

INDIA IN 'DZAM—GLING RGYAS—BSHAD

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However if one may describe simply and briefly a few of the main sacred objects, structures and holy places (in India). As mentioned above¹, there is a town, known as Gutapasara in the south of the Mithila region. One reaches there after crossing many small and a big town known as Lālasahor and which is part of Mithila. After a journey of about seven to eight days, one comes to the river Gandak/Yid-'Ong-lDan. After crossing (the Gandak) one comes to the city of Yang-pa-chan (Vaiśālī). Among the people of India it is known as Baisalagriha/Besarghar. In ancient times, this city was surrounded by three boundary walls, and there were many multistoried buildings with roofs of gold, silver and copper within the inner-most boundary wall. According to the Sutras the most prosperous among these houses have been compared to the abode of gods. Today, they are all in ruins and the Licchavis clans are no more because of the changes through time.

The river Ganga is to the south and the river Gandak to the north of this city. It is learnt from the Acharyas that the southern boundary of the city has disappeared totally due to floods. Now there is a newly settled city known as Hājipur, which survives on the banks of the Gandak river to the east of Yang-pa-chan. There are remains of the residence of Li-Tsa-Byi Dri-Med Grags-Pa² (Licchavi Vimalakīrti) : to the north-west of the outer iron boundary of Yang-pa-chan city. Close by is the Rig-pai Lhakang (Vidyā Devālaya) where once Vimalakīrti had fallen sick. According to Thang-Zing's guide book, this place happens to be one of the holiest places. Near by is the place where our sTon-Pa (Śāstā i.e. Lord Buddha) had turned the Wheel of the Law for the last time and had preached the mDo-sDe bsKal-Ba bZang-Po (Bhadrakalpika Sūtra) in a Temple, known as sPreu-rZing-Gi-gTsug-Lag-Khang (Vānara Jaladhara Vihāra). Also close to this place is a stupa enshrining the relics of a past Buddha. The place where the Evil one requested Sasta to enter Nirvana soon is also quite close to this city of Yang-pa-chan.

There is another place where Li-tsa-byi mGar-ba (Licchavi Karmakāra) prayed Śāstā not to enter Nirvāṇa and Śāstā accepted the request and extended his life-force by three months. To the north-west of this is the place where all the bewailing followers fainted when Śāstā proceeded for Ku-sha'i Grong-Khyer (Kūśinagara). It is mentioned in the guide book of Thang-Zing that the place where Śāstā saved a huge eighteen headed fish from hell and preached Dharma to five hundred fishermen on the bank of the river Nārāṇi (Nārāyaṇī), to the north of the city of Yang-pa-chan. In all these places there are still extant many remains of the stupas which were constructed by king

Aśoka and other devotees in ancient times. After travelling for about half day to the north-east of Yang-pa-chan one reaches the place where the second Buddhist council was held. After travelling for another half-a-day from there, one reaches the place of activities and seats of four previous Buddhas. There are stupas each containing relics of Kun-dGa'-Bo (Ananda), on either side of the river Ganga south of Yang-pa-chan city. From this place, after crossing the Ganga one reaches a medium size city known as Patana (Patna). In ancient times it was the residential place of Dharma Asoka and was known as the great city of Pātaliputra. In the city there is a fort, known as Benakor (Bankepur/Bankipur) which is now in ruins only. Patna is a newly established city around the remains of this fort. This region was a part of the kingdom of Magadha. The gSer-lDan (Sone) river flows to the west of this city and today it is known as Andhanata. The river Nirañjanā lies to the east of the city. Both the rivers flow from south to north and join the Ganga. At a short distance from the confluence of the Sone and the Ganga, there are a few rocky structures on a small rocky hillock. According to the Acharyas, they are the remains of Vikramaśīlā Mahāvihāra. In ancient times there were several temples and monasteries in the city, which were destroyed by the Du-Rush-Ka Mahamasti (Turki Mahammadan) invaders, and they could not be restored again. It is heard from the Acharyas that even now there are some monks in the form of Tantriks.

Generally now-a-days the rocky hillocks are known as Shilakravati. The Buddhist Yogis of the place and kindred Yogis are known as Akota Siddha. In character and philosophy they are similar to the Gaupalas, the Bantas etc. of Nepal. A short distance to the south-west of Patna city, there is a very huge stupa, like a mountain, known as Gola Gola Ghar. It is mentioned in the Thang-Zing's guide book that a complete set of the eighty four thousand teachings of the Dharma were inscribed and enshrined in this stupa but its veracity is a matter for investigation. South of this (huge stupa), there are five smaller stupas, known as after the Phung-Po-lNga (Pañca skandhas); it is mentioned in many legends that in ancient times after constructing eighty four thousand stupas all over Jambudvīpa by Dharma Aśoka. The rest five relics measures (BIG) which were also enshrined separately in different stupas in his capital. These days, it is believed by certain wandering ascetics that if a person takes water from Ganga and offers to each of these stupas he will attain salvation in the next life. From this city (Patna), after a journey of four to five days to the south, one reaches the province of Kalamka. Gaya city is part of that province as also Bodhi Gaya which abounds in hundreds and thousands of small and big Vihāras close to it. In Bodhi Gaya there is a bronze statue of Lord Buddha, known as Ganja Dhar to Tīrthikas and close to that is the Bodhi Tree. (In the same city) there is a Tathāgatas's statue, made of stone in a temple, known as Gayaji, where there is a tree the same as above. (Because of the

