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Regmi Research (Private) Ltd,
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Ashok And Nepal

By
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("Ashok Ra Nepal". Nepal Samskritik Parishad Patrika. Year 2, No.2, Baisakh 2010 (April 1953).

1. Nepal During The Ashok Period

The Bagmati basin appears to have been the center of Nepal from time immemorial. The ancient Kingdom of Lalitpur or Lalitpattan and the present city of Kathmandu is located here. According to the account of the 7th century traveler, Yuwan Chwang, in those times the area of Nepal extended from the Tista in the east to the Bheri in the western Himalayas. (Nepal Samskritik Parishad Patrika, Vol. 1, No. 1, P. 5). But it appears that, Nepal was very limited in area during the period of Gautam Buddha and Emperor Chandra Gupta Maurya. Nepal then might have been limited to 20 or 30 miles in the environs of Kathmandu or Lalitpur. Traders from Aryavarta visited this area from time to time. But it does not appear that they settled here permanently. The Himalayan Aryas (the Khas), who were migrating from Kashmir also appear to have stopped at the Sakhika Lekh. So Nepal had not been annexed to Aryavarta. The small Kirat or Mongolian community named Nepar from whose name Nepal is so called, ruled over this area. Nepal then appears to have formed a part of the Kirat Kingdom.

When Bidudāo, a Kochal King, invaded Kapilavastu, the birthplace of the Buddha, during latter part of the Buddha's life (circa 470 B.C.), some Shakya refugees came to Nepal. At that time, Gautam Buddha was at Shravastī. His chief Shakya disciple, Ananda, came to Nepal to collect information about these refugees. He had to travel through difficult routes. He met Indian traders who had come here to purchase wool and crystals (Levi, Le Nepal, Vol. III, (Paris, 1908), P. 183-85). When there was famine in Nepal during the period of Emperor Chandra Gupta Maurya (321-297 B.C.), Shadra Bhatta, the famous Jain preceptor, had come to Nepal. (Levi, Le Nepal, Vol. I, P. 245 and Vol. II, P.65). The account of his journey does not give any detail regarding Nepal. But the Arthashastra written by Kautilya, the minister of Chandra Gupta, refers to woollen blankets woven in Nepal. (Arthashastra, 2 ll. 105-106). Perhaps such woollen blankets were used for making tents. These accounts show that sheep-farming was popular in Nepal and that wool and rough woollen blankets were exported in large quantities. The position of Nepal during the periods of the Buddha and Chandra Gupta might be ascertained to a certain extent by studying the present condition of Ghan Pokhara in Lamjung district.

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In those times, the main route from Magadh or north Bihar lay through Bara and Parsa. Dipankar Shree Gyan had come to Nepal through Sindhuli on his way to Tibet in the 11th century. (Levi, Le Nepal, Vol. I, P. 106). Both before and after him, many Chinese and Tibetan pilgrims had visited centers of learning and Buddhist places of pilgrimage in India through Nepal in the middle ages. Shanti Rakshit and other scholars of the Nalanda and Vikramshila universities had traveled to Tibet through Nepal. I am of the opinion that all of them came through the pass of Sindhuli. Sultan Shamsuddin Ilias Shah of Bengal and Bihar also chose this route when he invaded Nepal in the mid-14th century. (This speculation has been made on the basis of broken stone-figures still to be seen in villages close to the route to Sindhuli from the capital). The Sen Kingdom was established in Makwanpur at the end of this century and the route through Bara and Parsa was opened. But it was a difficult one. So, Kinloch, the British Major, who wanted to occupy Kathmandu in 1767, tried to come through Sindhuli. A cannon was left behind when he retreated. (It can still be seen at the Sindhuli fort). Ananda and Bhadra Bahu might have come to Nepal through the Sindhuli route during the periods of the Buddha and Chandra Gupta. But, because of the fear of enemies, and because Palpa could be reached easily through the bank of the Tinau, the Shakya refugees of Kapilavastu might have come to the capital of Nepal through that route. From the capital, the Buddha could be easily informed of the calamity by the traders. Though Sindhuli was the main route, stone boulders had wounded the feet of Ananda, seeing which the Buddha permitted Buddhist monks to put on sandals. (Levi, Le Nepal, Vol. III, P. 183). The route from Palpa is difficult even at present. In those times, it might have been more difficult. Refugees fleeing for their lives had to travel through such difficult routes everywhere.

The same situation prevailed during the period of King Ashok (269-32 B.C. grandson of Chandra Gupta. Ashok and other people of Magadh were aware of this

2. The "Vijit" And "Anta" Of Ashok

Ashok enjoys a position of glory in the history of India. Considerable material on his life is available in Indian literature, especially in Buddhist literature. The stone inscriptions of Ashok are found at 30 sites between Dohradun and the fort of Chittal (Mysore) and between Puri and Junagarh (Kathiawar). As the regulations prescribed by Ashok in these inscriptions suggest his purity of heart and his love for the people, these are objects of reverence. Let us now try to ascertain the relationship between Ashok and Nepal with the help of the stone inscriptions and Buddhist literature. The area and condition (of Nepal) have been already mentioned above.

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Ashok had sent missionaries not only throughout India; but also to Iran and Greece in the western world. He had tried to popularize kindness towards living beings by opening clinics and veterinary centers, planting trees on roads and digging wells. (Ashok Ke Dharma Lekh, Ed. Janardan Bhatta (Varanasi, 1923), 2nd stone inscription). In this context, he has also mentioned something about other Kingdoms. As there is no need to write here about Kingdoms in the western world, it is necessary to introduce Kingdoms in India, excluding the Maurya Dominions, for ascertaining the relationship (of the Maurya Kingdom) with Nepal.

Ashok has given the names "Vijit" and "Anta" to his Kingdom and to the neighboring Kingdoms respectively. (2nd stone inscription published in Ashok Ke Dharma Lekh). When his coronation ceremony was performed, the Kalinga region, situated between the Mahanadi and the Godavari not too far from his capital Pataliputra, was an "Anta" Kingdom. Eight years after the coronation, he conquered this region and annexed it to the "Vijit" Kingdom. (13th stone inscription in Ashok Ke Dharma Lekh). Millions of people were slaughtered in this campaign, and this changed his heart. Discarding the empire-builder's attitude, he adopted the path of religious conquest. (13th stone inscription in Ashok Ke Dharma Lekh). So, there were four Kingdoms in south India which remained independent. Chola, Pandya, Satyaputra and Keralaputra, were then independent Kingdoms. The Coromandel region between Nellore and Pudukata in the present time was the Chola Kingdom of the past. Madura and Tinnevely districts of the present constituted the Pandya Kingdom. Kalidasa has mentioned its capital as Uraipur (Raghu Vamsha, Canto 6, Verse 59). The location of Satyaputra has not been identified as yet. Possibly, it was a petty Kingdom near Bangalore. The region between Malabar and Cape Comorin was under the dominion of Keralaputra. No stone inscriptions of Ashok have been found in these "Antas" as yet. So it appears that stone inscriptions were installed by him only in his "Vijit" Kingdom.

The Mahavamso, a Buddhist Purana written in Ceylon, gives an account of Ashok. As this was written on the basis of folk tales 7 or 8 centuries after his death, in colorful language, it is difficult to accept its account without other corroborating materials. It describes the sending of Mahendra and Sanghamitra, the son and daughter of Ashok, to Ceylon in a religious mission, the welcome accorded by King Tishya there and the missionary work done there by them. In the stone inscriptions of Ashok, "Tamraparni" is mentioned along with Chola, Pandya etc. This may possibly stand for Ceylon. So the visit of Mahendra and Sanghamitra as Buddhist missionaries, to Ceylon for popularizing Buddhism cannot be doubted. Chola and other "Anta" Kingdoms are not mentioned in the Mahavamso. Possibly because people had already forgotten what had happened during the missionaries' tour.

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The stone inscriptions of the Himalayan region shed no light in this context. But the Mahavamsa speaks of the visit of Ther (monk) Majjhantik to Kashmir and of Majjhim towards the Himalayas. (Mahavamsa 12. 5. 6.). As Kashmir lies in the western part of the Himalayas, it appears that the Himalayas mentioned here is for the bare Himalayan region east of Kangra. The Mahavamsa writes that Majjhim was accompanied by four friends. In the commentary, their names are given as Kassapagotta, Dundubhisar, Sahadul and Mulakadev. The names of Majjhim and Kassapagotta are inscribed on the lid and the bottom of the metal caskets found inside a stone-vessel buried under a Chaitya in Sanchi. (Cunningham: Vilva Stupas, London, 1854, P.119). The adjective, "Preceptor for the entire Himalayan region" are applicable to both these names. Similarly, the name of Dundubhisar is found at the Chaitya of Sunari near Sanchi. (Ibid). So it appears that Majjhim and other Thers had definitely gone to popularize Buddhism in the Himalayan region east of Kangra. Possibly, the Himalayas were not mentioned in the stone inscriptions of Ashok as the Thers were sent to the Himalayan region only after these stone inscriptions were inscribed. During the last part of Ashok's period, or a few years after his death, the Thers might have come to Nepal wandering through the difficult routes of the Himalayas. It appears that the foundation of Buddhism was laid in Nepal at that time.

This mission does not prove that the entire Himalayan region was within the "Vijit" dominion of Ashok. He had sent Ther missionaries to the "Vijit" and "Anta" regions without any discrimination. Other evidence is necessary to prove whether the Himalayan regions were within the "Vijit" or the "Anta" Kingdoms. According to the Rajatarangini of Kalhan, Kashmir was under the authority of Ashok. In other words - it was a "Vijit" dominion. (Kalhan: Rajatarangini, l. 10. 101). But no evidence to prove Ashok's political authority in the Himalayan region east of Kangra is available. The Chure (Siwalik) range has divided the Himalayan region into two parts - "Bhanwar" and Tarai. The northern parts of the Tarai are called "Bhanwar" and the low hills farther north are called "Pahad". No stone inscription of Ashok is available in the Tarai, the Inner Tarai and the hill regions from Kangra through Sirmur. So it appears that the Himalayan region between the Vyasa and the Jamuna was not a part of the "Vijit" dominion of Ashok. Dohradun district in the south-west of Garhwal is a Bhanwar. As there is a stone inscription of Ashok at Kalsi, near the confluence of the Jamuna and the Tons, there can be no doubt that this district was a "Vijit" dominion. Nevertheless, the hills of Garhwal were not "Vijit". No stone inscription of Ashok is found in the hills, the Bhanwar and the Tarai regions of Kumaon, Doti and Sinja in the east of Garhwal. The plain in the south of Pyuthan and Palpa is called Butaul. The Kumari forests divide it into two parts: the Tarai and the Bhanwar. No sign commemorating Ashok is available in the Bhanwar, where the market of Butaul is situated. At Rummidei and Niglihawa, two villages in the Tarai, inscriptions of Ashok have been found. The first stone inscription installed at the village where the Buddha was born exempts the village from taxes. So it is definite that this Tarai region was a "Vijit" dominion. Whereas the Bhanwar and the hills do not appear to have been under Ashok's authority.

