen** and **Mukunda Sen II** successively. Kausallay Devi the aunt of Mukunda Sen II was married to **Nara Bhupal Shah** of Gorkha from whom Prithvi Narayan Shah was born. Thus a



good relationship between Sen of Palpa and Shah of Gorkha was formed.

### **Mahadatta Sen**

Mahadutta Sen, son of Mukunda Sen II, was the contemporary of King Rana Bahadur Shah. He had a vast tract of land in the terai which he got as Jagir from Nawab Wazir Asaf Daulla. He helped Damodar Pande for the conquest of the Chaubise States.

### **Prithivpal Sen**

Mukunda Sen II was succeeded by his son Prithivpal Sen. The Gorkhals were on the move to capture Palpa and merge it in their kingdom. But Prithivpal was getting support from the Nawab, so the Gorkhals were waiting for an opportunity.

He was called to Kathmandu to attend the coronation of Grivana Vikram Shah. When he reached he was confined but was released by the grace of the older queen. Again when Rana Bahadur Shah came back from Benares, Prithivpal Sen was called on a pretext that the king wanted to marry his sister. A simple fellow as he was, came unwillingly and was captivated. Afterwards when Rana Bahadur was murdered by Sher Bahadur, though innocent, he was alleged complicity and was killed. Thus the Palpa kingdom which remained powerful till then, was annexed into the kingdom of Gorkha.

## **SEN RULERS OF TANHUN**

After the division of Palpa kingdom, Bihanga Sen, the third son of Mukundasen I, became the king of Tanhun, and was succeeded by his son **Hammirsan**. In his time the kingdom of Rising was added to Tanhun after the death of Rama Sen his cousin, who died without a heir, so he adopted **Tula Sen** brother of Sultansen of Rajpur as his successor to the throne of Tanhun. He had to fight with Ram Shah of Gorkha. After the death of Tulasen his son **Damodar Sen** ascended the throne. The king of Rajpur died without a heir, so Rajpur came under Tanhun. Thus the kingdom of Tanhun became quite big which extended upto Ramnagar in Champaran district of India.

**Digvijaya Sen** ascended the throne after his father Damodar's death. He was the contemporary of Aurangzeb, who conferred

on him the title of Raja. He made matrimonial alliance with Prithivipati Shah of Gorkha by giving his daughter Mallikavati to his son Birbhadra. She gave birth to Narabhupal Shah, who succeeded his grandfather Prithivipati Shah, Digvijaya Sen was succeeded by his son **Kamaraj Dutta Sen**. He made an alliance with Lamjung and attacked Gorkha. But soon they made treaty of friendship and to strengthen this friendship they further made matrimonial alliance by giving Subhadravati in marriage to Narabhupal Shah of Gorkha. Thus a good relation was established between the two houses of Gorkha and Tanhun at that time.

Kamaraj Dutta Sen was succeeded by his son **Tribikram Sen**. In his time the relation with Gorkha was not on good terms. Prithvi Narayan Shah in order to block the valley kingdom got hold of Lamidanda, a good cotton cultivated land, which was under Tanhun.

Lamjung made an alliance with Tanhun and other states and attacked Gorkha, but they were defeated at the battle of Sihranchook. When Tribikram went against Prithvi, Prithvi wished to subdue Tanhun indirectly. Their common preceptor was asked to act as mediator between Gorkha and Tanhun. So the preceptor was requested to go to Tanhun and call Tribikram for friendship treaty. They met on the bank of Trisuli and during the course of discussion Prithvi's men captured and imprisoned him for some time. All through his life he opposed Prithvi Narayan Shah.

After the death his son **Kamaridutta Sen** ascended the throne of Tanhun. Kamaridutta also could not pull on well with Prithvi Narayan Shah. Surapratap Shah had taken refuge in Tanhun when he had a quarrel with Prithvi Narayan Shah. So Prithvi was furious with the Tanhun king and sent one detachment to attack which encircled Tanhun, Kamaridutta seeing no alternative committed suicide.

### **Harakumar Sen**

After the death of Kamaridutta his brother **Hara Kumardutta** became the king of Tanhun. Being compelled he signed a treaty with a clause to allow the Gorkha troops to remain in Tanhun. Harakumar helped the Gorkha troops in their westward movement. Later, Tanhun encircled the Gorkha troops, but the commander of the Gorkha troops did not care and attacked Nuwakot

and Kaski. At that Kirtibom Malla, king of Parbat, with the help of other Chaubise states gave a crushing defeat to the Gorkha troops and they had to surrender. After this Prithvi had to give up the hope of conquering the Chaubise states.

During the time of Sura Pratap Shah, Abhiman Simha Basnyat was sent to conquer the west who subjugated Upardang Garhi and Chitwan. Harakumar had already handed over the Terai to the East India Company. During the time of Rana Bahadur Shah, Bahadur Shah went to conquer the Chaubise states. At that time Harakumardutta with the help of Palpa and Parbat could regain power in Tanhun, but in 1781 A.D. the Gorkha troops conquered the Chaubise states and Harakumar took asylum with Lamjung. In 1782 Lamjung was conquered. This made Harakumardutta disappointed and went to his village in Ram Nagar in Champaran.

#### SEN RULERS OF THE KOSI AREAS

**Lohangga Sen** who was brave and ambitious conquered the whole of Morang during the life time of his father Mukunda Sen I, After the division of his father's kingdom he ruled this area. He had two sons Raghav Sen and Bhagabanta Sen.

When he died his son **Raghav Sen** became the king of Morang and its neighbouring states. His son **Harihar Sen** added the title Hindupati after his conquest up to Gondabara. He had four sons from his two wives who quarrelled for the territories. Harihar Sen was even confined for some time by his sons. At last he had to divide his kingdom into two. The western part from Kosi was given to **Shuva Sen** and the eastern part of Kosi was given to his eldest son **Chhetrapati Sen**. Later, his minister betrayed and most part of Morang was taken by the Nawab of Purnea. Shuva Sen with his crown prince were sent to Delhi for punishment.

Chhetrapati's two other sons **Mahipati Sen** and **Mandhata Sen** went to take protection in Kiranti regions where they got help to regain their power. **Mahipati Sen** ruled the remaining area to the east of the Kamala river and **Manik Sen** towards the west of river Kamala and made Makawanpur his capital.

**Kamadutta Sen** became king of Morang district after his father Mahipati Sen's death. He had a quarrel with his minister so he was driven away by his Kiranti ministers, and Manik Sen's son

**Jagat Sen** was placed on the throne. Later, **Kamadutta Sen** came back and got only the areas east of Kosi river and **Jagat Sen** retained west of Kosi upto Kamala river.

After **Kamadutta Sen**, **Karna Sen** the king of Chaudandi who had come to Morang after his defeat with the Gorkhas, was placed on the throne of Bijayapur, which was annexed to Gorkha kingdom in 1774 A.D.

#### SEN RULERS OF MAKAWANPUR

After the death of Shuva Sen his kingdom was divided between his two sons. **Manik Sen** got the areas west of the Kamala river. He peacefully ruled for twenty years and died. He had four sons. **Hemakarna Sen**, **Jagat Sen**, **Jayamangal Sen** and **Bikram Sen**.

After **Manik Sen** his eldest son **Hemakarna Sen** ascended the throne of Makawanpur. **Jagat Sen** was placed on the throne of the district east of Kamala and Kosi river by the Kiranti ministers, in which Chaudandi and Shikarmara were also included. When **Jagat Sen** died without a heir, **Bikram Sen** and after him his son **Karna Sen** succeeded the throne. When Prithvi's troops took Chaudandi, **Karna Sen** fled to Morang.

**Hemakarna Sen** who became the king of Makawanpur gave his daughter in marriage to Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha but there was clash as he could not take the bride according to Gorkhali custom with him. After the death of **Hemakarna** his son **Digbanta Sen** ascended the throne. He had favourable alliance with the valley kings and was Prithvi Narayan's success. At last he was defeated by Prithvi Narayan Shah in 1762 A.D. and the kingdom of Makawanpur fell in the hands of the Gorkhalis.

#### THE WESTERN MALLAS AND KHASA RULERS OF THE KARNALI BASIN

In the seventh century A.D. the Khasas were inhabiting in the surrounding areas of the Himalayas spreading from Kashmir to the central Nepal.

Two dynasties were ruling the Pala dynasty at Purang which comprised Jumla, Dullu to Surkhet and the Mallas at Guge controlling over the western Tibet beyond the Himalayas including

Manasarover, Kailash Parvat to the north and Taklakot Khojarnath side to the west.

Later, these two kingdoms were merged into one united Khasa kingdom with capital at Semja, which situated at the confluence of the two tributaries of the Karnali river.

Very little is known about the kings who ruled over this vast kingdom in the early days. The *Kirti Stambha*, Dullu stone pillar of Prithvimalla gives the names of his ancestors. According to this Pillar, they belong to solar dynasty and the founder of the Western Mallas was Nagraj and his descendants continued to rule upto three centuries. Purang and Guje state were united into one. The last ruler of the Guje state was Pratapmalla who died issueless. After his death the Guje kingdom was handed over to Punnyamalla of Purang state, thus Punnyamalla unified both these states but he belonged to the next dynasty not that of Nagraj. He was succeeded by Prithvimalla.

The well-known rulers who succeeded Nagraj were Chapa, Chapila, Krakuchula. Krakuchula had made the conquest of Kumaon and Garwal. The next well-known ruler was Asokachulla whose name is found in a stone Pillar of Bodhagaya. It shows that he was a follower of Buddhism. The first king to avoid the name of Chulla and replacing it as Malla was Jitarimalla.

We know about three kings who invaded the Kathmandu valley in the thirteenth and fourteenth century. We know more about Prithvimalla from his Dullu inscription.

In 1287-88 the khasa king **Jitarimalla** invaded the valley during the reign of Anantamalla. His troops were encamping in Swayambhu side. Anantamalla's army fought bravely and killed many of the invaders. They fled, but Jitarimalla again attacked the second time, burnt many villages and made a havoc. He returned after worshipping Swayambhu, Lokeswar and Pasupati.

**Ripumalla** the nephew of Jitarimalla invaded the valley during the reign of Jayarudramalla in 1313 A.D. and devastated the temples and houses. He visited Lumbini and Kapilavastu on Pilgrimages. He seems to be a follower of Mahayana Buddhism.

**Adityamalla**, the son of Jitarimalla invaded the valley after the death of Rudramalla. He captured Nuwakot, Pharping and entered Patan in 1328 A.D. and seized it. Then after a month he returned back. The Dullu inscription shows the name of

Kalyanmalla who ruled after Adityamalla. The last ruler was Pratapmalla who belonged to Nagraj dynasty.

**Prithvimalla** was the most reputed king among the rulers of karnali basin who flourished in 1338 A.D. He had a vast kingdom. The ruins which are seen in this part of the country reveal its past advancement in all aspect. Prof. Tucci who had been there several times to explore the history says; "The mallas reached the height of their power under Prithvimalla who ruled over a great kingdom which included Guge, Purang and the territories on this side of the Himalayas as far as Dullu to the south west and Kashikot to the east and to the plains in the Terai of that region."

For commerce and trade roads were constructed to connect Jumla and Surkhet to the south and Taklakot to the north-west for transit trade. Taxes were levied on trade and fields were irrigated.

There were smaller principalities who paid tribute and in times of war sent forces.

There were temples for the Hindu and Buddhist dieties. For all religious purposes they used Sanskrit and books were written in Ranjana script. At that time the Parvatiya language formed the medium of communication among themselves.

Later, due to the Muslim invasion in India most of the orthodox and the ruling families of Rajputana states, to protect their religious integrity found their way to the hilly regions of Nepal and gradually settled down. In course of years they ousted the native rulers and seized the power for themselves, in different valleys of Western Nepal. *Hamilton says*: "It is generally admitted that most of the chiefs who, coming from the low country, sought refuge in the Nepal hills, entered into the service of the various mountain chiefs, and having gained their confidence by a superior knowledge and polished manners contrived to put them to death and seize their country".

In that process were born the Baise and Chaubise states which were all in course of time consolidated into one united kingdom of Nepal by the Shah rulers.

*Oldfield writes*, "The progress of Muhammadanism daily drove fresh refugees to the Nepalese mountains. The khasa tribes availed themselves of the superior knowledge of the strangers to subdue the neighbouring aboriginal tribes. They were uniformly succesful; and such a career, continued for ages they gradually merged the greater part of their own ideas, habits and language (but

not physiognomy) in those of the Hindus. The Khas language became, and still is, a corrupt dialect of Hindi, retaining not many traces of primitive barbarism”, this proves the existence of Khas in Nepal long before Muslim conquest in India.

NEPAL ON THE EVE OF  
GORKHA CONQUEST

The condition of the valley on the eve of Gorkha conquest could be explained briefly under three heads.

**Political**

The political condition of the valley on the eve of the Gorkha conquest was very deplorable. There were three kingdoms in the valley and their rulers were always trying to increase their strength at the expense of their neighbours. The king of Kathmandu alone foresaw the ruinous consequence of such feuds and invited the king of Patan and Bhaktapur to present a united front against the growing power of the Gorkhas, but his voice fell on deaf ears. Ranajit Malla did not co-operate with Jayaprakash Malla but he wanted to maintain the policy led down by Jagat Prakash Malla, who in his time had opposed to be under the influence of the king of Kantipur. So he sided and made friendship with Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha.

At Kathmandu the nobles were discontented with Jaya Prakash and were plotting to remove him from power. Even the Khas and Magars who were enlisted in the army were against Jaya Prakash for which the king could not trust them, so he also recruited Terai men in his army. Through Terai men he killed Kashi Ram Thapa after his defeat at Nuwakot inspite of his protestation of innocence. This act of the king infuriated the courtiers who began to plot against him. The self willed and haughty tempered king was opposed even by his wife, which made him to leave his throne and live at Gujeswari as an exile for some time.

In Patan the king was a mere figure head. All power was in the hands of six ministers, who were known as *king makers*. There



was no stability of the throne as these king makers used to change the rulers within a short term. This weakness was seen by Prithvi Narayan while he was at the court in Bhadgaon.

### **Economical**

The economical condition of the valley on the eve of the Gorkha conquest was also lamentable, because the rulers of the three principalities were at daggers drawn. They even had court intrigues, so the trade with Tibet and other states outside the valley dwindled very much. Again there was struggle for the minting of Tibetan coins for making profit thereby. For all these there was struggle in the valley. They had even robbed the treasury of the temple and Vihar to meet the expenses for the warfare. So economically the valley kingdoms were not sound at that time.

### **Social and Religious**

Art and literature had enjoyed the patronage of the early Malla rulers. On the eve of the Gorkha invasion, as a result of dissension among the rival states, art and literature had been dwindling. The Nepalese artisans were however, skillful and the buildings of the period display wonderful skill particularly in woodcraft. A wealth of woodcarving ornaments the buildings and the caves of the roofs mostly taking the form of projecting latticed windows and doorways. In designs many of the patterns are exceedingly intricate and beautiful, while others are of a grotesque or obscene nature. The art of building reached a high stage of perfection during that time.

Both Hinduism and Buddhism prevailed in Nepal. The two sects lived at peace with each other. There was inter-marriage between them. The Nepalese were fond of dancing and other social enjoyments. People seemed to have neglected the tantric cult but adicted to sensual pleasure and drinking. The mass as a rule was steeped in literary darkness. The practice of widow marriage and the practice of sati (the self immolation of the widow along with the dead husband on the funeral pyre) and divorce prevailed in the society.

**Division :** On the eve of the Gorkha conquest the whole country was divided into five state groups as:

- (a) the Baise Rajya in western Nepal.
- (b) the Chaubise Rajya in far western Nepal.
- (c) the Kiranti Rajya in eastern Nepal.
- (d) the Limbu Rajya also in eastern Nepal.
- (e) the Kathmandu valley Rajya.

Each of these states were again subdivided into smaller states, who were frequently engaged in quarrels among themselves.

The facts gathered so far reveal that the Royal family of Gorkha were the descendants of the Rajput prince of Chitor. Vikramaditya and Salivahana were the two Suryabansi and Chandravansi Rajas who ruled in early days. These two monarchs selected a large number of Rajas and divided the country into various small states. Among them Bhattarak Rishiraj Rajaji descendant of the lunar race ruled over *Chitor*. The thirteenth Raja of his line was Bhattarak Deva Sharma who left the country after being defeated by the Muslims. A descendant of this line Bhupal Ranaji Rao came wandering from the plains of India in 1495 and reached Ridi in Palpa. From there he went to Bhirkot and settled there. Two sons were born to him. They were *Harihar Simha* (Jayat Simha) and *Ajaya Simha*. They were called by the local name Khancha and Mincha Khan. **Khancha Khan** the elder, conquered the country of Mangrat, which lies west of the Gandak and comprises Gulmi, Dhor, Gheerung and Bhirkot. **Mincha Khan**, the younger who had already become the chief of Nuwakot extended his domain up to Kaski, Lamjung and Tanhun.

### **Kulamandan Shah**

Kulamandan Shah the descendant of Mincha Khan who ruled Kaski and Nuwakot was very powerful. He overthrew the Magar chieftain of the north and became the ruler of the Himalayan states and the title Shah was given by the emperor of Delhi to him. Since then the Shah surname is added to the royalties of Gorkha. During the time of Kulmandan Shah there were no king in the Lamjung state. The Lamjunges were in search of a suitable king. The representative of the Lamjunges approached to Kula-

mandan Shah for his son. **Kalu Shah**, the second son of Kula-mandan was taken to Lamjung whom the Lamjunges made their king. On the death of Kalu Shah, **Yasobom Shah** another son of Kulamandan Shah was placed on the throne. He had two sons. The first **Narahari Shah** ruled over Lamjung, who always wanted to add Gorkha to his territories of Lamjung. So for years there was feud between Lamjung and Gorkha.

### **Drabya Shah (1559-1570 A.D.)**

Drabya Shah, the second son of Yasobom, was bold, clever and ambitious from his boyhood. In his early life he showed signs of future greatness. He was not content on living as an ordinary prince at home in the shadow of his brother's rule in the small kingdom of Lamjung. He had cherished a desire to find a kingdom elsewhere. He was living at a place called Raginas. In the mean time he got golden opportunity from his well wishers.

In those days there were several tiny kingdoms in the neighbourhood of Gorkha, where most of the rulers were Khadkas, Magars, and Khas tribes. In Gorkha itself Khadkas were ruling. Most of the people of Gorkha were Brahmins and Kshatriyas. They did not have good relation with the rulers and wanted to oust them. So, Ganesh Pande a Brahmin won over the down trodden people on his side. By chance he met an astrologer named Narayan Aryal, who was a well wisher of Drabya Shah. They with Bhagirath Panth, Ganga Ram Rana, Bhora Khanal conferred among themselves and came to a decision that they should put a famous warrior Kshatriya on the throne of Gorkha. They had made secret connection with Drabya Shah and had promised to give full support to attack Gorkha and its surrounding principalities.

It was not an easy task to capture Gorkha unless one controls its surrounding strategic states. So, Drabya Shah and his followers attacked Liglig under a Ghale ruler. The Ghale ruler was defeated and Drabya Shah became king there. He ruled there for some time and gaining full control over there he wished to conquer Gorkha. In order to bring split among the ruler and the ruled, Drabya Shah sent his espionages to Gorkha and became quite successful. At this Drabya Shah invaded Gorkha where the people of Gorkha sided him. Thus by force of arms he became the king of Gorkha in 1559 A.D. He put the Khadka ruler to the sword.

Thus Drabya Shah founded the royal dynasty of Gorkha which was destined to play a leading role in the later history of Nepal.

After his conquest Drabya Shah consolidated his power by annexing Siranchok and Azirgarh and followed his conquest up to Dhading. Thus Drabya Shah was at the head of a strong and powerful state which excited the envy of his brother Narahari Shah. He made an attempt to snatch the kingdom of Gorkha from the hands of his brother and annex to the territories of Lamjung. But Drabya Shah acted quickly and controlled their routes, and foiled their attempts. He even hatched a plot to take the life of his brother, Drabya Shah but was unsuccessful. Being disappointed in his attempt to kill his brother, Narahari Shah with full force invaded Gorkha but was repulsed.

In this way Drabya Shah expanded his kingdom which became a powerful state. After his conquest, though an outsider from Raghinas, he declared himself to be a Gorkhali king and won the popularity of the people. He found little time to devote to administrative reforms. He ruled for eleven years and died in 1570 A.D. In a way he became immortal, for the kingdom which he founded became the capital for years and the cradle of the ruling dynasty of Nepal.

Drabya Shah who ruled from 1559 to 1570 A.D. was succeeded by his son **Purandar Shah** and after him his son **Chhetra Shah** sat on the throne for seven months only. Chhetra Shah had no issue so his brother **Rama Shah** ascended the throne.

### **Ram Shah (1606-1626 A.D.)**

In 1606 A.D. Ram Shah ascended the throne of Gorkha. He ruled for twenty-six years. He made good and wise reforms, for which he was famous as one of the greatest rulers of Gorkha. He was not only a wise ruler but also a doughty warrior. Ram Shah was a great reformer and he can be compared to Jayasthiti Malla for his reforms.

When Ram Shah ascended the throne, his kingdom was not very big and so he began a campaign to annex all the smaller states of the surrounding areas. His conquest extended as far as Kerung and Rasuwa on the north and Trisuli on the east and to the south upto Mahabharat. The king of Lamjung had tried to kill Ram Shah but was unsuccessful. Lamjung even attacked Gorkha but they were able to inflict a crushing defeat on the Lamjunges.

### **His Religious Reforms**

He made grazing grounds for the cattle and planted trees on the roads and he made rules that anyone who cut these trees would be severely punished by the king.

### **Economic and Commercial Reforms**

In the old days, there was no standard unit of measurement. This led to the chaos in the units of measurement for weights and measures. The rich people used to take undue advantage of the poor and so Ram Shah saw that a standard unit of measurement was vital. He therefore introduced the system of *Pathi*, *Mana*, and *Muri*. He made it a rule that 20 Pathis make one Muri and two *bisaulis* make one *dharni*.

He then allowed merchants from Patan to come and stay for trade in his kingdom. These merchants had migrated to Gorkha during the reign of Siddi Narshing Malla of Patan. They were even given a few privileges and thus Ram Shah was able to conduct trade with Patan and so Gorkha prospered a great deal under Ram Shah.

The neighbouring states also wanted to introduce the units of weights and measures and they also kept good relations with Ram Shah.

The next important reform to his credit is that he fixed the rate of interest for loan at 10% in cash transactions and 20 Parthis in grains. In case of loan after 10 years, the creditor shall not claim more than double the amount in cash and treble in kind. Thus compound interest could not be charged.

### **His Legal Reforms**

The poor people had found justice very expensive as all small cases were decided by law courts. Ram Shah decided that smaller cases were to be decided by the Panchayats of the villages and only important cases were to be handled by the law courts.

Wherever there were two parties, he introduced the system of taking an oath by holding the '*Saligram*' (holy stone). If a woman was accused of witchery, she would be banished from the village if found guilty but if she was not guilty, the accuser would be fined. If anyone went to bribe a judge, he would be exiled from the country.

As regards capital punishment, new rules were framed. The

members of the royal family would be exiled. Brahmin, Sanyasis and Bairagis would be shaved and exiled. The Prime Ministers, Kazis and other Government officials would be executed if they were proved guilty of murder.

In this way Ram Shah made many legal reforms due to which he had become very famous and raised the prestige of Gorkha. People outside his kingdom considered Gorkha to be a kingdom where one got real justice.

### **His Other Reforms**

He made rules and regulations regarding the use of the water from the canals. Everyone had a right to use it by turn to irrigate his fields. If there were any disputes regarding the use of waters, the village Panchayats were empowered to settle the disputes.

He made a rule that the royal family could wear gold ornaments from the head to the foot. The members of the Kazi and Brahmin family could wear any ornaments of the foot except that of gold.

The king began to take the advice of his family in matters concerning the donation of lands. In the olden days, land used to be given by just saying "that hill" but Ram Shah introduced the system of pointing out the land in more accurate methods. They even had to lay a demarcating line in the field to distinguish the fields to that of others.

From all his reforms, we can say that Ram Shah was a brave, just and reformative king. He can be compared to the Moghal Emperor Jahangir for his justice. He was indeed a great king of Gorkha.