presence of) both the trees in these Vihāras they were recognised as the Mahā Bodhi Vihāras by Panchen Sangyas Palden Yeshe in his own guide book of Śambhala. There are some differences among the different manuscripts on ancient legends and Thang-Zing's guide book but (I am) going to give a short account of them, below later on. Then there are Ri-Bo Gaya (Gaya Mountain) to the south and some distance from it Ribo-ITeng-rGyas (Uruvilva Mountain), etc. The Gaya Mountain is very high and very difficult to climb. The peak of this mountain is known as Gaya Gori. Here there is a huge stupa where, before the Enlightenment, the Buddha had attained the Three Wonderful Dharmas and, after the Enlightenment, had preached 'Phags-pa dKon-mChog-sPrin-Gyi-mDo (Ārya Ratnamegha Sūtra). So it is one of the holiest of places.

Uruvilva Mountain, is not very high but very wide spread and is easy to climb. It is said that once upon a time, Drang-Srong-rNams (Ṛṣi) asked Tsangs-Pa-Chen-Po (Mahā Brahma) for a hermitage and this (mountain) was given them for this purpose. It is learnt from wandering ascetics that this is the place where our Śastā obtained his first alms after giving up asceticism. Even today that particular place is marked by the foot prints of De-bDzin-gShegs-Pa (Tathāgata). The Nairanjana (Nirañjanā) river flows between these mountains from the south to the north. In the rainy season, it flows with thickness of human size with muddy water. In winter and spring, at the time of rare rain it disappears in sand. However if one digs anywhere in the sand, there will be fresh water of Yan-Lag brGyad-lDan³ (that is possessed of eight attributes). If one sees carefully the water can be seen slowly moving towards the Ganga; this had been observed by certain Acharyas. The water moves without appearance (i.e. in under-current) so it is named Niranjana. It flows close to the Ganga, Gaya city and east of dPal rDo-rJe-gDan (Śrī Vajrāsana). The local people call the ever flowing river Phalgu and Thang-Zing has translated it as Phag-Chu (Arya-Apa). It is held by the Indians that the manes of their dead fore-fathers come and accept the offerings of gTor-Ma (Pindadana) made by their off-springs at these places.

In this region there are many fresh water springs, flowing here and there and mounds of various shapes on either side of the river Nirañjanā. There are a few scattered houses and a small population of Brahmanas and Ṛṣis in this area. The place where sTon-Pa (Śastā) practised penances for six years the site of his foot prints and the place where Uruvilva Kāśyapa and his two brothes were converted are also in this area. There are many other holy places nearly such as the birth place of Mahākāśyapa and the seats of earlier Buddhas etc. From the city of Gaya as one walks along the river Nirañjanā for more than half a day, one would reach rDo-rJe gDan (Vajrāsana) or Byang-Chub Chen-Po'i gNas (the spiritual place of the Bodhi). According to the Vinaya; this is the Holy Centre and beyond its boundaries lies the sphere of the barbarians. It is also the

central nodal joint of the earth. This is the place where one thousand Buddhas will gain Enlightenment in the present era bsKal-bZang (Bhadrakalpa). Naturally, therefore, it will have to have four-fold assembly⁴ of the followers here. So from the religious point of view, it is the centre of the country. It may not be the centre of both India and Jambudvīpa but then according to Sūtras it happens to be the centre of sTong-gSum-Gyi-sTong-Chen-Po 'Jig-rTen-Gyi-Khams (Tri-sāhasra-mahā-sāhasra-lokadhātu).

According to Pharata⁵ when indicating the centre and the boundary of the sphere of the barbarians in the east, it has been mentioned that the river which flows in under current is the western boundary (of that sphere) In Prayag situated to the west of Varanasi, which is more than five days journey from here, there is a Fort, where the confluence of the river Gangā, the Yamunā and the Sarasvatī occurs. The river that flows as an under current is believed to be Nirañjanā. The aforesaid (invisible)river towards east and the west (of the centre) might be a mistake in mentioning the directions or it may be some other river in the west which flows as an under current which is described). But it is not quite clear (to me). According to the Vinaya the eastern boundary of the Centre i.e. Nirañjanā and Prayag as the western boundary are almost the same, as the lower region in the east, starts from Prayag and falls on the centre line of the Sa'i-dPe-Ris (map) of the Jambudvīpa prepared by Pharsisi (?Parsis). This is almost the same opinion as above but it is a matter for further research.

Broadly speaking, the country of rGya-Gar (India is situated in the southern part of Jambudvīpa. (In the Centre) it extends southwards from bSil-Ri (Snowy Mountain) in the north Southwards from Me'i-Ri (Agni Parvata) & or Me'i-Sa-gDzi (Agni Bhumi), in the west southwards from Pharate'i-Yul (Pharata Desh), and in the east southwards from Aubri-Yul (Aubri Desh) which is part of rGya-Nag Chen-Po (Mahāchīna). These have been measured and (India) comes in the Centre and this is learnt from (different) scholars. In Sa-Yi-Go-La (Map), also the same lines are drawn over it. So (I) mentioned it with some details here.