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Now let us consider the border region of Nepal proper. The Inner Tarai area of Makwanpur and the Tarai regions of Bara and Parsa were definitely outside the Kingdom of Nepal in the period of Ashok. Although these then districts are a part of Nepal at present, there can be no doubt that these were separate entities. As these districts were densely forested in those times, only primitive hunters lived there. Champaran district is situated in the south-west of Bara and Parsa. Three stone inscriptions are available at Radhiya, Mathiya and Rampurawa villages in this district. These villages are 20 or 25 miles distant from the present border of Nepal. In those times, the borders of Nepal did not go beyond the hills and hence these stone inscriptions were at a distance of not less than 65 miles. So it can in no way be said that Nepal in those times was a part of the "Vijit" dominion of Ashok. A stone inscription would have been definitely installed at the source of the Bagmati had the situation been otherwise.

The Ashokan pillars were made from stone quarried at the Vindhyachal mountains. It may be argued that it was not possible to take them through the Chure and Mahabharat hill and so were left at Radhiya and other villages. But a similar stone-pillar is found to have been taken to Maski (Hyderabad) through the hills of the Vindhyachal and across the Godavari. So it was not a formidable task for Mauryan engineers to take such stone-pillars beyond the Chure and Mahabharat hills. Moreover, there was no lack of stone boulders at the source of the Bagmati for inscribing stone inscriptions like these in Kalsi.

As Ashok had taken an oath not to conquer other Kingdoms after the conquest of Kalinga in 261 B.C., there is no possibility of Nepal having been annexed to the "Vijit" Kingdom. Moreover, his grand-father, Chandra Gupta and his father, Vindusar, had conquered Hindukush and Mysore at distances of thousands of miles from their capital and had annexed these regions to their "Vijit" Kingdom. Why was Nepal, situated at a distance of only approximately 1,400 miles from (the Maurya) capital, not annexed? Nepal was a land of difficult mountains and dense forests. Transportation and the supply of provisions for a military campaign was very difficult to manage. The Maurya Kings were not incapable of surmounting these obstacles. But heavy expenses would have been incurred to conquer the tiny Nepal, as if a mountain had been dug up to catch a mouse. Though not annexed to the "Vijit" Kingdom, the local Kirat Kings would have become allies of the Maurya Kings. So Nepal might not have been annexed to the "Vijit" Kingdom. The brave Gupta emperors of the 4th and the 5th centuries had not been able to conquer Nepal and annex it to their Indian empire. Sultan Shamsuddin Ilias Shah of Bengal attacked Nepal and set its cities on fire, but he too had to go back. The Mughal emperors too were able to conquer Kangra only. They were not able to make efforts for the occupation of Nepal. The British, with their modern equipment, occupied most of the Himalayan region. But they could occupy only the Tarai region of Nepal, which they had to give up later. Nepal was formed as a Kingdom before the Maurya period, and since then, it has maintained its independent existence.

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But, according to the Vamshavali edited by Wright and written by a Nepali gossip, Ashok married his daughter Charumati, to Dev Pal. The couple later led separate lives as monk and nun after constructing 1. Vihara each. (Wright: History of Nepal, (Chambridge - 1877, 110-11 Pp). At another place, the construction of 4 Chaityas by Ashok in Lalitpur is mentioned without evidence. (Wright: 115-16 Pp). Prof. S. Levi supports these stories without considering their authenticity. (Levi, Le Nepal, Vol. 1, 67, P. 263 and Vol. 11 - 24, P. 336). It is surprising to see this great scholar sunk in such misunderstanding. Going one step further, Dr Vincent Arthur Smith writes that the capital of Nepal, Lalitpatan, was under Ashok, or, in other words, it was under the "Vijit" dominion and that it was under the central authority, being close to Pataliputra, the Maurya capital. (V.A. Smith: Ashoka (3rd edition) Oxford, 1920) 77-78 Pp; and Early History of India, (3rd edition, Oxford, 1914, P. 162). Dr F.W. Thomas and other European scholars, and Dr Hem Chandra Rayachaudhary and other Indian historians, following the lead of Levi and Smith, are making the misunderstanding more comprehensive. (Cambridge History of India, Vol. 1, 501-502 Pp and Political History of Ancient India, 1st Edition, Calcutta, 1938), P.254). But Devdatta Ramkrishna Bhandarkar and Rakhai Das Bannerjee, have kept Ashok unconnected with Nepal and thus have remained free from this misunderstanding. (Ashoka, Calcutta, 1923 and Pre-Historic, Ancient and Hindu India, (1st Edition), Bombay, 1934).

Kirat Influence In Lichchhavi History

(Dhana Bajra Bajracharya: "Lichchhavi Kal Ko Itihas Ma Kirat Kal Ko Prabhav", (Kirat Influence In Lichchhavi History), Purnima, Baisakh-Ashadh, 2025 (April-June, 1968); Vol. 5, No. 1, 1-8 Pp).

The Lichchhavi period in Nepal's history can be regarded as a golden period from different viewpoints. A well-ordered administrative system, a high level of social life, a high standard of education and developed arts are hallmarks of this period. This distinction was not achieved by the Lichchhavis without a background of evolutionary development. But the period that precedes the Lichchhavi period is still dark.

Nepal Valley was first a lake. Only when the water flowed out did human settlement become possible. Forest lands were suitable for establishing cattle-farms and Gopals (i.e. cow-herds) therefore settled here. The Gopal Raj Vamshavali, the Swayambhu Puran (published by the Asiatic Society, 38-39 Pp), and the Himavat Khanda refer to these legends.

The Gopal Raj Vamshavali was compiled in the period of Sthiti Malla, in the first half of the 15th century of the Vikram era. In it, an attempt has been made to note down the main historical incidents from the very beginning to the period of Sthiti Malla. The incidents of two or three centuries before the period of Sthiti Malla, mentioned by the Vamshavali, can be considered authentic. This Vamshavali provided the groundwork for the writing of other Vamshavalis later. But the later Vamshavalis, though writing of incidents that occurred during the Lichchhavi period, do not say that the Kings they mentioned were Lichchhavis; whereas the compiler of the Gopal Raj Vamshavali is found to have retained the memory of the Lichchhavi Kings. The Vamshavali says:

"In the beginning of the Kali Yuga, Gopals were (settled) in the densely forested areas on the lap of the Himalayas. ... There were 8 Gopal Kings. Later Mahishpals (i.e. buffalo-herds) became Kings, vanquishing the Gopals. ... There were 3 Mahishpal Kings. Kirats ruled over the land after the fall of Gopals and Mahishpals. ... There were 32 Kirat Kings. Kirats are now settled in areas between the Tamakoshi and Arun rivers. ... The Lichchhavi dynasty then ruled over Nepal with the glory of the solar dynasty." (17-19 Pp).

The Gopal Raj Vamshavali gives the name of former Kings and the period of their rule. In the absence of other evidence, it cannot be said whether the names of the Kings and their ruling periods are authentic or fictitious. But evidence is not lacking to show that the Kirats were in power before the Lichchhavis.

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Lichchhavi stone-inscriptions show that there were four main offices among those established to run the administration efficiently.

(The author quotes from stone-inscriptions of Jaisidewal and Chaukitar, Bhagwan Lal - No. 3, and Purnima, No. 10).

(The citations) show that the four most important offices in the Lichchhavi period were Kuther, Shuli (sometimes mentioned as Sholla), Lingwal and Mapchok. The names of these offices are not of Sanskrit origin. All stone-inscriptions of the Lichchhavi period are in Sanskrit. Sanskrit was then the national language. Government records were kept in Sanskrit. So it should be considered why the name of these four offices are not in Sanskrit. These offices could have been given Sanskrit names as in the case of Paschimadhikaran, Purvadhikaran, Antarasan and Paramasan offices.

Similarly, Sing and Chokhpara (taxes mentioned in the stone-inscription of Thankot-Purnima, No. 8) are not Sanskrit terms. These terms are in the contemporary vernacular. Apparently, the term Sing is the Sin, meaning (fuel) wood of the present Newari, Tamang and Limbu languages.

The Lichchhavi terms Gu (forested hill), Bu (khet-land), Kicha (elephant) and Tilamak (irrigation channel) are still in use more or less in the same form to convey the same meanings.

Compulsory and unpaid labor impressed by the government was called Bishti. The term, used to denote certain Bishti obligations are not in Sanskrit. Kashasthi Bishti (mentioned in the stone-inscription of Bhringareswar-Suna Guthi - Purnima, No. 16) and Jhalandu Bishti (mentioned in the stone-inscription of Balambu-Groli, No. 76) are not Sanskrit terms. The "Dangkhuttardha" exemption mentioned in the stone-inscription of Bhimarjun Dev and Jishnu Gupta at Kebalpur is not Sanskrit.

Kamhu and Hamhu - two in-kind Bastu taxes (mentioned in the stone-inscription of Sanga - Purnima, No. 7), are not Sanskrit terms. In modern Newari, Hamo means mustard and this meaning is appropriate in the context of oil-press mentioned in the stone-inscription.

The stone-inscription of Amshu Varma at Harigaun mentions a mail-carrier named Gochchhimjak and the stone-inscription of Narayan Chaur, Naxal, mentions two persons named Rogmachan and Sindrir. These names are significant linguistically.

Similarly, more than 80% of the place-names mentioned in the Lichchhavi stone-inscriptions are non-Sanskritic. The stone-inscriptions of Mana Dev's period give the names Khakampring, Domman, Prangpring, Maishing, Jolping, etc. Such non-Sanskritic place-names are found in the stone-inscriptions of Basant Dev, Gana Dev, Shiva Dev, Amshu Varma and others.

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The name of rivers, streams and ponds mentioned in the Lichchhavi stone-inscriptions are also found to be non-Sanskritic. e.g., Bardumbradul, Cnyatikhrin and Tenkhu rivers and Bilhinkho and Famshinpral streams.

The non-Sanskritic sound and character of these names suggest that these belong to the Kirat language. Definitive linguistic research work is necessary to authenticate this speculation. Moreover, it can be said that the non-Sanskritic place names were already popular when the Lichchhavis came to power. As these names were already in use, the Lichchhavis did not change them. Some of these are still used in a changed form. For example, Khopring is now Khopa (Newari for Bhaktapur), Kurpasi=Khopasi, Shanga-Sanga, Tengkhu=Teku, etc. In the same manner, the Lichchhavi rulers did not change the names of offices such as Kuther, Shulli, Lingwal and Mapchok and the Bastu taxes, though Sanskrit was their national language.

This suggests that the roots of the Lichchhavi administration goes back to the Kirat period. Archeological excavations and a proper study of available materials will authenticate this speculation.

The Lichchhavi King Manu Deva

("Lichchhavi Raja Manu Deva", Purnima, 16, Magh-Chaitra, 2024 (January-March, 1968), 443-444 Pp).