After a long reign of about 27 years he abdicated in favour of his son Dambar Shah and with his wife went to the basin valley of the rivers Marshyangdi and Daraundi where he lived for the rest of his life.

**Dambar Shah** (1633-44) ruled for eleven years at Gorkha. After him his son **Krishna Shah** and his grand-son **Rudra Shah** ruled in succession from 1644 to 1669.

### **Prithvipati Shah (1669-1716)**

Rudra Shah was succeeded by Prithvipati Shah the founder of Pokharithok in Gorkha. He was a weak ruler and laid Gorkha

open to attack by the Lamjunges. These Lamjunges encroached and occupied a great part of its lands. Prithvipati being weak could do nothing, so his territories shrank steadily. But he had a bold, selfless and a patriotic son, **Ranadulla Shah**. When the Lamjunges were encroaching upon Gorkha territory Ranadulla Shah conceived a plan to baffle them. He pretended a quarrel with his father and went to Lamjung. He impressed the ruler and was trusted to govern all the districts around Gorkha. Later, when he had a good footing over these areas he secretly sent news to his father to attack those areas and joined himself. The Gorkhas recaptured all the lands that were occupied by the Lamjunges. Thus, Ranadulla Shah with the help of Bijaya Thapa and Gaureswar Pantha turned the table upon Lamjung by a stroke of diplomacy. This made him a favourite to his father and popular among his people. His brother became envious of him for he thought that his father would make him his successor. Ranadulla tried to convince his brother that he had no intention to become king. When he was not convinced Ranadulla committed suicide. At this tragic death people in Gorkha were very much shocked. Even his brother Bir Bhadra grieved and came to worship Pasupatinath. On his way back he died. Having predeceased both the sons and the other one being blind the question arose to Prithvi Pati Shah who would succeed him. So Narabhupal Shah, born of the wife of Bir Bhadra at Tanhun was brought to Gorkha as the heir apparent.

### **Narabhupal Shah (1716-1742 A.D.)**

After the death of Prithvipati Shah his grand son Narabhupal Shah, still a boy, ascended the throne of Gorkha in 1716 A.D. When he grew in age he became very bold and ambitious. While Narabhupal was reigning in Gorkha, Ripumardan Shah ruled Lamjung. During this time the Lamjunges, the traditional enemies of the Gorkhalis, overran Gorkha. They had the king of Tanhun at their back. But the invaders were defeated by the Gorkhalis. This was a lesson which the Lamjunges never forgot.

This victory upon the united front of Lamjung and Tanhun encouraged Narabhupal Shah to extend his kingdom by conquest. During that time the three city states of the valley were torn by strife and were at daggers drawn with each other. Narabhupal Shah being aware of this wanted to seize this opportunity and



conquer the valley. With this aim in view, he made matrimonial alliance with the king of Makwanpur if the necessity for assistance arises. Before entering the valley, it was necessary for the Gorkhalis to conquer Nuwakot, the gateway from the west, on which the economy of the valley depended. So, Narabhupal Shah sent an army under the leadership of Jayanta Rana, Maheswar Pantha and Biraj Thapa to attack Nuwakot in 1737 A.D. But the invaders were repulsed by Jayaprakash Malla with the help of Patan King. Narabhupal Shah was deeply shocked by this defeat and dismissed the leaders of the illfated expedition. Specially all the blames were thrown on *Jayanta Rana*, who commanded the army. This touched Jayanta to the heart. So he left Gorkha and served under Jaya Prakash Malla in Nuwakot.

The defeat at Nuwakot in 1737 gave a staggering blow to Narabhupal. He could not get over it and withdrew from all concern of state affairs. Henceforth his mind leaned towards a life of religious seclusion. His wife brought him tactfully into the palace and conducted the state affairs by associating the crown prince Prithvi Narayana Shah. Depressed and dispirited by the ignoble defeat, Narabhupal Shah died shortly in 1742. He was succeeded by his son Prithvi Narayan Shah who was then only twelve years old.

Nara Bhupal Shah had four queens and Prithvi Narayan Shah was born from the second queen *Kausalyavati* the daughter of *Gandarva Sen* the king of Palpa in 1723. It is said that one night the queen dreamed that she had swallowed the sun. Prithvi Narayan was born after he had stayed for seven months in his mother's womb. On the very day of his birth the senior queen, Chandra Pravavati also gave birth to a child *Brindkeshar*. Then there arose a dispute in the palace as to who should be made the crown prince but after a few years, Brinda Keshar died and Prithvi Narayan became the undisputed successor. When Narabhupal failed to conquer Nuwakot he was very much disappointed and gave up to work in administration, so he nominated *Chandra-prava* along with Prithvi Narayan as co-regent. Thus Prithvi gained the experience in administration.

He was considered to be a very clever, brave and powerful man even during his childhood. There is a story that when he was a child of only six, he happened to reach the temple of *Gorakhanath*. There he met an old man who said that he was hungry and so wanted some curd. Hearing this the boy went and fetched some curd. The old man ate all the curd and when there was a little left in his mouth, he told the boy to stretch out his hand. On this hand he vomitted a little bit of the curd and told the boy to eat it. The boy did not like it and as he let it drop, it fell on his feet. The old man then said, "if you had eaten that curd, you would have conquered all the territories you longed for, but as you threw it away, you will be able to conquer only those lands that you personally tread upon." After saying this the old man, no other than *Gorakhanath* himself, vanished.

He then got married to the daughter of *Hemakarna*, king of *Makawanpur* but due to some customary system they had a quarrel. The reason was that according to the Gorkhali custom the bride had to be taken with the bridegroom whereas according to the Makawanpur custom they had to keep the bride for some time. So Prithvi Narayan had to return without the wife. On his return, he wanted to see the kingdom of the valley. It would be dangerous for him to travel openly as the relations between his country and the valley were strained. He therefore went in disguise as a commoner and from the hill-top of Chandragiri saw the valley kingdoms, which he wanted to conquer for himself.

He then got married for a second time with a *Rajput girl of Benares named Narendra Lakshmi*, the daughter of *Abhiman Singh*. This marriage was to make the king of Makawanpur jealous.

When Prithvi Narayan was still a crown prince, he had come to Bhadgaon and stayed there for nearly three years. At that time Bhadgaon and Kathmandu were in very bad terms. He made a deep friendship with prince *Bir Narsimha* and the ties between Bhadgaon and Gorkha were strengthened. Before returning to Gorkha, he studied the geographical and strategical position of the valley. On his return, his father died after a few days and he was proclaimed king of Gorkha in 1799 V.S. (1742).

After he ascended the throne, his father-in-law, King of Makawanpur asked him to take his wife and so he went. But due to the treacheries of his brother-in-law, he returned empty handed without his wife for a second time. This was actually due to the insolent behaviour of the Makawanpur troops that infuriated him and he killed them. Upon which his brother-in-law and he were engaged in serious exchange of hot words.

### **Invasion of Nuwakot**

When Prithvi Narayan Shah knew that the British swallowed Bengal he foresaw the danger for Nepal also. So he wished to unify the whole scattered states of Nepal and make it strong so that he could face the advancing East India Company's forces. So to gain some experience in warfare he attempted to lay hands on *Nuwakot*. Another thing was his great ambition to conquer the *valley kingdoms* but to do this, he had to first conquer Nuwakot which lay on his way. His father had already been unsuccessful in his attempt to conquer the kingdom of Nuwakot and so Gorkha

had lost some prestige, the young king had gathered an army and sent to conquer Nuwakot under Kazi Biraj Thapa (Magar). This force went to invade Nuwakot but Biraj Thapa did not attack immediately because he did not know the strength of the enemy who were well protected inside their fortresses. He therefore waited for the right opportunity.

Meanwhile in Gorkha, the enemies of Biraj Thapa, began to misinterpret his delay and poisoned the king's ears that he was politically implicated. Believing the Panths, he appointed Gureswar Panth as commander of another force and he attacked Nuwakot instantly but the Gorkha troops were badly defeated. Thus Nuwakot was victorious a second time.

The reasons for their failure can be said due to the following factors. Firstly the Gurkha force had two rival commanders, each of which trying to prove the other inferior. The second reason was that the Gurkhas did not have enough arms and ammunitions as well as rations and equipment. The third reason was that the people of Nuwakot were fighting for their freedom under the able leadership of their king and moreover they were not lacking in rations as they were fighting from their own soil. The next important factor that went against the Gurkhas was that they had been defeated before and so had an inferiority complex while the Nuwakot had superiority complex which greatly helped the defenders.

### **His Visit to Kasi**

When his troops had been defeated, he realised the standard of his army. He was quite convinced that to defeat the valley his army would have to be very well trained and armed as well. He, therefore, went to Kasi leaving his trusted *Kazi Kalu Pande* to look after the state affairs. In Kasi with the help of his father-in-law he acquired different kinds of arms and ammunition necessary for his army. He returned to Gorkha via Butawal and began to train his army. He imported a few Indian war veterans and entrusted them the task of training the army. He had begun to prepare for his next invasion of Nuwakot.

### **Gorkha makes Peace with Lamjung**

The kingdom of Gorkha was surrounded by enemies and so he did not think it wise to expose his fronts to his enemies while he was busy with the invasion of Nuwakot. The king therefore sent his

minister Kalu Pandey to hold talks with the king of *Lamjung* in the basin of the *Chepe*, the tributary of the *Marsyangdi* river. Talks were held in very cordial atmosphere and Lamjung and Gorkha were able to secure their frontiers in the west due to the diplomatic actions of Kalu Pandey. The king was very pleased and so made Kalu Pandey a Kazi (Prime Minister). Because of this alliance, the other enemies of Gorkha dared not attack the kingdom of Gorkha when it was making preparations for the invasion of Nuwakot.

### **The Conquest of Nuwakot**

Having fully prepared for the invasion, king Prithvi Narayan Shah left Gorkha in the month of Bhadra in 1801 V.S. Being the monsoon season they had great difficulty, but because of his firm determination, the army proceeded for the invasion. On the other hand the people of Nuwakot never expected to be attacked in a season of this type. In the Saturday night of the 15th of Aswin 1801 V.S. the Gorkha army crossed the Trisuli Gandaki river and reached the valley of Nuwakot. The Nuwakotes, crowned with their previous two successes, did not care about the oncoming Gurkha army and were fully confident that victory would be theirs. On the other hand, the moral of the Gurkha troops was very high because King Prithvi himself was in command of the army.

Before the final attack of Nuwakot, Prithvi Narayan divided his army into three parts. One division attacked Nuwakot from Gorkha, which was in a dominating position therefore it was easy for the Gorkha. The Nuwakotes fought valiantly under the able leadership of *Shankermani Rana*. When he fell in the battle, the troops of Nuwakot lost all hopes and they fled leaving Nuwakot in the hands of king Prithvi Narayan Shah.

The king then pursued the Nuwakotes to *Belkot* and a fierce battle was fought in which many brave Gurkhas were killed. Prithvi Narayan also nearly lost his life in this fierce battle. The Gurkha captured the leader of the Nuwakotes, *Jayanta Rana* who had at one time commanded the Gorkha army which had come to invade Nuwakot during the days of Nara Bhupal. Prithvi Narayan Shah killed the traitor.

Nuwakot occupies a very important position and we can see this if we look at the map. Trade between the valley and Tibet

was carried on through this place. It lay between Gorkha and the valley and so Prithvi Narayan had to conquer it. For the Malla kings of the valley, it was a great loss because their trade was greatly affected and so they sent *Kasi Ram Thapa* with 4000 troops to drive the Gurkhas away. But the valley troops were defeated and *Kasi Ram Thapa* ran away to his home for fear of *Jayaprakash*. This made *Jayaprakash Malla* suspicious about *Kashi Ram's* loyalty, so he killed him along with seven other chieftains. This act of *Jayaprakash* resulted in court hostility. Thus the king of Gorkha got opportunity to block the valley economically.

When Prithvi Narayan was busy with the conquest of the different parts of the districts, information reached him that a son was born who was named *Pratap Simha*.

### **His Attempt to Isolate the Valley**

*Naldum* and *Mahadev pokhari* occupy a strategic position over the valley, therefore, Prithvi Narayan attacked and occupied these two places. This action made the friendly *Bhaktapur* grow suspicious, but the clever Gorkha king was able to remove the suspicion and the king of *Bhaktapur* was pacified. But the shrewd king *Jayaprakash* was not to be fooled and so he counter-attacked and re-occupied the two places.

Since *Nuwakot*, *Belkot* and *Sheopuri* ridge were under the Gorkhalis the trade between the valley and Tibet was being carried on via *Bhimdhunga* pass. The ridge of *Dahachok* was thought by Prithvi to be a strategic position to control the *Bhimdhunga* area, so he occupied this place and cut off the valley from Tibet. It just so happened that at that time *Dahachok* ridge occupied a key position to control the route between *Kathmandu* and *Tanahun* and the latter's trade with the valley was greatly affected, so it opposed the Gurkhas. The kings of *Lamjung*, *Tanahun* and *Parbat* jointly attacked the Gurkhas who defeated all the three leading powers. Then with the diplomatic negotiations carried on by *Kalu Pandey*, they again became the supporters of the Gurkhas.

The king of *Kantipur*, *Jayaprakash Malla*, was also a very brave and shrewd king. The Gurkhas had to defeat *Kantipur* and the valley would be theirs. *Jaya Prakash* hatched a conspiring plan with the *Jaisee* of *Thankot* and tried to capture *Pratap Simha Shah* but the plot was disclosed and the concerned *Jaisee*

was put to death. On the other hand Jayaprakash thought that his courtiers were helping the Gurkhas secretly, so he killed many of his nobles. Thus Jayaprakash's doom was drawing close.

### **Prithvi Narayan Shah Betrays Tanahun**

The Gurkha king had not forgotten the *Siranchok* war and so he determined to take his revenge upon Tanahun. At that time the ruler of Tanahun was *Tri Bickrama Sen* who had been a friend of his father Nara Bhupal Shah. It just so happened both these kings had taken the *Mantra* from Raj Guru Gaureswar. Prithvi Narayan therefore asked Guru Gaureswar to come to Gorkha from Benares and he was highly received. The Guru was asked to convey to the ruler of Tanahun that he wanted to make friendship and the Guru agreed to go. Due to the Guru's advice, the king of Tanahun agreed to meet Prithvi Narayan on the bank of the Trisuli. The Gurkha king had hidden arms in the sands of the bank of the river and when Tri Bikram Sen came, he was captured by the Gurkhas which was highly disapproved by the Guru. He was driven away from Gorkha. The king then brought Tri Bikram in chains to Nuwakot. By this act of treachery, Prithvi Narayan was able to get hold over Tanahun.

### **War with Lamjung**

The king's attention was now turned upon his age old enemy Lamjung. He decided to conquer this and so sent an army under the command of Chautariya *Kriti Mahodam Shah*, Bansa Gopal Panth etc. The two armies met in Salimpa in which both the sides showed great valour and courage but final victory went to the Gurkhas and the town of Raghinas fell into the hands of the Gurkha army. Then they attacked and captured Lamjung. In this battle, Parath Bhandary, Kunjar Bhandary etc. were made captives.

Sardar Bhadel was in command of the garrison at Siranchok and at that time, twenty-four states attacked this garrison. Fresh reinforcements arrived from Nuwakot under Chautariya *Kriti Mahodam Shah*, Kalu Panday and Amber Panday. From Gorkha, Rudra Shah brought some more reinforcements. There was a fierce battle in which both sides suffered heavy casualties. Amber Pandey was killed in the battle. In the end victory went to the Gorkha troops. Sardar Jogha Singh Pandey and Mahidhar

Sahi of Lamjung were captured.

### **The Story of the Yogi**

There is a story in the Vamsavali which says that a Yogi came to Gorkha from Kasi. He was looked after properly by the king so the Yogi being very pleased asked the king what he wanted. The king asked for the whole of Nepal. The Yogi replied that he would give a reply in Kasi only and he left. After about six or seven months the king went to Kasi and found the Yogi, who said that he would be able to conquer Nepal. When Prithvi Narayan insisted on giving '*Guru Bheti*', the Yogi said 'make necessary facilities for the pilgrims going to the *Gosainthan*. The king readily promised to do so and returned to his country.

### **His Campaign Against the Valley Kingdom**

Having crushed the power of his enemies (Lamjung and Tanahun) he proceeded towards the valley with Chautariyas Kriti Mahodam, Daljit Shah, Dalamardan, Bir Bahadur, Jib Saha, Janhangir Shah, Kazi Surpratap Shah, Kalu Pandey, Tularam Pandey and a host of other important persons and a huge army. He then surrounded the valley by posting garrisons on all sides of the valley. He put a strong force in Sivapuri and from there occupied Kavre Palanchok.

On the seventh of Jesta of 1814 he attacked Kirtipur in spite of the fact that Kazi Kalu Pande had opposed the date for the attack. The people of Kirtipur fought bravely as a result of which the brave, loyal and indispensable minister Kalu Pande was killed with many other brave Gurkhalese. Even Prithvi Narayan narrowly escaped death. The Gurkhas were defeated and had to retreat to Nuwakot.

### **The Senior Queen meets the King**

The king's Makawanpur queen expressed her desire by letter to come to the king and so Prithvi Narayan sent the youngest Sahebju to fetch his senior queen. He brought her and they met after a long long time.

### **The Victory over Chaukot**

In the night of the thirtieth of Asad 1818 V. S., the Gurkhas occupied Chaukot. An interesting incident happened after the



occupation of that place. The troops were cooking their food and getting ready to eat, they had taken off their clothes according to the Hindu custom. At that critical moment, Jaya Prakash's army attacked them and the Gurkhas had to fight naked. In due course the Kathmandu troops were defeated and their commander was captured and brought before the king. He pleaded for his life and promised to serve under the Gorkha king and so he was released. Because of the incident, Prithvi Narayan declared that troops engaged in war could eat with their clothes on and would not be looked down from the religious point of view.

### **Occupation of Makawanpur, Hariharpur, Timalkot and Sindhukot**

Prithvi Narayan had made a very logical decision of first blocking the valley and then attacking it. He therefore made plans for the occupation of Makawanpur, Hariharpur, Sindhuli and Timalkot, as there was trade being carried out with the valley. He sent an army under the able leadership of his three brothers Kriti Mahodam, Dalapati Saha, and Dalajit Saha. Kazi Sur Pratap, Tularam, Sardar Laxmi Pandit, Ramkrishna Kunwar, Amber Simha Thapa and other brave people were sent.

On the 8th of Bhadra 1819 V.S. the Gurkhas attacked the 'fort of Makawanpur Garhi. King Dig Bandhan Sen, Prithvi Narayan's brother-in-law fled and took refuge in Hariharpur Garhi. The Gurkhas pursued them and conquered Hariharpur as well on the 22nd Aswin, but Dig Bandhan Sen fled but his family was captured and sent to Nuwakot. Thus the kingdom of Makawanpur fell an easy prey in the hands of the brave Gurkha army.

Another branch of the troops under Bir Bhadra Thapa and Bansaraj Pandey conquered Timalkot, and Sindhulikot. Thus they completely blocked the valley from all sides and got financial resources and arms to fight later on.

### **Victory over the Muslim and the British Forces**

When the Gurkhas were attacking Makawanpur, King Dig Bandhan Sen appealed for help to *Mir Kasim of Bengal* who sent a muslim army. At that time the *East India Company* was against Mir Kasim. So Mir Kasim had trained army to wage war with East India Company, and to test the ability of the army he helped the king of Makawanpur. The Gurkhas defeated this contingent of Mir Kasim and even killed their commander

Kasmalli Khan and the muslims left the battle field never to interfere again. Valuable equipments and rifles fell into the hands of the Gurkhas. This battle with Mir Kasim's troops raised the morale of the Gorkhalis and discouraged other native rulers from interfering in the affairs of Gorkhalis.

Just as the king of Makawanpur had appealed to Mir Kasim, Jaya Prakash asked for help from the East India Company. They sent an army under *Kinlock* and tried to enter Nepal via Sindhuli Garhi. A fierce battle was fought. They could not stand with Gorkhalis Gurella tactics in the hilly warfare so the victory again went to the Gurkhas and the British attempt to enter Nepal was crushed by the army under Birbhadra Thapa and Kazi Bansaraj-Pandey.

These two defeats were a great boon in disguise to the Gurkhas because they were able to capture thousands of arms and ammunitions and several cannons. This victory raised the morale of the Gorkhalis and glooms on the kings of the valley. These proved to be of great help to them when they attacked the valley.

### **Victory Over the Valley**

After blocking the southern and eastern sector Prithvi Narayan wished to penetrate Kathmandu and Patan for which first he had to capture Kirtipur. So the Gurkha attacked Kirtipur the second time but brave Kirtipures were able to drive away the Gurkhas. In this attempt one of the king's brother lost an eye. The king was fully aware that to capture the valley he had to take Kirtipur and so he again attacked it with due caution and tact. This time he was successful and Kirtipur was occupied. The king then ordered that the noses of the leaders be cut off and the city to be nicknamed Naskatipur\* (city of cut noses).

There is controversy among the historians, some say only the noses of the ring leaders were cut while others hold that all people over the age of 12 had their noses cut, still other hold that this is an exaggeration as presented by the Christian Father who were expelled from the valley at that time. Whatever the case may be in his fury as his brother had to loose an eye, he must have cut the noses as evidenced by (1) the Sanskrit poem by Lalitabal-lava\*, (2) Fr. Giuseppe's account, (3) accounts seen on the Chroni-

\*ह्रस्वा शत्रु मनस्विनः कति पुनः प्राच्छिद्यनासादिकम् ।

cles, (4) Kirpatrick's account where he says number of noseless men in his entourage. All these facts lead us to believe this incident till sufficient proofs come forward.

Having occupied Kirtipur, he was able to take Kathmandu with great ease as the people and troops were celebrating Indraajatra and majority of them were intoxicated with drinks. Jayaprakash Malla resisted this sudden and unexpected attack of the Gurkhas but in vain. So he fled to Patan and took asylum with Tej Narsimha. In the mean time Prithvi Narayan Shah ascended the throne of Kathmandu in front of the Durbar square honouring the custom of Kathmandu people.

When Jaya Prakash was in Patan he came to know that the Pradhans were in contact with Prithvi Narayan, so he left Patan with Tej Narsimha to Bhadgaon. Prithvi sent a message to the nobles of Patan. He promised to give them security of life and property. This was accepted. Then the nobles were treated in a diplomatic way and Patan was taken without any bloodshed.

Bhadgaon still remained to be subjugated. All the three kings of the valley realised the folly and gathered forces to drive out the Gurkhas, but there was no organisation or union in the valley. Some months later having completely conquered the valley Prithvi went to Bhadgaon. The seven illegitimate sons of the king of Bhadgaon were on Prithvi's side. So when he went there, Jaya Prakash tried to resist but was checked by a sharp battle and the Gorkhali's were able to surround the palace.

The king of Bhadgaon was received with kindness and respect. Some historians believe that Ranajit was asked to continue his rule in the city. But he refused and asked permission to go to Kasi\* where he died some time later. Jaya Prakash who was wounded on the foot, got permission to retire to Pasupati Aryaghat, where he died.

With the fall of the Nepal valley the two countries of Gorkha

\*The story that Prithvi Narayan Shah generously offered to let Ranajit Malla retain his sovereignty over Bahktapur has no basis on fact. Ranajit Malla was an old man. Besides he was related to his son by the solemnities of sworn friendship. He had stayed at Ranajit's court as his guest for several years. So in all fairness he could not keep Ranajit under custody. So he sent away Ranajit to Benares, which was a polite way of getting rid of people whose presence was considered dangerous to the safety of the state or the ruler.

and Nepal were united into one kingdom and Kathmandu was made its capital. Afterwards, he attacked Chaubise States. The country of the Kiranti was subdued under the leadership of Abhiman Singh Basnet. Tanahu resisted strongly. He made Nepal a united, strong and independent country out of many smaller states.

A Roman Catholic mission had long since been established in the valley. The Newar Monarchs had granted Birtas to the missionary. It had secured many converts. But Prithvi Narayan drove them from the country for the first time in the world and thus employed opposition to imperialistic colonialism solidly. *Warren Hasting* had to turn a deaf ear under compulsion as Rohila war, Maharatta war were commencing and also the American war of Independence was about to commence. Most of the converts settled at Betiah. Their Church at Patan was in existence till 1802. Prithvi Narayan asked them to retire not because he was intolerant of Christianity but because he suspected political motives behind their religious activities in support of the then English power in India. As the then people were under impression that 'with the Bible comes the bayonet, with the merchant comes the musket'.