(Coming back to Mahābodhi) its boundary which is made of bricks is wider from east to west and a little narrower from north to south. The whole length of the compound is more than five hundred steps. The walls are covered by Bodhi leaves and different kinds of flowers. The Nirañjanā river is at a short distance from the gate at the eastern boundary. Near the south gate, there is a big Lotus Pond and the west gate is surrounded by rocks. The north gate is connected with gTsub-Lag Khang-Chen-Po (Mahāvihāra). According to the Thang-Zing's guide book and experience of the Acharyas, there are several sNgon-Byung-Gi-rNam-Thar (ancient eventful stories) engraved on the stones in the railings. Therefore it is decidedly a very important Holy Place. Thang-Zing has written that here in addition to the seat of our sTon-Pa

(Śāsta), there are three other seats of previous Buddhas⁶. According to the Sutras, here is also an Aśoka Tree against which our Śāstā/Buddha leaned at the time of Enlightenment.

According to the Thang-Zing's guide book, it is Pipala tree but wandering ascetics told me that it is called Deva Pipala tree. The flower of the Pipala tree is akin to that of Pipling, and that might have been the reason calling it so. To come under the Aśoka tree leads to the disappearance of sufferings by its coolness and hence the name Aśoka. Therefore it makes no difference whether we call it Deva Pipala or Asoka Pipala. There is an image which represents the Buddha looking at the Bodhi Tree constantly without closing his eyes. There is also a statue of sPyan-Ras gZigs (Avalokiteśvara) whose body up to the chest is under the ground. It is said that it will remain so till the end of Shakya-Thub-Pa'i-bsTan-Pa (the Era of Buddha Śakyamuni). There are some sacred statues of Chu-Klung sGrol-Ma (Nadi Tārā) etc. as also several other statues including that of the Earth Goddess whose body is half buried in the ground. According to the Mendicants, the places visited and sanctified by our Śāstā/Buddha were commemorated by Aśoka and other devotees by building stupas there.

According to Thang-Zing, there is a Vihāra full of beautiful architected pieces near the north gate of the Bodhi Tree and there is a Stupa also enshrining the relics of the De-bDzin-gShegs-Pa (Tathāgata) in a multi-storied structure one hundred Khru (Cubits) in height depicting the six Islands. However there is no confirmed evidence for the existence of an image of Lord. All the same it has been named the Mahābodhi. According to some Acharyas there is a stone image of Tathāgata inside the temple which is known as Bodhi Nātha. The Phe-Reng (foreigners) and Barbarians called it Buddhajira. Therefore this may be accepted as Byang-Chub Chen-Po'i sKu (Mahā Bodhi Image). In the Ko-La'i Kha-Byang (commentary map) the Phe-Reng Ang-Ki-Re-Ji (English people) have described Byang-Chub Chen-Po'i Lha-Khang (Mahā Bodhi Vihāra) as close to the river gSer-lDan (Sone). In ancient times Buddhist monks used to reside in this Vihara, but since the invasion of the Du-Rushka Mahamasti (Turki Mahammadans) it was looked after by (Hindu) Mendicants, known as Brama-Nāti. It is described in the guide book of Thang-Zing and Byang-Chub Chen-Po'i Lo-rGyus (history of Mahābodhi Temple) that after crossing the river Nirāñjanā one comes across a big decorated Vihāra in which there are the silver image of sTon-Pa Thub-Pa'i dBang-Po (i.e. Great Buddha) and other statues of rGyal-Bu Ma-Pham-Pa (Māitreya Bodhisattva), 'Phags-Pa sPyan-Ras gZigs (Ārya Avalokiteśvara) etc. The Achryas also say that in ancient times there was a beautifully decorated Vihāra on the right bank of the Nirāñjana river east of the boundary of Mahābodhi and there were many bronzes decorated by different kinds of

precious stones embedded in them. And sometime in the mediaval period, the Turki army destroyed it and looted its gold, precious stones etc. Later it was restored by devotees : Kings, Ministers and devotee house-holders of India. The Du-Rushka (Turkis) and the wild people of the 'Bigs-Byed (Vindhya) ranges often invaded the Vihāra. As a result it was shifted to the city of Gaya and only some (Stone) remains were left there. Byang-Chub Chen-Po'i Lha-Khang (Mahā Bodhi Vihāra) once stood here but later on it was shifted to its present site inside Gaya city. When one goes through the thick forest and walks for more than one and half days eastwards, one reaches the place known as Ri-Bo Bya-rKhang-Chan (Kukkutapāda/Kukrihar). It is believed that 'Phags-Pa 'Od-Srung Chen-Po (Ārya Mahākāśyapa) is still in mediation in that place, and therefore it is regarded as a very sacred spot.