An inscription of the Lichchhavi period has been found recently at Gairhi Gaun, near Buddha Nilakantha by Ramji Tewari. It is inscribed on a large water-spout. Unfortunately it is damaged, so it could not be read completely. We, therefore are unable to publish it in this issue. The inscription described a heretofore unknown Lichchhavi King called Manu Deva. Some portions of the inscription read as follows:-

"(Now), when King Manu Deva is ruling."

"During the time of Manu Deva, who has virtuous subjects."

It is obvious that this inscription was inscribed during King Manu Deva's reign. However, no inscription had been found so far which mentioned the name of Manu Deva. Since this inscription does not mention any date, it cannot be said when he ruled. Even the Pashupati inscription of King Jaya Deva, which contains much information about the Lichchhavi dynasty, does not help us, because it does mention Kings preceding Narendra Deva and succeeding Basanta Deva.

Some Vamshavalis helps us to identify Manu Deva. They mention "Manu Deva" as the successor of Basanta Deva. A portion of the Vamshavali written by King Jita Mitra of Bhaktapur is as follows:-

"King Vrisha Deva, Dharma Deva, Mana Deva, Mahi Deva, Basanta, Udaya, Mana Deva, Kama Deva."

The Sankshipta Vamshavali, in the collection of the Samsodhan Mandal and another Vamshavali found in Nuwakot also mention Mana Deva as the successor to Basanta Deva and Udaya Deva.

Manu Deva of the Buddha Nilakantha inscription may thus be identified with Mana Deva (mentioned in the Vamshavalis). The script of the inscriptions seems to be of Basanta Deva's period.

King Prithvi Narayan Shah's
Letter To Bhagavanta Nath

(Published by Babu Ram Acharya in the
Purushartha, (Nepali monthly), Vol. 1,
Issue 1, Poush 2006 (December 1949).

From King Prithvi Narayan Shah
to Shri Bhagavanta Nath-Dev.

Obeisance. All is well here. We shall feel gratified if you are also well there. The news here is good. Shashidhar Upadhyaya has arrived along with your kind letter. We noted the contents of the letter, and also heard his oral account. We were exceedingly delighted at the news that a grand-son has been born. You have directed that with the blessings of Shri Nath prosperity will be constantly with us. It is Shri Nath who is all-powerful. We were born through his favor; it is with blessings that he has taken back. This is the nature of the world. It is Shri Nath who disposes. But if you grace us with your presence, no more will be born, and those who have been born will live long. So bless us.

You have directed that we should maintain very amicable relations with Jumla and Jajarkot in order to conclude treaties with them. A good man had gone to Jumla from here on our behalf. Two persons, Mahatara and Budathoki have come here from Jumla. They said they desired unity between Gorkha and Jumla and expressed their desire for an exchange of gentlemen from here. Therefore eight or ten persons including Birabhadra Pantha, Maheshwar Pantha's son, will go from here to Jumla. They are ready to depart, but if we send them by that route, the Chaubisi States may stop these important persons from going. Even if they let the men go, they will not let the presents be transported through that route. Therefore, they are leaving by the old route through Tibet. Please send your men also to Jumla and arrange that our relations with Jumla and Jajarkot may be amicable. People are going from here to Salyan and Jajarkot, as well as to Pyuthan.

You wanted swords for the Kirat expedition. By your blessings, all the Kirat domain, in the Madhesh, in the hills and in Tibet, has been conquered. The boundaries have been extended to the Kankai river in the Madhesh and the Hasabharyakhola and the Tamor river in the hills. But we were not able to kill many men. Many men ran away to the Moolan (India) while many came for Sukhim (Sikkim). 85 of the enemy were slain in bushes and forests. We are establishing peace with Sukhim. If this is concluded, they will capture all men that ran away from the Kirat country and deliver them to us. If, however, peace cannot be concluded, we shall have to fight Sukhim. By your blessings, we shall conquer Sukhim.

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You have asked whether you should go to Dang or remain in Salyan. In our opinion, you should remain in Salyan even if you get less respect there than in Dang. But if you do not get the slightest respect in Salyan, there is no alternative but to leave that place. We have already offered at your feet the remaining Mandal levies.

Bishwamitra Upadhyaya and Gangananda Acharje have left for Sukhim. Brihaspati Pandit has gone to Purnia. Kiritmali has gone to Patna. Baikuntha Upadhyaya has gone to Nawab Sujauddaula. We have stationed men at all these places. Dinanath Upadhyaya has gone to Calcutta. He may complete his work in a few days. Raj Giri, disciple of Bhim Giri, will go to Lhasa. He has a firm in Kashi too. He has houses, lands and a firm here also.

Amicable relations, though superficial, are continuing with Lamjung also. Bishweshwar Upadhyaya and Siba Ghimire are staying there. Similar relations exist with Kaski too. Birabhadra Thapa is representing us there. Two Brahmins from Kaski are staying here. You know well what relations we have with the other Chaubisi states. They try to harm us as far as possible. But they are sitting inactive only because they lack strength. Shashidhar Upadhyaya will explain everything to you in detail. What more to learned people. Dated Friday, Bhadra Sudi 6, Kathmandu.

Explanation

This is a copy of a letter written by King Prithvi Narayan Shah to the mendicant Bhagavanta Nath of the Gorakhnath sect, who was living in Salyan. The letter does not mention the year, but it appears to have been written in 1831 Vikrama. This mendicant was regarded to be possessed of much spiritual power. The letter shows what faith and respect Prithvi Narayan Shah had for him. It was in this year that Prithvi Narayan Shah's eldest grand-son, Nayak Singh, was born to his son Pratap Singh Shah. But the child died after one month. By 1830 Vikrama Prithvi Narayan Shah had occupied the region up to the Arun river in the east and thus laid the foundations of the Kingdom of Nepal. The letter mentions that in 1831 Vikrama, the Pallo Kirat region and Morang across the Arun river too were conquered. But Prithvi Narayan Shah had once suffered a disastrous defeat in his attempt to subjugate the Chaubisi states like Lamjung and Tanahu up to Pyuthan, west of Gorkha. Yet this letter shows that Prithvi Narayan Shah, instead of feeling frustrated, in an effort to win over the Kings of Jumla, Jajarkot and Salyan and surround the Chaubisi states, sent his men there. As the Chaubisi Kings had blocked the way, it was decided to send these men through Tibet to the north of Gorkha. Mandal means a levy to be paid by each household once a year to wandering mendicants.

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The letter shows that at that time Brahmin Pandits were prominent in foreign affairs. At this time, the British Government in India had its capital in Calcutta. Dinanath Upadhyaya, who went as envoy there this year, remained in Calcutta working ably for thirty years. At Purnea, on the border of Morang, was stationed an English Officer, and a high officer was stationed at Patna. Sujauddaula was the Nawab-Wazir of Oudh. At that time Sanyasis (mendicants) were engaged in trade. This letter appears to have been sent at a time when it had been decided to send a delegation to Lhasa for the establishment of trade relations with Tibet.

Note:

The original of this letter was seen in the possession of a mendicant at the Rana monastery in Salyan forty years ago. This copy has been taken from a copy in the possession of the Guthi Bandobast Adda (Guthi Administration Office). It has now been checked with the original.

On Shamanism

Shamans, called Dhamis, were appointed by the government during the 19th century "to look after the area (assigned under their jurisdiction) and keep the gods (dev-devata) satisfied." They were entitled to certain customary payments from the local people. On Marga Sudi 5, 1860, Chinchu Dhami and Thitar Dhami were appointed to discharge these functions, in the region between Hetaura and the Indian border.¹ Dhamis were in fact appointed for different regions in the Tarai to check the depredations of wild animals, particularly tigers. They were held responsible if people suffered from such depredations.²

Dhami-Danda was a fine imposed on a Dhami in Pyuthan and other areas in the western hill region whose god (devata) caused suffering to others.³

In Dang,⁴ Deukhuri⁵ and other areas, Dhamis appear to have been called Guruwa.

-
1. Order Regarding Appointment Of Chinchu Dhami And Thitar Dhami, Marga Sudi 5, 1860. (19/150).
 2. Order To Daya Dhami And Masya Dhamyani, Bhadra Badi 5, 1865. (36/18)
 3. Regulations In The Name Of Kaji Narsing Thapa For Pyuthan And Other Areas, Kartik Sudi 1, 1893. Section 9. (35/66).
 4. Appointment Of Parsram Chaudhari As Guruwa In Deukhuri, Bhadra Sudi 12 1895. (35/590).
 5. Appointment Of Muthuwa As Guruwa In Dang, Bhadra Sudi 12, 1895. (35/592).

Ban On Cow Slaughter

A ban on cow slaughter appears to have been imposed rigorously immediately after the unification of Nepal. Thus in the Solukhumbu area in the eastern hill region, the ban was enforced immediately after it was annexed to the Kingdom of Nepal. However, the ban was not effectively enforced. In fact, the ban was waived in the beginning on payment of an annual expiatory fine called Chokho-Danda. This fine was abolished in 1863.¹

On Marga Badi 9, 1862, Yagnya Nidhi Tiwari and other judges were sent to Solukhumbu and Chankhu areas in the eastern hills to enforce the ban on cow slaughter. Regulations promulgated in this connection admitted that cow slaughter was widely practised in these regions. They prescribed: "In case persons guilty of this crime are punished with death or enslavement, most of the inhabitants of these areas will have to be killed or enslaved. Accordingly, the heaviest possible fines should be imposed on persons who committed cow slaughter after these areas came under our rule, as long as they have wives, sons, daughters and bondsmen available for sale. Those who committed this crime after Falgun 1860 should be either beheaded or enslaved."² The government made it clear at the same time that the slaughter of yaks in the Solukhumbu area was to be permitted.³

Very severe punishment was awarded for stray cases of cow slaughter. A Damai guilty of this crime in a western hill district in 1862 was sentenced to death. The local authorities were directed to "cut flesh from his back, apply condensed citrus juice mixed with salt (on the wounds), force him to eat (the flesh) himself, and thus kill him."⁴

-
1. Abolition Of Fine For Cow Slaughter In Solukhumbu, Baisakh Sudi 6, 1863. (6/769). 1806
 2. Regulations On Ban On Cow Slaughter In Solukhumbu, Marga Badi 9, 1862. (6/662). 1805
 3. Order Regarding Ban On Cow Slaughter In Solukhumbu, Aswin Badi 3, 1862. (6/441). 1805
 4. Order Regarding Punishment Of Damai For Cow Slaughter, Chaitra Badi 9, 1862 (6/746)..
-1806

Contd...