The expulsion of the missionaries was significant as it closed the valley to the over-seas foreigners and their interference in the valley. This enabled the Shah rulers to consolidate all the smaller states like the Baise, Chaubise and the other to make one united kingdom of Nepal.

Prithvi Narayan Shah, founder and builder of modern Nepal could not live long to reap the benefit of his victory, for he died at the age of fifty in January 1774 at Devighat, leaving two sons Pratap Simha and Bahadur Shah behind him.

### **Personal Estimate of Prithvi Narayan Shah**

Prithvi Narayan Shah was an ideal man of his time. He is ranked with other great men of the world. He had lofty and insatiable ambition. He had iron will and nerves of steel. He had also courage, patience, tact and many other noble virtues such as judgement, great courage and unceasing activity. His tenacity of purpose was simply amazing. Although defeated many times in the battle, he was never dispirited. His patience and perseverance led him to success. He was a great leader and personally led his

army in several battles with success as did Napoleon and Hannibal. He was also tactful. His friendly relation with Lamjung preparatory to his invasion of Nepal to starve off all possible danger to Gorkha speaks of his wisdom and foresight. He infused a feeling of nationalism into the minds and hearts of the Nepalese. He had polite manners. Like other famous generals of the world, he had great influence over the army. The soldiers looked upon the leader as their father and obeyed him implicitly. He knew how to win the heart of his officers and soldiers. His dazzling victory of Nepal was the result of his efficient generalship.

Prithvi Narayan holds a high place in the history of Nepal. He brought the history of Nepal from the medieval period to the modern age—a fact which is proved by the glowing examples of his wise rule. So his life and heroic achievements open a new epoch. He was aware of the rising of the British Power in India. So he felt the urgency of unifying his kingdom and began a process of expansion. He conquered several states one by one and united them into a mighty Gorkha Kingdom. The states torn by civil war and deadly strife enjoyed the blessing of his benign rule. He thus raised the glory and greatness of the mighty kingdom to the lofty height and laid the foundation of an independent country. He may be compared with such ideal monarchs as Alfred the great of Britain, Akbar of India, Bismark of Germany and Cavour of Italy. He followed a liberal policy. He used to say, "My kingdom is a garden in which four castes and thirty-six sub-castes blossom forth." He was a great statesman. He used to say "Nepal is sand-wiched between two powers, China and British India. We should have close relations with China and show friendship with the British. They are very clever. When they would be masters of the whole of India they would create trouble in Nepal."

His policy was to foster arts and crafts in the country, to encourage export and discourage import, to work out mines, to improve the national dance. It was his conviction that if foreign merchants were allowed to trade in the country they would drain the wealth of the country and thus impoverish the people. Because at that time a great part of the trade of Nepal and Tibet was in the hands of foreigners of whom the Gosains and Kashmiris were the most important. Whatever country he conquered he did not interfere with the social customs and religious

practices of the people. On the other hand he made endowments to the temples and founded new trusts for the religious worship. The beautiful nine storied Basantapur Durbar in Kathmandu, the seven storied Durbar, Ranga Mahal and Tilanga House at Nuwakot are the evidence of his artistic excellence as a lover of building.

“With his boundless ambition, tenacity of purpose, and love and determination he turned small Gorkha state into a free united Nepal, just as Prussia was turned into German empire, Sardinia into Italy, Castela into Spain and Wessex into Great Britain.”—Dr. Gokul Chand.

### **Important Personages**

**Kalu Pandey:** Kalu Pandey was the great warrior of the Gorkha kingdom. He was the descendant of Ganesh Pandey who had put Drabya Shah on the throne of Gorkha. He became the right hand man of Prithvi Narayan whom he set on the throne. He had helped Prithvi Narayan in achieving great objectives. When the king went to Kasi, Kalu was entrusted with the reign of government. On his return the king was pleased with him at his good government and promoted him to Kaziship.

When Prithvi Narayan was thinking of the invasion of the Kathmandu valley, he made friendship with Lamjung diplomatically. Thereby kept Gorkha secure from the attack by Lamjung. Under his efficient management the attack of Nuwakot was planned and it was taken and annexed to Gorkha. In the open engagement with the troops led by *Jayant Rana* in Belkot it went very hard for the king to stand the onslaught of Jayant. Kalu fought by the side of his royal master and defeated *Jayant*.

Later, when the Gurkhas invaded Kirtipur, Kalu Pandey was the general of the army. A great battle was fought and the hero was killed in 1757. In this battle the invaders suffered a terrible loss. Prithvi Narayan committed a great blunder in the action Kalu had advised Prithvi that the time was not yet ripe for the invasion, but Prithvi did not pay heed to his advice, hence there were heavy casualties on the side of the Gurkhas.

Kalu Pandey was a bold, just and far-sighted statesman. He gave advice and help to his royal master in all big affairs. He would often say that all ill-timed and hasty attempts are sure

to be abortive. His saying proved true in the Kirtipur invasion.

**Ram Krishna Kunwar:** Ahiram Kunwar of Kaski was a gentleman of high honour. During the reign of Nara Bhupal Shah, he came to Gorkha and settled down there. Ram Krishna Kunwar was the eldest son of Ahiram. He was one of the famous generals of Prithvi Narayan. His brother Jaya Krishna was also a warrior of high repute. His grandson, *Bir Balbhadra* was the famous hero of Nalapani. Ram Krishna was a general of the forces of Prithvi Narayan. He was a doughty warrior, a loyal servant and a patriot. He was well versed both in civil and military affairs. He had displayed his heroic mettle in several war fronts. He showed the Gurkha gallantry at its best in the battles with Mir Kasim, Kinloch, Kirantis and with Kirtipur and Bhaktapur. He also played a major role in the unification of the Gorkha kingdom by defeating the twenty four states. Jung Bahadur was the great grandson of this very man. He was also pious. He founded the trust of Guthi land in honour of Shivalinga at Mrigasthali. He also constructed the beautiful steps with paved stones from Pasupati to Guheswari.

So Ram Krishna and most of his descendants were the worthy sons of Nepal.

**Pratap Simha** ascended the throne in 1775 at the age of twenty four. In the beginning of his reign his uncle Dalajit Shah together with his brother Bahadur Shah made a conspiracy against him. But the plot was detected and Bahadur Shah was imprisoned at Nuwakot jail who was released by the request of the royal preceptor. Bahadur Shah then went to Bettiah, whereas Dalajit slipped away. He wholly engaged himself in strengthening the internal affairs of the kingdom. He sent troops under the leadership of Kazi Abhiman Singh to Tanahun. He conquered it and annexed Upardhang Gadi and Chitawan which belonged to Tanahun. He attacked *Athing*, the king of Morang seventeen times. On his eighteenth attempt, he succeeded to conquer him. He waged war with Sikkim though he could not succeed in forcing that country to surrender.

He improved the land tenure system in the country and made it a rule for the land tillers to pay one-sixth of the gross produce. He made for the first time the custom of erecting *Linga (Pillar)* in the Indrajatra festival at Hanumandhoka. He was inclined to Tantrik cult in which he has written a book on this subject in 1775. He died in 1778.

### **Rana Bahadur Shah**

**Rana Bahadur:** After the death of Pratap Simha his son Rana Bahadur Shah became king. As this king was in infancy his mother Rajendra Laxmi became Regent, then his uncle *Bahadur Shah* came from Bettiah and became Regent. This ambitious and brave Bahadur Shah entered upon a campaign wishing to extend



his dominion to the west. In order to get help against the last few Chiefs or Chaubise Rajya, who still held independence. Bahadur married the daughter of Prithvipal Sen, the king of Palpa. After that they proposed a united campaign. Bala Bhadra and Damodar Pandey were sent in charge of the Regents' forces to undertake the campaign. The Chaubise and Baise Rajyas fell one by one before the well-trained and skilfully led troops of the Gurkhas. Flushed with success the valiant Damodar invaded the province of Kumaon and annexed it to the kingdom of Nepal.

After subduing successfully in the west the Gurkhas now turned their attention eastward. In 1787 they penetrated into Sikkim. Seeing their encroachment in the frontiers, the Tibetans moved a force to check the Gurkhas' movement. But the Gurkhas gallantly annexed Sikkim to Nepal in 1789. They even crossed Shekhar Dzong and plundered the temple. At this encroachment of the Nepalese the Chinese Government sent about 70,000 men against them. The Chinese suffered heavy losses in the mountain warfare. Still their overwhelming numbers reached the vicinity of Nuwakot, a key to Nepal valley. The Regent had to acknowledge the suzerainty of China and a treaty was signed. Nepal had to send every fifth year a mission to Peking.

During the days of enmity between China and Nepal, the Nepalese Regent applied to the British for military help. Lord Cornwallis was unwilling to send troops but sent a mission under Colonel *Kirpatrick* to negotiate a treaty between the two countries. He reached Nuwakot in 1792. Before his arrival the peace term had already been made. Kirpatrick, the first English man to visit Nepal, was instructed to try and induce Nepal to allow the establishment of a British resident in Kathmandu. All efforts about this proved useless. So he left Nepal the same year.

The defeat with the Chinese did not check the military activity of the Nepalese in the west. They annexed Garawal and Kumaon in 1794. Now the Gorkha kingdom extended from Kashmir border to Sikkim, and from the Himalayas to the border of Agra and Oudh, Bihar and Bengal to the south. In 1795 Rana Bahadur Shah removed Bahadur Shah from the regency and began to rule personally. During his minority, Rana Bahadur was kept in ignorance by the trick of his uncle. Rana Bahadur Shah had two wives. The first one was Raja Rajeswari Devi daughter of Gulmi Raja Siddi Pratap. She was a devoted wife and was intelligent

and faithful. She had no issue. The second wife Suvarnaprava daughter of a Basnyat had a son Ranodhat Shah. He discarded both these wives in favour of Kantbati the daughter of a Brahmin, who bore a son named Girbana Juddha Vikram Shah. Though an illegitimate, he was adopted as the heir.

When the queen died, he was mad with sorrow. He defiled and smashed to pieces many idols including Taleju. The nobles rose against him and he had to abdicate his throne in 1800. He went to Benares as an ascetic under the name of Nirbananand Swami. He was accompanied by his wife Raja Rajeswari Devi.

### **Bahadur Shah**

Bahadur Shah was the second son of king Prithvi Narayan Shah. Having incurred the displeasure of his brother he was confined in the prison for some time. After his release he did not feel safe to live in Nepal, so he took himself to Terai. He came back to Nepal on hearing the death of Pratap Simha. Pratap died leaving behind his infant son, Rana Bahadur who was two and half years old. So his mother Rajendra Laxmi ruled as the regent. Bahadur Shah helped the regent queen in administration. He was the first minister in Nepal. His power grew by degrees. He could have sat on the throne himself had he so desired then. But he was quite honest and loyal. He was so true to the baby king, in whose name, he began to rule himself.

He was very bold, thorough and wise. His power grew so much that his name was enough to send a terror in the hearts of the rulers of the vassal states. The Chaubise and Baise states which had been once conquered by Prithvi Narayan Shah, had now become virtually independent. These two states had planned to invade Nepal. But they could not venture to go on with their plan for fear of Bahadur Shah. Bahadur had forestalled them by sending a troop to invade the states. Seeing the growing power and popularity of Bahadur, the Queen Mother began to suspect the honesty and integrity of the loyal minister. There were two reasons for it, (1) the king was still an infant and Bahadur could usurp the throne in view of the ill treatment of Pratap Simha towards him. The queen's suspicion had been kindled by two members of Bahadur's rival party. This led to misunderstanding between them which ultimately developed into open hostility. The queen was now bent on depriving him of his power. So it

went hard with Bahadur for his existence. He was imprisoned but later, was released by the entreaty of *Gajaraj*, the royal priest. Now Bahadur put the Queen under surveillance and began to rule in the name of the infant king. But the queen asserted her right as the regent. The high-handed measures taken by Bahadur were repugnant to the Nepalese nobility. Thinking that his life was in danger, he fled to Bettiah and later settled down at Patan\*. The queen was happy to get rid of him and took the reigns of government in her own hands. Bahadur Shah was gone but his activities were bearing fruits. The troops that he had mobilised to conquer Chaubise and Baise states, easily took Tanahun. Later it was recovered by the united forces of Palpa, Tanahun and other hill states. These forces even invaded Gorkha. So the queen sent a troop under the leadership of Amar Singh for the defence of Gorkha. The rulers of Chaubise were routed and a pitched battle was fought between the troops of the hill states and those to the Nepalese and the latter came out victorious. It was in this battle that *Bhakii Thapa*, the captain of the Lamjung troop was defeated and came over to the side of the Nepalese army. After this the Nepalese army defeated Kaski, Lamjung, and Tanahun one by one which were annexed to the kingdom of Nepal. *Abhiman Simha* who was sent by the queen also conquered Palpa, Bhirkot, Rishing etc; and were annexed to the kingdom of Nepal. The queen died in 1785 and it was left to Bahadur to complete the work, the expansion of the kingdom of Nepal, to fulfil his father's desire.

On her death Bahadur Shah came back to Nepal under the assumed name of *Fate Bahadur* and resumed the charge of the Government. His will to conquer the Chaubise states was still very strong. He formed diplomatic relations with the ruler of Palpa secretly. Then he conquered most of the Chaubise states and annexed them to the kingdom of Nepal. After the war was over, Palpa got Gulmi, Argha and Khanchi by way of reward.

Having finished the task in the west Bahadur turned his atten-

\* Some historian opine that he was pro-British as he made friendship with the capuchin missionaries who were driven away by his father. Whenever he was turned out from Nepal he lived in Bettiah. Through them he had connection with the East India Company. That was one of the cause of fight between the queen and him. He was pro-British not at the cost of Nepal.

tion to the east. The army, flushed with victory, were advancing till they came to the border of the Kirati region. They also proceeded further to the north and took a north west portion of Sikkim in 1789. In the meantime war broke between Nepal and Tibet over the counterfeit coins. Bahadur sent a troop to Tibet. The soldiers looted some monasteries. The Nepalese soldiers came into clash with the Chinese troops posted at Tibet. The ruler of Tibet begged the Chinese Emperor for help. The Chinese troops marched and pushed back the Nepalese forces almost to the gate of its kingdom. The Nepalese troops fought bravely against the rising tide of the Chinese advance. At last the treaty between China and Nepal was signed in 1792 at Nuwakot. This put an end to the dispute about the alloyed coins. Trade was resumed between Nepal and Tibet. In 1792 Bahadur Shah gave orders for the framing up of a new register of the survey of lands. He applied the method of the Mallas for fixing the land value.

Then Bahadur sent his troop to the north western sides. This troop under the command of the Pandes made much headway conquering Kumaon, Almora as far as Dehra Dun. To the south they conquered Makawanpur and Vijaipur. Thus under Bahadur Shah Nepal grew from a petty state into a mighty big kingdom. Lord Cornawallis sent Col. Kirkpatrick to make commercial treaty with Nepal. So by the prowess of Bahadur Shah, Nepal extended to Tibet on the North, to Kashmir and Dehra Dun on the west, to Bhutan on the east and to the British Indian territories on the south. Some of the worthy sons of Nepal who helped Prithvi Narayan Shah and Bahadur Shah with their heart and soul for the unification task were Kazis Kalu Pandey, Tularam Pandey, Abhiman Singh Basnet, Bansaraj Pandey, Kehar Singh Basnet, Amar Simha Thapa, Vijaya Thapa, Ram Krishna Kunwar, Shri Harsha Panth and Kazi Bir Bhadra Thapa. They will all be remembered and revered by the posterity.

When Rana Bahadur Shah, a man of revolutionary spirit, came of age, he did not like to be in his uncle's guardianship. Moreover during that time most of the nobles were against Bahadur Shah as he was found pro-British. So he took the reign of the government in his hands in 1795 A.D. The question of land survey arose to increase the revenue but people raised a bitter opposition. Even Bahadur opposed to this measure, for which

the king became angry with him. Bahadur Shah was asked to submit the account of the war expense which was impossible within such a short notice. So the king without any thought or evidence against him threw him into the prison being oblivious of his sterling service to the country. Bahadur Shah committed suicide in the prison. This was the tragic end of a true patriot, a great warrior and a loyal servant. Kirpatrick wrote about him.

*“He was a man of exceptional quality — a man of enlightened views and possessed administrative skill, and whatever he learnt out of his association with the British while in Bettiah, he wanted to exert his views on the various problems of Nepal in their line like the much wanted reforms on judiciary and army. That opportunity, however would not come, resistance being the less enlightened colleagues who not only distrusted the English but also conceived of their political systems in no less hostile terms.”*

Pressed by the queen, **Rana Bahadur Shah** wished to place his infant son Grivana on the throne in his life time. Though there was grumble amongst the nobles the king with the help of Prithvipal Sen of Palpa completed the investiture of the Crown ceremony in 1798 A. D. To act as regent during the minority Rana Bahadur Shah nominated his first wife Raja Rajeswari Devi. A council of ministers was formed in which Damodar Pandey, one of the leaders of Bahadur Shah's army, assumed the duties of Prime Minister.

Then Rana Bahadur Shah with his sick wife *Kantibati* both in ascetic dress went to live at the sanatorium in Devapatan. His second wife *Suvarnaprava*\* also asked to remain in the palace to look after her two infant sons who were also appointed as Chautaria. When the queen was not cured the king shifted his residence from Devapatan to Pulchok. He was asked by the priests to perform all sorts of religious deeds such as Homa, Prayers, Charitable alms. All these could not effect any good on the health of the queen. At last the disease grew more and more and the queen died in 1799.

At this the king became broken hearted with grief and lost all good sense and did many strange acts. He punished the priests and physicians, defiled and discredited the images of gods and goddesses. All these caused terror in Kathmandu.

Later on when he was pacified he began to lay hands on government affairs and thought to upset the administration. So this compelled *Damodar Pandey* and others to transfer the capital from Kathmandu to *Nuwakot* and took Grivana Judda there. Thus

\*Suvranaprava daughter of Subuddikhadka.

there was dual government, one from Kathmandu another from Nuwakot for one year. Seeing this state of affairs Rana Bahadur made preparation of war to attack Nuwakot, but realising little chance of success, against the war veterans, he left Kathmandu for Benares with his queen Raja Rajeswari, Sardar Bhisen Thapa, and Dalabhanjan Pandey. "A Civil War seemed imminent until it became apparent that most of the military leaders sided with the Council." Mr. Lee Rose. In Nuwakot, in the absence of Raja Rajeswari *Sivarnaprava* was made regent to Grivana and Damodar brought Grivana to Kathmandu.

### **Rana Bahadur Shah in Benares**

At Benares the British gave Rana Bahadur refuge, loaned him with funds and also gave hope to regain his throne. Rana's presence in Benares was deemed by the Britishers as a favourable opportunity for the renewal of closer alliance with Nepal.

After some years Rana Bahadur Shah abandoned the life of an ascetic which was only a plea of politics. His resignation and the enthronement of Grivana in infancy shows that he was not sure whether the nobles would accept Grivana as a king after his (Rana's) death or not. So he enthroned his son during his life time. It is evidenced by the *Tamapatra* (documents) which was signed by all the nobles seventeen days before his resignation. In that *Tamapatra* even instructions to be followed by the nobles are mentioned.

**Knox's Visit:** At this time British politics came into the affairs of Nepal. Nepal made a commercial treaty with the British for fear of the deposed king, who might induce the British to intervene and reinstate him. The Regent agreed to accept a permanent British Resident at Kathmandu. Captain Knox was appointed as resident and came to Kathmandu in 1802. After a few days Captain Knox found that the Nepalese were becoming more and more unwilling to have any closer relation with the British Government. When Rana Bahadur's eldest Rani returned to Kathmandu she overthrew the Regency and took the charge of the young Raja and the government by herself. Captain Knox, who had negotiations with the previous Regent and nobles found it difficult to remain in Kathmandu. He withdrew from Nepal in 1803. In January 1804 Lord Wellesly formally dissolved the alliance with the existing government. On the departure of

Captain Knox from Kathmandu, Rana Bahadur Shah was asked by the British to leave Benares. Thus hoping to get the loyal support of his eldest queen he left Benares and returned to Nepal. When he reached Thankot a large body of troops under *Damodar Pandey* went with the idea of either winning him by request or to oppose his advance. But the loyal soldiers hailed Rana Bahadur as their master. Damodar Pandey was arrested and the next day he with his two sons and other nobles was put to death. Mr. K. Majumdar opines that Damodar Pandey was killed because of his Treaty with the Company in 1801 and the attachment to Captain Knox. Ranajit Pandey became the chief Kazi, Bhimsen Thapa was promoted to kaziship and Balnarsing became the A.D.C. to the king.

### **Mukhtiarship (P.M.) of Rana Bahadur Shah**

Now Rana Bahadur Shah resumed the charge of the kingdom as Prime Minister, a supreme head of the government to his son Grivana's minority till his death in 1806. (*This is evidenced by the Red Seal of Grivana to his father V. S. 1862-11-8-4.*)

After Damodar his wrath fell on the queen *Raja Rajeswari Devi*. He was furious with her because she appointed Damodar Pandey even when she returned from Benares. Some historian mention that when Damodar went to receive the king he had with him silver fetters which he could not have taken without the permission of the Regent. She also had written to the king to remain in Benares. For all these reasons the king banished her to *Helambu* where she remained till her death.

King Prithvipal Sen of Palpa was called to Kathmandu on the pretext of negotiating matrimonial alliance with him. When he reached unwillingly in Kathmandu he was imprisoned at Lalitpur Durbar and Palpa was annexed easily to the kingdom of Nepal, which was the last of the remaining Chaubise States.

At the time when the British activities were increasing in Northern India, Rana Bahadur Shah with the advice of Bhimsen Thapa wished to organise the army on modern lines in order to expand his kingdom. For this he required quite a large amount of money. So he made new laws, confiscated all Birta (trust lands) and freeholds of the people including the trusts and endowments of the temples and monasteries in 1862 V.S. i.e., 1805 A.D. which is better known as *Basatti Haran*. He also introduced gold



currency in the country. All these measures were taken to support the army which he mobilised.\* This is evidenced by the Red Seal of Rajendra for compensating the confiscated trust lands of 1862 belonging to the Brahmins, monasteries and temples.

During that time smallpox epidemic spread in Kathmandu. So the king ordered to remove all the children who were not vaccinated, from the town to the outskirt. This made the people and the parents of the children panicky.

Rana Bahadur Shah became unpopular. The insult and prosecution of the Brahmins as before, the execution of Damodar and his adherents, the upliftment of Bhimsen Thapa which curtailed the power of other nobles at the court. So they began to hatch a plot against Rana Bahadur. (*The letter by Balnarsing to king Rajendra elucidates the incident of Rana Bahadur's murder.*) In order to find out the leader of the plot and to decide the old case of commercial treaty which allowed the British to trade in Nepal and other clauses of the treaty, Rana Bahadur and other top ranking nobles were assembled at the house of Kazi Tribhuban. In the course of the meeting *Sher Bahadur* was suspected. *Sher Bahadur* finding an opportunity stroke Rana Bahadur with a sword and while he was falling he called *Balnarsing* who in his turn cut down *Sher Bahadur* immediately. At that moment *Bhimsen Thapa* was not there.

After that incident *Grivana Judda* appointed *Bhimsen Thapa* as Prime Minister and Mukhtiar. As for the culprit of the case and the plot, Kazi Tribhuban, Jagat Pandey, Bidur Sahi, Kazi Narsing and Prithvipal Sen were found guilty and were put to death. "Bhimsen thus gained complete ascendancy in Nepal and cowed those who were in opposition to him, that he held indisputed sway in the kingdom", Stiller.

After the death of Rana Bahadur Shah, *Grivana Judda* who continued to remain on the throne during the turbulent years with no real power, again held the throne until his death in 1816. During this period **Tripura Sundari Devi**, the youngest queen of Rana Bahadur Shah became the Regent and *Bhimsen Thapa* remained Prime Minister.

\*This is evidenced by the Red Seal of Rajendra for compensating the confiscated trust lands of 1862 V. S. belonging to the Brahmins, monasteries temples— See p. 83, Rana Bahadur Shah by Chittranjan Nepali.