At present, there is a mountain known as Ri-Bya rKhang-Chan which is situated some where on the border between China and Jang (Jang). However, it is not the real one (i.e original), and it may be said only to represent the older one. To the south of the seat of Enlightenment is the place called Sasiram', a fort named Rodhasi, and a city called Aeks-Su-Ru (Eksuru) etc. To the east of rDo-rJe gDan (Vajrāsana) there is a forest called Buddhavana, and a cave known as Gaurakhsh Gupha etc. When one passes through all these places one reaches rGyal-Po'i-Khab (Rājagriha) after about three days journey. That city is surrounded by mountains like a fort. The people of India called the outer boundary of the fort, Pahaghar. The inner fort is known as Rāja Mahal (Rājmahal). The mountain ranges including both rDo-RJe-gDan rGyal-Po'i-Khab (Vajrāsana/Rājagriha) are known as Srinipadu. In this area are the remains of residences of 'Tsho-Byed gDzon-Nu (Kumāra Jivaka) and king Ma-sKyes dGra' (Ajātasātru) etc. The place has many sacred places visited by the Tathagata including Dur-Khrod Chen-Po bSil-Ba'i Tshal (i.e. Great Cemetery known as Mahāchitavana). According to the Sutras there were one hundred and eight hot springs (at Rājagriha) at the time of the Tathagata. During the time of Thang-Zing there were about twenty hot springs and, at present, only three are in existence-as reported by the Acharyas.

It may be mentioned here that (many) changes have taken place even in terra firma, water courses and stone structures not to speak of monasteries big and small. Just close to the northern gate of Rājagriha fort one can see Gridhakuta, which is called Chivutakutara these days. It is like the back-rest of a chair. It is very high and wide at the top and is surrounded by cliffs. Just below this to the west is the summit of the rocky mountain, where Śāstā preached Sher-Phyin (Prajñāpāramitā). This is a well constructed rostrum while the image of the Lord, in preaching posture is installed. It is said to be of life size of the Master himself. To the east, there is a big flat stone seat where sTon Pa (Śāstā) preached mDo-sDe Pad-Ma dKar-Po (Puṇḍarīka Sūtra). To the south, there is a rocky cave where the Sasta had lived for some time. And near about are

many places where the dGra-bChom-Pa (Arhantas) practised meditation. Just behind the cave, there is a big pathway along which Mara came in the form of a vulture and left his foot prints. Also close to the cave, there is a stone slab on which Chos-Gos (Civara) of the sTon-Pa (Śāstā) was dried and its threads have left their marks on it as if engraved. Thang-Zing has said that there are these and such many other sacred spots in the neighbourhood. Except for the place for the Prajñāpāramitās was preached., the statements of experienced Acharyas and Thang-Zing guide book generally agree on other matters. Therefore Thang Zing's guide book seems to be trust worthy.

There is 'Od-Ma'i-Tshal (Venuvana) one rGyang-Grags (Krosa) away to the north from this place Pal-Nalen-Dra'i-gTsug-Lag-Khang (Sri Nalanda Vihara) is at a distance of one Tshalam⁸ from there. According to general belief of the Tibetans, nothing is left here of Buddhism these days, not to speak of Śrī Nālanda Mahāvihāra. According to the history of Tārānātha both Vikramaśīla and Odantapuri Mahāvihāras were destroyed by invading Turki Mohammadans, but no reference is made to Śrī Nālanda Vihāra in it. However it is mentioned that during the reign of king Chamgala, Nālanda Mahāvihāra flourished. It appears that in the beginning Nālanda escaped the ravages of Turki invaders. According to Acharya Lalagiri some remains of Nalanda had been left even during his time. With the passage of time the number of monks and earnestness of the students also diminished. At rGyal-Po'i-Khab (Rājagriha) and other parts of Magadha. There are many places visited and sanctified by the Buddha. The birth place of Sha-Ri'i-Bu (Śāriputra) and Mou-'Gal-Gyi-Bu (Māugalyāyana) are also near here. Venue of the first Buddhist Council also happens to be here. Besides there are innumerable other sacred spots for details of which Thang Zing's guide book may be referred to.

To the west of Bodhi Gaya when one walks about two to three days one comes across the fort of present Rājā of Magadha known as Tikari. Close to this place there are small hamlets called Mahāpalapuri and from there if one goes westwards along the south bank of the Ganga one reaches the region of Aṅga which is known as Ate to-day. When one walks for some days after crossing the Ganga, one reaches Ram Nagar of Rājā of Kāshi. When one crosses again to the other side of the Ganga, one comes to the big city of Vārānasi, which is called Kāshi Saher these days and is known to foreigners as Benaras. it is a big city of about one million houses with a huge population. Most of the houses are built of stone and are several stories high. In the streets, there are wide drains, four to five 'Dom (fathoms) deep and covered with stones. The people of the city are very prosperous, have markets of various merchandises and are well-up in all kinds of arts and sports. Inside the city here is an image of the Buddha in preaching posture similar to the one at Drang-Srong lHung-Ba Ri-Dvags Kyi Nags-Tshal (Rṣipatana Mṛgadāva).

There is also an image of 'Phags-Pa 'Jig-rTen dBang-Phyug (Ārya Avalokiteśvara) made of white marble eighteen Khru (cubits) in height, and regarded (here) as that of Lha-Chen-Po (Mahādeva). Beside there are many other sacred objects here. With the change of time in twenty four sacred places they have come to be regarded as Lha-Chen-Po'i-rTen (Symbol of Mahādeva) known as Viśveśvara/sNa-Tshogs dBang-Phyug, and Umādevi/Annapurnā/'Bru'i-Gang-Ba. There are also images of Śiva in his fearful form of Kāla Vāirava/'Jigs-Byed Nag-Po, Vedukavairo/mGon-Po Mi'u-Thung-Gi-gZugs-Chan in dwarf form etc. etc.

