



NAVA NALANDA MAHAVIHARA

(Nalanda University)

(An autonomous institute under Ministry of Culture, Government of India)

NALANDA- 803111 (BIHAR) INDIA

PROSPECTUS



Price:

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Sl. No.:



Ven. Bhikkhu Jagadish Kashyap
(1908-1976)
Founder Director of Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda

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PROSPECTUS OF NAVA NALANDA MAHAVIHARA, NALANDA

Introduction

Nalanda Mahavihara was one of the great seats of Buddhist education for nearly seven hundred years between the 5th to 12th century A.D. The word 'Nalanda' is derived from 'nāla' meaning a stem of a lotus flower. It is a symbol of generating knowledge or wisdom and 'dā' means to give. Nalanda, therefore, means place to bestow knowledge or wisdom. It is said that 10,000 students and 1500 ācāryas resided in Nalanda at one time.

During the lifetime of the Buddha Nalanda was an important centre of religious activity. The Buddha's chief disciples, Sāriputta and Moggallāna, came from the nearby villages of Nālaka and Kulika. The names of several lay followers of the locality also figured prominently in the literary sources.

According to early sources, Nalanda was a 'yojana' away from the outskirts of Rājagriha, the capital of the great Magadhan Empire. The Buddha and his disciples often stayed for a night in the Pāvārika Mango Grove. The Pali literature records that Prince Pāvārika constructed a halting place in the grove, then donated it to the Buddha. The Buddha delivered ten discourses there. On his last journey from Rājagriha to Kushinagar, the Buddha spent one night at Nalanda.

According to Tārānātha, the Tibetan historian, king Aśoka, in the third century BC, constructed a stūpa at the birthplace of Sāriputta in the village of Nalanda. On his way to Rājagriha, the Chinese traveller Fa-hien worshipped at the stūpa, but he made no reference to Nalanda or the Mahavihara, perhaps because the Buddhist monastic establishment at that time had not taken a viable shape.

Establishment of the Nalanda Mahavihara

According to Xuanzang the royal founder of Nalanda Mahavihara was Śākṛāditya known otherwise as Kumar Gupta I (415-455 AD). He laid the foundation of the Nalanda Mahavihara by establishing a monastery. With the establishment of the monastery by Kumar Gupta, the site of Nalanda became important to the Gupta Emperors. Therefore, the construction was followed by successive Gupta Emperors.

The Nalanda Mahavihara was an example of a common phenomenon found in Buddhist history. Resting places in the form of ārāma, or vihāra, were originally intended to provide a night's stay for wandering monks, gradually those turned into places of permanent residences for them. In due course Nalanda turned into a place of spiritual learning and upliftment of education in ancient India for ultimate attainment. For imparting teachings, these places were naturally transformed into prominent centers of higher learning.

The Gupta kings, famous for their love of education, art and culture, bestowed royal patronage on the Mahavihara. During Harsha's reign, the famous Chinese traveller Xuanzang came to Nalanda to study. When the Mahavihara reached the height of its development and was considered a model academic institution with a reputation that spread far and wide in East and South East Asia. Many foreign students and scholars were attracted to Nalanda because of the high quality of teaching. Students came from as far as Korea, Japan, China and Tibet. The ācāryas or teachers were so learned and erudite scholars as they were often invited by Buddhist countries to come and assist in the dissemination of the teachings of the Buddha.

The cultural legacy of Nalanda was finally taken over by the Pāla kings who promoted the Mahavihara for several centuries. Their contributions are preserved in the ruins of the ancient university, most of which dated back to the Pāla period.

Contribution of the Mahavihara

The contribution of Mahavihara in the development of Buddhist education, particularly in the field of philosophy was well recognized. Śīlabhadra, reportedly as the one having mastery over the sutras, instructed Xuanzang in the intricacies of philosophy and the latter, in turn, founded a new Buddhist school in China after his return. Nalanda also specialized in Buddhist Logic. Dingnāga, an ācārya at Nalanda, was the father of Buddhist Logic. Dharmakīrti further developed the subject.

The Mahavihara was also a centre of esoteric Buddhism, and its contribution to the spread of Buddhism abroad, particularly in Tibet forms a golden chapter of its history. Ācārya Śāntaraksita was first invited to Tibet by King Khri-srong-lde-btsan. The king sponsored the construction of the bSam-yes monastery; the first monastery of Tibet, after the model of the Odantapuri Mahavihara and ācārya Śāntaraksita consecrated it. On his recommendation, the Tibetan king also invited ācārya Padmasambhava from the Mahavihara, who converted Tibet to the Tantric form of Buddhism and came to be deified as the Guru (Lama). His contemporary, Kamalaśīla of Nalanda, was also invited to Tibet.

Before they established contact with Tibet and Bhutan, the ācāryas of Nalanda had gone to Central Asia and China. Prabhākaramitra, Vajrabodhi, Amoghavajra and others figure prominently as translators of Buddhist texts. Dharmapāla went from Nalanda to Sumatra at a ripe age and disseminated true Dharma. Other renowned scholars trained at Nalanda were Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva and Asanga.