**POLITICAL CAREER OF  
BHIMSEN THAPA**

**Bhimsen Thapa** was the son of Kazi Amar Singh Thapa. He started his career as a subaltern in the Nepalese Army. He basked in the royal favour by virtue of his boldness and wisdom. He was promoted to Sardarship, when the king went to Benares. He soon became the right-hand man of King Rana Bahadur Shah. He followed his royal master in his exile to Benares in 1800. He pleased the king so much that he was promoted to kaziship, when Rana Bahadur Shah returned for Benares. He was a young, ambitious and a good statesman to whom Nepal owes for her present prosperity. With an extraordinary tact he brought his master back to Nepal from exile. On his return he removed all his formidable rivals, the Pandes. He ruled as Prime Minister for a period of 34 years serving three generations of the king in succession. His administration was wise and enlightened. In order to retain independence and sovereignty of Nepal he had to balance Chinese and British power. His first concern was to expand the dominion of Nepal, and to follow a policy of aggressive expansion. So in 1804 he sent his father *Kazi Amarsingha Thapa* to conquer Palpa which remained powerful till then. He captured Palpa and soon Butawal was also occupied. To consolidate and extend the Gurkha conquest to the west, the great General Amarsingha Thapa and his own brother Nainasingha Thapa were deputed, who occupied Garhwal but while attempting to annex Kangra valley they were halted by *Ranjit Singh of the Punjab*. The British sent four divisions to fight with the Gurkhas. Three of these were defeated by the Gurkhas but after many hardships, bitter fighting and with great difficulties *Octorlony* defeated Amar Singh in Garhwal. Later on while Octorlony advanced to Kathmandu

valley by a direct route, the treaty of Sugauli was signed in 1816 A.D.

Though the treaty was signed he was very much dissatisfied and he had the anti-imperialist sentiments ever burning in his heart. He even appealed to the Native States of India, China, Tibet, Burma, Iran and other countries for the Asian unity against the Western Imperialistic elements. Thus he conceived a spirit as that of the '*Bandung Conference*.' He was all in all in the state till 1832 when the Queen Mother Tripura Sundari died. Thenceforward his power was on the wane. The appointment of Mathbar Simha Thapa as a general excited the jealousy and suspicion of the Pandes. So they were biding their time to feed fat their grudge against Bhimsen. At this juncture the sudden death of the youngest son of the eldest queen gave a chance to the opposition party to turn the king against Bhimsen. They spread the rumour that the child was poisoned at the instigation of the Prime Minister. The king believed the story and was furious against him. He threw Bhimsen into prison and seized his property. Later on he was found innocent and was released by the queen, Laxmi Devi. He went back to Gorkha and led there a private life. He was called back and was asked to attend court as a councillor. Unfortunately the child murder case was revived and he was again thrown into prison in his own house. To make the matter worse he heard the rumour that his wife would be taken undressed round the city. So he preferred "death before dishonour" and committed suicide. Thus ended in utter disgrace and oblivion the career of the veteran general, the wise statesman and the old Prime Minister, who brought glory to his country notwithstanding internal and external pressure. Even Hodgson the then Resident observes, "The great and able statesman who for more than thirty years had ruled this kingdom with more than regal sway. . . the uniform success of nearly all his measures had been no less remarkable than the energy and sagacity which so much promoted that success. He was indeed a man born to exercise domain over his fellows alike by the means of command and persuasion. Nor am I aware of any native statesman of recent times except Ranajit Singh who is in all things considered worthy to be compared with the late General Bhimsen Thapa."

**His Reforms:** (1) Bhimsen Thapa reorganised the army on modern lines, He made cantonments, magazines and barracks and

drilled the army into hard military training. To make the army men feel proud of their ranks, he made badges and head dresses and uniforms.

(2) To the memory of the late Queen, Tripura Sundari, he made Dharahara and Sundhara. Besides these monuments, he also made many temples and religious edifices.

(3) He also made many reforms in civil administration.

(4) All the land in the country was surveyed and the land-tax was assessed.

(5) The country was divided into districts and he appointed personnel for their administration and improved Postal system.

(6) He set up courts in different parts for administering justice.

(7) He opened many selling depots for the sale of timber from the forests of the terai.

(8) For the convenience of the travellers he constructed the roads and bridges wide enough for the carriages and horses to pass through.

(9) He also made arrangements to reclaim the waste land in the hilly regions and terai.

(10) He made the golden and silver doors in the temple of Pasupati.

(11) He built a paper Magazine at Thabahil where Dhyak Paise (Pice) were made and brought into Currency.

(12) He was opposed to slavery in Nepal. He wanted to do away with it.

(13) He was successful to circulate the Nepalese silver currency into the Tibetan market, which was stopped since the Nepal-China war.

In this way Bhimsen made the country a powerful and picturesque state.

### **NEPAL'S WAR WITH THE BRITISH**

The Nepal-British war was not a result of aggression on the part of the Nepalese, as some British writers have tried to make out. A perusal of the English account of the war leaves the impression on the mind that if the Nepalese took the offensive first, they were provoked to do so by the behaviour of their adversaries towards them. The disputes arose over certain territories on the border of the British and Nepalese territories, in

the district of Saran and Gorakhpur. The frontier between the British and the Nepalese territories was indefinite. The Nepal Government advanced claims of these districts, but the British Government claimed that these lands belonged to them on the plea that they were owned by Zamindars who were under their protection and paid land tax to them. The Nepalese sincerely wanted peace and had no intention to go into war with the British, but they could not yield on the point; because there were several other points along the five hundred miles long border between Nepal and British India where similar boundary disputes had been going on. The Nepalese knew that to yield at one point would only make matters worse and would encourage the British to make claims at other points too. So Nepal resolved to stand on her claim and when the British seized the disputed area, Nepal took counteraction by attacking the police stations set up by the English and reoccupying the lost territory. This led to the opening of hostilities between the British and the Nepalese in 1814. Thus it is clear that in this war Nepal took the defensive against the active aggression of the British people.

Nepal is one of the most difficult countries in the world for military operation. So the invasion was commenced on the western frontier, it being easier of access than from Bengal side. The British were repeatedly driven back with serious loss and could not shake the moral of the Nepalese officers like *Amar Singh Thapa*. The most desperate resistance of the enemy was perhaps at Nalapani near Dehra Dun under the command of *Bala Bhadra*, a great warrior, patriot of Nepal, where general *Gillespie* fell while encouraging the troops to renew the attack. *General Martindale* was checked at Jaitak and the central attackers on Palpa and Kathmandu were driven back. After that *Sir David Ochterlony* assumed the chief command. He was trying to corrupt the fidelity of *Amar Singh* by offering him the state of Bashahar if he would surrender his army. But the patriot *Amar Singh* refused to do so. *Amar Singh Thapa* spent his whole life by waging war. He had no ambitions to amass wealth nor had he time to do so. The main motto of his life was to heighten the glory of his mother country even at the cost of his blood. *Ochterlony* skilfully dislodged the Gurkha troops and compelled *Amar Singh* to surrender the fort of Malaon on 15th May 1815. Thereupon *Amar Singh Thapa*, the commander of the fortress entered into negotiations with the

besiegers, and surrendered ten cities on the condition that he and his soldiers should be allowed to march out with the honour of war.

In Kumaon also the enemy succeeded in driving the Gurkhas. So a definite treaty of peace was concluded in December 1815. But the signature of the King being withheld, it was declared to renew the war. The British forces advanced from Bettiah directly on Kathmandu under General Octorlony. The Nepalese made strong resistance but they were defeated in several encounters and the British advanced, after hard fighting, within three days' march from Kathmandu. Thinking all their resistance go in vain, the Nepalese at once sent an ambassador to the British to sue for peace. So on March 4, 1816 the unratified treaty of the previous year was duly signed. This treaty is known as the *Treaty of Sugauli*, by the terms of which Nepal lost Sikkim, Kumaon, Garhwal and the Terai west of Gandak thus reducing the country one third of its territorial acquisition from Mechi to Mahakali. The British got the sites for the principal hill stations and summer capitals of India like Simla, Mussoorie, Almora, Ranikhet, Landor and Nainital which belonged to Nepal before the treaty. Under the terms of treaty Nepal was open to Indian nationals who wished to carry on trade in Nepal likewise Nepalese traders could establish commercial enterprise in India. After the war of 1816, Sir D. Octorlony confidentially said to Lord Hastings that "The company's soldiers then Hindusthanies could never be brought to resist the stock of these energetic mountaineers on their own grounds." This praise from the enemy side is a true picture of Nepal's patriotic sons and brave soldiers. At the end of 1816. Lord Hastings modified the treaty by which a portion of the Terai was restored to Nepal. Mr. Gardner came as a British Resident. This treaty of Sugauli sought to cripple Nepalese military power and checked its expansive activities. To effect the treaty Mr. Gardner was appointed. Even then the military energy and pride of the Nepalese patriots failed to shatter. Mr. Campbell says "In the midst of their misfortunes Mr. Gardner found the Nepalese not obsequious and slavish, but jealous, proud and insolent in their bearing. Just after the war smallpox epidemic spread in the valley. Grivana Judda Bikram Shah also died of smallpox in November 1816 at the age of eighteen.

**Bir Bala Bhadra;** Bir Bala Bhadra was a true patriot of Nepal

and was also a hero of high order. His grand father, Jaya Krishna and his father Chandra Bir had shown their powers in the battle of Timal, Tibet and Garhwal respectively. Bala Bhadra is also known as the *hero of Kalanga*. He sallied forth with a handful of soldiers and won even the admiration of the English. He was related to the famous hero Amar Singh.

When the dispute about the border arose, Bala Bhadra was deputed by the Nepal Government to Dehra Dun. In the mean time *General Gillepsi* marched at the head of a large army. Hearing this news Bala Bhadra hastened to a high fortress of *Nalapani* which was four miles away. He had with him women and children numbering about six hundred, all told. The English *General Maubi* attacked the fort. The Gurkhas held out boldly. Seeing this General Gillepsi marched there with a large force. A pitched battle ensued. In the mean time some soldiers marched from *Nahan* to reinforce Bala Bhadra. So the English could not defeat the Nepalese. The Nepalese artillery went into action and Gillepsi was killed and the troops were routed.

The English suffered a heavy casualty. As they had to retreat very often in disgrace, they were desperate, Maubi hurried from Delhi with forces, and equipments. A pitched battle was again fought. The English forces besieged the fort. The Nepalese showed bravery to the best advantage. Even the women began to hurl the enemies with such missiles as stones, logs etc. and harrassed them. The English troops beat a retreat. They cut off the water supply of the fort. This gave acute distress to the Nepalese. The surviving members of the fort numbering about 70 persons (men and women) rushed out with naked swords in hand and marched with unflinching courage to the *Jaitak fort*. This was something like the march into the jaw of death as there were enemies in front and on all sides. The fort of Nalapani being thus evacuated, was captured by the English. Even then the English were shadowing this hardy foe, Bir Bala Bhadra reached the fort of Jaitagarh. There too *Major Bedlock* launched a heavy attack upon him. But he was not successful in this operation. So he had to retreat. Thus Bala Bhadra with a handful of soldiers encountered the huge army of the English and foiled all their attempts and inflicted a great loss to the enemies. Thus Bala Bhadra showed a glowing example of patriotism and bravery. His unique heroism extorted a memorial in his honour. It was, therefore, no less

credit on his part to receive so much tribute of respect from the unrelenting foes. Had he been equipped with ample sinews of war and ammunitions, the tide of the battle would have most probably taken a different turn. So there is no doubt that Bir Bala Bhadra may be ranked with the famous war lords of the world.

**Bir Amar Singh:** Amar Singh may be regarded as the flower of the Nepalese chivalry. He is Amar (immortal) both by name and deeds. He showed glowing examples of Nepalese bravery in many theatres of war. His character was very good and was above all reproach, his heart brimmed with patriotism and his actions showed it clearly. He had learnt statesmanship and arts of war from king Prithvi Narayan. It was his cherished desire to make the Nepali flag fly throughout the length and breadth of the Himalayan region. Later, it fell in his line to do so. During the reign of Prithvi Narayan and afterwards he showed unique heroism in many battlefields. His promotion was rapid; first of all he became Sardar and after victory at Achham, Doti, Almora and Garhwal he was made Kazi. He was the son of the warrior '*Bag Bhim Simha*.' During the ascending power of the Pandes, he fell a victim to their intrigue and was even put to prison for some time.

Late in 1814-16 he showed his bravery to a greater advantage. He knew well when to hit the foes and when to shake hands with them. By opening hostility with the English against his advice, Nepal suffered a heavy loss. He had to fight with the English because of the patriotic feeling of Bhimsen Thapa. In 1814 under his bold and able leadership the Nepali soldiers fought so bravely in the battle of *Ramgarh* that even *General Octorlony* had to retreat several times. In the battle of *Devasthal* he advanced forward with a small army to fight with the English. General Octorlony was simply amazed at his daring attitude. He was compelled to sue for peace. But he was for keeping friendly relation with China. He was defeated on the western hills of Nepal for lack of men and materials. He pinned his hope on Ranajit Singh to get help but he was disappointed. It was the crown of his desire to conquer the kingdom of Kangra. He fought with no less bravery but he failed for want of adequate help. The Nepalese were defeated at many points. So he was compelled to make peace. When the treaty was sent to Kathmandu for ratification, it was turned down by the Nepal Court. So General Octorlony



reached as far as Makawanpur. The whole of Kathmandu became panicky and the treaty was signed. It was not liked by Amar Singh, for it affected the independence of his country. It gave him a rude shock. He died in 1816 on his way to Gosainthan.

There are few men who are so brave, patient and patriotic as Amar Singh. It was no less a credit on his part to have won such glowing praise even from the bitter foes. His life was dedicated to the love and service of his country. He was also pious-minded. He built the big temple of Sita Ram at Janakpur. He also made many public inns and pilgrim houses and also founded trusts for the daily worship. The temple in the northern corner of Bahadur Bhawan was also built by him. There are many heroes in the history of Nepal, but Amar tops them all. He is better known as '*The Living Lion of Nepal.*'

**Bhakti Thapa:** There were two forts called Devasthal and Surajgarh on the right and left sides near Malaun. As Octorlony was badly defeated at Malaun, he now concentrated all his activities for the capture of the two forts. Bir Bhakti Thapa was in command of the *Devasthal Fort*. As the English were engaged in a heavy attack at Malaun Bhakti Thapa had to rush out to help Amar Singh against the English. Taking advantage of his absence the English attacked Devasthal and captured it. Hearing this Amar Singh sent troops under the leadership of Bhakti Thapa to repel the enemies. On 16th April 1815, a pitched battle was fought at Devasthal. The Gorkhals suffered a heavy casualty. Bir Bhakti Thapa in a fit of frantic fury advanced with a glistening sword and a naked khukuri in hands in the face of the artillery fire in order to capture the magazine of the English. This display of superhuman courage was nothing short of the march into the jaw of death. He did not care for bullets and shells which were showering thick. He got near the cannon and despatched many enemies, but before he could attain his objective a bullet hit him on his thigh and he fell down. Seeing this, his soldiers ran away helter skelter. *Gardner*, who was in command of the English forces sent a few soldiers to take the hero with military honours. But he refused to surrender and even while lying down in a pool of blood, he killed a couple of the English with his sword. At last the English soldiers pierced him to death with the point of the bayonet. Thus the brave warrior fought to the last breath for the freedom of his

country. Even after his death he was very much honoured by Octorlony, who covered his dead body honourably with a shawl and sent the corps to Amar Singh. Thus showing a glowing example of bravery, the true son of Nepal died a heroic death.

Girvana Vikram's son, **Rajendra Vikram Shah**, who was then only two years old ascended the throne. As the new king was of tender age, *Lalita Tripura Sundari*, the Royal baby's grandmother continued to act as regent.

The executive authority of Nepal fell again in the hands of Bhim Sen Thapa. No opposition came against the Prime Minister for thirty years, though there were moments of antagonism between the Pandes and the Thapas. During his Premiership he introduced many acts of progress and reforms. Fresh sources of revenue were found, a new and more effective system of taxation was introduced and the efficiency and discipline of the army were increased to such an extent that Nepal became a strong military power.

For many years after the treaty of Sugauli nothing important happened to disturb the peace of the country. In April 1832 Queen Mother Tripura Sundari died. Thenceforward the power of Bhim Sen Thapa began to wane. In 1833 *Mathbar Singh* was appointed as a General. He was quite young and had outstanding talents and energy. The rapid promotion of this man made *Rana Bir Singh*, brother of Bhim Sen, jealous and suspicious. Some historians presume that he tried to turn the king against him. Besides this Ranajung Pandey, son of Damodar Pandey was intriguing against him. At this juncture the eldest queen's youngest son died suddenly. The opposition party spread the rumour that the child had been poisoned at the instigation of Bhim Sen Thapa. Consequently both Bhim Sen and Mathbar Singh were imprisoned. Their property was confiscated. Now *Ranajung Pandey* became Prime Minister. He turned out to be proud with

power. He lacked talent, ability and statesmanship. Later on, both the prisoners were released by Queen Laxmi Devi. Bhim Sen had to retire and two years afterwards he committed suicide, while his nephew Mathbar Singh went to the Punjab where he got service.

For some years there followed a chaotic decade punctuated frequently by assassinations, unrest, and foreign difficulties. Prime Ministers succeeded Prime Ministers in rapid succession. After removing Bhim Sen Thapa the senior Rani had practically ousted the king in state affairs. She began to rule by herself. She began to prepare for war as she had anti-British feeling. Meanwhile Ranajung Pandey also forged a vigorous foreign policy and created trouble abroad. Thus the conflict between the Nepalese and the British was at hand. Some days later urged by the war party she ordered troops to invade the British territory, where nearly a hundred villages in the district of Ramnagar were taken. The British Government at once sent an armed force to the frontier. But Hodgson, the then Resident in Nepal, tried to avert the conflict. The Nepalese evacuated the territory and also agreed to dismiss the Pandey Government and to appoint in its place a type of Coalition Government in which *Fatejung Chautaria* was nominated as Prime Minister.

### **Mathbar Singh Thapa**

**Mathbar Singh Thapa** was the nephew of Bhimsen Thapa. He was one of the greatest men of Nepal. He was a trusted general of Bhimsen Thapa. He was made the governor of Palpa with command over a brigade of soldiers. Under the influence of Bhimsen Thapa, he took part in politics. He had a clean grasp of the home situation and the condition outside Nepal. He had prodigious strength and could over-throw half a dozen men at one and the same time. It is said of him that he could crack a walnut by simply pressing it in his fist. He could read people's mind and win the hearts of the soldiers. But he was too vain.

The poison case against Bhimsen Thapa spelt disaster on all his relatives. Mathbar Singh was clever enough to slip away to the Terai with the plea of capturing elephants. From there he made his way to Simla and Almora and settled there. After the war with the English, Bhimsen Thapa was planning secretly to pounce upon the English. He thought of seeking the help of *Ranajit Singh*

and of making a friendly relation with the *Shah of Persia*. The English got the inkling of the whole affair. So they arrested Mathbar Singh while he was crossing the Sutlej and threw him into the prison at Ludhiana. He was released after a year.

At that time the court had become a hot-bed of intrigue. In 1841 the senior Rani died and by the vote of the chief officers of the state the junior Rani was virtually invested with full political powers. She was the supporter of the Thapas. So in 1843 she called back Mathbar Singh Thapa. She installed him as Prime Minister and commander-in-chief of the army. He had experience in political affairs. He could read the psychology of the soldier's mind and use his talents for his benefit. He wholeheartedly tried to improve the forces in the country, for the maintenance of which he wanted to take Birta (grants) from the Birta holders. Queen Laxmi Devi, who was the favourite wife of the king was secretly trying to put her son on the throne. The king invested Mathbar with the full ruling power as he was in good grace of the queen. When the poison case was reviewed, he proved the innocence of the Thapas and the table was turned upon the Pandes. After this his rise was rapid. He found himself at the helm of the administration. Being pleased with his efficient administration the king conferred on him the Prime Ministership for his whole life and clothed him with full military power. He decorated him with the title of *Kala Bahadur*, four gold medals weighing 22½ tolas, better known as Sunapatra and also awarded a *Sword* signifying a guarantee for the protection of his life. So Mathbar became all in all in the state. He now made further attempts to make himself a dictator. The extraordinary favour of the king to Mathbar created discontentment to the aspirant courtiers who in course of time were hatching conspiracy against Mathbar. Even the king and the queen were startled and planned to do away with him. The junior queen finding Mathbar dissenting to act according to her wishes was plotting with king Rajendra, a weakling, to bring about Mathbar's downfall. She wished to do away with him through Gagan Singh. Jung Bahadur was also taken into confidence in the conspiracy. One day Mathbar received an emergent call from the palace at 11 o'clock at night saying that the queen was suffering from an attack of colic. Mathbar Singh hastened to the court without the least suspicion. As soon as he stepped into the queen's chamber, he was shot dead by Jung Bahadur in May

1845. Such was the tragic end of a great warrior and statesman. Perceval Landon writes, "the murder of Mathbar Singh Thapa was due to his secret conspiracy with the Sikhs for the expulsion of British at Benares in 1845 A.D."

Afterwards under FATEJUNG Chautaria's premiership a mixed cabinet was formed with Gagan Singh, Abhiman Rana, Dhala-bhanjan Pandey as members and as a reward Jung Bahadur was given the command of three regiments. This did not please the queen, so she tried to gain full power with the help of Gagan Singh. This was suspected by the king. So Gagan Singh was murdered at the secret order of the king while he was in his prayer room. The assassination of Gagan Singh was the sign for an outburst of bloodshed and carnage. The queen, mad with anger summoned all high officials and demanded vengeance. Jung Bahadur undertook the task and executed it with alacrity. The queen ordered Jung Bahadur to wipe out all the opponents to her interest. So Jung Bahadur brought his armed forces, made them stay surrounding the kot and were out at his call to meet the contingency which he had envisaged. Jung Bahadur advised the queen to convene an assembly of chiefs and nobles within the palace to enquire into the crime and to punish the culprit. Disputes arose and a refusal on the part of one of the councillors to carry out the order of the angry queen resulted in what is called '*Kot Massacre*' where fifty five of the nobility and high officials lost their lives. It exterminated all the rival groups of aspirants to power at the court and cleared the way for Jung Bahadur to become a despotic ruler.

The reign of Rajendra Vikram Shah is packed with events of

N.B. It was apprehended that the assassination of Mathbar Singh would lead to rebellion by the people or the army. Mathbar Singh was complacent that he was popular. On 20th Feb. 1845, he in course of his conversation with the British Resident, had said that no Prime Minister since the reign of Prithvi Narayan Shah had died a natural death, but he hoped, he would escape such violent death. So his death was kept secret for a day. But the people and the army in Nepal would keep their loyalty unshaken in the midst of the political upheaval. Dr. Oldfield observes about it. "The Nepalese soldiers are at all times and under all circumstances most singularly obedient to the Powers that they obey the constituted authority—be it Raja, Rani, Prince or Minister—most unhesitatingly and without any reference to the duty required or its consequences." In fact this statement was borne out true by the revolution of 1950-51.

far-reaching consequences. They are as follows:

- (1) The death of the queen, Tripura Sundari.
- (2) The downfall of Bhimsen Thapa and his kith and kins.
- (3) A succession of many individuals to the post of Prime Ministership, such as Rana Jung Pandey, Ranga Nath Paudel, Chautaria Puskar Shah etc.
- (4) The death and disgrace of Bhimsen Thapa.
- (5) Conspiracy against Rajendra and the fall of Rana Jung.
- (6) Ministry under Fate Jung Chautaria.
- (7) Insane and unjust acts of Surendra Vikram Shah.
- (8) Royal proclamation and capture of the power by the queen.
- (9) Return of General Mathbar Singh and his promotion to Premiership. The revival of the power of the Thapas.
- (10) Assassination of Mathbar and the second ministry of Fate Jung.
- (11) Rise of Jung Bahadur.
- (12) Assassination of Gagan Singh and the consequent grim *Kot Massacre*.
- (13) Premiership of Jung Bahadur.
- (14) Bhandarkhal Plot.
- (15) The exile of the King and Queen to Kashi.
- (16) Conspiracies against the life of Jung Bahadur.
- (17) The installation of Surendra on the throne.
- (18) *Alau Plot*, capture of Rajendra and his imprisonment.
- (19) Dictatorship of Jung Bahadur and the origin of the Rana autocracy which was to last for a century.