There are also images of other Devas in fearful form. These are Lha-Khyab-'Jug/Srid-Med Kyi-Bu (Nārāyaṇa) and his follower dGa'-Byed dGra'-sTa-Chan (Paraśurāma), Rājā Ramana (Rāma), and Bram-Ze Nag-Po/Krisina etc., in all eight in number. (Kṛṣṇa's) consort Lha-Mo dPal-Mo (Kamālā) and her retinue Hanumān the son of Lha-Chen (Mahādeva) and sPre'u-Ma Anjana (Monkey Anjanā), Lha-sTobs bZang (Deva-Balabhadra), Klu-'Jog-Po (king of the Nāgas Takṣaka), Nam-mKha'-lDing (Garuḍa) etc. all these have their separate statues and temples. There are separate temples of gDzon-Nu gDong-Drug (Kumāraśadānana), Tshogs-Kyi bDag-Po (Gaṇeśa), Bringiriti, and dGa'-Byed dBang-Phyug (Iśvara-rāma). The places of hermitages of the following sages such as 'Tshangs-Pa'i Grong Gautama (Brahmanagrāma Gāutama), Bharadvāja, Śānti and also Drang-Srong Ser-sKya (Ṛṣi-kapila), rGyas-Pa (Vyāsa) and Agra etc. are here. There are besides innumerable temples, with statues of gods which are both well and not so well known, such as the king of the gods mChod-sByin-biGya-Ba (Indra) the teacher of the gods Ṛṣi Brhaspati, chief of the defence Drang Srong-bKra-Shis (Ṛṣi Maṅgala), the source of all gods Me-Lha (Agni Deva), the creator of all living beings Kāmadeva/'Dod-Pa'i-Lha, Yamarāja who is watching over good and evil actions, his messenger Kālarūpa etc., the architect god Viśvakarmā, the physician god Tha-sKar-Gyi-Bu (Aśvini-Kumāra), treasurer of the god gNod-sByin Lus-Ngan (Kubera), his follower rMugs-'Zin (Jakhendra), Nor-Bu bZang-Po (Maṇibhadra), Gang-Ba bZang-Po (Purnabhadra), Lha (Sūra) and Lha-Min (Asūra), Chu-Lha (Jala Deva) rLung-Lha (Vāyu Deva). Srin-Po (Demon), Nyima (Sun), Zla-Ba (Moon), Ri-Yi-Lha (Mountain God), Shing-Gi-Lha (God of Woods) and Grong-Gi Lha (God of City). It is said by Tirthankaras that these gods can ordain constructive and destructive works. From the Śastā, rDzogs-Pa'i-Sangs-rGyas (Samyak Sambuddhas) to those who feed upon corpses in the cemeteries and burning ghats and all beings in between these, when there abodes and statues are gathered together, they comes to some thirty three millions. This is as told me by the residents of Kāshi. There is also a burnt stone in the shape of a wood, a big and tall one, known as

vairolati. There is also a stone house in the shape of Gandhaupa known as the way to the heaven which is four hundred to five hundred 'Dom (fathoms) long. In this building one could go up to the top. There is also an under ground way known as door to the Ganga, where one could go through, and feel that the Ganga is flowing overhead while crossing it. To this passage no damage is done by water etc. In this manner one hears of so many wonderful things in existence.

However, it seems that there are in this region many statues and temples, and higher ordained monks of different sects. Mirzapur is reached after crossing the Ganga from the south-west end of Kāshi Nagara. It is a big city of some sixty thousand houses. Then to the south, there is a big forest at a distance of one day's journey amidst several scattered hills. Then there is a Mu-sTegs-Pa (Tīrthikas) centre for worship known as Vindhyāsana/Vindhyapashi Devī. It is believed that one who cuts his head and limbs and offers them to the deity he gets them back. Close to this is a statue of Lha-Mo Nag-Mō'i (Kālīdevī) in a cave which is a very powerful one. It is said that there are many wonderful objects here such as the eighteen cubits long Khardga which was used by Dus-Kyi Rigs-IDan Drag-Po (Vidyādhara). To the north-west of Kāshi, at a distance of four to five days journey, there is a country known as Ayodhya on the left bank of the Ganga (Ghagra or Sarju in actual fact). This is an old city known as Gopapur. It is believed that it was residence of Rājā Ramana. It is said that certain articles of the period are still preserved there. A little distance south-west from it, there is the confluence of the Ganga, the Yamuna and the Sarasvastī at Prayak, marked by the Allahabad fort. According to Thang-Zing that is the spot where bDag-Chag-Gi-sTon-Pa (our Śāstā) subdued the six Mu-sTegs-Kyi-sTon-Pa-Drug (heretical Teachers). It is heard from Gāusana (?Gossain), that every six years Sannyasis, Sāivas, Buddhist monks and others assemble there as great festival (?Kumbu Mela). There is also a tree known as Atshai Pasti (Akshay-Bat). The Ate region is in the adjoining area to the west. Also at a distance of Tshalam for Vārānasi towards north-east is a fort known as Chunargar/bTsan-rJong Chen-Po. Drang-Srong lHung-Ba Ri-Dvags-Kyi-Nags (Rṣipātana Mṛgadāva) is near by. There was a small river flowing close to it and our Śāstā/the Great Compassionate One turned the Wheel of Law and preached the bDen-Pa-bDzi⁹ (Four Noble Truths) there. According to certain historical records there was a life-size brass image of our Sasta in Dharmacakramudrā and also many other items of importance. It is believed that the stupas built by devotees to mark the seat of the Śāstā are still to be found there.