Revenue, although not the main objective of these measures, was not an unimportant consideration. The same officials, when posted in Bhadgaun, had earlier been ordered to expedite action against persons guilty of cow slaughter. They were specifically told not to make any delay in finalizing measures "which will bring in a revenue of Rs 12-15,000."⁵ On another occasion, these officials were warned, "You only report that you have collected fines. However, you do not remit the proceeds."⁶

Cow Slaughter was banned in Jumla also after this territory was annexed. Persons who slaughtered cows in contravention of the ban were beheaded, while those who did so out of ignorance were heavily fined. A proclamation was issued in 1862 that the criminal would be punished by death or enslavement.⁷

Orders and regulations promulgated from time to time on this question were codified and issued as part of the Legal Code in 1853. The new law, as given in the 1866-67 edition of the Legal Code,⁸ was as follows:

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5. Order Regarding Collection Of Fines For Cow Slaughter In Bhadgaun, Kartik Badi 14, 1862. (6/632).
 6. Order Regarding Ban On Cow Slaughter In Solukhumbu, Aswin Badi 13, 1862. (6/490).
 7. Order Regarding Ban On Cow Slaughter In Jumla, Shrawan Sudi 11, 1862. (6/292).
 8. "Govadh Garnya". (On Cow Slaughter). In His Majesty's Government, Sri 5 Surendra Bikram Shah Dev Ka Shashan Kalma Banako Maluki Ain. (The Legal Code Framed During The Reign Of His Majesty King Surendra Bikram Shah Dev). Kathmandu: Ministry of Law and Justice, 2022 (1961), 296-298 Pp.

Contd...

Section 1

Any person who deliberately kills a cow shall be sentenced to imprisonment for life.

Section 2

In case any person deliberately strikes at a cow with a weapon, but without killing it, shall be enslaved if he belongs to a caste which can be enslaved; if not, his property shall be confiscated according to law and he shall be acquitted.

Section 3

In case a cow is killed while being driven away, obstructed, detained or hit by any person with sticks or stones, or in case an ox is killed while being castrated or used to thresh grains or draw the plow, such person shall be fined with Rs 1.00 and granted expiation.

Section 4

In case a cow or an ox is killed while being driven away or obstructed or hit with sticks or stones by any person, so that it goes towards a dangerous place, and in case such person reports the matter, he shall be fined with Rs 1.00 and granted expiation according to customary and scriptural rites. In case he accuses another person of killing (a cow or an ox) in this manner, and is subsequently proven to have done so himself, he shall be fined with Rs 100.00. In case (any person) reports that anybody has killed (a cow or an ox), whereas it had actually died a natural death, and in case it is proven that such (wrong) information was furnished out of malice and that (the cow or ox) had not actually been killed, (such informant) shall be fined with Rs 60.00 and granted expiation. In case he fails to pay the fine, he shall be imprisoned.

Section 5

In case any person sees a cow being killed but does not report the matter, and suppresses it, he shall be fined with Rs 50.00.

Section 6

In case any person hits at a cow so that blood flows, he shall be fined with Rs 2.50. In case any person breaks the leg of cows or buffaloes, the price (of the animal) shall be recovered on behalf of the owner and a fine of Rs 10.00 shall be imposed. The disabled animal shall be handed over to the person who has injured it. In case any person belonging to a beef-eating caste breaks the leg of a cow, the cow shall not be handed over to him; both the cow and its price shall accrue to the owner.

Contd...

Section 7

In case anybody sees a cow or an ox being killed, and kills the person who does so, except when it is difficult to identify such person because of the presence of a large number of people, he shall not be deemed to have committed an offense. In case anybody kills any person who kills a cow or an ox amidst a large number of people, he shall be sentenced to imprisonment for life if he belongs to caste which is liable to punishment with partial shaving of the head (instead of to capital punishment), and sentenced to capital punishment if his caste status so permits.

Section 8

Any person may cut the horn of a cow or an ox when necessary, or clean wounds and remove worms therefrom, or cut open boils and painful wounds sustained (by the cow or ox) as a result of falling down, or cankerize it or draw blood from it, for the well-being of the cow. In matters involving the well-being (of the cow), no offense shall be deemed to have been committed. The permission of offices, courts or local authorities (Amal) need not be obtained to do so.

Section 9

Throughout the Kingdom of Gorkha, in case anybody sees any person drawing a weapon and preparing himself to kill a cow or an ox, he shall prohibit such person from killing the cow or ox. In case such person does not obey such order and kills (the animal) in his presence, he may kill such person at the same place and time. He shall not be held guilty of murder. In case he does not actually see a cow being killed, but obtains the information later, he shall capture the person (who has killed the cow), put him in fetters, and hand him over to the court or police station.

Section 10

Throughout the Kingdom of Gorkha, no person belonging to any of the 1 castes and 36 sub-castes, shall kill any bird, animal, aquatic animal or other creature, or hunt (animals) on land and water, on the eleventh day of the moon (Ekadashi), the birth anniversary of Lord Krishna (Krishnashtami) and Shivaratri, except, for purposes of compulsory sacrifice in the course of traditional religious performances. In case any person kills any bird, animal, aquatic animal or other creature on these days, he shall be punished with a fine equivalent to the price of the animal which is killed. The officer of any court or police station who executes the sentence of capital punishment on any person who has confessed to a crime so punishable shall be fined with Rs 25.00. In case he fails to pay the fine, he shall be imprisoned. In case any person who eats meat or fish eats stale meat or fish on these days, he shall not be deemed to have committed an offence. He shall not be compelled to eat (such stale meat or fish) in case he does not do so.

Contd...

Section 11

In case any person hits at a cow or an ox 2, 4, 5 or 7 times with sticks and stones with the objective of protecting his crops without intending to kill it, and the cow or ox dies as a result, this shall be regarded as an accident. The price (of the animal) shall be recovered from him, and he shall be fined with an equivalent amount.

Section 12

In case any person suppresses information in respect to the accidental killing of a cow without telling anybody, or does so after hearing of or seeing another person killing a cow accidentally, and involves others in the sharing of water of kitchen (with the person responsible for the accidental killing of a cow), he shall be punished with a fine of Rs 20.00 and granted expiation, since even the person responsible for accidentally killing a cow is entitled to expiation. Any official who imposes a fine arbitrarily on these matters, without studying or understanding the law, thinking: "What will happen to me if this person is fined with this amount in such a matter?", shall be made to restore the amount involved to the person to whom it belongs, and fined with Rs 10.00. In case an offense has been committed, action shall be taken according to the law, or else according to the law enacted by the Council when the matter is referred to it.

Section 13

In case cows or oxen tied in a shed are devoured by a tiger, or are killed by fire or lightning, or die as a result of any disease, or by being choked by the rope used to tie them, this shall be regarded as an accident. The court or local authority shall charge a fee of 2 annas and grant expiation on grounds of ignorance.

Section 14

In case a mute person hits at a cow or an ox with sticks, stones or weapons and thus injures it without shedding blood, he shall be given 10 lashes with a whip and released. No (other) punishment shall be awarded. Expiation shall be granted.

Law On Conjugal Relations, 1952¹Section 1

A wife, except when bound by a contract, shall not, unless she has committed an offense which is punishable by abandonment, be abandoned according to the custom prevailing in the concerned caste, or otherwise. She shall not be harassed in any way without any offense. She may, however, be abandoned after the observance of all the legal formalities required by the nature of the offense, if she commits any offense which is punishable by abandonment, and after the signing and exchanging of a document in duplicate according to the procedure prescribed by law, duly witnessed and attested, if both are willing.

Section 2

In case a wife who is abandoned in any way other than through the signing documents according to legal formalities as prescribed in Section 1 above takes another man for her husband without making any complaint against the legal husband, the latter shall be entitled to have punishment, awarded for the offense of elopement.

Section 3

As the act of committing something that may cause the loss of caste, or of expelling from the house, or of abandoning a wife declaring her to be similar to a daughter, sister, or mother, is deemed to be an act of cruelty, the husband, the father-in-law, the mother-in-law or any other leading member of the family, whoever may do so, shall not be entitled to refuse her a share in the property on the ground that according to the law of subdivision of property a son, during the life time of his father, and a wife, during the life time of her husband, shall have no claim over the property. Such a wife may have the property partitioned, according to the law, out of the share of her husband. In case she dies or takes another man for her husband, the legal co-parcener may get back whatever property is left by her after spending on her maintenance. In case she takes another man for her husband, the husband who has treated her in the manner described above shall not be entitled to have punishment awarded for the offense of elopement. He may, however, do so if it was only her father-in-law or mother-in-law who had expelled her in that manner. In cases other than those mentioned above, subdivision of property shall be done according to the law relating to the same.

¹"Logno Swasni Ko." (On Conjugal Relations). In Government of Nepal, Muluki Ain (Legal Code). Part III. Kathmandu: Gorkhapatra Press, 2009 (1952). 76-78 Pp.

Section 4

In case a wife, not being able to live in amity with other members of the family, lives with the family of her mother or of other relatives, without anything having been done by her husband, and in case she makes a complaint against such other members only, except her husband, such complaint shall not be registered. The husband shall be summoned, the matter shall be explained to him, and the woman shall be handed over to him. In case she complains even against her husband to the effect that he has abandoned her, such complaint shall be registered according to the law and decided according to the findings.

Section 5

A concubine who is kept privately outside home shall get only whatever she is given by her husband and nothing more. She shall have no claim over the share of the property.

Section 6

In case the husband spends his wife's dowry, such act shall be valid irrespective of its having been done with or without her consent in writing, provided her husband has only one wife and children only by her and servants only, and provided he has done so because he could not make both ends meet. The amount thus spent shall be recovered whenever the husband earns anything. When thus spending a wife's dowry, if there are other co-parceners as well who live in the joint family, all of them are liable for payment from out of the joint property, provided all of them who are above 16 years of age give their consent in writing when the husband, because of straitened circumstances, spends his wife's dowry with her consent in writing. In cases where the dowry is given and spent without observing such formality, the co-parceners shall not be liable for payment, which shall not be made from the joint property, if other co-parceners are not willing to do so.

Section 7

Any person who, makes a false claim and takes it by force shall be made to pay up the amount involved, together with a fine amounting to 15% of the same.

Section 8

In case a valid claim is not entertained, the amount involved shall be recovered, together with fines equal to 5% or 10% thereof, according to the case.

Contd...

Section 9

A person who makes a false claim shall be fined $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ of what he has claimed.

Section 10

Any person who claims more than what he is entitled to or offers less than what he is liable to shall be fined 5% or 10% of what is claimed or offered, as the case may be.

Section 11

An informer who cannot prove his allegations shall be punished to the extent of half of what would have been due to the accused if the latter had been proved guilty.

Section 12

In case where compensation is to be paid, it shall be realized along with an additional 5% or 10% of the amount. In cases where fines are imposed, the additional 5% shall not be charged.

Section 13

In case where a wife's dowry is spent, claims may be made within the life-time of her husband, if consent to that effect has not been given in writing. If there is any such document, claims may be made within three years after partition of property, provided the document has been witnessed by the co-parceners. No claim shall be entertained after the expiry of the prescribed time-limit.

Section 14

Except where the time-limit has been prescribed by law, and where cases of illicit sexual intercourse, caste, sharing of kitchen, assault and subdivision of property are involved, complaints to the effect that abandonment is made by the husband, or the wife, or the father-in-law or the mother-in-law, or that suffering is caused by such abandonment, or that expulsion is made after treatment leading to suffering, shall not be entertained, if not made within a year of such action.

Section 15

No sentence of imprisonment under this law shall exceed 6 years.