**Jung Bahadur:** After the kot massacre the Rani entrusted *Jung Bahadur* with the office of the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the army, a top position in the Government of Nepal. The queen asked him to eliminate the heir apparent in favour of her son which Jung Bahadur disobeyed. So the queen began to plot against him and a month later a conspiracy was formed for Jung Bahadur's destruction. But Jung was too shrewed for her. She was implicated in it. Jung Bahadur seized and beheaded all the supporters of the conspirators. This is called *Bhandar Khal Parba*. The Rani was banished with her two younger sons. King Rajendra voluntarily followed the queen to India. There he became a centre of intrigues. Malcontents who had taken their flight to India gathered round him and began to incite and instigate him to make an attack on Nepal. On hearing such reports Jung Bahadur wrote to him urging him to return at once to Nepal. But instead of complying with Jung's request he sent two agents with written instruction to murder Jung Bahadur. The plot was discovered. Thereupon Jung Bahadur declared the throne vacant and placed the heir apparent **Surendra Vikram Shah** on the throne in November 1846.

Though ambitious, selfish and ruthless, Jung Bahadur was a sagacious ruler possessed with foresight, courage, and diplomacy. After overthrowing the opposition party by assassinations, persecutions and making the king a mere cypher, all state powers became vested in his person, and he established the Rana rule over Nepal.

At the elimination of the anti British, Thapa, Pandey and Chautaria, the British were happy to win over Jung who always



proved to be friendly towards the British.\* He volunteered the service of eight regiments under his personal command to help the Britishers in the Second Sikh War but the offer could not be accepted. He increased the friendship by a visit to Europe. By treachery and other tactics he firmly attained the highest position in the country and felt secure in his position as evidenced by the fact that he dared to leave Nepal within four years of accession to power.

He left his brother *Bam Bahadur* to act as Prime Minister during his absence. He was the first Nepalese ruler to visit England. He was accompanied by his two brothers, and many influential men of the country who went to England in 1850. He was received kindly by *Queen Victoria*. He met all the prominent people of the day. Among them the Duke of Wellington impressed him most. He returned via France.

After his return from Europe a conspiracy made to kill him was found out. It was organised by Prince *Upendra*, the king's brother, and his own brother *Badri Narsingh*. This conspiracy was frustrated by General *Bam Bahadur* whom they wanted to act on their side.

In 1854 a rupture occurred between Nepal and Tibet for the mistreatment of Nepalese merchants by the Tibetan authorities and also border skirmishes. Under *Dhir Shumsher* troops were sent. After a short hostility and prolonged negotiation a treaty was concluded in 1856. By this Tibet was bound to pay an annual tribute of Rs 10,000 to Nepal, to concede freedom of trade to Nepalese merchants in Tibet and to receive at Lhasa a representative of Nepal for the interests of the Nepalese merchants. So shrewd was he that in August 1856 he purposely resigned the premiership in favour of his brother *Bam Bahadur*. Some days later the king conferred on him the title of *Maharaja*. The king gave him the power of life and death, of making war and peace, of full control over all the state departments and to have the succession of Prime Ministership with the titles of *Maharaja* upon his family in perpetuity. The sequence of inheritance being from the

\*Mr. Shah writes "The British envoy of the time had no small hand in helping *Jung Bahadur* climb up the ladder of power and eminence by enabling the latter to his political rivals along with other men of standing unacceptable to the British,

senior most member of the family down, then to his next generation. This he did to avoid plots and counterplots among his own family members. He could make new laws and repeal old ones. Thereafter Jung Bahadur was Nepal and Nepal was Jung Bahadur. So he became an absolute dictator.

In 1857 Mutiny broke out in India. Jung Bahadur offered the help of troops. He himself went down at the head of 8,000 men and helped for the recapture of Gorakhpur and Lucknow. The wounded and the relatives of the killed got a liberal donation from the Britishers. He was also given the title of G.C.B. and under a treaty concluded in 1858, a part of West Tarai (Nayamuluk) which had been ceded to British-India in 1816 was restored to Nepal. Jung Bahadur was unhappy to get only a strip of Nepal's former territory and not the whole of Tarai as promised. So Jung began to harbour evil design against the British but it was too late.

### **Reforms of Jung Bahadur**

During his visit to London in 1850, Jung Bahadur made a critical study of the English Government, English customs and society. When he came back to his country, he introduced many civil and military reforms:

(1) First of all he made judicial reforms. He repealed the old primitive laws and made new ones; he abolished the old methods of inflicting punishments such as grievous injuries involving the loss of limbs and of punishing witches. He also made some audit laws for checking the public accounts.

(2) He discouraged the Sati system—the self immolation of the widow along with the dead husband on the funeral pyre.

(3) He turned his attention to increase factories. In 1860 a workshop was opened for repairing cannon and rifles.

(4) Roads were made to ease the problems of communication and old tracks were repaired and postal system established.

(5) For collecting land revenue, he appointed landlords and chaukidars in many districts and the revenue was collected in a new way.

(6) He made regulations to preserve the Hindu temples and Buddhist Vihars. He sent for Chinese artists for the renovation of the Swayambhu Stupa.

(7) Notification was published to keep the record of birth and death—the first step towards the population census,

(8) A bathing ghat was made at the Bagmati at a cost of Rs 10,000.

(9) In 1865 survey of the route between Nepal and Tibet was made and the map of the same was prepared.

(10) He also spent a lot of money for planting trees by the way side and the building of inns for the comfort of travellers.

(11) He prohibited the staking of goods on chattels in public gambling.

(12) He made laws prohibiting the religious endowments in foreign countries.

(13) He gave out by notification that grievous punishments of five categories in distant districts like Bajang, Jajarkot, Jumla, shall require the approval of His Majesty.

But he always placed his personal interest above anything else. During his thirty years rule he earned a great deal of wealth for himself by ignoring the public interest.

He was fond of big game hunting. When *King Emperor Edward VII* visited India in 1876 he organised in his honour one of the big game shoots in the Tarai. In March 1877 taken ill while on a hunt, he passed away from this world at Patharghata in the Tarai.

### Prithvi Bir Vikram Shah

**Rana Uddip:** The law of succession made in 1856, ought to have made Badri Narsingh, Prime Minister. But he was excluded from the roll of succession by Jung Bahadur for his attempt to kill him. So the Premiership fell to Rana Uddip Singh. He was simple and was a genial easy going man. He had to meet many difficulties from the opposition of Jung Bahadur's sons. Jagat Jung the eldest son of Jung Bahadur was particularly hostile. Finding him weak the crown prince **Trailokya Bir Vikram** better known as Walihad Maharaj also wishing to regain royal power was seeking on an opportunity to oust Rana Uddip with the help of disgruntled nobles and courtiers. But Dhir Shumsher was clever enough to detect and was given slow poison so he (Prince Trailokya) died a premature death. Rana Uddip was fortunate to have *Dhir Shumsher* as his Commander-in-Chief. He was capable, farsighted, and loyal to him. The old business of intrigues, plotting and killing was once more resumed in Kathmandu. In 1881 King Surendra Bir Vikram Shah died after a nominal reign of

thirty years. His son Trailokya Bir Vikram Shah having been pre-deceased, his grandson **Prithvi Bir Vikram** a boy of six years succeeded the throne.

Narendra Vikram to fulfil the desire of his deceased brother Trailokya hatched a plot with the help of Jagat Jung and other nobles, but this was disclosed by a traitor. So Narendra and Jagat Jung were exiled and imprisoned at Allahabad in 1882.

Jagat Jung and a number of his brothers were excluded from the roll of succession. Many leading chiefs were put to death. After the death of Dhir Shumsher Jagat Jung was allowed to return from exile and was reinstated in the roll of succession. This was considered inimical to their interest by the 17 sons of Dhir Shumsher. Bir, Khadga, Chandra, Bhim and Damber Shumsher. So the sons of Dhir Shumsher went to the palace of Rana Uddip at night and shot him dead in November, 1885. They seized all the power in the state in the name of the sovereign. Jagat Jung and his son Juddha Pratap Jung and other nobles were put to death. Thus the sons of Dhir Shumsher gained the field without a rival.

**Dhir Shumsher:** Dhir Shumsher was the youngest brother of Jung Bahadur. He rose to the rank of the Commander-in-Chief in 1879. Dhir was blessed with seventeen sons. So these brothers are called the '17 Brothers'. Ever since the descendants of Dhir Shumsher had been known as 'Satra Bhai' or *Seventeen Brothers*. Dhir was the father of Bir Shumsher, Deva Chandra, Bhim and Juddha Shumsher. He was a doughty warrior. Jung Bahadur had great trust on him. He had led the forces in the war with Tibet and in the Tarai. He came back with laurels of victory from both theatres of war. He also became the Brigadier for Bhaktapur. He was a great lover of learning. He had a great hand in founding an English Primary school and a Sanskrit boarding school in Kathmandu at Tindhara. He had helped Rana Uddip sit on the throne of Premiership. Rana Uddip retained only nominal authority and vested real power in the administration of the state affair to Dhir. Dhir had accompanied Jung Bahadur in his European tour and gave a good account of himself wherever he went. He had an intention to put his sons on the roll of succession after him by ousting Jung Bahadur's sons. But as luck would have it he died in 1884 before he could become the Prime Minister, at the age of 57,

**Bir Shumsher:** After the assassination of Rana Uddip, the 17 brothers went with the infant King Prithvi Bir Vikram and the Queen mother to the Tundikhel. In the presence of the troops assembled Bir Shumsher the eldest of them proclaimed himself Prime Minister of Nepal. He was an earnest ruler, a great builder and a lover of music. In moments of emergency he acted with rapidity and firmness. It is he who started a new line of succession to the Premiership of Nepal excluding all others except the legitimate sons of Dhir Shumsher. So the country with the administration was monopolised by the seventeen brothers, sons of Dhir Shumsher, in place of seven brother of Jung Bahadur. He, though not a literate ruler, was a man of liberal views and enjoyed to an eminent degree the virtue of moderation. He, a luxury-loving man, enjoyed life to the full at the cost of the country's revenue. He allotted the good and fertile lands of the country to his family members. The public were in an enslaved condition. Out of the National Insurance Wealth i.e., Guthi income he established Durbar High School, Bir Hospital, Bir Tower, Pathshala, Sanitary and other social services. Just near the beautiful springs of Godavari he built nice bungalows for his health resorts, which are now used for the modern Jesuit High School. He also provided a good supply of drinking water to the towns of Kathmandu in 1891 and to Bhadgaon in 1895. In 1894 he set up an Arms manufacturing factory at Sundarijal. Thus he tried to place the facilities of modern civilization at the service of his citizens of the valley ignoring the country outside the Capital. He was a man of progressive ideas. He founded the Bir Library. He permitted scholars to undertake research work in the valley and at the birth place of Buddha. He

gave permission to the British for the free enlistment of Gurkha recruits in their Army in India.

Like his predecessors he was not to escape the opposition of political opponents. Although he rose to power by betraying and murdering his own kith and kin, he was not always harsh. His relation with his enemies was not marked by vindictiveness. He discovered a conspiracy directed against himself and the young king. The head of the conspiracy was his brother Khadga Shumsher the Commander-in-Chief. He punished the conspirators leniently for Khadga Shumsher was banished to Palpa where he was interned. But after two years he was made Governor of Palpa. Bir Shumsher now excluded Khadga Shumsher from the roll of succession. At this time the sons and grandsons of Jung Bahadur also were excluded. Thus he cleared the way from those who were likely to cause him trouble. There was only one threat of war during his time. The Tibetan proved hostile over a dispute about the salt supply. He received high honours from England and China. He ruled for sixteen years and died due to the bursting of a blood-vessel on 5th March 1901.

### **Deva Shumsher**

Bir Shumsher was succeeded by Deva Shumsher, who had not taken any part in killing Rana Uddip. He was a man of kind nature and as a ruler he was anxious for the welfare of the people. He was well educated but was fickle minded and pleasure seeking.

He provided drinking water pipes in Charkose Jhadi and Bhimbhedi for the welfare of travellers. To draw the attention of the public to their midday time he caused the midday gunfire at Kathmandu Tundikhel. He established many vernacular schools and started the weekly paper Gorkhapatra. He freed some of his own slaves and took step in the abolition of slavery in Nepal, but this made him unpopular among his nobles. However, this paved the way for general emancipation during Chandra Shumsher's administration. He made rules and regulations about the work and duties in the offices. He introduced the system of religious recitation by a Pandit on the Parade ground and the public were given free shows of cinematography. It is also said that boxes were set up at different places asking for the suggestions of public opinion.

With the advice of General Gehendra Shumsher he wanted to introduce the parliamentary system of government in Nepal for

making the people to take part, and also to improve agriculture according to Japanese methods. Deva Shumsher had taken measures to manufacture under the guidance of Gehendra Shumsher 8000 Martin Henry-type rifles and 6 batteries of 7-pounder guns when the British wanted to put more stringent restrictions on arms supply to Nepal. These progressive ideas seemed to be harmful to the interest of his successors so on the plea that he neglected the state affairs and indulged himself in pleasure and luxury leaving aside the works in the hands of the Mukhtiyar (C-in-C) he was removed from Premiership and exiled. The Royal sanction edict of 1901 conferred to Chandra Shumsher states that due to misconduct in state affairs Deva Shumsher was removed. He was banished to Dhankuta and later on he escaped to India. While Chandra Shumsher was in Delhi in 1908 he tried to plot against him but could not succeed. He died in the month of February, 1914.

### **Tribhubana Bir Vikram**

Deva Shumsher was succeeded by **Chandra Shumsher** in 1901. He was a farsighted statesman and a shrewd and sharp-witted ruler with an iron will. He was learned and had an intimate knowledge of English. Almost in all administrative works he centralised the power in himself as one-man's dictatorship following a closed-door policy. His policy was 'divide and rule'. He classified the Ranas into three categories A, B and C, in which only the A class was made eligible for the roll of succession. But in the long run it proved to be a seed of poison.

He improved military and judicial administration. He also improved jail discipline and opened workshop within the precincts of the jail to afford employment to the prisoners when released. He introduced some administrative and social reforms. The most important one was the abolition of slavery in 1924 and a reform in the Jhara (forced labour) system which was very much helpful to the peasants for one could employ labour without proper wages. The *Sati* custom of the old was also abolished. This was a horrible custom which compelled the living wife to be burnt with her dead husband. He abolished the custom of animal sacrifice to their family deity at *Panchayan*. He also paved the way for using Nepalese stamps on letters between Nepal and India. He improved the land tenure system of Nepal by giving security and fixed the rates of revenue of the lands. Formerly lands were given as a

reward for military service but Chandra Shumsher substituted cash payments which helped the tenants. Most of the best lands were converted into private Birta of the Prime Minister and his family. His motto was "If the citizens become wealthy, they will be enlightened and Ranarchy would be in danger", but for himself hoarded wealth and left an immense fortune to his sons.

His rule was rigorously harsh, but his harsh rule and perpetual vigilance served to strike terror into the hearts of the officials, so that the people suffered very little from the tyranny of higher officials. He had the knack of selecting competent officials for the various administrative posts.

In 1903 he attended the coronation Durbar of *King Edward VII* at New Delhi. He visited England in 1907 to strengthen the friendly relation between Nepal and Britain and at the same time to gain a thorough knowledge of western civilization. When there was trouble between India and Tibet, he arranged terms of peace in 1904. This resulted in a treaty between the British and Tibet and opened a new trade route to Tibet via Kalimpong. Thus Nepal was forced to give up its monopoly on trade with Tibet. This proved his diplomatic and political sagacity.

In 1910 king Prithvi Bir Vikram wanted to limit the power of the prime minister and to curtail the prerogative of the Rana family. But this scheme was foiled by Chandra when it was disclosed. The failure of this scheme caused anxiety in his mind and in 1911 the king died leaving his infant son Tribhubana Bir Vikram on the throne.

During the great war in 1914 he proved to be a loyal friend of the Government of India. He placed the whole military resources of Nepal at the disposal of the Government of India. So a majority of Nepalese troops for general service in India left Nepal in 1915 with General Babar Shumsher as G.O.C-in-C.

It is said that he became very happy when a heir to the king was born in 1920, from that date the 31 gun fire to the king and 21 to the crown prince came into vogue. Chandra Shumsher was cautious with Tribhubana whom he considered quite sharp and intelligent.

During his rule he provided the means of communication from Raxaul to Amlekhganj, the rope-way transport from Bhimphedi to Matathirtha, water pipes in Jajarkot, Pokhara, Dhankuta and Patan. He electrified the town in 1904, and established the Tri-



Chandra College in 1918. In short he showed the way of progress which was to be developed fully.

In 1923 the British Government in India revised the treaty of 1815 and clearly recognised Nepal as an Independent Sovereign Country. This treaty proved to be the farsightedness and praiseworthy action of Sir Chandra Shumsher.

At the close of his life he showed signs of devotion to the crown and the country. He was conscious about his fame, prestige of Nepal and its Sovereignty. But unfortunately at the age of 67 he died in November 1929, after being Premier for twenty eight years.

**Bhim Shumsher:** Chandra Shumsher was succeeded by his brother Bhim Shumsher. He had twenty eight years' experience as commander-in-chief and chief officer of the state administration under his brother. He, at first showed a very liberal tendency and the people were glad to find a lenient ruler after the harsh rule of Chandra, but as time passed on, he grew harsher and harsher. People were severely dealt with even on the mere report of spies.

There was trouble between Tibet and Nepal during his rule. A war was about to break. But this catastrophe was settled by the British Government and an agreement was signed at Kathmandu to end the tension.

He took some measures of public reforms by providing drinking water pipes in Kathmandu and abolished customs on salt, cotton and live-stocks. He also passed order for the suspension of Capital punishment in the State in 1931 except in cases of high treason. He enrolled his illegitimate sons on the line of succession, in spite of the resentment of the other legitimate Ranas.

### **General Basant Shumsher's Incident**

General Basant Shumsher, son of Padma Shumsher and grandson of the Maharaja attempted to produce for personal use 'Subarna Bhasma', an Ayurvedic medicine, through the disintegration of gold into smaller particles by the help of heated mercury. For this a large quantity of charcoal was needed, which could be procured most easily at Sundarikal. So, Basant Shumsher, himself went to Sundarikal together with the apparatus. Some spies reported this matter to General Hiranya and Ram Shumsher, both illegitimate sons of Bhim Shumsher. But Ram Shumsher and Hiranya Shumsher distorted the facts, and reported to Bhim

Shumsher that Gen. Basant was attempting to produce bombs and other explosives against the Prime Minister. So, Bhim Shumsher arrested and interned Basant, under this false accusation, for the rest of the Premiership of Maharaja Bhim, his own grandfather.

**Library Incident:** When a couple of youngmen brought up the idea of opening a library, they were fined a hundred rupees each as the Rana thought that this will enlighten the public and their despotic rule will be in danger.

A plot arranged by Umesh Vikram, Kadgaman, Ranganath Kandamansimha and others to do away with him became unsuccessful. After which he started a reign of terror. When he passed away in 1932, after a rule of nearly three years many breathed a sigh of relief.

**Juddha Shumsher:** After the death of Bhim Shumsher, Juddha Shumsher succeeded him. He was courageous and was a man of national pride.

In 1934 a dreadful earthquake occurred in Nepal. Excessive damage was done to buildings and hundreds of lives were lost. So he granted 36 lakhs of rupees as a relief fund to the people which includes donations from outside.

### **Expulsion of High Ranking C Class Ranas**

The procedure of succeeding the roll of Prime Ministership in Nepal established by Jung Bahadur was defective as in each Prime Minister's time they included on the roll their sons though illegitimate which caused discontentment and rose family feuds and conspiracies. During the time of Bir Shumsher he enrolled his illegitimate sons Rudra Shumsher, Tej Shumsher and Pratap Shumsher on the roll of succession. When Chandra Shumsher was Prime Minister he classified the Ranas into three categories, legitimate A class, legitimised B class and illegitimate C class, with a motive to make only A class Ranas eligible for the roll of succession. But when Bhim Shumsher became Prime Minister he enrolled his illegitimate sons Hiranya Shumsher, Ram Shumsher and grand son Mahabir Shumsher on the roll. This caused resentment to the sons of Chandra Shumsher who were then pushed down from the roll because the promotion to the roll was

counted according to the seniority of birth. During the time of Bhim Shumsher, Bhim was urged and advised by his influential sons Hiranya Shumsher, Ram Shumsher and financially supported by Tej Shumsher to expell 27 A class Ranas. But Bhim Shumsher hesitated to agree as he had to include even his one and only one legitimate son Padma Shumsher (who had to perform Bhim's KIRIYA and SRADHA). But man proposes God disposes; as in the mean time Tej Shumsher suffered from paralysis and the matter ended. This conspiracy though kept top secret was sensed by the sons of Chandra who waited to take revenge. These powerful malconents persuaded Juddha Shumsher through Bahadur Shumsher to exclude from the roll of succession the illegitimate sons of Bir Shumsher and Bhim Shumsher who were very near to the roll of Prime Ministership. Juddha Shumsher in 1934 excluded from the roll of succession the illegitimate sons of Bir and Bhim. They were expelled and exiled from the Kathmandu Valley and were made Governor of different districts of Nepal. They were allowed to take their cash and valuable movable property. This was the most tangible seed of trouble which developed later on. This act on the part of Juddha proved suicidal to the interest of the A class Ranas. He widened the gulf between the A class and the C class which ended in breaking up the solidarity of the Rana aristocracy. The faction that thus arose served to hasten the collapse of the Ranarchy. During the Second World War he helped the Indian Government with twenty thousand soldiers. When the war was on, he had to face political agitation conducted by the patriots of Nepal which was suppressed with great harshness.

During his rule he improved to some extent the agricultural condition, and increased the electric power generation at Sundarijal. To get acquainted with British diplomacy Bhimsen Thapa wanted to open a legation in London during his premiership but the English did not allow as they had interest behind it. Judda Shumsher was able to establish a Nepalese legation in London which can be considered to be his act of farsightedness. After the earthquake he modernised the town of Kathmandu by extending Juddha Sadak and Putali Sadak.

Juddha's failure was due to his lack of steadiness of fixity of purpose. He had not the patience to stick to his plans until they were completed and left many of his schemes half done. He lacked

foresight. He had not the patience to look into the details of administration. Administrative efficiency which was the only redeeming feature of the Rana rule vanished. Administration deteriorated rapidly. Corruption became rife. He had a large family to provide for and this prevented him from properly financing the various schemes of progress that were contemplated by him.

He abdicated the premiership in favour of Padma Shumsher in 1945 and went to stay in Ridi. He was happy to get free from anxiety and risk. Later he retired to Dehradun and died some years after.

### **Padma Shumsher**

Padma Shumsher succeeded Juddha Shumsher. He was a man of liberal sentiments but he was not firm or determined. He wanted to reform the country in a democratic line but on account of his wavering and feeble nature he could not succeed. He always used to call himself 'the servant of the people.' Padma lacked the necessary courage and had no firm backing from his brothers to put his schemes into practice. He realised the situation of the country and knew that the Government (if Ranarchy was to last), must win public support by introducing political reforms and by conceding the demands of the people, which were till then quite modest. But he was opposed by those near him. He was not generous of spending money so he failed to build up a party of loyal supporters, without which no autocratic ruler can achieve his end.

Political consciousness arose among the youth of Nepal and a Satyagraha movement was launched. Many persons taking part were arrested, but were released later on.

He established a reforms committee and also invited from India some constitutional experts for framing Constitutional laws. He promulgated the countrys' first written constitution in 1948. He was to be credited for introducing ideas of civil liberty, popular ministry etc.

A diplomatic and commercial treaty was signed between Nepal and USA and also with India for exchanging diplomatic representatives at ambassadorial level.

He also deserves praise for his attempt to spread mass-education in Nepal, and for the establishment of Basic-type of schools as that of India. He also started schools for girls, whose education had

been up to that time totally neglected by the Government. His son, Basant Shumsher's residence at Dillibazaar was donated to Padma Kanya High School; and as a compensation Basant Shumsher got the Bishalnagar Durbar after Padma left for Ranchi.