From that place towards north-west at some distance, there is a big river known as Sardhoha/Sarju. gNyan-Yod (Śrāvasti) or Kośala kingdom is situated near by and now a days it is also known as Tikshana Ayodya. The great city of Śrāvasti existed there and the palacts of rGyal-Po gSal-rGyal

(king Pasenajit) were there. As a result of the passage of time only the ruins are existant at present. These days this place is known as Kosalapuri. To the left of it is the seat of the sTon-Pa (Śāstā), which is marked by a stūpa. Near by lie the ruins of the residence of sKye-rGu'i-bDag Mo (Prajāpati) and close to that palace are the remains of residences of Khyim-bDag mGon Med Zas-sByin (Anāthapiṇḍika) and Sor-Mo'i Phreng-Ba-Chan (Angulimālā). These places have generally been marked by stūpas built by the devotees. In the eastern part of the city, there is a gate having pillars of fifteen Dom (fathoms) on either side. According to the Catalogue out side the city in a big Vihāra, there was an image of our Śāstā made of both gold and copper. it is not known whether the same is still in existence or not. Thang-Zing says that at a distance of about four to five rGyang-Grags (Yojanas) southwards of the city there is the ruin of rGyal-Byed Tshal (Jetavana). According to many Sūtras, 'Das-Pa'i Sangs-rGyas gSum¹⁰ (past three Buddhas) and our present sTon-Pa (Śāstā) delivered many of their discourses here and sanctified the place. So decidedly it is a sacred site. Further a short distance from there, Śāstā also had permitted the monks to take their bath. There is a place where (Phags-Pa Shari-Bu (Ārya Śāriputra) had saved Mou'u-'Gal-Gyi Bu (Māugalyāyana) from swooning by his miraculous powers. There is also a well which was used by the Śāstā. It is stated that the pits from where Lhas-sByin (Devadatta) and some of his followers, a prostitute who had criticized the bChom-IDan-'Das (Bhagavāṇ) and a naked woman etc. had fallen into hell is marked some where near rGyal-Byed Tshal-Gyi gTsug-Lag Khang (Jetavana Vihāra). To the north-west of Jetavana, at a distance of three to four rGyang-Grags (Yojanas) there is a place called Mig-mThong (?Cakṣu-Darśana), which had importance in activities performed by the Śāstā. It is also said that there are to be found of many Vihāras where Nyan Thos 'Phags-pa (Ārya Śrāvaka) meditated.

In the north-west direction from there (Śrāvasti) and north of Ayodhya is situated a big fort, known as Lucknow. In the east side of Jetavana is the place where Śāstā had a discussion with teachers of other faiths (Ārya Tīrthikas). East of that is the place where Ārya Śāriputra had defeated in argument wandering ascetic Angkara etc. There is also the place, from where on seeing the Śāstā, the Sinner Viruḍaka, who had come with arms to assassinate Śākya, returned. There is also the place where Viruḍaka cut off limbs of Śākyan ladies and cremated them. It is said that the rGyal-Po Mya-Ngan-Med (Rājā Aśoka) built stupas to mark all these spots. Near the stūpas, marking the massacre of Śākyan ladies, is the spot where 'Phags-sKyes-Po (Viruḍaka) was swallowed by flames and fell into hell. From here after a journey of eight to nine days in the eastern direction one reaches Kapila Kingdom, the birth place of our sTon-Pa (Śāstā) which was so-called after the Drang-Srong Ser-sKya (Rsi Kapilamuni) who (earlier) resided in that place. At present Kapila city Ser-sKya'i-Grong is known as

Jayasipata/rGyal-Ba'i-gNas. After walking through that place, one comes across the river Rohita (? Rohini) which flows from north-east to south-west, and on whose banks is situated the new town of Shiktranpur. On the other side of the Rohita are situated Ka-Tsi-Li-Vana (Kachilivana) and Balpo rZong (Nepal district), and ranges of Thag-Pa'i-Yul (Rajju Desh). At a short distance from there, there is a township known as Dhonasahre, or Dhonakota. At a distance of some two to three days journey to the west from there, one comes across the city of Kapilati. It is said to be the site of ancient Grong-Khyer Ser-sKya (Kapilavastu); Both Gausans and Thang-Zing's guide book agree on this point. As also mDo-sDe (Sūtras). As stated in several Sūtras, once king gSal-rGyal (Prasenajit) and 'Phags-sKyes-Po (Virudaka) had gone for hunting when their horses took a wrong path and reached Ser-sKya'i-gDzir (Kapila province). Sinner Virudaka/'Phags-sKyes-Po became hostile to the Sakyans and attacked them with a big force. According to the Vinaya Āgama when Virudaka with a big force attacked the Sakyans, some of them escaped into Bal-Yul (Nepal) and some to Gyad-Yul (Malla country). Further the night Byang-Chub Sems-dPa' (Bodhisattva) renounced the world, he went across several kingdoms namely Śākya, Ke'u-Te (?Kenti), Gyad (Mallae), and Mene (Mithila). He then reached the town of Khrom-Pa-Chan of sPong-Byed (Vriju) Kingdom, on the bank of the river Yid-'Ong-IDan (?Anoma/Aumi), at dawn of the day. This is mentioned in the short life story of the De-bDzin'gShegs Pa (Tathāgata), titled 'Khrul Med-sPyod-Pa'i-gTer (Abhānta-Caryā-Nidhi). According to mNgon-Par Byang-Chub-Pa'i-mDo (Abhisambodhi-Sūtra) the distance of this place from Ser-sKya (Kapila) is said to be twelve sPag-Tshad (Yojana).