On Conjugal Relations

(His Majesty's Government: Logne
Swasni Ko (On Conjugal Relations),
Muluki Ain (Legal Code) (1963 ed.)
P.P. 130-131).

Section 1

Except in circumstances mentioned in Sections 4 and 5 of the Bihabari Ko (Law on Marriage) as well as in the following, the relationship between a husband and a wife cannot be broken off. If it is necessary to break off relationship in such circumstances, separation is permitted only according to the decision of the office¹, after it makes such a decision on an application, indicating the reasons, which is submitted to it:-

1. The husband may break off his relationship with his wife if she leaves him and lives separately for a period of three years or more continuously without his consent; or performs any action or indulges in any intrigue or conspiracy designed to put an end to his life, or lead to his physical disability, or result in any great physical suffering to him.
2. The wife may break off her relationship with her husband if he brings or takes another wife, or drives her out of his house; or does not provide her with food and clothes, or leaves her without obtaining any news of and searching for and taking care of her continuously for a period of three years or more; or performs any action or indulges in any intrigue or conspiracy designed to put an end to her life, or lead to her physical disability, or result in any great physical suffering to her; or if the husband becomes impotent.
3. In circumstances other than those mentioned above, conjugal relations may be broken off with mutual consent.

Section 2

In case a wife, without effecting separation as mentioned in Section 1 of this law, commits adultery with any person other than her husband, or lives with another man as her husband, the husband is entitled to have punishment inflicted upon the person who has eloped with her, and in such circumstances conjugal relations shall be automatically broken off. In case

¹Office in the Muluki Ain includes a court of law.

Contd...

a wife confesses at the office that she has committed adultery with any person, even though she has not done so in fact, conjugal relations shall be broken off automatically.

Section 3

Any child born within 272 days with effect from the date when the conjugal relations were broken off shall be, unless otherwise proved, considered to be the issue of the husband with whom relations were broken off. Such a child, as well as other children below three years of age, if any, shall be maintained by the father, if he so desires; and if he does not, by the mother, until they attain the age of three years. After such children attain the age of three years, they shall be maintained by the father, except when they are maintained by the mother, with the mutual consent of their parents. The liability of a wife under this section who has broken off conjugal relations, shall devolve on her new husband also, if any.

Section 4

Any woman who is denied maintenance by her parents-in-law and or her husband and expelled from the house, or is frequently beaten up and harassed, or whose husband has brought or taken up another woman as wife, shall be entitled to obtain her share of the property from out of her husband's share. In case such a wife dies or takes up another man as her husband, the amount of the property left after providing for the expenses of her maintenance shall accrue to the nearest relative. In case she has been expelled only by her parents-in-law, she shall be provided with maintenance according to income and status.

Section 5

If the dowry or personal property of a wife is spent, it may be compensated from out of the joint property of all co-parceners living in a joint family without sub-division of property according to the Law on Monetary Transactions only if consent in writing has been obtained from all co-parceners who are above the age of sixteen years, if any. In case it is spent without fulfilling this formality, the liability shall not be borne by the co-parceners, nor compensated from out of the joint property, in case they are not willing.

Section 6

Except in reference to cases mentioned in Section 1 of this law as well as cases of elopement, no complaint shall be entertained in respect to other matters unless filed within one year of the action or event.

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Lichchhavi Settlements¹

Not all the areas, which are inhabited (in Kathmandu Valley) at present had been settled during the Lichchhavi period. The boundaries of Nepal during the Lichchhavi period cannot be fixed in the absence of definitive evidence. However, it can be said on the basis of available materials that the boundaries of Nepal during the Lichchhavi period were more or less the same as at present.

Kantipur, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur, the three principal cities of Kathmandu Valley, were already settled in the beginning of the Malla period as three sovereign kingdoms. But these cities were not well settled during the Lichchhavi period.

The stone inscriptions of the Lichchhavi period show that important settlements in Kathmandu Valley included Anantalingeshwar, Chapagaun, Bungmati, Balambu, Thankot, Sitapaila, Dharmasthali, Tokha, Budhanilakantha, Tupyak, Gokarna and Sankhu. These settlements were not important during the Malla period, nor are they so now.

Anantalingeshwar temple is situated to the south of the Suryavinayak temple in Bhaktapur and north-east of Lubhu in Lalitpur. The stone-inscription of Lichchhavi King Narendra Deva informs us that there was then a famous settlement called Hamsagriha Dranga in this area.

In those times a settlement which had a prescribed area and whose population was larger than that of a village as prescribed was called Dranga. A number of villages comprised a Dranga. Such Drangas later developed into Doshas (i.e. city) during the Lichchhavi period.²

Lokpalswami was the tutelary god of Hamsagriha. The stone-inscription of Anshu Varma at Handigaun refers to endowments made for worship of the god of Hamsagriha. The stone-inscription of Narendra Deva is damaged at the lower portion. Moreover, the extant portion shows that the god of Hamsagriha was worshipped in a grand scale every year. A Kulpati was appointed to conduct all religious ceremonies and performances. Devadasas were appointed to maintain cleanliness at the temple, while Devadasis used to perform certain functions during worship. The anniversary worship of the god was celebrated on the 12th day of the bright half of the moon in the month of Kartik every year. At present there is no settlement near the Anantalingeshwar temple.

¹Dhan Bajra Bajracharya: "Lichchhavikalik Vasti," (The Lichchhavi Settlements), Purnima, Samshodhan Mandal, Kathmandu; Vol. 5, No. 2. (Issue No. 18), Shrawan-Aswin, 2025 (July-September, 1968), 87-101 Pp.

²Purnima-No. 10, 13-17 Pp. The stone-inscription of Narendra Deva shows that different castes, from Brahman to Chandal, lived in this Dranga.

Lele is situated in the south-west of the Anantalingeshwar temple. This settlement lies outside Kathmandu Valley. In this area, there was Lembati Dranga during the Lichchhavi period. The stone-inscription of Shiva Deva and Amshu Varma at Lele suggests that this Dranga was then densely populated. The endowment of Guthi lands for different purposes, as mentioned in the stone inscription, sheds some light on the Lichchhavi social life.³

When one enters into Kathmandu Valley from Lele, one has to pass through Chapagaun. Chapagaun was a well-known settlement during the Lichchhavi period. The stone inscription of Shiva Deva installed there refers to the tax liabilities of fishermen.⁴

Areas between the Chandragiri and Dahachok hills were sites of different settlements during the Lichchhavi period. The Satungal, Kisipindi, Thankot, Bhelbu, Balambu, Pasinkhya, Maltar and Chaukitar stone inscriptions of the Lichchhavi period provide evidence of this fact. Most of the settlements in these areas were under the jurisdiction of Sheetatika Dranga. There is no settlement at Bhelbu, Pasinkhya, Maltar and Chaukitar at present. But old bricks and ruins of buildings recall the former Lichchhavi settlements.⁵

There were some Lichchhavi settlements in the areas of Adeshwar, Sitapaila, Dandapauwa and Ichangu in the western part of Kathmandu Valley. The stone inscription installed at Adeshwar⁶ refers to Chhagung, Yubisama, and Talanju villages. Similarly, the stone inscription of Sitapaila refers to villages whose names are missing in the inscription. Only remnants of these settlements are seen at present.

In the west of Sitapaila is situated Kewalpur. It has a stone inscription which shows that Nupunna Dranga was situated there during the Lichchhavi period.⁷ Different Lichchhavi rulers had granted many facilities to this Dranga, as suggested by the stone inscription. The stone inscription further shows that there was also the temple of Narayan Swami. But the original Lichchhavi temple no more exists in Kewalpur.

³Purnima, No. 13, 3-5 Pp. But Lele at present is not a important settlement; it is only a tiny hamlet. The Lembati Dranga of the Lichchhavi period has degenerated into the tiny Lele of the present.

⁴Gnoli, No. 32.

⁵Purnima, No. 10, 1 and 11-12 Pp.

⁶Gnoli, No. 53.

⁷Gnoli, No. 54.

The northern outskirts of Kathmandu Valley were well settled during the Lichchhavi period. Lichchhavi stone inscriptions have been found at Dharmasthali, Tokha, Dhapasi, Dharmapur, Chapaligaun and Budhanilkantha. These settlements still exist in some form or other.

Moreover, the most famous settlement in this area, Thantungri Dranga is completely lost. Three Lichchhavi stone inscriptions have been found recently at the foot-hill of Vishnupaduka mountain, on the banks of the Vishnumati, north-west of the Budhanilkantha temple.⁸ The stone inscription of Shiva Deva shows that Thantungri Dranga was situated in the area. Tax remissions granted to inhabitants of that Dranga are mentioned in the stone inscription. The installation of a Shiva Lingam by King Mana Deva at the site of the Dranga also suggests that Thantungri Dranga was famous at that time. But at present only old bricks are available in the area.

As suggested by stone inscriptions, there were Lichchhavi settlements in Gokarna, Changu and Nilbarahi in the north-eastern and eastern parts of Kathmandu Valley. (An unpublished copy of the stone inscription at Gokarna is available at the Bir Library).

The Lichchhavi settlements in the outskirts of Kathmandu Valley suggest that the sites might have been chosen on the basis of facilities available there. It appears that these settlements steadily became depopulated when the three main settlements in Kathmandu Valley came into existence.

There were different Lichchhavi settlements in the areas which presently comprise Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur.

The Lichchhavi settlement in Lalitpur was more densely populated than in other areas, which suggests that Lalitpur was already developed as a city at that time. The stone inscriptions of the Lichchhavi period found at Mangal Bazaar, Kumbheshwar, Chyasal, Khapichhen, Yagbahal, Tyagal, Sundhara, Gaishidhara, Minnath and Lagankhel bear testimony to this fact. But such settlements did not constitute a city as at present. The settlement at the present site of Mangal Bazaar was known as Yupagrama. When Yupagrama became a Dranga, different settlements near it, which were Gramas, came under its jurisdiction. But Gramas which were at a little distance continued their independent existence. Buddhist Viharas were constructed between such Gramas.

The stone inscriptions of Narendra Deva, at Talajuchok in Mangal Bazaar, and at Bhimsensthan, and the stone inscription at the water-tap near the Minnath temple mention Yupagram Dranga and refer to facilities and tax remissions granted to inhabitants of this Dranga.

⁸ Purnima, No. 15, 330-32 Pp.

But the stone inscription at Sundhara mentions Mating Grama, while that of Yagbahal gives the boundary limits of Gullangtang Grama. The highways and paths mentioned there also suggest that roads were constructed from one Grama to another. The Lichchhavi stone inscription at Chyasal Tole mentions Loprin Grama.

Yupagram Dranga may be considered to be the original settlement of Lalitpur.

The central portion of Kantipur was famous as Koligrama during the Lichchhavi period. Till the time of King Yaksha Malla, this area was known as Koligrama.⁹ The southern portion of Koligram was more populated than other portions. Gradually, the southern portion came to be known as Dakshinkoligrama Dranga. The stone inscription of Narendra Deva at Yangalhati shows that a large number of Gramas was under the jurisdiction of Dakshinkoligrama Dranga. As in the case of Lalitpur, the Dranga was not a city in itself but was comprised of Gram units.