The conciliatory spirit of Padma, however, and the liberal tendencies exhibited by the 1948 Constitution alarmed a group of the more conservative Ranas headed by Mohan Shumsher. Shortly after the announcement of the political reforms he left Nepal for India and settled in Ranchi. Within two months, in April 1948, he was forced to resign; and Mohan Shumsher became Prime Minister. Mohan Shumsher suspended the promulgation of the new Constitution, given by Padma Shumsher. Padma died in 1950 in Calcutta

**Mohan Shumsher:** Padma Shumsher was succeeded by Mohan Shumsher. He was a man with a religious turn of mind and firm purpose, he was very cautious. His accession was looked upon by progressive people as a triumph for the reactionaries. He began to take up repressive measures with the hope of stopping the tide of public awakening. For some time there was a lull in the activity of the political opponents; but they went on working underground.

The Hyderabad and Kashmir trouble arose in India. He gained friendship with Independent India by sending Nepali troops to help, for which he was decorated with honorary generalship of the Indian army. The Nepali Congress people enjoyed the sympathy of many powerful Indians. Mohan was so short sighted that he did not realise that the Indian Government would no longer support a government which was not progressive and which was so bitterly disliked by the Indian masses. While opposition was growing stronger Mohan Shumsher made a fatal mistake of confiscating the property of the descendents of Bhim Shumsher, who at once threw in their lot with the revolutionaries. Financed by the grandsons of Bhim Shumsher, Subarna Shumsher and Mahabir Shumsher, the Nepali Congress roused itself from stupor and made preparation for overthrowing the Rana rule by violence. King **Tribhubana** also being tired of Ranarchy, had made an alliance with the Congress secretly. He feigned to be unwell for three months during which he did not come out of his Durbar. He even wanted to abdicate his throne in favour of his son which was not accepted

by the Ranas. Just two days before his flight he asked the permission of the Prime Minister to see him at Singha Durbar. He went there with his two sons. After two hours the two princes came out. Only the king was there who came after in his yellow car. The next day he informed the Prime Minister that he would go on for a hunting trip with his family. Accordingly, as planned secretly, he with all his family, except the infants made a dramatic flight and sought asylum in the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu on November 6, 1950, and thence flew by air to Delhi where he was cordially received by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. This created an international situation. Seeing this chance the Nepali Congress launched an attack on Nepal border at nine points. The Ranas could not take quick action against them, for owing to the lack of communication state troops could not be hurried into the attacked areas. The Indian Government did not permit the Ranas to carry armed troops through Indian territories. The sympathy of the masses and even the troops was with the king and this weakened the morale of the state forces. The Ranas saw the futility of keeping up hopeless struggle and were forced to agree to a compromise. A Nepalese deputation awaited on the Prime Minister of India. After a long discussion a constitutional formula was arrived at and the King returned to his country. On February 18, 1951 the king announced the establishment of the Interim Government and the Rana autocracy came to an end.

Nepal, sandwiched between two powerful nations like China and India, maintained neutral foreign policy for centuries. This traditionally neutralistic attitude was continued till the withdrawal of the British power from India. Till then, Nepal had official relations limited to the British Government in India, Tibet, and Great Britain. To retain independent status she had to balance Chinese and British power.

After 1950 onwards Nepal discarded its isolationist policy and established close relations with India, China and other 30 countries of the world. She also became the member of the United Nations in 1955. The achievement in this field is evidenced by the offer and acceptance of aid from countries of the world.

### **Relation of Nepal with Tibet and China**

The relation of Nepal with China can be traced far back to the early dawn of the Nepalese history. It is said that Manjusri, the Chinese savant was responsible for the birth of the fair valley of Kathmandu and for the establishment of a king named Dharmakara. Manjusri has been canonised as a saint by the Buddhists of Nepal.

*Tsong-sang Gampo* ruled in Tibet in 501 A. D. He was a great man and a wise ruler. He unified the petty states of Tibet into a strong and large kingdom and founded the capital city of Lhasa. He married Britsun (Bhrikuti), the daughter of Amsuvarma, the King of Nepal. The next year he married a Chinese princess, Beching. After the death of king Harsha, anarchy prevailed in northern India. Tsong-sang Gampo swooped down into the plains. His court was graced by the presence of great

scholars from India, China and Chinese Turkistan. Among the literary gems, Silamanju, the Nepalese Buddhist scholar shone the brightest.

As a result of the matrimonial alliances of Tsrong-sang Gampo with Nepal and China and the unselfish religious activities of the two princesses, Buddhism spread in Tibet. The religious zeal of the royal patrons, helped Buddhism make such a rapid progress in Tibet that the two princesses came to be deified as *Haritara* and *Swetatara* by the people of Tibet.

Tsrong-sang Gampo brought in learned scholars from Nepal and India and Nepal became the route for Tibet. So visits became very frequent between Nepal and Tibet.

The matrimonial alliance of Tsrong-sang Gampo with Nepal had far reaching consequences. It led to the spread of Buddhism and the awakening of Tibetan art and culture. Trade flourished between the neighbouring countries of Nepal, Tibet and China. Mention of Nepal is found in the account of the Chinese traveller Huin-tsang.

After the death of Tsrong-sang Gampo, *Thi-Song*, one of his scions, brought in a number of Buddhist scholars from Nalanda University and had Buddhist viharas constructed in his country. Buddhism thus received further impetus. Towards the 4th century many books on theology, philosophy and other branches of learning were translated into the Tibetan language. Many Indian scholars and Nepalese savants like *Sri Bhadra* had played their part in this Tibetan renaissance.

Upto the 15th century the Tibetan goods like salt, fur, herbs and drugs were sent down to Nepal via Kuti, Kerong and Nuwakot and then the goods were exported to India. Similarly Nepalese and Indian goods were imported to Lhasa through the same route. Thus trade was very brisk between Nepal, Tibet and China.

During the reign of Yaksha Malla some Tibetan districts like Kuti, Kirong etc., were annexed to Nepal. But after some time they slipped away from the hands of the Nepalese. The Gorkhali king Ram Shah attacked as far as Kuti and Kirong. Pratap Malla, the king of Kantipur had annexed them. Sometime before this, Kazi Bhim Malla had made commercial treaty with the Tibetan Government. By it Nepalese traders were allowed to open shops and carry on business at Lhasa. The treaty was very much in favour of Nepal. By it if a Nepalese businessman dies without an



heir in Tibet, his property would come to Nepal Government. In this way trade flourished between Nepal and Tibet. Through Tibet, a tie of friendship was forged between Nepal and China. Nepal sent good-will missions to China. Under the Mallas too this relation was continued. Nepalese currency was accepted in Tibet.

Later financial stress led the Mallas to issue coins mixed with copper. These coins were also in circulation in Tibet. This faulty currency estranged the relation between Nepal and Tibet, which drifted to the verge of war.

During the regency of *Bahadur Shah*, who followed the policy of expansion, his army pressed on the South west of Sikkim and annexed a part of it. At that time sikkim was under Tibet. Taking advantage of the absence of Touhd Lama, who was on a visit to Peking, the Gurkha forces marched into Tibet and looted some of the monasteries. They marched back laden with the booty. The Tibetan soldiers could not repel the Gurkhas onslaught. They asked China for help. The Chinese emperor sent a large army of 70,000 under *General Fae-Kang-an*. Being out numbered by the enemies, the Gurkhas made a retreat. On the open plains of Tibet the Nepalese could do nothing against the overwhelming numbers of the Chinese. But the latter suffered heavily in the mountain warfare at Dhaibung. After this the Chinese gave up the idea of fighting altogether. Nepal, Tibet and China all talked of peace. Peace was concluded between the three Governments in 1792. It is called the Treaty of Nuwakot; by this treaty (1) the territories of Tibet won by Nepal were to be returned to Tibet and the Tibetan captives too were to be repatriated to the Tibetan Government; (2) Both Nepal and Tibet shall acknowledge the suzerainty of China. (3) Nepal was permitted to carry on trade with Tibet and China; (4) The dispute between Nepal and China about the 'counterfeit coins' was to be treated as closed and a friendly relation was resorted between the two countries; (5) In the event of the invasion of Nepal by the foreign country, China was to help Nepal and was to compensate the Nepalese merchants for what they suffered in Tibet; (6) There shall be an exchange of diplomatic mission between Nepal and China; and Nepal shall send a mission to China with presents every five year and China to receive it with proper courtesy. This exchange of diplomatic mission and presents continued down to the regime of

Prime Minister Chandra Shumsher. This treaty of Nepal with the Celestial Empire and the friendly relation was very beneficial to Nepal, but it was just the reverse for Tibetan interest.

After the treaty of Nuwakot with which ended the dispute about the counterfeit coin, good relations were restored between Nepal and Tibet. Trade flourished between the two countries. During the Anglo-Nepalese war of 1814-16 the Chinese even refused to respond to Nepalese request for military help. To retain an independent status Nepal attempted always to balance China against Britain. Later in 1854 during the regime of Jung Bahadur the bad feeling between Nepal and Tibet came to a head. A number of Nepalese merchants had been done to death and others had been robbed of their goods. Jung wrote to the authorities in Peking asking for redress and for the punishment of such Tibetans who had caused such outrages against peaceful Nepalese. No reply came to the protest. So Jung Bahadur declared a state of war as existing between Nepal and Tibet. A troop under Dhir Shumsher marched towards Kuti and another under Bom Bahadur proceeded towards Kirong. Thus a two-pronged attack was made on Tibet. On both sectors the Tibetans were defeated. At this a large troop marched from Peking. Nepal too sent a large reinforcement under Bakhat Singh and Jagat Shumsher. The Nepalese forces attacked Guntagadhi and Jhunga. After a sharp engagement Jhunga fell into the hands of the Nepalese. Dhir Shumsher captured Sona monastery. Having posted his soldiers at all strategic points at Jhunga, Dhir Shumsher came back to Nepal on the approach of the rainy season. Being defeated in all fronts, peace negotiation was carried on by the Tibetans. The negotiation however broke down as the Tibetan and Chinese authorities did not agree to the terms of Nepal that it would not return the Tibetan territories in the possession of the Nepalese. The Tibetan resumed the hostility and the Nepalese had to retreat. But the Nepalese made a bold stand at Jhunga and inflicted a heavy loss on the Tibetans. Dhir Shumsher hurried up with a large army and put the Tibetans to route at Kuti. Jung Bahadur himself marched at the head of a large army and encamped near Jhunga and conducted the campaign. The Tibetans were defeated on all fronts and were compelled to sue for peace.

In 1856 the representatives of the Tibetan Government came to Kathmandu to talk about peace. On the 24th March 1856 the

treaty was signed at Thapathali; so it was called the treaty of Thapathali. By this treaty Tibet agreed to pay an annual tribute of Rs 10,000 to Nepal. The Nepalese political agent residing at Lhasa was also given extra-territorial rights in Tibet.

Towards the close of Chandra Shumsher's regime the relations between Nepal and Tibet were strained because of the hostile attitude shown by Tibetans towards the Nepalese nationals. Chandra Shumsher was about to mobilise the Nepalese troops when he himself died. The Tibetans, however begged apology and agreed to pay indemnity to Nepal. Diplomatic relation was again resumed.

The treaty was revised in 1956 when Tibet was exempted from paying the tribute in return for their acceptance of the Nepalese Consulate General at Lhasa, four trade agents one each at Lhasa, Nyalam Dzong (Kuti), Girang Dzong (Kyirong) and Zhikatse (Shigatse) were opened and the exchange of the ambassadors of China and Nepal to each other.

According to the agreement on the question of the boundary between the two countries which was signed in 1960, the Nepalese-Chinese Joint Boundary Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Major Gen. Padma Bahadur Khatri from the Nepalese side and H.E. Chang Shih Chie, the Chinese ambassador to Nepal, from the China side. The Joint committee in its four sessions, held in Kathmandu and Peking respectively had solved all out-standing problems of the border in a friendly and cordial atmosphere, and prepared a draft of the boundary treaty between Nepal and China. The Treaty was signed by H. M. King Mahendra Bir Vikram Shah Dev from the Nepal side and Chairman Liu Shao Chi from the Chinese side on October 5, 1961 at Peking Congress Hall. The treaty provided for the Sino-Nepalese Joint Boundary Commission to agree upon questions regarding alignment, location and maintenance of the 79 demarcation markers. On October 15, 1961 an agreement was signed to construct a motorable road linking Kathmandu with Tibet. In 1962 when there was aggression against India, Nepal reasserted its neutrality. Nepal continually supported China's application for membership in the UNO helped to maintain friendly relations on a mutual basis. There has been frequent official visits between both the countries,

### **Relation of Nepal with Great Britain**

The relation of Nepal with the British can be traced since the eighteenth century when *the East India Company* was extending its activities in Northern India. The first contact was made by Jayaprakash Malla for help when Prithvi Narayan Shah made economic blockade of the valley and attacked from all sides. At this the East India Company sent a force under Captain *Kinloch* to check the Gorkhali advance in 1770 which proved a failure. Then the British again sent *Logan's Mission* at the court of the Malla king which also became a complete failure.

The British maintained a policy of tactful non-intervention with Prithvi Narayan and his successors till 1785 though during the reign of Bahadur Shah they wanted to trade in the Nepal border which was rejected. In 1787 a rupture in Nepalese-Tibetan relation occurred in connection with currency problems. China joined with Tibetan side. So Rana Bahadur Shah wanted help from the British but the British neither liked to be involved in the conflict by joining Nepal side nor decline the request. So they sent *Kirkpatric* a British envoy to negotiate a treaty between the Chinese and the Nepalese and also to establish British Resident in Kathmandu. But realising the British motive Rana Bahadur made treaty with the Chinese before the arrival of Kirkpatric. So Kirkpatric's mission had to leave Kathmandu without success. The ill motive of the British is seen from the writings of Kirkpatric "Had Nepal resisted more the better terms would have come." When the mission of Kirkpatric failed the British sent a mission under *Maulvi Abdur Qadir* in 1795. This mission also did not produce any good results.

In 1800 when the nobles rose against Rana Bahadur Shan, he abdicated his throne and went to Benares. The British gave him refuge, loaned him funds and gave hopes to regain his throne. The coup government realised this situation in Benares. Meanwhile the British took this advantage and sent *Captain Knox* to negotiate a new treaty and establish a Residency. This was signed in 1802. But in 1802 the coup government was overthrown and this new government opposed the treaty with the result that Captain Knox had to withdraw from Nepal in 1803.

When Nepal extended as far as Suttlej in the West the Sikhs and the British became concerned about the expansion. A dispute over sovereign power in certain parts of the Terai area arose and

the British declared war with Nepal in 1814. After harsh fighting equally honourable to both sides the war ended and the treaty of *Sugauly* was signed in 1816. This treaty reduced the Nepalese territory and gave the permission to establish British Residency in Kathmandu. Since then the British have continuous representation in Kathmandu. The recruiting of the Gurkha volunteers in the British army began during this period. Mr. W.H. Hunter says, "Wherever a great stroke was to be dealt in India, wherever honour was to be gained, the Gurkha regiment have appeared in the foremost line."

Due to the loss of the Terai lands Nepal occasionally tried to develop anti British feeling siding with the Indian princes. At that time even Hodgson compared Nepal to "*a thorn in the side of the growing British empire.*" He suggested his government that either it must be "*uprooted or its edge had to be rounded.*" Otherwise "*no security for British India.*" During such critical time Bhimsen Thapa was wise enough for making peace regarding delimitation of boundary question. The commission which was entrusted completed its boundary demarcation work in 1833 and its recommendations were accepted by India and Nepal. During the whole period from 1837 to 1841 the British continued to maintain a consoliatory policy with Nepal.

During the Second Sikh War in 1848 Jung Bahadur offered the services of troops to the British but this offer was not accepted.

After the visit of Jung Bahadur to England in 1850-51, Nepal had smooth and peaceful relation with the British, when *Mutiny* broke out in 1857 in India Jung Bahadur himself volunteered to help and suppress the *Mutiny* which was warmly accepted by the British in their dark days.

In 1860 a treaty was signed wherein Nepal restored all the lost territories in the Terai which had been ceded to Britain in 1816. In 1876 even King Emperor Edward VII visited Nepal for shooting in the Terai forest.

Throughout Bir Shumsher's regime between 1885-1901 friendly relations with the British continued though at one time Lord Curzon wanted to interfere in the internal affairs which was baffled by Bir Shumsher.

In 1904 Chandra Shumsher arranged terms of peace during the trouble between British India and Tibet which resulted in opening a new trade route to Tibet via Kalimpong and forced Nepal to

give up its monopoly on trade so far carried with Tibet.

During the first World War Chandra Shumsher expressed his wish to place the whole military resources of Nepal at the disposal of the British. This was accepted for general services in India during the war period. After the war the post of Resident was raised to British Envoy to the court of Nepal and a treaty was signed in 1923. The most significant clause was that the king of Nepal was regarded as His Majesty by the British and thereafter by all the foreign powers. This Treaty also accorded to Nepal permission to import arms, ammunition and other stores from and through British India. Again in 1925 another treaty was signed ratifying the Sugauli treaty which reasserted the internal and external independence of both governments.

When the second world war broke Judda Shumsher helped the British with troops. To make friendly relation strong with the Nepalese the British government allowed to keep a Nepalese Minister in London.

The relation with the British seemed all in tact till India's Independence in 1947. During peoples revolt with the Rana regime in 1950-51 they followed the policy of India. After 1951 the relation of great Britain and Nepal is cordial for economic development and Gurkha recruiting affairs.

### **Relation of Nepal with India**

The relation of Nepal with India could be traced from the Epic Age. The Ramayana mentions that *Sita* the daughter of *king Janaka of Nepal* was married to *Rama the prince of Ayodhya*. In the Mahabharat age a Kiranti king fought on the side of the *Pandavas*. Even at the Swayambara ceremony of Nala and Damayanti a king of Nepal was present to witness the event.

The free thinkers like Kashyapa Muni, Kanaka and Sikhi Buddhas and others came to Nepal via India and blended the Buddhist and Hindu religion resulting in a distinct culture which finds expression in temples and chaityas.

Many ruling dynasties of Nepal like the Mauryas, the Lichhavis, the Thakuris, the Karnataks, the Mallas, the Shahs were immigrants from the plains of India. These immigrants though became the head of administration, never made Nepal a dominion of India but always kept her independent.

King Mahendra Malla is said to have visited the Mughal court

and since then the Nepalese language and culture were greatly influenced by the Persian, Arabic and Urdu languages and culture. From the time of Jayaprakash to 1950 Nepal had relations with the British India as mentioned above.

Since India's independence the relation of Nepal continued as based on the 1925 treaty for three years. Then since 1950 relation have been based on two treaties: (1) The treaty of peace and friendship; (2) the treaty of trade and commerce—by which each government agreed to acknowledge and respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the other, to continue diplomatic relations with the other, and, on matters pertaining to industrial and economic development, to grant rights equal to those of its own citizens to the nationals of the other residing in its territories. In the treaty of trade and commerce India recognised Nepal's right to import and export commodities through Indian territory and ports. Customs were not to be levied on commodities while in transit through India. Both treaties reflected India's desire for a friendly and stable government in Nepal.

It was through India's effort that the peace terms with the Ranas for the restoration of king Tribhuvana to the throne and establishing a stable popular government was negotiated.

Relation with India was strained somewhat in 1961 when India gave asylum to the exiles and provided the arms and ammunitions to raid across the border into Nepal. But in 1962 when the king of Nepal threatened India to take the matter to the United Nations and asked India to stop giving support to the armed opposition and at the same time conflict between China and India also helped to subside the situation.

Since 1963-69 relation with India improved by frequent exchange of visits by high officials of both countries and India's aid to Nepal in her development projects like hydro-electric power, water supply canals, buildings like the university library, national Archives, Tribhubana Rajpath, airports etc., are noteworthy evidences.

From 1970-71 there had been a slight tension in connection with trade treaty of the two countries. But a new trade and transit treaty was concluded between Nepal and India for a period of 5 years with effect from August 15, 1971.

**A RAPID SURVEY OF THE  
RISE AND FALL OF THE  
RANA RULE IN NEPAL**

Nepal has always remained a monarchical state. Loyalty to one common king is the strongest that welds together the heterogeneous elements of the population of Nepal. A review of the past history shows that until the end of eighteenth century a large measure of autonomous power was always enjoyed by local chief and vassal princes. In the Lichhavi period the Guptas and Varmas were very influential, and some of them, like Amsuvarma and Vishnu Gupta completely overshadowed and even totally eclipsed the power of the legitimate sovereign. Powerful kings like Mana Deva and Narendra Deva in the Lichhavi period, and Jayasthiti Malla and Yaksha Malla in the medieval age quelled the refractory vassals and established a strong centralised power, but the political unity which they achieved was of short duration. At the succession of a weak sovereign the vassal princes always hastened to reassert their powers. Towards the close of the Malla period there were families in Nepal which monopolised all power and were known as *king makers*.

The Gurkha kingdom was a creation of Prithvi Narayan and Bahadur Shah, but they owed their success to the active co-operation and intense devotion of certain loyal families, the Basnets, the Pandeys, the Chautarias and Thapas. The king was the head of the state. The Prime Minister always enjoyed the confidence of the king and the people. The Prime Minister had to guard the attacks of rival nobles. So he used to entrust the post of high responsibilities mostly to the members of his family circle. Bhim Sen Thapa and Mathbar Singh Thapa monopolised the powers of the state to some extent, but neither of them once thought of humbling the king and reducing him to the position of a parrot



in a golden cage. The nobility of Nepal was too turbulent to submit to the yoke of Bhim Sen. After 30 years of rule, he was overthrown by a hostile clique. Mathbar's career was cut short by a treacherous attack by his nephew Jung Bahadur.

The Anglo Nepal war closed the political ambition of the Nepalese. A little earlier Nepal had suffered a defeat at the hands of the Chinese. Hemmed in by two mighty empires, China and British India, Nepal had to sacrifice all ambitious schemes of territorial expansion. The energy of the Gurkhas which has hitherto been employed in military adventures came to be directed to domestic feuds and squabbles with the result that the history of Nepal after 1866 became a history of plots and counterplots, court intrigues and political murders.

The situation was aggravated by the incompetence of the sovereign. The vacillating nature of Rajendra Vikram, the selfish policy and headstrong nature of the Queen Regent, and the waywardness of the crown prince created a scene of political confusion. As a writer says, "during the rule of Mathbar Singh, there were four powers in the state, the nominal Sovereign Rajendra Vikram, the heir apparent Surendra, the Queen Regent Rajya Laxmi and the Prime Minister Mathbar Singh." There was no co-ordination of authority among them. After the fall of Mathbar Singh the administration was entrusted to four generals. The power in the hand of Gagan Singh, a favourite of the queen, caused a great deal of indignation both in court circles and in the public. This bitter disgust resulted in the murder of Gagan Singh. At this the queen was mad with fury and her blood thirsty soul turned with the spirit of revenge. Jung Bahadur, who then happened to gain her confidence got a good chance to seize power in the state. He suggested to her to convene a gathering of the nobles at the Kot. He cleverly massacred the entire nobility and became the undisputed master of the country and the blame fell on the hopeless queen. She realised her folly and tried to do away with Jung Bahadur. But he was more than a match for her. A plot to murder Jung was miscarried and she was banished from Nepal. The king also followed her. Surendra was so grateful to Jung for his staunch devotion to his cause that he was glad to sign away all his royal prerogatives.

The powers of the hereditary nobles which had served as a check on the autocracy of the rulers was gone. The king was a

state prisoner. Political awakening had not come for the masses. The people rejoiced to find in Jung Bahadur an able ruler. He maintained peace in the country and dispensed justice in a fair manner. He enjoyed so much confidence and popularity that he ventured to go to England just after four years of his accession to power. He defeated the Tibetans and imposed on her a new treaty which favoured the Nepali merchants. He gained friendship with the British and recovered certain territories that was lost in the Anglo Nepal war. This heightened his prestige. Jung Bahadur secured the title of *Maharaja* and *Tin Sircar* to dazzle the public eye. He elevated his family above other classes of nobility by matrimonial alliance with the royal family. Although the king remained the legal sovereign and the fountain head from which all authority flowed out, Jung Bahadur became a super king. Knowing that the traditional loyalty to the sovereign was too strong to be shaken, Jung Bahadur was careful not to remove the king but to let him remain as the ceremonial head of the state. Jung created a new order of nobility who owed their elevation to him and vied with one another in winning his favour and confidence. This class of new nobility was the backbone of the Ranas as a power. The friendship with the British was also another factor to strengthen the position of the Ranas.