However, it is said that Ser-sKya (Kapila) is situated some where near mNyan-Yod (Śrāvasti), Bal-Yul (Nepal), Gyad-Yul (Malla), and Mene (Mithila) kingdoms etc. Kapilata of Jayaspata/Jokina Desh seems to be the actual site of Ser-sKya (Kapila) and according to some Balpo (Nepalese), the old city of Shi-Mangala is the site of Kapila. In the centre part of the ruins of the city are the remains of the palace of king rGyal-Po Zas-gTsang (Suddhodana) with his statue and that of queen bTsun-Mo sGyu-'Phrul Chen-Mo (Mha Māyā) known as Mahā Jokini (Yogini). Now a days, the Acharyas hold different opinions as to why this statue is called Mahā Jokini. According to some, Lha-Mo sGyu-'Phrul Chen-Mo (Mahā Māyā Devī) is rDo-rJe dByings-Kyi-dBang-Phyug-Ma (Vajradhātveśvarī) and she is the same as the spiritual sense of rDo-rJe Phag-Mo (Vajravārāhī). (I) think this might have been the reason for calling her by this name. The place where the sTon-Pa (Śāstā) had entered the womb of his mother is near by. And there is also the image of the same (Śāstā). To the north-east is the place where the sage Drang-Srong Nyon-Mongs-Med (Rṣi Niskleśa/Kaladevala) observed the physical signs of rGyal-Bu (the Prince). It has been marked by stupas built

later by Aśoka. At the four gates of the city, there are the statues of gDzon-Nu Don-Grub (Kumāra Siddhārtha). There are also four statues representing sKye (birth), rGa (old age), Na (disease) and 'Chi (death) and one of dGe-sByong (Śrāmaṇa). In the north-west of the city where Virudaka massacred the Śākya, there are hundreds and thousands of stūpas containing their remains. Such is the report of Thang-Zing and these have been seen by certain Ācharyas even in those days. Outside the southern gate of the city is place where Prince Siddhārtha had competed with other Śākyan Princes in demonstrating his strength and skilfulness. The place is also marked by stūpas. Close to it is Glang-Po-'Che'i-gShong (elephant valley) and near by is the place where the statues of rGyal-Po Don-Grub (Rājā Siddhārtha), Grags-'Zhin-Ma (Yaśodharā), and Sras-sGra-gChan Zhin (Prince Rāhula) are said to have existed. This is recorded in dKar—Chhag (Catalogue) and these were seen by the wandering mandicantē Lālagiri. It is said that when worship is offered to these images, the blind recover their eye sight, those who are sick become healthy, and women get sons. It is said that those who reside near these two statues of Yab (i.e. Siddhārtha) and Yum (i.e. Yaśodharā) and also those who come from outside observe some festival every eight days.

At a short distance from here in the southern part of the city, there is a standing statue of Lha-Chen-Po (Mahādeva) known as gNod-sByin Sha-Kya-'Phel (Yakṣa-Sākya-Vardhana), made of stone, in a big temple. It has been seen by the people who visit the place. To the south of this place, there is a well (called) mDa'-Chu'i-Khrom-Pa (well of water of arrow) at a distance of a Tshalam¹¹. It is believed that one becomes free from ailments by taking bath in its waters. Now a day the people of India say that the well was the result of shooting an arrow by Shing-rTa-bChu-Pa'i-Bu (Dāśarathi). It is said by Thang-Zing that by travelling in the southern direction from here about one half days journey one reaches the birth place of the two previous Buddhas :-¹² Khor-Ba-'Jig (Krakutsunda) and gSer-Thub (Kanakamuni). From the above place, Bhagavān Pasavuti, (?Bhagavān paśupati) after making another one half day's journey towards north-east one reaches Lumbini garden. At a little distance from there towards north is the place where the mother of Prince Siddhārtha took hold of the branch of Aśoka Tree with her right hand. Close to that are two ponds with hot and cold water which emerged at that time and also there is an oily looking water known as oil-spring. According to Thang-Zing there are other spots in the neighbourhood where Prince Siddhārtha carried on his activities, from that place to the north-east, there is a big monastery, in a solitary area, which is called Saha-Para Byakar by the Nepalese. After going through this place and travelling a little more than one day's journey, one reaches a small kingdom, which may be Kaputa kingdom. According to the Āchāryas, (as here indulgence in sex is sin) and before copulation comes to an end the house would catch fire. And this is the result of

a curse cast by one Drang-Srong (Sage) in ancient times. In that area there are some gTsub-gLag-Khang (Vihāra) and old villages. It is said that there are some Hindu ascetics here and there and not many of other population.