There were important Lichchhavi settlements at the present sites of Naxal and Handigaun. This is corroborated by the stone inscription of Narayanchaur, Naxal.¹⁰ The stone inscription shows that in this area there were Tamrakuttashala, Maneshwar, Sambapur, Jamayambi and three other Gramas. These Gramas, according to the stone inscription were later formed into a Dranga. The boundaries of Maneshwarraj Dranga suggest that there was also a royal palace at this Dranga. The stone inscription of Amshu Varma at Handigaun refers to endowments made for Maneshwar and Sambapur.

The stone inscription of Narendra Deva at Yangalhati mentions that Dakshinkoligrama Dranga had been given the responsibility of maintaining the Bhuvaneshwar temple in Maneshwar, which suggests that these two settlements were closely aligned.

The stone inscription of Amshu Varma at Gairhidhara, Naxal, refers to Jonjonding Grama, situated in this area. The Lichchhavi stone inscriptions of Handigaun¹¹ suggest that there were Lichchhavi settlements in that area too.

⁹Pancharekshya, Catalogue No. 1113 of the Bir Library published in Purnima, No. 9, P.15.

¹⁰Purnima, No. 16, 360-64 Pp.

¹¹Gnoli, Nos. 11, 35 and 36.

Deupatan and the areas nearby was known as Navagriha during the Lichchhavi period. This name was in use also during the Malla period.¹² During the Malla period, this area was considered as the capital and references mentioning that certain Malla Kings performed their coronation ceremony there are available.¹³ During the Lichchhavi period too, this area was well populated. There was a road named Brijikarathya in Navagriha, which suggests that there was a community of Brijiks settled in the area.¹⁴

Compared to Lalitpur and Kantipur, Bhaktapur has only a few Lichchhavi stone inscriptions. This leads one to speculate that Bhaktapur was sparsely populated during the Lichchhavi period. The stone inscription of Shiva Dev and Amshu Varma at Golmadhi Tole mentions Makhopring Dranga. This Dranga had apparently flourished during the Lichchhavi period. Khopring later became the capital of the Malla Kings.

Lichchhavi stone inscriptions have been found in areas immediately beyond Kathmandu Valley. This suggests that there were Lichchhavi settlements at Sanga, Banepa, Nala, Khopasi, Palanchok, Lele, Pharping and elsewhere. A stone inscription of the Lichchhavi period has been found in Gorkha. But that has not been studied yet.

The stone inscriptions of the Lichchhavi period mention every settlement as Grama. Not a single settlement is called a city. Grama cannot be translated as village. Even the capital of the Lichchhavi rulers was then known as Grama. The stone inscription of Nilbarahi mentions that Jishnu Gupta had his headquarters at Yaprang Grama.

The Arthashastra of Kautilya, the Shukraniti and the Swapna Vasavadatta Natak of Bhasa show that in ancient times a settlement containing 100 to 500 houses and an area of two or four miles was called a Grama. The Lichchhavi settlements were accordingly called Gramas.

The site of the Lichchhavi capital in Kathmandu Valley has not yet been identified. A Chinese account says that the capital's area was about 40 lis. 40 lis is equivalent to about 6 miles.¹⁵

¹²Purnima, No. 6, P. 13.

¹³The "Gopal Vamshavali" mentions that coronation ceremonies of Jayadev in 1311 Vikram Samvat and of Ari Malla in 1377 Vikram Samvat were performed in Deupatan.

¹⁴Purnima, No. 6, 7-14 Pp.

¹⁵Praman-Prameya, 23-24 Pp.

In the middle ages, the three cities and other small towns, called Desha, were all walled like forts. A high wall surrounded a city or town and immediately outside the wall a moat was dug.¹⁶ But there were not such fortified settlements during the Lichchhavi period. Moreover, there used to be Kottas, inside which settlements flourished and people cultivated their fields. The stone inscription of Shiva Deva and Amshu Varma at Changu refers to Lichchhavi regulations for settlement and development of agriculture inside Kottas.

Lichchhavi settlements were inhabited by Brijiks and Kolis in addition to Lichchhavis themselves. The stone inscription of Narendra Deva at Deupatan clearly shows that Brijiks were settled in Deupatan and adjoining areas during the Lichchhavi period. Areas in the region of Kantipur was known as Koligrama. The name itself suggests that Kolis were in a majority in this Grama. In those times, Kolis, like Lichchhavis, Brijiks and Shakyas, were well-known communities.

Kapilavastu, the city of the Shakyas, was situated in the west of the river Rohini, and in the east was situated the city of the Kolis. The Kolis and the Shakyas used irrigation facilities in the Rohini river jointly. Once there was a bitter dispute between these two people on the issue of irrigation, which almost erupted into war. But with the intervention of the Buddha, the dispute was resolved.¹⁷

Shakyas too had settled in Kathmandu Valley. A stone inscription at Tebahal Tole, Kathmandu, mentions a Buddhist monk Priyapal Shakya.¹⁸ S. Levi refers to the settlement of Shakyas in Kathmandu Valley.¹⁹

¹⁶Purnima, No. 2, 22-30 Pp.

¹⁷Rahul Sankrityayan's Buddhacharya, 251-252 Pp.

¹⁸Sanskrit-Sandesh, No. 2.

¹⁹S. Levi, Le Nepal. (English Translation), Pp. 156-15.

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Land Regulations In Tarai Region, 1861

Note:- On Marga Badi 6, 1918 (November 1861), Prime Minister Jang Bahadur promulgated detailed regulations concerning the land tenure and tax systems in the districts of Morang, Saptari, Mahottari, Rautahat, Sarlahi, Bara, Parsa and Chitaur districts. Following are excerpts, under appropriate headings, from regulations promulgated for Morang district, which were substantially applicable also for the other districts mentioned above.

Land TenureSection 22

Lands cultivated by local residents have been granted as Pota Birta in their names on a non-alienable basis as long as they pay the Pota tax due thereon. In the event of default, the lands shall be confiscated.

Section 23

Aliens may be allotted lands for cultivation on the personal responsibility of the Jimidar if they:

- (a) bring their family into Nepal or,
- (b) furnish a respectable local person as personal surety.

In case they can do neither, lands cultivated by them shall be taken away from them.

Section 26

Any person who constructs a brick house with tile roofs shall be given the site thereof as Birta. In case the value of the house is Rs 5,000.00 or above, he shall be given 1 bigha of land as Birta in addition for use as an orchard.

Section 31-32

In case a ryot is unable to cultivate his Pota Birta lands, the Jimidar shall provide him with necessary facilities. The ryot may relinquish his rights to avoid tax obligations. Until he relinquishes his rights, or until another person is granted the land, the tax obligation shall continue to attach to him.

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Section 55

In case any ryot dies or otherwise defaults in payment of revenue, the arrears, along with 10% interest, shall be recovered from his property.

Land ReclamationSection 68

Taxes shall not be assessed until 1923 Vikrama on lands reclaimed after 1919 Vikrama.

Five-year Pattas for land reclamation shall be granted to any person who offers to settle people on virgin lands situated far away, or which local people are unable to reclaim, on condition that he does not collect anything from the settlers for 5 years, but obtains on ox-team or 1 laborer, as the case may be, from each settler for reclamation, does not evict settlers from lands cultivated by them, provides loans with interest according to law and procures settlers from non-Raikar lands. After 5 years, the land shall be measured and registered in his name, and taxes assessed thereon.

Section 69

The government will finance 50% the cost of irrigation projects. The balance must be met by local ryots or by persons who have undertaken to reclaim virgin lands.

The Jimidari SystemSection 28

Every ryot shall provide an ox-team, if he has one, or else one laborer, to the Jimidar one day every year. On other occasions, wages shall be paid at the rate of 4 annas for an ox-team and 2 annas for 1 laborer.

Section 33

The Jimidar shall not be granted remission for loss of revenue caused by depopulation. He shall settle new people on such lands.

Section 35

Lands belonging to ryots shall not be converted into Jirayat.

Section 42-43

Priority in the appointment of Jimidars and Patuwaris shall be given to hill people and respectable settlers, in that order. They shall be dismissed if they are unable to collect revenues in time, or if they oppress the people.

Section 58

Taxable lands shall be granted as Khangi to the Jimidar yielding an amount equal to 5% of the collection made by him.

Section 59

Patuwaris shall be granted a commission of 3% of the collection in cash.

Fiscal ReformsSection 36

Darshani levies for each mouja, collected from Jimidars and Patuwaris, have been retained. All other levies, Amilan, Najrana, Tika, Gasti-Salami, Mejmani, Bhojani, etc, which had been collected until 1910 Vikrama, have been abolished.

Interest, Remittance, etcSection 12

Interest shall be charged at 10% on both cash and grain loans until 10 years have passed. Thereafter, an amount double the principal amount in cash and treble in kind shall be collected and the loan shall be cleared off.

Section 50

Exchange rates:-

123 Mohar rupees for 100 Patna rupees.

1 Patna rupee - 1 rupee and 1 anna Company.

Section 52

Funds shall be remitted to the Sadar Muluki-Khana in Kathmandu immediately after a sum of Rs 20,000.00 is accumulated.

MiscellaneousSection 38

Porters shall be paid wages at the rate of 8 pice for every 10 Kosh. Bugari (unpaid labor) shall not be utilized.

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Section 85

Chaudharis and Kanugoyes who had been granted Bekh and Phikdar lands without authority to sell or mortgage such lands, and who have sold or mortgaged such lands, shall be dismissed from 1919 Vikrama.

Section 86

Even if Chaudharis and Kanugoyes have not sold or mortgaged Nankar, Bekh and Phikdar lands as mentioned above, they shall be dismissed from 1919 Vikrama if they have not satisfactorily collected revenues and maintained accounts.

Land Tax Assessments In Tarai Districts

(According To Settlement Made In 1914 Vikrama)

| <u>District</u> | | <u>Revenue</u> |
|-----------------|-----|------------------------|
| Morang | ... | Rs 209,514-14* |
| Saptari | ... | Rs 312,516- 8 |
| Mahottari | ... | Rs 320,831- 0 |
| Rautahat | ... | Rs 158,315- 0 |
| Sarlahi | ... | Rs 139,782-11 |
| Bara | ... | Rs 146,898- 8 |
| Parsa | ... | Rs 83,293- 5 |
| | | <u>Rs 1,371,151-14</u> |

*Rupees and annas. The figures are in the 16-anna rupee unit.

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Economic Conditions In Morang District
During The Early 19th Century

The writings of European missionaries, officials and travellers constitute an important source of information on different aspects of Nepal's history. "An Account of Nepal, and of the Territories Annexed to This Dominion by House of Gorkha", written by Dr Francis Hamilton (Buchanan) and published from Edinburgh in 1819, is even at present an important work of reference and inexhaustible source of citations for Nepali writers and historians.