The century of the family autocracy of the Rana was a period of uninterrupted peace and except for a puny expedition into Tibet, Nepal had to fight hardly any war. Nor was there any serious internal disorder as most of the people were illiterate. Such a period of peace was extremely favourable for economic development and material and intellectual progress. But the selfish rulers never cared for the welfare of the people. For want of state support many of the native industries and native genius died down. No attempt was made to spread education among the masses, thinking that an educated mass would never tolerate their selfish rule. The Ranas had splendid chance of serving the country and earning the gratitude of the subject by carrying the country forward along the lines of intellectual and moral development and also in the development of the potential resources of the country. The chief aim of every ruler was to hoard wealth for his good. No long term plan of development was tried, because no premier wanted to let his successor reap the benefit of his toils.

In spite of the attempt to stifle national awakening there had

been a growing political consciousness among the masses. The national movement in India roused the political ferment in Nepal. The Rana failed to move with the times. They did not adopt themselves to changing circumstances nor did they hear the opinion given by younger Rana, like Krishna, Mrigendra, Vijaya. Even after the establishment of a national government in India they continued their policy of repression.

One of the causes of the sudden collapse of the Rana rule was the distinction between 'A' class and 'C' class Ranas. A house divided against itself cannot stand. The smouldering flame of discontent of the 'C' class Ranas flared up suddenly during the critical days of the Revolution and hastened the collapse of the Rana power.

The real cause of their down fall was their growing unpopularity among the masses. They could offer no solution for unemployment and for the acute distress caused by scarcity and by the rise in the prices of food and the articles of every day use. The efficiency of administration which was a redeeming feature of the Rana rule also began to deteriorate. Since Juddha's time, owing to the slackness in the vigilance of the Prime Minister, corruption crept in every department. The growing complexity of administration left no leisure for the Ranas to attend to Justice, which had been delivered remarkably well. While the income of the Government steadily declined as a result of grant of lands and forests to Ranas and their satellites, the expense of the Government increased in order to provide for the expanding branches of administration. A large amount of state revenue was wasted in providing for the members of the double aristocracy of the Ranas and the state. Whatever surplus remained all went to swell the coffers of the Prime Minister. All these things made the people clamour for a revolution.

In the words of Lt. Gen. Mrigendra Shumsher "Had the Rana Regime of 104 years been a good and prosperous one it would not have collapsed within 104 days. Internally it was already putrified and rotten. It was widely disfavoured though they could not express one another. Espionage and secret agencies were in abundance. Nobody relied on any one. The Prime Minister as an individual had absolute power. He could do anything as he wished. To uphold his reign he had absolutely no trust, faith and belief on others. Even the commander-in-chief and the senior

commanding general had to be alert always to retain their position. Each individual had his own spies. Nobody attempted to speak open heartedly. External travel was also prohibited. People could not go abroad even for education or medical treatment.”

Taking advantage of the situation the King made a dramatic flight and sought asylum in the Indian Embassy. The Ranas enthroned an infant Gyanendra Vikram. This created an international situation. Nepali Congress took this advantage and launched an attack on Nepal at nine points and people supported the revolution whole heartedly. The Ranas who had neglected the development of communication found themselves at a great disadvantage while they had to send troops in the attacked areas. The firm determination of the Indian Government not to uphold the cause of the Ranas, the domestic situation and the staggering loss of support from large sections of the Rana family, destroyed the morale of the ruling A class Ranas. They realised that they were carrying a hopeless struggle, fought rather indifferently and at length agreed to a compromise which meant a total surrender of all their vested interests and privileges.

**RESTORATION OF  
ROYAL POWER****A Glimpse of the People's Struggle for Political Freedom in Nepal**

Political consciousness came late to the people of Nepal; all the same social reforms had engaged their attention from the very early time. The wide awakening among the people of the sub-continent of India led the mind of the Nepalese towards social reforms.

**Propagation of Arya Samaj:** Madhav Raj Joshi, the father of Sukra Raj had started propagating the creed of Arya Samaj since the time of Bir Shumsher at Pokhara and Kathmandu. But during regime of Chandra Shumsher suspecting that the proselytizing activities might lead to political consciousness among the people, threw Madhav Raj into prison and ostracised the followers of the Arya Samaj creed. Later on when released Madhav Raj left Kathmandu and settled in Darjeeling.

After some years his sons, began to preach Arya Samaj faith among the people. They were, however, arrested by the order of Chandra Shumsher. Later secret activities under the cloak of social service went on, to encompass the object, but that too was leaked out; in the meantime the sons of Madhav Raj were banished.

**Gorkha League:** After the first world war the thirst for social reforms was seen in a marked degree. Thakur Chandan Singh of Dehra Dun established Gorkha League and started its two organs. 'Gorkha Sansar' and 'Tarun Gorkha' to arouse social and political consciousness among the Nepalese. But Chandra Shumsher bought off the founder and nipped its activities in the bud.

In the meantime Tulsi Meher came back to Kathmandu from India and confined himself to the propagation of Charkha rather than politics.

In the regime of Bhim Shumsher an attempt was made by Khanda Man, Khadga Man and Umesh Bikram to start an organisation called, "*Prachanda Gorkha*" with a view to bring about a change in the government. But the aims and objects of the organisation leaked out and the three youthful workers were given life sentence.

**The Committee of Civil Liberty:** During the regime of Juddha Shumsher, Sukra Raj Shastri, Rajalal, Kedar Man and Gangalal thought of forming a committee of civil liberty in Nepal. Sukra Raj had even contacted Malaviyaji and Mahatma Gandhi in connection with the matter. But on the very charge Sukra Raj was put under surveillance on his return to Kathmandu.

In the meantime the members of the committee, some teachers of Mahabir school and Pt. Murlidhar had made a vigorous endeavour to rouse the masses from their slumber. They also started a volunteer corps and rendered service to the pilgrims in the Shivaratri fair. They made a plan to address the people once a week. First of all Sukra Raj took the lead. As he was delivering lecture about Karma Yoga, he was arrested. Then the government wanted to haul up all its members, who soon went underground.

**Nepal Praja Parishad:** The dazzling success of the Indians in their struggle for freedom against the alien rulers made the Nepalese youths bold enough to come forward to put an end to the century-old Rana autocracy in Nepal. Thus an organisation was formed in Vikram era 1993; Tanka Prasad, Dasarath Chand and Ram Hari were its leading members. They even made a contact with the King through Dharma Bhakta. In the meantime Nepalese students in Benares started '*Nepal-Sangh*' delivering social and political speeches. The young Praja Parishad organisation also got support from them.

The members of Praja Parishad, being thus encouraged from outside help, started printing pamphlets against the Rana government and articles to the same effect caught bold headlines in the Indian and foreign papers.

**Nepal Democratic Congress:** After some time there was a split in the National Congress due to its political stagnation and another party known as Democratic Congress sprang into existence in Calcutta. Among its founders Mahendra Bikram, Surya Prasad and Prem Bahadur were the most prominent. Subarna Shumsher and Mahabir Shumsher had given financial help to the party out of their private purses.

**Nepali Praja Panchayat:** Subsequent to the announcement by Padma Shumsher a party of young men headed by Tripurbar was working within the framework of the constitution of Nepal Praja Parishad. But they were soon arrested. Then Bisheswar Prasad Koirala, Kedar Man and Krishna Prasad came to Kathmandu secretly and carried on agitation on the basis of Praja Panchayat. But Bisheswar was again arrested. At the sight of the brutal torture done to political prisoners in the prison, he went on fast for twenty one days with his demands of better treatment to his fellow prisoners. At last finding no other way out, Mohan Shumsher released these prisoners.

**Nepali Congress:** Towards the end of 1948, 'Nepal Democratic Congress' founded by Mahendra Bikram and others made a tremendous plan of launching a country-wide agitation. In the meantime a bloc of National Congress and the Democratic Congress sat together in a joint session in Calcutta. The offshoot of this unification was the birth of the new organisation called 'Nepali' Congress. Matrika Prasad was elected President. Two programmes, external and internal, were drawn up for the organisation. It was resolved that externally Matrika Prasad was to organise the party on democratic lines and internally Bisheswar and Subarna Shumsher were to plan for armed revolution.

Then Ganesh Man, Sunder Raj Chalise and others came back to Kathmandu with a view of winning over the army to the side of the Congress. They were doing their work when suddenly Sunder Raj Chalise, his wife, Col. Toran Shumsher, Mohan Bikram and others were arrested and were put to cruel torture. Ganesh Man escaped but was arrested at Thori.

Now the Ranas were very much scared. Even the king was in favour of the Congress, they were afraid lest the army might go out of hand. So they watched the movement of the King very

strictly. **H.M. the King Tribhubana** then thought of seeking asylum in India.

**Bairgania Resolution:** Seeing Mohan Shumsher follow the policy of ruthless suppression, the leaders of the Nepali Congress met in a conference on 26th September 1950 at Bairgania. Resolution was passed for violent revolution. Matrika Prasad, the President was vested with full power for the period of insurrection.

### **Departure of King Tribhubana from the Palace**

King Tribhubana was implicated in the anti-Rana revolution of 1940. Since then he was in strict vigilance by the Ranas. He was also considered to be the sponsor of 1950 September Revolt. Being tired of the Ranas he wanted to abdicate his throne in favour of his son, and go to Europe. Confidentially the younger Ranas advised the Prime Minister to send him under the supervision of General Nara Shumsher who will have vigilance on the king. This proposal was not accepted. When the king did not get permission to leave Nepal he escaped on the 6th November 1950 and sought asylum in the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu. Mohan Shumsher made his level best to make the King come back. On his flat refusal Mohan Shumsher dethroned him and put his three-year old grandson, **Gyanendra Bir Bikram** on the throne.

The forceful deposition of king Tribhubana sent a wave of indignation through the kingdom and all the people were sad and became rebellious. The news spread like wild fire in the outside world. Though the foreign powers had sympathy for the Ranas, none could declare anything against the wish of India. India refused to recognise Gyanendra as the king.

Mohan Shumsher left no stone unturned to block the passage of the king to India. But all his attempts proved futile before the mighty Indian power. The royal refugees were picked up by the Indian Dakota and taken to Delhi. The Rana government were so blinded by fury that an indiscriminate arrest was made of the persons suspected of revolutionary spirit.

**Revolution:** Now the Nepali Congress got the golden opportunity to engineer the *revolution*. On the 10th November pamphlets and leaflets were rained down from the aeroplane and on the same night the insurgent forces of the Congress led by Thir



Bom and Puran Singh made a surprise attack under the cover of darkness and captured Birgunj and made prisoner of its Governor, Som Shumsher. This success of the Congress kindled the courage of all people. The Indian and foreign presses also lauded the glorious triumph. But the tide of victory stopped their advance next day on account of the death of its young commander, Thir Bom caused by the hands of the government forces. The insurgent could not advance further. The People's Government was set up at Birgunj. Then the insurgents obtained success in different districts and People's Government were set up in all the places. Then the leaders of the Congress girded up their loins to measure words with the Ranas.

On 17th November the insurgents met the state forces led by Gen. Yek Raj Shumsher in an open engagement at Parwanipur. On account of the shortage of ammunition, they made hasty retreat. The state forces advanced and recaptured Birgunj. Many persons were thrown into jail and even innocent people were killed.

On 18th November a big procession of the farmers numbering about ten thousand staged a demonstration in Gaur Bazar. But they were dispersed by the state forces resulting in the death of Shiva Prasad, the leader of the procession and many other persons fell victim to the soldiers firing.

On the western front the insurgents had a remarkable success. Dr. Kunwar Indrajit Singh made a heavy onslaught on Bhairahawa. The jails were broken open and the Governor's house was attacked. The state forces marching from the capital compelled him to retreat; all the same he did not give up fighting. At last after the ceasefire order issued subsequent to the Delhi Agreement, he did not like to lay down arms. He was declared the rebel chief and was taken prisoner on 18th Falgun 2008 (V.S.).

In the meantime the insurgents forces had scored victory at Dang Deokhuri, Jajarkot, Musikot, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Palpa, Gorkha etc., and had planted People's Government in all the places. *Rudra Shumsher* had been appointed as the military Governor of Palpa.

In this way the whole western districts had come under the sphere of People's Government.

In the east also the insurgents fought tooth and nail. The battle between the insurgents and the State troops raged on for twelve days, at last the State forces who had come to the relief of the

governor were defeated and the governor had no other alternative but to surrender. People's Government was also set up there.

Then Jhapa, Udaipur Gadi and Pasupatinagar etc., fell one by one into the hands of the insurgents. In the meantime Dhankuta and Bhojpur also enjoyed the benefit of the People's Rule. The cease-fire took place on all fronts, consequent to the framing of the new ministry in Kathmandu.

**The People's Struggle in Central Nepal:** While the people's struggle was going on outside the capital, the people in the Valley were not sitting idle.

From the day the King left Kathmandu processions came out from each and every Tole. Hartal was observed in all the three principal towns and the people were not willing to recognise Gyanendra as their king. Students of schools, colleges and pathshalas and people belonging to other public organisations took active part in it.

The Rana Government on the other hand let loose an orgy of repression to put down the movement. The city was clamped with curfew and they relentlessly injured many people through their soldiers.

In the meantime *Frank Roberts* the British Deputy High Commissioner for India and Sir *Easter Denning*, the roving Ambassador visited Kathmandu on 3rd December 1950, to study its political situation. On the historic day a mammoth crowd of people led by *Mr. Shanker Dev Panth*, had gathered at the Gauchar Airport. The visitors were besieged by the mob who raised loud slogans in favour of the exiled King. To disperse the crowd the military had to resort to firing and use tear-gas.

On 13th March, a big procession started towards the central jail to raid it and release the political prisoners. As soon as the processionists came in front of the gate they were greeted with a shower of bullets. Many were wounded. This added fuel to the flame of the people's fury. The eyes of the people were turned expectantly to Delhi for the outcome of the parley.

**Delhi Talk:** At last His Excellency Kaiser Shumsher, the late Field Marshal, and Vijaya Shumsher were deputed as representatives of the Nepal Government to talk with Prime Minister Nehru. The representatives of the Nepal Government, the Con-

gress people, and H. M. the King, Tribhubana sat together for discussion. A negotiation was arrived at, Tribhubana was to form a new ministry under his leadership. The same day on 15th February 1951 Tribhubana flew back to Nepal. With him came the leaders of the Congress. On 18th February the cabinet was formed on a parity-basis—five from the Ranas and five from the Congress.

**Gallant Gorkha Dal:** Some days afterwards Bharat Shumsher, the grandson of Baber Shumsher, set up an organisation called the Gallant Gorkha Dal with a view of rousing the public against the Congress. This organisation was composed of Rana's bodyguards and followers, some of them roamed about with naked khukri in hand. So the people were panicky.

Seeing a sort of fiendish activity of some of the members of the Gorkha Dal, Bishweswar Prasad, the Home Minister, got its prominent leader, Bharat Shumsher arrested for the peace and security of the country. The procession of 'Gorkha Dal' broke open the jail and brought their leader out and raided the residence of Bishweswar. But a bullet from the hand of Home Minister pierced the heart of one bodyguard and put the rest to flight. During this incident the late Field Marshal Gen. Kaisher, who was then commander-in-chief, worked tactfully and controlled the army, who were all in a stand-by position at the Tundikhel Parade Ground, otherwise it would have taken another shape.

There was deadlock in the cabinet. Composed as it was of the two hostile elements, the Government machinery could not function smoothly. At last Mohan Shumsher had to resign his post of premiership and another cabinet was formed under the premiership of Matrika Prasad. In this way the century old Rana autocracy came to an end.

Even under the Congress Government the people were far from happiness. All their hopes of better days was dashed to pieces; the people were dissatisfied at the scramble for power and the fulfilment of private ends by the Congress Ministers. So the disillusioned people raised their voice against them. So there was a wave of discontent among students, the civil servants and the general public.

**Biratnagar Hartal:** On 4th March 1947 the factory hands of the Biratnagar mill went on strike. They had the leaders of the Na-

tional Congress at their back. The Government sent 250 soldiers to put down the strikes. The soldiers arrested Bishweswar Prasad and others. Most of the grievances of the mill employees were redressed. Nevertheless the strike continued and many persons were still arrested.

**The Rebellion of Dr. K. I. Singh:** Kunwar Indrajit Singh was a bold and farsighted statesman. During the movement he had played a major role at Bhairahawa and Dhankuta. But he could not pull on with the Congress leaders. So he continued fighting in defiance of the ceasefire order. So he was declared a rebel chief, was captured by the state troops and was imprisoned. His conviction was that there should be equitable distribution of the national wealth and that no Rana should be allowed to occupy positions of power. But as there were two Ranas in power, his views were not endorsed by the colleagues; so he did not slacken his revolutionary activities.

A few days after his imprisonment at Bhairahawa, Dr. K. I. Singh broke open the jail and escaped. But he was not at large for a long time. He was taken prisoner at Jhunga Gadi by the state forces which were sent from Kathmandu. He was brought over to Kathmandu and was imprisoned in Singh Durbar. He, however, managed to conduct an illicit connection with the political parties and won the loyalty of the very insurgent soldiers of Raksha Dal posted to guard him. He slipped out of the confinement under cover of darkness and rose into rebellion. He stormed the Central jail and let out the prisoners.

Then his followers occupied Singh Durbar, the magazine, Bank and Treasury and other key posts. All the ministers fled to the Royal Palace to seek shelter. The next day the state forces came into clash with the rebel soldiers, but K. I. Singh received no support from any political party or organisation. At last driven to despair, he quitted Singh Durbar and made his way to Tibet. Nobody had the pluck to capture him. From Tibet he went to China and settled there. On the occasion of H. M. King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev's accession to the throne, he granted amnesty to him. He, then came back to Nepal, opened a party of his own and began to devote his time to the organization of the party.

In the meantime there was a split in the Congress Party. Everybody was after his personal and selfish ends, Matrika Prasad,

the Prime Minister, and Bishweswar Prasad, the President of the Congress, vied with each other to capture power. The titanic struggle between the step-brothers reached its climax. Some members of the cabinet on the side of Bishweswar tendered resignation. The ministry collapsed and Matrika Prasad too resigned his premiership. The King took the reins of the Government in his own hands and began to rule with the advice of a body of advisors with Kaiser Shumsher as the chief.

The split among the political leaders became more and more acute and before this acuteness Kedar Man had set up the leftist wing. Matrika then thought of opening another party. The session of the Nepali Congress passed the no-confidence motion against Matrika Prasad and consequently he had to resign from the Congress. He set up Rastriya Praja Party. In it he was supported by Tripurabar and Narad Muni Thulung and was secretly backed by Mahabir Shumsher. At that time no political party had been able to do any organised work for national benefit. So a gloom of despair had settled down on the nation. On the one hand the Congress was torn by internal strife and on the other Praja Parishad had been sluggish. Of course Kisan Sangh, Communist Party, Janabadi etc., were there, but none could do any solid deed. Moreover the Gorkha Parishad was biding their time. The decline of the Congress cleared the line for Gorkha Parishad. But the public had no faith in it and had suffered from the same malady. The people had pinned hope in the Advisory Regime. Had it done any solid deed, it would have heightened the popularity of Tribhubana. But the advisors did not prove to be skilled administrators. The condition of Nepal deteriorated. But for a few minor things like the conference of landlords, the farmers' problems, it could not do any thing worth mentioning. In the meantime the health of the King broke down and H. M. the King again called Matrika Prasad, the leader of the Rastriya Praja Party, to form the Government. Accordingly in Ashadh 2010 Matrika Prasad became the Prime Minister for the second time.

As the health of H. M. King Tribhubana became worse and worse, he set up a Regency Council on 4th Shrawan 2010 and flew to Europe for treatment. On his return to Nepal he set up a coalition Government on 7th Falgun 2010 with Martika Prasad as the Prime Minister. No solid deed was done except for the vested interest and there was quarrel in the cabinet meetings. This

idle cabinet once more sent a wave of discontent among the public. H. M. the King's health was impaired again and having set up a Regency Council he flew to Zurich for treatment. The Regency was headed by H. R. H. the Crown Prince. The cabinet was once more torn by internal discord and disunion. At the recommendation of the minister, the Regency council removed Tanka Prasad and Bhadrakali Misra from the Council of Ministers. As the King's health grew worse, the Crown Prince flew to his ailing father and came back invested with full royal power. Matrika Prasad resigned from his Prime Ministership on 19th Falgun 2011 and the cabinet was dissolved. H. R. H. the Crown Prince took the reins of Government in his own hands and ruled over the country with a cherished desire to do good to the people. He raised the salaries of his civil servants and defined the civil service rule.

**MAHENDRA BIR BIKRAM  
SHAH DEV**

King Tribhubana died in Caintin hospital at Zurich. His son Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev ascended the throne on the 15th of March 1955. The remains of the deceased king was brought on a specially chartered plane to Kathmandu, and the funeral ceremony took place at Aryaghat at Pasupati.

The Late King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah had gained administrative experience during the life time of his father, and had also acted as the head of the Regency of Council with full power. He took the reign in his hand and ruled personally with advisory board. This was criticised by the semi-democratic parties, so he invited Tanka Prasad Acharya, a patriot and man of principle, the leader of Praja Parisad, to become Prime Minister and to form the government with royal nominees and his party members.

Tanka Prasad paid a visit to China and made a friendly alliance with the country. Just after his return, the Indian President paid a state visit to Nepal, and after five months, the Chinese Prime Minister *Chou En Lai* also made a state visit. It was during his time that the preliminary diplomatic relation with USSR was made. Nepal got admission in UNO also.

Later the cabinet was expanded with more nominees with whom the Acharya government had conflict, so he could not do any big thing nor could he fix the date for general election as conditioned in him. So he had to tender his resignation.

The king held parleys with different political parties in the country. Seeing disagreement among them he asked Dr. K. I. Singh, the leader of the United Democratic Party to form the government providing seats to members of the other parties as well. But no party came forward to join with him. So he

formed his own party government on 26 July 1957. He became Prime Minister and attempted to get independent control for which he had to quit after 110 days.

The king then ruled directly and called the representatives of different parties if they could hold the general elections on the fixed date. The congress and the Gorkha Parisad answering in the affirmative, the king formed a multiparty government headed by the congress representative Suberna Shumsher, who was styled as the Chairman of the council of ministers. The king then granted a constitution on February 12, 1959 by which Nepal was to have a bicameral Parliament of 109 elected members in the Lower House, the Upper House consisting of 50 members, some of which were elected from the Lower House and the others as nominated.

The general election was held on the 18th February 1959. The country was for the purpose of elections divided into 109 constituencies, each sending one elected member to the parliament. Nine political parties of the country contested the elections. Two thirds of the seats were won by the Nepali congress party, the conservative Gorkha Parisad won only nineteen seats, the United Democratic Party 5, and the communist party 4. The result of the election was that Mr. B. P. Koirala and his party formed the government, who were sworn on May 27, 1959 and in which he included representatives from all castes, classes and religion.

The people of Nepal were now eagerly looking forward to the development of the country by the people's elected government. This government tried to carry out some reforms, but lacked backing. In March 1960, Prime Minister Koirala visited China and signed an agreement to solve the time old boundary question for demarcation by joint teams. Then the Chinese Prime Minister Chou En Lai came to Nepal on April 1960 and signed a treaty of peace and friendship.

The new regime could not bring any substantial changes in the deteriorating condition of the country. Political circles were at intrigue. The wide-spread lawlessness was not controlled. For all these the king took major steps on December 15, 1960 against the Nepali congress party leaders, who were all arrested. The king adjourned and dismissed the Parliament in accordance with the clause 55 of the Constitution, and accused them for ruining the



nation in the name of democracy.

He formed a cabinet of prominent people selected on the basis of personal merits. Unlike the previous government, the king himself acted as both Head of the State and government wherein Tulsi Giri as Chief Minister in the council.

He realised that the delicate machinery of democracy based on party government crashes in the rough hands. So the king wanted to remove it of the foreign brand and gave it our own native stamp. This partyless democracy is called the Panchayat system to lead the country to the general welfare. It is basically founded from the bottom upwards.