To the north-east of this kingdom, there is a thick forest known as Jatrevana passing through which one reaches the Malla kingdom. These days it is called Bala Deśa /sTobs-lDan Gyi-Yul/Gyad-Gyi-Yul. Kajilivana is situated to the north-west of this kingdom, and near by is the river gSer-lDan, now a days known as Jatre-Nadi. (On the bank of the river) there is the garden of Sal Trees where the Śāstā attained Nirvāna. The Śāstā Mahāparinirvāna on a bed under eight tall Sal trees which bent down, on their own, over his seat and became oily and brown in colour. According to Thang-Zing, there is a image of the Sasta in the Nirvāna posture in a Mahāvihāra and the Acharyas had not seen it. In other matters the Āchāryas generally agree with Thang-Zing. At a short distance from there towards east is the place where the body of Śāstā was cremated. Now a days the people of India call it Krayata (Angara Chaity). According to Thang-Zing, within the radius of one rGyang-Grags (Yojana) one could see yellowish and blakish earth, and devotees could easily find relics of the size of mustard seed there. The people of India believed that it is the place where the son of Shing-rTa bChu-Pa'i-Bu (Dāśarathi) was cremated. And also this is the place where our Sasta, at the time of practising Slob-Pa Lam-Gyi gNas-sKabs-Su (?Caryā-mārga-avasthāna), was born as a pheasant who saved a group of pheasants from the danger of fire, and while he was born as a deer, protected a group of deer from fire. This was also the place where the relics were divided after Nirvāna of our sTon-Pa (Śāstā). This is also the place where the wandering ascetic Rab-bZang (Subhadra) was subdued and where Lag-Na rDo-rJe (Vajrapāni) screamed after sTon-Pa (Śāstā)'s Mahāparinirvāna. Later the devotees constructed stūpas which are still in existence. When Vajrapāni screamed and rolled about on the ground, it turned into an uneven valley. Some Acharyas have seen it but they say it is the result of the rolling about of Hanumantha.

Bal-Yul (Nepal) is situated to the north of both Ser-sKya (Kapila) and Gyad (Malla) kingdoms. Close to it is Mukhampur/ Khayi Grong-Khyer, with a big fort known as Mu-Phri-Tra-Vara/Dzal-Ngo'i-'Dun-Sā. It has been related by Lakshmi Nara Singha that one could see from there rDo-rJe-gDan (Vajrāsana), Vārānasi, Kapila, and Gyad (Malla) kingdoms. From there to the east is Videha¹². There is an old city known as Janākapur in Videha. In this place are said to be the mDa' (arrow) and gDzu (bow) of rGyal-Po Ra-Ma-Na (Rājā Ramaṇa) as well as the fifteen fathom long rib of sage Drang-Srong Dzo-'thung (Ṛṣi Dadhica) who lived during the Tshe-Lo-dPag-Med (Measureless) era. Besides these, there are so many other wonderful things to be seen. It is heard from Gausans that when the kingdom was being ruled by

one Durgasahe, who was well-up in the art of war, there was war with Gorkha king of Nepal because of which the big war started from 14th Rab-Byung¹³ water-bird year upto fire-fat year between the Ferenki (English) and the Gorkhas. If one starts from the boundary of the king's palace in that country and walks for about two to three days to the east, one reaches again the old path which one had travelled already. There are two ways leading to Bal-Yul (Nepal), one already mentioned and the other a short-cut through Namkhu.

While refering to the mJad-Pa bChu-gNyis (twelve principal events in the life of the Śāstā), and in short, I have tried to give an account for the pilgrims' sake with the help of the guide book of Thang-Zing, the Sutras and discussion (I) had with Gausans.

NOTES

- 1 Bulletin of Tibetology 1984 : 2.
- 2 The famous Licchavi king of Vāisāli.
- 3 i. bSil-Ba (coolness); ii. Dzim-Pa (sweetness); iii. Yang-Pa (lightness/digestive); iv. 'Jam-Pa (softness); v. Dvangs-Pa (clearness); vi. Dri-Ma Med-Pa (freedom from impurities); vii. 'Thung-Na lTo-Bar 'Jam-Pa (soothing to the stomach); and viii. mGrin-Pa Sang-Dang bDe-Bao (cleansing and decongesting the throat).
- 4 Four-fold assembly: Bhikṣu, Bhikṣuṇī, Upāsaka and Upāsikā.
- 5 May be Bhārata (i.e. Mahābhārata).
- 6 i. 'Khor-Ba-'jig (Krakutsunda); ii. gSer-Thub (Kanakamuni); and iii. 'Od-Srungs (Kāśyapa).
- 7 Sahasrārāma, one thousand Vihāras.
- 8 Tshalam is interval period between breakfast and lunch.
- 9 i. sDug-bsNgal (Dukkha); ii. Kun-'Byung (Samudaya); iii. 'Gog-Pa (Nirodha); and iv. Lam (Mārga).
- 10 Vide P. No. 29
- 11 Vide P. No. 31
- 12 Mithila was capital of Videha.
- 13 A circle of sixty years called Rab-Byung in Tibetan.