During the years 1807-11, Dr Francis Buchanan (he appears to have changed his name to Hamilton later), was ordered by the Governor General in Council of India to conduct surveys of the districts of Bihar which at that time constituted part of the Presidency of Bengal. A report of his survey of Purnea district, which adjoins the Nepali district of Morang, was published by the Bihar and Crissa Research Society in 1928. The report contains valuable glimpses into economic conditions in Morang district nearly half a century after the territory was incorporated into the Kingdom of Nepal.

The boundary between Morang and Purnea had not been properly demarcated at that time, so that "disputes between the subjects of the two states and discussions between the governments" were frequent. Dr Buchanan noted that "landlords on both sides make frequent innovations, which are often winked at for some years by those on the opposite side: for every Zimidar who loses an acre makes his loss a pretence for withholding the revenue of twenty." Such border incursions were not limited to unscrupulous landlords. Dr Buchanan states that elephants and other wild animals "harboured in the wastes of Morang" also made occasional incursions into Indian territory. Landlords on the Indian side therefore employed regular "Jagirdars" to protect their fields from such depredations.

Indeed, considerable areas of land in Morang district were waste or under forest. The greater part of cattle from the adjoining Indian areas was therefore sent to Morang for pasture during the dry season. Dr Buchanan writes, "The woods there, at the foot of the mountains, always retain some degree of freshness, and the rains of spring are there usually early and copious, which brings forward a very strong vegetation, while almost everything here (i.e. in India), even to the bamboo, is perfectly withered." For each herd of cattle, the Indian graziers paid tax in the form of a male calf, while for each pair of buffaloes, they paid 10 to 16 annas.

One reason why large areas of cultivable land had remained waste in Morang might have been that after Prithvi Narayan Shah conquered that region in 1774, many of the local inhabitants fled to the adjoining Indian territory.

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Nepali source materials substantiate Dr Buchanan's observations in this respect. But the fugitives soon found that their choice had not been wise. According to Dr Buchanan, "a colony of hardy mountaineers who fled from the oppression of their conquerors settled in the woods (in India) and cleared most of what had a rich soil. ... (But) no sooner had the natives seen that the animals had vanished than they quarrelled with the mountaineers; and as these people had no legal security for the property which they had cleared a great many have been driven out, and the lands given to favorites." Dr Buchanan's desire to condemn the "oppressive" regime of the (Gorkhali) "conquerors" appears to have led him to ignore the state of affairs in British-India where tillers were not entitled to the lands they had reclaimed. Nor does he mention that many of the fugitives had been persuaded to return to Nepal because their lands and homesteads had been restored to them and a general amnesty proclaimed by the Government of Nepal in 1795.

Morang district exported such forest and agricultural products to India as rice, timber, oilseeds, spices, catechu, herbs and drugs, musk, wax, honey, birds, elephants and oranges. Manufactures such as canoes, ploughs, cotton carpets, sack-cloth and woolen cloth were also exported. Timber was transported to Indian territory by boat through the Kankayi and other rivers. Sal timber exported by Morang was considered more valuable than that procured from Bhagalpur in India. Of special interest is the fact that iron and copper were exported from Morang to India, although some quantities of these metals were also imported because of differences in quality. Some entrepot trade was conducted between "Bhotan" (the term is used obviously to mean Tibet) and India through Morang in such commodities as blankets, ivory and yaks' tails.

It is significant that the list of Morang's imports is shorter than that of exports. The former was limited, according to Dr Buchanan's account, to sugar, tobacco, indigo dyes, salt, cotton goods and metal utensils. Morang thus had a favourable balance of trade with India. Dr Buchanan estimated the value of exports from Morang at Rs 364,000, and of imports, at Rs 71,000. The balance was paid by the East India Company's territory in silver.

Dr Buchanan ends his account of Nepal-India trade in that sector with a tribute to the financial sagacity of the Government of Nepal. He writes, "In respect to money, the Government of Nepal has far surpassed in wisdom many nations that have advanced much farther in science. ... The Gorkhalese, since their conquest of Nepal and Morang, do not in general seem to have acted very unreasonably towards our merchants, nay, they seem in some cases to have shown them a particular indulgence."

However, Dr Buchanan has described in detail one particular case in which, in his opinion, the Government of Nepal did not act with justice.

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In the autumn of 1809, the merchants of Nathpur (in India) had made advances to the farmers of "Suban Saptari" for the supply of paddy at 2 maunds per rupee and of other grains in proportion. However, the Government of Nepal imposed a ban on exports soon thereafter on the ground that a famine was apprehended, and made internal procurement at 4 maunds of paddy per rupee. Dr Buchanan complains, "Our merchants have lost all that they have advanced; and the Raja's profit is not likely to be great." It is clear that Dr Buchanan has stressed only the commercial aspect of the situation. Nepal was at that time apprehending a war with the British, and it is not inconceivable that the ban on food exports constituted part and parcel of the military preparations then undertaken.

At one place Dr Buchanan has suggested some administrative changes on the Indian side which would enable the local officials "more easily to watch the frontier of Morang." Dr Buchanan's mission was primarily intended to collect information to promote the territorial and general political designs of the East India Company. Even then, we may be thankful to him for the valuable account he has left of economic conditions in Morang district during the early 19th century.

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Jumla Administrative Regulations
(Abstract Translation)

Shrawan Sudi 3, 1851 (July 1794)

(These regulations were issued in the name of Subba Jog Narayan Malla).

1. Financial allocations for temples shall be made as in the past.
2. Religious and charitable expenses for the Chandannath temple shall be incurred as in the past.
3. Expenses shall be incurred as in the past during the Dashain festival.
4. Expenses incurred on mail-carriers and Wakils shall be remitted as in the past.
5. Presents which are received there shall be transmitted to us.
6. In the event of rebellion, guilty persons of above the age of 12 years shall be beheaded, but the members of their families shall not be enslaved.
7. Offenses committed by soldiers and other persons shall be scrutinized by Panchas and punishment shall be awarded in the form of death or enslavement as appropriate.
8. In case feudatory chieftains in the area do not extend assistance in war or in other matters, and rebel, they shall be awarded appropriate punishment.
9. In the event of invasion by enemies, appropriate defense measures shall be adopted. Instructions from the center shall not be necessary in such emergencies, as the palace is situated at a distance.
10. Complaints against you shall be disposed of only after proper scrutiny of evidence submitted by both parties. One-sided evidence shall not be heard.
11. Stationery expenses for the Kachahari shall be incurred as usual.
12. Remission shall be granted for expenses incurred in repairing forts, constructing suspension bridges and making boats.
13. Rewards shall be granted to persons rendering exceptional service.

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Trade And Markets In Almora, 1812¹

(Falgun Badi 3, 1870 (February 1814))

From Bam Shah,

To His Majesty King Girban Yuddha Bikram Shah.

I have received the following order (from Your Majesty):-

"You have rightly written that our ryots and merchants will lose their employment and the consequences will be bad if Tibetans and Englishmen meet each other and conduct trade. You have, moreover, replied correctly to Harsey's letter. You have also done well by writing to the Tibetans and sending money. But so far as trade is concerned, if people who move in such a clandestine manner, as well as one or two other persons, are disposed of, they may not be able to do so again. This territory is situated between Tibet and the Madhesh. If regulations for monopoly trade are enforced prescribing the price at which goods brought there by Tibetans are to be purchased by us as well as their profit, with provision for profit while we sell these goods to ryots and traders, as well as the profit which ryots and traders should be permitted to make while taking such goods to the Madhesh, and, in addition, prescribing the profit to be provided for when we supply such goods directly to the English, arrangements which will avoid harassment to both the Tibetans and to other ryots and traders will continue for a long time. Moreover, we shall be able to deal in a better way with the English. These provisions were not contained in the draft of the order which you have sent. Accordingly, the royal seal has not been affixed on it this time. Therefore, prepare a draft containing particulars of arrangements, in consultation with our ryots and traders in both Tibet and the hill regions, concerning commercial transactions between Tibet, the hill regions and the Madhesh, with provision for profits according to local conditions, which, in your judgment, will continue for long, safeguard the livelihood of our ryots and traders and also bring in some revenue. We shall then affix the royal seal thereon."

So far as the order concerning persons who move about clandestinely is concerned, nobody has done so after Moorcroft and Harsey were captured while on their way back from Tibet. Arrangements regarding trade appear to have been made in Tibet itself during the visit of Moorcroft and Harsey to that place. In case they come here clandestinely and are detected, I shall act according to Your Majesty's order.

¹Shankar Man Rajvamsi (Ed), Aitihāsik Chitthi-Patra Sangraha. (A Collection Of Historical Letters). Kathmandu: Bir Library, Department of Archeology, Ministry of Education of His Majesty's Government, 2023 (1966). 33-39 Pp.

Your Majesty has also ordered me to submit particulars of prices and profits. Prices are not the same everywhere. In case the number of purchasers is large, and the quantity of goods small, prices are high. But if goods are available in large quantities, while the number of purchasers is small, prices are cheap. Tibetans come to ... along with traders, merchants and Jimidars, on the Maghe Sankranti Day.² I too had gone there, hoping that prices would be determined and that I would be able to submit a report. Loans had been advanced to merchants for the supply of borax. They charge two rupees and four annas or two rupees and eight annas for each receipt. If we purchase borax and sell it here at the same price, there will be no profit. The monopoly trade introduced by us will then earn a bad reputation.

On the low country, in their territory, the English have established markets at ferry points as well as elsewhere for a long time past. They used to purchase a few profit-yielding goods produced in Tibet and the hill regions and sell these elsewhere. Seeing that if we too established markets in the territories under our control, the markets in the low country would dry up, while our territory would prosper and Tibetans and Englishmen would not be able to meet each other directly, I had, in 1868 (1811 A.D.), intended to establish markets. But I had to give up this plan because I had to go to Doon.

After the order relating to monopoly trade in borax as well as funds had been sent to Tibet, I had sent men to establish markets in Kota and Kumaun Valleys. A market was established at Dhikuli in Kota Valley. Once a market is established, the forest adjoining it cannot be encroached upon from below, and our prestige too will grow. I therefore resolved to establish a market even though no profits may accrue this year. I informed Jimidars that I would pay four annas more at the market for each maund compared to last year. At first the people of Kota became pleased and came forward to sell at the market. Only the Jimidars of Behahari in Kali-Kumaun, from Darma, disobeyed this order and sold their goods to the English. Even then, I directed officials (Jamadars) who had been deputed to collect revenues in Kali-Kumaun to establish a market in our territory and reprimand those who disobeyed the order. From here also I sent an official (Jamadar) to establish a market at a place called Kilraud. So far I do not know whether any profit will accrue this year. We have only established a market after obtaining loans from creditors and prevented Tibetans and Englishmen from meeting each other. Had we sufficient funds in our possession, we could have purchased borax from Tibetans in the month of Kertik (October-November), sold it to Jimidars and traders at ..., prescribed the price at which it should be sold at the market, and made some profit by selling it to other customers. The market will not flourish if virgin and other waste lands around it are not claimed. Accordingly, I have submitted the draft of an order. No person will

²First day of the month of Magh corresponding to January 14.

settle down on waste lands in the Bharwar region if a tenure of 5 or 7 years is not provided. In case the royal seal is affixed on this draft, I shall have people settle there. Arrangements have to be made in respect to borax. There are a few other matters also. I had therefore summoned Bijaya Singh to Almora. He has arrived here. He says, "The Tibetans have obtained money from the English from Juhar-Bhot to make arrangements themselves for transactions in goods. When I asked them who had permitted them to do so, they said they had never met Englishmen or held talks on trade with them, and asked me to seize those persons who had sent such reports. ... I have summoned the Tibetans who had made direct arrangements with the English. I shall report whenever the facts come to light."³

³The rest of the letter deals with other matters.