After Tulsi Giri, Surya Bahadur Thapa and Kirti Nidhi Bista became Chairman and Deputy Chairman. Then in 1966 May, Surya Bahadur Thapa was made Prime Minister and Kirti Nidhi Bista as Deputy Prime Minister, but Bista was at variance with Thapa's measure of works so he resigned in September 1968. The king considering dutifulness and honesty of Bista removed Surya Bahadur Thapa and replaced Kirti Nidhi Bista as Prime Minister on April 7, 1969.

To meet the essentials of life and to raise the standard of his people within a short possible time, he launched the first five year plan, the second three year plan and the third five year plan. In 1970 December he appealed to his people to make the present coming decade an Economic Development and prosperity for making the country economically sound.

During his travel within the nook and corner of the country he realised that the lag of the country was in absence of good roads. So he implemented the construction of East West Highway and some of the feeder roads from North to South. It was during his reign that a hundred years slothful idleness and servile meanness followed by a period of unceasing activities and all round development.

As a lover of art and literature and culture he set up the Royal Nepal Academy of Art and Culture. In 1959 he opened the Tribhuban University, and he as its Chancellor guided its affairs. He introduced the New Education Plan to produce the future generation intellectually creative and useful in the society.

He possessed a charming personality, grave outlook and never lost his temper about anything. He enriched his mind with width of learning. He had a broad knowledge of the world and

general culture. Personally he was a Hindu of the strictest sect, not only by blood but by instinct, training and experience. He performed Kotihom and had restored and renovated many temples throughout the country. He was not a diehard Hindu. He allowed his people to follow their own religion. He showed high regard to the great teacher, Buddha, for his gospels of love, peace and non-violence. The fine marble pillar, the improvement on the holy site of Lumbini, and shrines are the striking proofs of his broad outlook.

He raised the prestige of Nepal in the international field. A good politician as he was followed the non-alignment foreign policy and made diplomatic friendship with other countries of the world.

The king, a widely travelled man at home and abroad, possessed a modern outlook. The old law of the country was cobwebbed with caste laws, and caste cases were frequent and bitter. So, he introduced the New Civil Code (Nayamulki Ain) in 1963, which gave a death blow to this traditional prejudices on caste system and made it to suit the new democratic set up. It guaranteed the fundamental rights of equality and freedom as stated in the constitution of 1962.

The landlords had big estates. The poor peasants used to till the land and could not enjoy the fruit of their labour but went to the landlords. The king was moved with pity at the wretched condition of the peasants. To do away with this social injustice the surplus land was taken from the landlords and given to the landless peasants. The compensation for the land taken went in the shape of capital to feed the infant industry. He introduced the Land Reform Act in 1964 in order to strike a workable balance between industry and agriculture and it guaranteed the tenancy rights to the peasants. He also abolished the age old system of Feudal states.

Thus by the political revolution of 1950 king Tribhubana gave freedom to the people and by economic revolution of 1964, king Mahendra gave bread to the hungry toiling peasants. They got a new lease of life.

King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah suddenly passed away due to a heart attack at *Diyalo Bungalo* in Chitaur on January 31, 1972 and his deceased body was brought to Aryaghat for cremation.

### **Birendra Bir Bikram Shah**

After the sad and untimely death of King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, his eldest son Crown Prince Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev ascended the throne of Nepal on January 31, 1972 at 12.17 p.m. and on the same evening he broadcasted a condolence message in the name of the nation. He declared *Queen Aiswarya Rajya Laxmi Devi Shah* as *Sri Panch Badamaharani* and his son *Dipendra Bir Bikram Shah* as *Sri Panch Yubaraja Dhiraj*. He urged all the people of Nepal to remain united and materialise the lofty desire of his illustrious father to raise the country high through mutual co-operation, goodwill and unity.

A well educated and widely travelled King as he is has gained wide experience in running the administration of the country. He has taken a series of measures for economic development based on his analytical observations of the problems to mitigate the poverty of the people.

The unification and consolidation of the scattered tiny states into one composite independent Nepal was made by His Majesty Prithvi Narayan Shah and the expansion of it into a wide coverage up to the Sutlej river in the far west was also completed in the reign of Grivana Juddha Shah Dev. The overthrow of century old Ranarchy was made under the able leadership of H.M. the King Tribhubana Bir Bikram Shah Dev. His majesty the late King Mahendra exhibited the traditional spirit for the sake of partyless Panchayat democracy suited to the soil of our country and also introduced the new version of the Mulki Ain (Legal Code). Now the present King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev whose motto of life is "Honesty is Honour and Labour is Luck" is ever ready to translate into deeds. So the kings of Nepal have always been leading the country as gallant torch bearers for the cause of the welfare of their people.



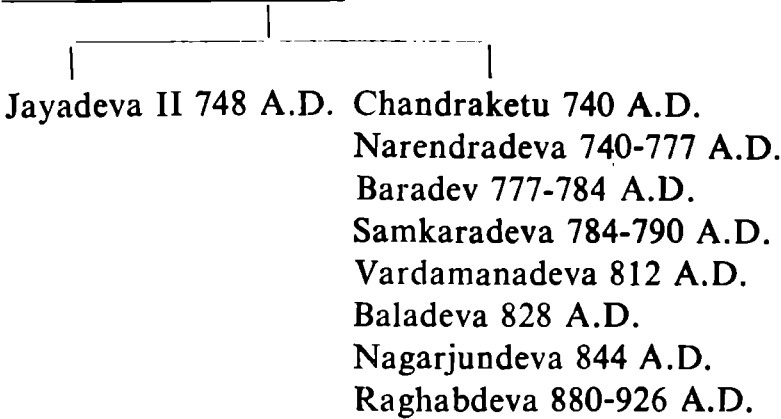
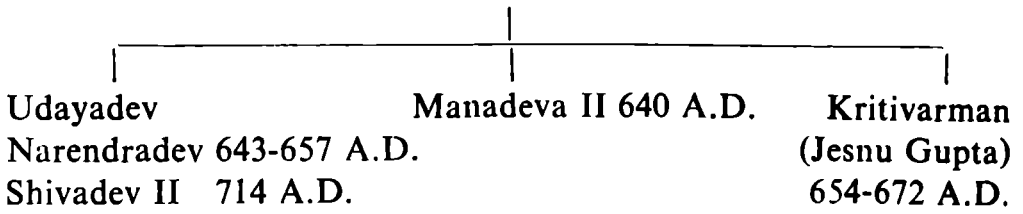
## Appendix A

### LICHHAVI KINGS

Bhumivarma	305 A.D.
Chandravarma	330 A.D.
Jayadeva I	340 or 350 A.D.
Varshavarma	
Sarvavarma	
Prithvivarma	
Harivarma	
Kuveravarma	
Siddhivarma	
Haridutta (Builder of Budhanilkantha and Narayans Temples)	
Vasudutta	
Sripati	
Sivavidhivarma	
Vasantadeva	
Manadeva I	576 A.D.
Gunakamadeva	
Shivadeva I	635-639 A.D.
Vrikshadeva	660 A.D.
Shankaradeva	
Dharmadeva	705 A.D.
Manadeva III	705-796 A.D.
Mahideva	
Vasantadeva	735 A.D.

**Gupta (Rulers in the Terai)  
Janakpur Side**

Jaya Gupta 500 A.D. }		Unknown Gupta
Parma Gupta 525 A.D. }		”
Harsha Gupta 550 A.D. }	Before Manadeva I	”
Bhima Gupta 575 A.D. }		”
Vishnu Gupta 600 A.D. }		Vara Simha
Jaya Gupta II	After Gunakamadeva	Jaya Simha
Yakshya Gupta	but before Sivadeva I	Bhuban Simha
Visva Gupta		
Bhumi Gupta 625 A.D. }		

**Amsuvarma 595-643 A.D.**

From 726 A.D. to 1200 A.D. there is a long gap. It is surmised that from 926 to 1130 A.D. it was under the Baladynasty.

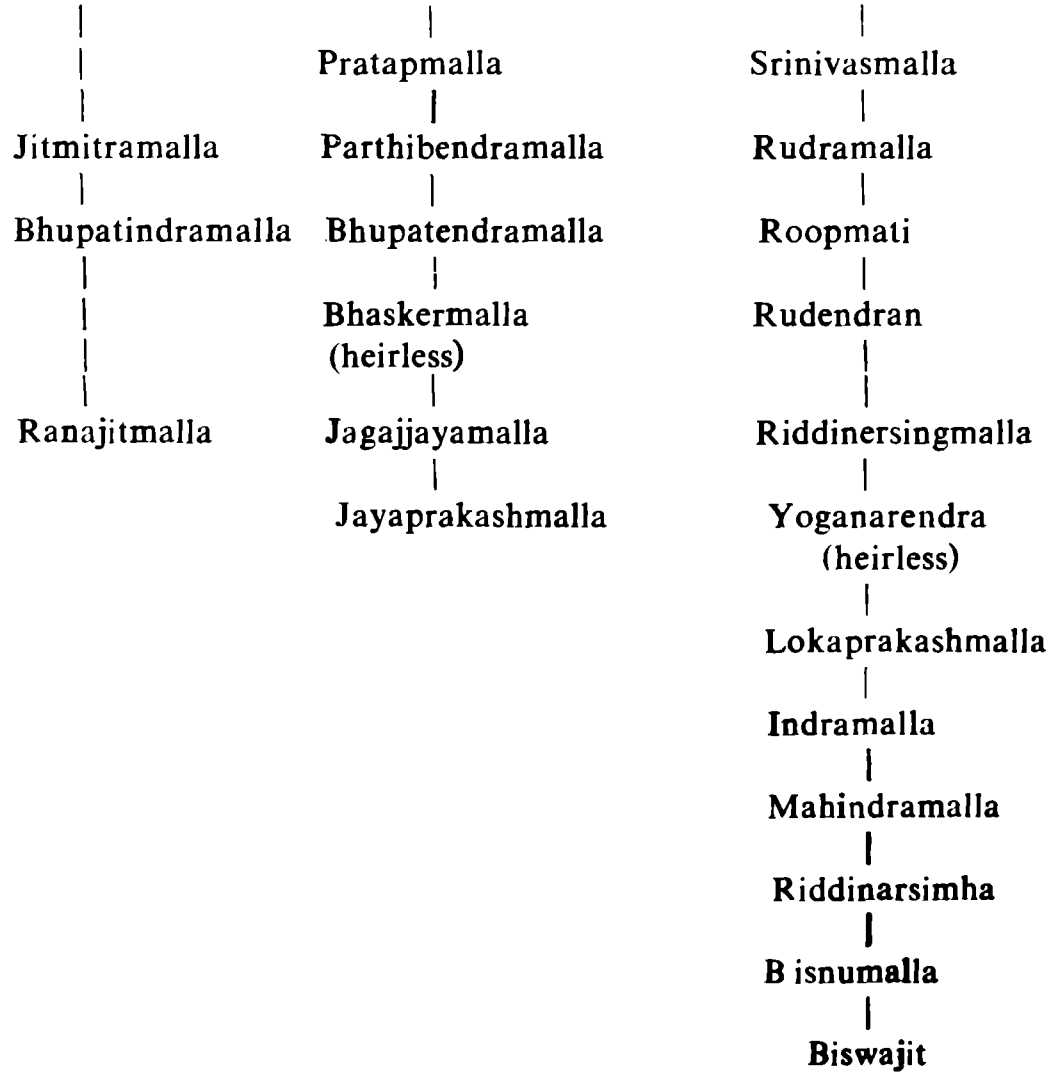
Sthitimalla (m. Rajalladevi g.d. of Rudramalla) 1366-1395 A.D.

Dharmamalla Jyotirmalla 1395-1428      Kirtimalla

Yakshamalla 1428-1482 A.D.      Jittamalla

( <i>Bhaktapur</i> )	( <i>Kantipur</i> )	( <i>Benepa</i> )	( <i>Arimalla</i> )
Rayamalla	Ratnamalla	Ranamalla	defeated
1481-1512 A.D.	Suryamalla	Vishnu Simha	1482-1565
Bhubanmalla	Amarmalla	(Patan)	
Pranamalla	Mahendramalla		
Biswamalla	Sivamalla		
Trailokyamalla	Hariharsimha (Did not become king)		
Jagaj Jyotirmalla			
Nareshmalla	<i>Kantipur</i>	<i>Lalitpur</i>	Siddinarsimha
	Laxminarsimha		





## Appendix B.

### GENEALOGICAL CHARTS OF THE SHAH RULERS\*

Drabya Shah (1559-1570)	
Purandra Shah (1570-1605)	
Chhatra Shah (1605-1606)	
Ram Shah (1606-33)	
Damber Shah (1633-42)	
Krishna Shah (1642-58)	— <i>Pitamber Shah</i> — <i>Shanker Shah</i> — <i>Balabhadra Shah</i>
Rudra Shah (1658-69)	
Prithvipati Shah (1669-1716)	— <i>Madhukar Shah</i>
Balabhadra Shah	— <i>Udyot Shah</i> — <i>Rabiraman</i> — <i>Shantarup Rutan Shah</i>
Narabhupal Shah (1716-1742)	
Prithvi Narayan Shah (1742-1774)	— <i>Dalamardan Shah</i> — <i>Surapratap Shah</i> — <i>Mahodamkirti</i> — <i>Dalajit</i> — <i>Rudra Shah</i> — <i>Bahadur Shah</i> — <i>Shere Bahadur</i> — <i>Rana Udyot</i>
Pratap Simha Shah (1774-77)	
Rana Bahadur Shah (1777-1799)	
Girbana Judda Shah (1799-1816)	
Rajendra Bikram (1816-1847)	
Surendra Bikram (1847-81)	— <i>Upendra Vikram</i> — <i>Ranedra Bikram</i> — <i>Brendar Vikram</i> — <i>Devndra Vikram</i>
Trailokya Bikram-Narendra Vikram	
Prithvibir Bikram (1881-1911)	— <i>Yaksha Vikram</i> — <i>Rana Vikram</i> — <i>Jharendra Vikram</i> — <i>Bir Vikram</i>
Tribhubana Bir Bikram (1911-1955)	— <i>Sagar Vikram</i>
Mahendra Bir Bikram (1955-1972)	— <i>Himalaya Bir Vikram</i> — <i>Basundhara Bir Vikram</i>
Birendra Bir Bikram Shah (1972- . . . )	— <i>Gyanendra Bir Vikram</i> — <i>Dhirendra Bir Vikram</i>
Dipendra Bir Bikram Shah (Crown Prince)	— <i>Nirajan Bir Vikram</i>

\*Mr. Bakhatman Singh Basnyat.

## Appendix C

### SHAH KINGS AND QUEENS OF NEPAL\*

#### *Kings*

Drabya Shah

Purendar Shah

Chatra Shah

Ram Shah

Dambar Shah

Krishna Shah

Rudra Shah

Prithvipati Shah

Birbhadra Shah

Narabhupal Shah

Prithvi Narayan Shah

#### *Queens*

Sumudavati

Satyavati  
Ambavati

Susirakavati

Mahimavati

Barnavati  
Roomavati  
Gangavati  
Manmutavati

Sakuntalavati  
Romilavati

Purnavati  
Damantivati

Jaganavati  
Bichhumavati  
Kulangavati  
Satarupavati  
Herkavati  
Ilavati

Siddhasuravati  
Malikavati  
Jayakumari  
Jitakumari

Kausallyavati  
Chandrapravavati  
Konkavati  
Subhadravati

Indrakumari  
Narendra Lakshmi

\*Mr. Bakhatman Singh Basnyat.

*Kings*

Pratap Singha Shah

Rana Bahadur Shah

Girbana Judda Shah

Rajendra Bir Bikram

Surendra Bir Bikram

Trailokya Bir Bikram Shah  
(Crown Prince)

Prithvi Bir Bikram Shah

Tribhubana Bir Bikram Shah

Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah

Birendra Bir Bikram Shah

*Queens*

Rajendra Lakshmi

Raja Rajeswari Devi  
*daughter of Subudi Khadka*

Subarnaprava

Kantavati

Chandravati

Amar Rajeswari

Lalit Tripurasundari

Siddi Lakshmi Devi

Gorkhrajya Lakshmi

Samrajya Laxmi Devi

Rajya Laxmi Devi

Trailokya Rajya Laxmi

Surarajya Laxmi

Devarajya Laxmi

Punnya Kumari

*daughter of Bhairab Khadka*

Tarakumari

Lalitikumari

Revati Raman Rajya Laxmi

Laxmidibyaswari

Kirtidibyaswari

Durgadibyaswari

Kanti Rajya Lakshmi Devi

Iswari Rajya Lakshmi Devi

Indra Rajya Lakshmi Devi

Ratna Rajya Lakshmi Devi

Aiswarya Rajya Lakshmi Devi

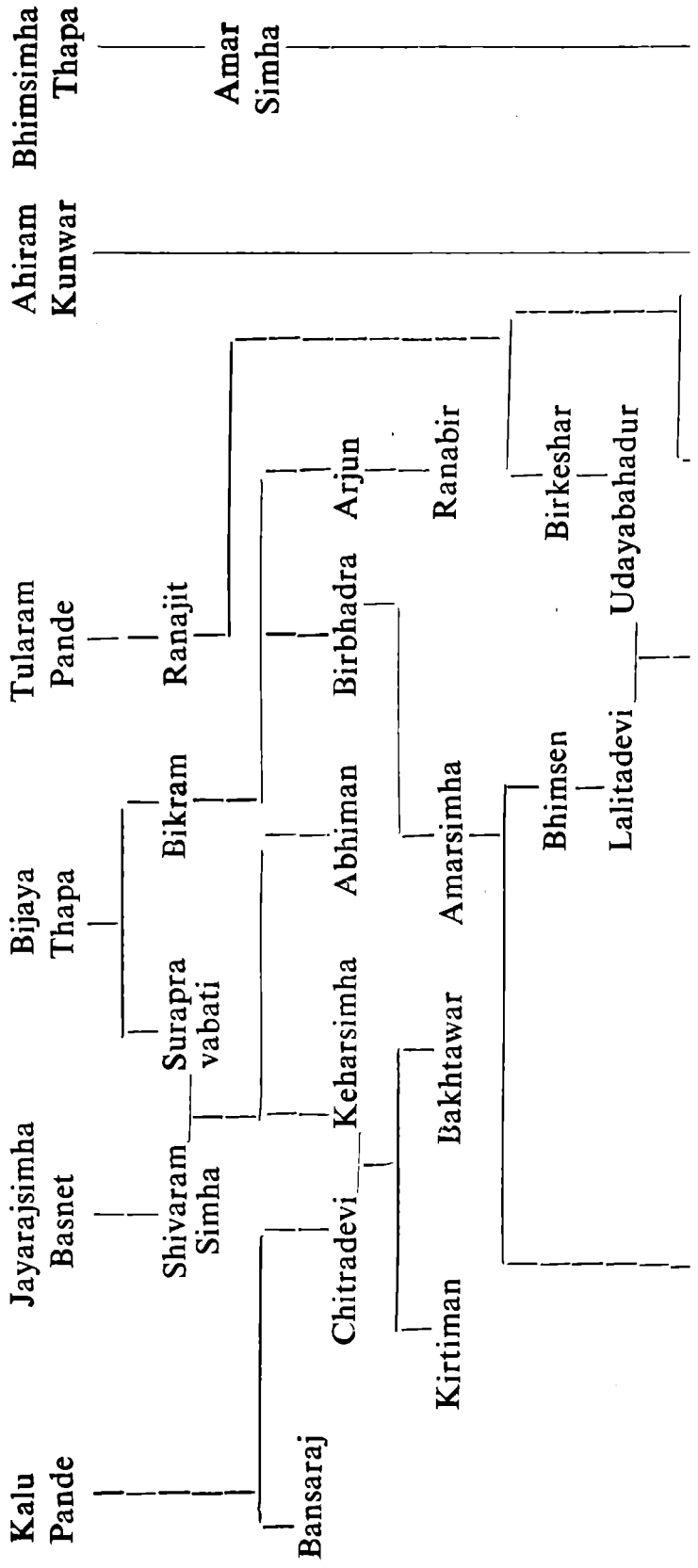
## Appendix D

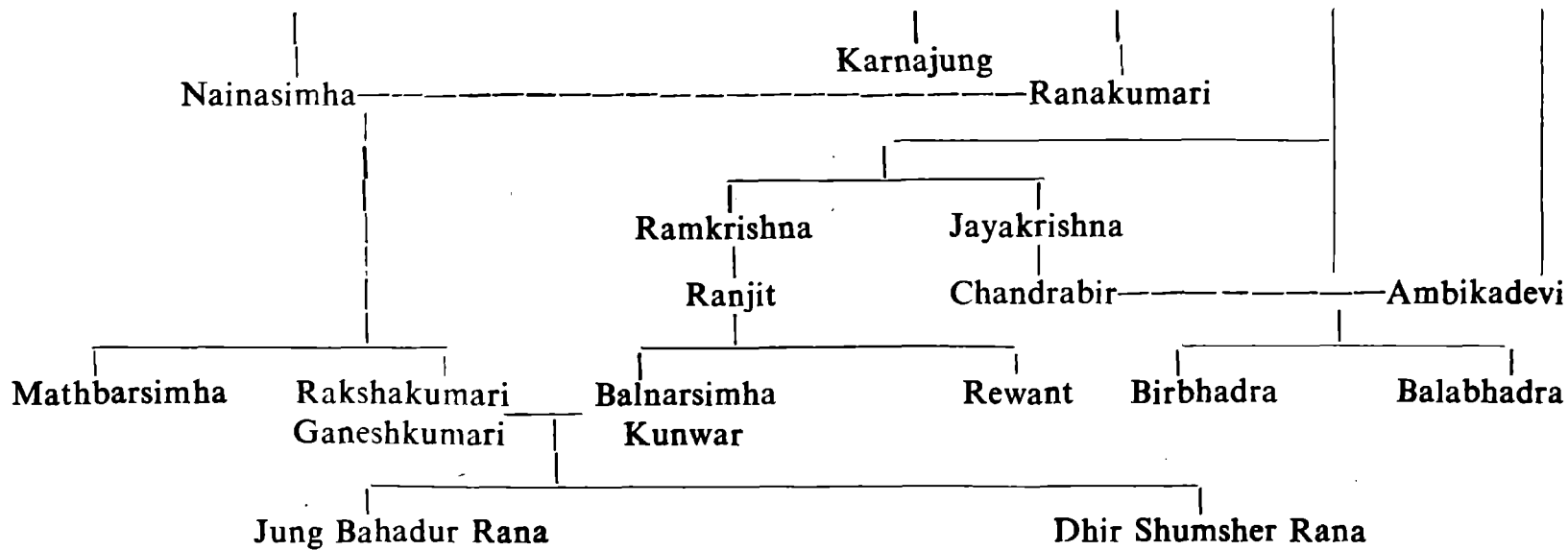
### PRIME MINISTERS

Bhimsen Thapa	1806-37
Rana Jung Pande	1837
Ranganth Paudel	1837-38
Puskar Shah	1839
Rana Jung Pande	1839-40
Chautaria Fatya Jung Shah	1840-43
Mathbar Simha Thapa	1843-1845
Ch. Fatyajung Shah	1845-1846
Jang Bahadur Rana	1846-1856
Bam Bahadur Rana	1856-57
Jung Bahadur Rana	1857-77
Ranauddip Singh	1877-1885
Bir Shumsher Rana	1885-1901
Dev Shumsher Rana	6 months
Chandra Shumsher Rana	1901-1928
Bhim Shumsher Rana	1928-1932
Judda Shumsher Rana	1932-1945
Padma Shumsher Rana	1945-1948
Mohan Shumsher Rana	1948-1950
Matrika Prasad Koirala	1952
Matrika Prasad Koirala	1953-54
Tanka Prasad Acharya	1955-57
Dr. K. I. Singh	1958
Biseswar Prasad Koirala	1958-1960
Surya Bahadur Thapa	1966-1969
Kirtinidhi Bista	1969-1970
K. Bista	1970-71
Kirtinidhi Bista	1971-72
Kirtinidhi Bista	1972-73
N. P. Rizal	1973-75
Dr. T. Giri	1975-77
K. N. Bista	1977-79
S. B. Thapa	1979-

**Appendix E**

**RELATION AMONG THE PANDES, BASNETS, THAPAS AND KUNWAR RANAS**





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