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Documents On Slavery

¹From King Girban,
Kartik Badi 10, 1860 (November 1803).

"It had been the practice in the region between the Bheri river and the Mahakali river to enslave Brahmans and Rajputs. From today, no Brahman or Rajput shall be enslaved throughout our country. Other ryots too shall be enslaved only with their consent, in the presence of the respectable persons of the village, not through the use of force."

Kartik Badi 10, 1860 (November 1803)

²From King Girban,
To Kaji Balwant Rana.

"The inhabitants of those regions willfully sell their children to Muslims and others from the Madhesh as well as Tibetans. They also kidnap and sell the children of others. This is a grave crime. Issue a proclamation to the effect that any person who sells or purchases (human beings) in this manner will be punished with his life and property and stop such transactions. Establish outposts at different ferry points. Any person who sells (human beings) in contravention of these orders and regulations shall be severely punished. The goods of people who come from the Madhesh and Tibet to purchase (human beings) shall be confiscated. Implement these orders properly, or else you shall be deemed to have committed an offense.

Aswin Badi 2, 1865 (September 1808)

¹Regmi Research Collections, Vol. 19, P. 137.

²Yogi Naraharinath (ed), Itihas Prakash Ma Sandhi Patra Sangraha
(A Collections of Treaties In Light On History). Dang: the editor, Falgun 2020
(February 1966). Pp. 68-69.

³From King Rajendra,
To The Danuwar money-lenders of Satgaun (Salyan district).

You supply loans to the people in the form of paddy, harass them on the ground that the loans have doubled or trebled and take their sons and daughters on bondage, or else forcibly enslave them. Nobody shall henceforth be permitted to charge interest on the loans which he has supplied to the people. Collect only the principal amount, not interest. Punishment shall be awarded in case force is used for bondage or enslavement. A royal order to this effect had been issued by our great-great-grandfather (i.e. King Prithvi Narayan Shah) in 1830 (Vikrama, or 1773 A.D.), which we hereby confirm.

Kartik Badi 8, 1887 (November 1830)

³Chittaranjan Nepali, General Bhimsen Thapa Ra Tatkalin Nepal (General Bhimsen Thapa and Contemporary Nepal). Kathmandu: Nepal Cultural Association, 2013 (1956). P. 187.

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Law On Dangeri Tharus¹

Section 1

In case a Dangeri Tharu commits adultery with his own mother, or with any widow or married woman brought as wife by his father, or his full sister, or his wife's mother, he shall forfeit his liberty and be separated from such a woman.

Section 2

In case a Dangeri Tharu commits adultery with the daughter of the full brother (elder or younger) of his father, or his father's sister, or his own sister's daughter, or his own mother's mother, his property shall be confiscated according to law and he shall be separated from her.

Section 3

In case a Dangeri Tharu commits adultery with the wife of his own brother, or his own daughter or son's wife, he shall be fined with Rs 50.00 and separated from her. In case he fails to pay the fine, he shall be imprisoned according to law.

Section 4

In case a Dangeri Tharu commits adultery with the sister of his own mother, or the wife of his mother's brother, he shall be fined with Rs 40.00 and separated from her.

Section 5

In case a Dangeri Tharu commits adultery with any blood relative up to five generations other than those specified herein, he shall be fined with Rs 40.00 and separated from her.

¹Government of Nepal, "Dangeri Tharu Jat Ko." (Law On The Dangeri Tharu Caste). Ain (Legal Code), (1870 ed.). Pp. 42-422.

Section 6

In case a Dangeri Tharu commits adultery with any blood relative between five and seven generations, he shall be fined with Rs 20.00 and with Rs 5.00 in the case of blood relatives up to twenty-one generations, and he shall be separated from her. In case he fails to pay the fine, he shall be imprisoned according to law. No offense shall be considered to have been committed in the event of adultery with relatives separated by more than twenty-one generations.

Section 7

In case a Dangeri Tharu commits adultery with the mother of his son's wife or of his daughter's husband whose husband is alive, or with his wife's elder sister, he shall pay Rs 30.00 to the latter as marriage expenses and fined with Rs 20.00. The rightful husband may accept his wife back or realize marriage expenses, as he likes. No offense shall be deemed to have been committed in the case of sexual intercourse with a girl who is of age, or with a widow, with her consent.

Section 8

In case a Dangeri Tharu commits adultery with a married woman of his own caste whose husband is alive, he shall pay Rs 30.00 to such husband as marriage expenses, as well as a fine of Rs 20.00. The rightful husband may accept his wife back or realize marriage expenses as he likes. No offense shall be deemed to have been committed in the event of adultery with a girl who is of age or with a widow, with her consent.

Section 9

In case any person entices and commits adultery with a girl of Dangeri Tharu caste who has been given away (in marriage) by her parents or other relatives after holding a feast according to the custom of the caste, he shall be fined with Rs 20.00, and the girl shall be handed over to her parents or other relatives.

Section 10

In case a Dangeri Tharu commits adultery with a woman, whose touch contaminates water, but contact with whom does not necessitate purification by the sprinkling of water, he shall be fined with Rs 20.00, and restored to his caste after performing the customary rites.

Section 11

In case a Dangeri Tharu willfully commits adultery with a woman contact with whom necessitates purification by the sprinkling of water, but suppresses the fact, and involves other members of his caste in commensality and the use of water touched by him, his property shall be confiscated according to law, and degraded to the caste of the woman with whom he has committed adultery.

Section 12

In case the daughter or daughter-in-law of a Dangeri Tharu is polluted through adultery with any person water touched by whom cannot be used, or contact with whom necessitates purification by the sprinkling of water, she shall be degraded to the same caste. Such a woman cannot be expiated in matters regarding commensality and use of water.

Section 13

In case any boy or girl of Dangeri Tharu caste willfully involves himself or herself in commensality or commits or instigates adultery with any person water touched by whom cannot be used or contact with whom necessitates purification by the sprinkling of water, and in case any (other) person, on the ground that it is (their) traditional custom, accepts such a man or woman as one of his community, after performing customary rites, such a person shall be degraded to the caste of the boy or girl with whom the Dangeri Tharu has committed adultery or got involved in commensality.

Section 14

In case any widow of Dangeri Tharu caste who is faithful to her husband is forcibly given away to another person by any officer on payment of a fee demanded by him, such officer shall be fined with double the amount charged as fee. It shall depend upon the paternal relations of the woman whether to give her away (to the other person) or not.

Contd...

On The Madhesiyas Of The Tarai¹

Section 1

In case a person of Matwali (liquor-drinking) caste who cannot be enslaved is proved guilty of committing adultery with a widow or girl above 11 years of age of Upadhyaya, pure Jaisi, Rajput Chhetri or other sacred thread wearing caste with her consent, he shall be sentenced to imprisonment for three years, provided he has not involved her in commensality. In case he is proved guilty of even involving her in commensality he shall be imprisoned for a period of six years. In case he is willing to pay money two times more than the period he has to remain in prison it shall be accepted. Anybody proved to have been involved unknowingly in commensality shall be granted expiation.

Section 2

In case a person of Matwali caste who cannot be enslaved is proved guilty of committing adultery with a widow or girl above 11 years of age of Deva Bhaju, Tehraunte, Bhatta, Marhatta, Nagar, Gujerati, Maharastriyan, Tailangana, Dravidian, Madhesiya or Devi Brahman or of a Brahman of other land with her own consent, he shall be imprisoned for a period of three years, provided he has not involved her in commensality. In case he is proved guilty of even involving her in commensality he shall be imprisoned for a period of six years. In case he is willing to pay money two times more than the period he has to remain in prison, it shall be accepted. Anybody proved to have been involved in commensality unknowingly shall be granted expiation.

Section 3

In case a person of Matwali caste who cannot be enslaved is proved guilty of committing adultery with a widow or girl above 11 years of age of a medicant (Bheshdhari) including Dasnam, Jogi, Jangam, Sekhada, Bairagi, Kanfatta, Nanak, Udasi and Aghori or of a Jaisi including Jaisi Dotyal or Jaisi Jumli born of a union with the third husband, with her own consent, he shall be fined Rs 30.00 provided he has not involved her in commensality. In case he is proved guilty also of involving her in commensality he shall be fined Rs 40.00. Any person proved to have been involved in commensality unknowingly shall be granted expiation.

¹Government of Nepal, Tarai Ka Madhesiya Ko: "Aijan Ma Karni Garniya Masinya Ko Ra Namasinya Ko." (On Adultery and Slavery Among the Madhesiyas of the Tarai). Ain (Legal Code), (1870 ed.).

Section 4

In case a person of Matwali caste who cannot be enslaved commits adultery with a widow or girl above 11 years of age of relatives other than blood-relations, enlisted under the state-offense, or of Matwali caste similar to his own, with their consent, he shall not be deemed to have committed any offense provided he has not involved her in commensality. In case he is proved guilty of involving others in commensality with her, he shall be fined only Rs 10.00 and shall not lose his caste, provided he has not involved himself. In case after committing adultery with her, he is proved guilty of involving not only himself but also others in commensality, he will be fined Rs 10.00 and degraded to the caste of that woman. In case the persons who have unknowingly been involved in commensality approach for expiation, they shall be granted the same of the girls' name. In case they do not so approach, it shall not be granted, they shall belong to their own caste.

Section 5

- (a) In case a person of Matwali caste who cannot be enslaved commits adultery with a widow or girl above 11 years of age of Matwali caste who can be enslaved with her consent he shall not be deemed to have committed any offense. He shall, however, be fined Rs 10.00 if any complaint were filed against his involving in commensality.
- (b) In case a person of Matwali caste who can be enslaved commits adultery with a widow or girl above 11 years of age of relatives other than blood-relations enlisted as punishable under the law on Matwali caste similar to his own, with her own consent, he shall not be deemed to have committed any offense provided no involvement has been made in commensality. He shall however be fined Rs 5.00, if any complaint were filed that such an involvement has been made.

Section 6

In case a person of Matwali caste who cannot be enslaved and who cannot by himself punish his wife's paramour is proved guilty of committing adultery with a widow or girl above 11 years of age of Matwali caste who cannot be enslaved but in whose society a person can punish by himself his wife's paramour, with her consent, he shall be fined Rs 40.00 if he has involved in commensality but only Rs 20.00 if no such involvement has been made. In case he fails to make the payment, he shall be imprisoned.