Nalanda Rediscovered

Due to conflicting forces, Nalanda Mahavihara was gradually deserted and eventually forgotten. The site was eventually reduced to mounds of earth. Francis Buchanan was the first to initiate a survey for the site in January 1812. However, it was Sir Alexander Cunningham who finally identified the complex of ruins of the Mahavihara in 1861-62. In 1870, A. M. Broadly excavated a portion of the site, but systematic excavation work did start until 1916 under Spooner. The work continued for 20 years under several excavators. Shri Hirananda Shastri eventually completed the major portion of the work. The findings are now preserved at the site in Nalanda and the antiquities in the form of inscriptions, icons, terracotta, seals and sculptures are preserved in the Archaeological Site Museum, New Delhi and Indian Museum, Kolkata.

Nava Nalanda Mahavihara

In the early 1950's, in order to revive the lost glory and the heritage of ancient Nalanda Mahavihara, His Excellency Dr. Rājendra Prasad, the first President of the Republic of India, declared that the ancient seat of Buddhist learning at Nalanda would be revived.

At the request of Ven. Bhikkhu Jagadish Kashyap and with the objective of reviving heritage of Nalanda, the Government of Bihar established "Magadh Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Pali and Allied Languages and Buddhist Learning" at Nalanda in 1951. It later came to be known as Nava Nalanda Mahavihara. The inspiration behind the establishment of this institute was to develop a centre of higher studies in Pali and Buddhism along the lines of ancient Nalanda Mahavihara. From the beginning, the institute functioned as a residential institution, with a limited number of Indian and foreign students.

On November 20, 1951, the foundation stone of the first building was laid by His Excellency, Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Engraved upon it are the following words:

"Let the rays of the sun of Nalanda rise from the summit of this rock in order to brighten the vernacular (lokabhasa in Pali) after the passing away of its nights of darkness (period of its obscurity)."

Ven. Bhikkhu Jagadish Kashyap became the Founder-Director of Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, and continued in that capacity until February 1955. One of his major accomplishments was the publication of a critical edition of Pali Tipitaka in Devanagari script in 41 volumes. It was very popular edition.

The first building, designed by well-known artist and architect Padmashri Upendra Maharathi, upon completion, was formally inaugurated by His Excellency Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, then Vice-President of the Republic of India, in March 1956.

In January 1981, the President of India His Excellency Sri Neelam Sanjiv Reddy laid the foundation stone for the International Hostel for scholars and students of the Mahavihara.

The present campus of the Mahavihara is 90 km from the metropolis of Patna, situated on the southern bank of the historical lake, Indrapuskarani. Close to the northern bank lie the ruins of the ancient University of Nalanda.

Teaching and Research

The word education literary means to bring forth from the mind its innate potential for understanding. The urge to learn, to know is a basic human trait as intrinsic to our mind as hunger and thirst to our mind. In today's troubling world however this hunger to learn is often stifled deformed, by moral twist that afflict our society. Hence the present day secular society dictates that institutional education should focus on preparing students only for their careers. As such a major cause of our educational problem lies in the commercialization of education. This approach may be needed in the present

society but alone is not complete. But in our University as per the teachings of Buddhism a middle path is adopted which recognizes that our spiritual aspiration require a healthy body and materially secure society which is integrated with other requirements design to bring the potentialities the human nature to maturity in the way vision by Lord Buddha. Therefore, our education policy is guided by the Buddhist principles, which aims to instill values as much as to impart information. It is directed not merely towards developing social and commercial skill but also towards maturing in the students the seeds of spiritual nobility.

The University emphasizes on 'making of man' as was the main theme of education in the ancient Nalanda Mahavihara. It is in the same tradition the University impart education clubbing 'Pariyatti' the theory, 'Patipatti' the practice leading to 'Pativedana' the experience as the formula for attaining knowledge. Based on this formula the teaching and research activities are carried out based on the value emphasizes by the teachings of the Buddha.

Publications

Publication is an important tool for projecting research and teaching material and is integral part of an educational institution. The Mahavihara undertakes long and short term projects. Short-term projects include doctoral student research, and publication of research volumes and monographs by staff members and research scholars. Long-term projects include publication of Pali texts not yet published in Devanagari script, Hindi translation of the Pali Tipitaka, cataloguing, critical decipherment and publication of manuscripts. The compilation work of a Pali-Hindi Dictionary first of its kind in India has started and is in progress.

The Mahavihara published the entire Pali Tipitaka with the publication of Pali-Hindi Dictionary vol. I part I that was released by H. E. the President of India on 2nd May, 2007. And some commentaries in Devanagari script for the first time in the early 1950's. Eight Nava Nalanda Mahavihara Research Volumes have been further published. A section of other publications related to Buddhism have been published as well. The scope of research and publications include Pali literature, Sanskrit Buddhist texts, Tibetan texts, Buddhist philosophy, cultural, social and religious history of Buddhist countries of South-east Asia and other topics related to Buddhism.

Library

The library is housed in a two-story building known as the Library Building, which contains sixteen research cubicles with two large rooms on either side. Presently, the library includes over 52,500 books, important journals and a rare manuscript collection. To develop the library donations and purchases were made from the Late Rash Bihari Mukherjee, from Hoogly, West Bengal; Prof. (Dr.) Nalinaksh Datta, former University Professor and Head of the Department of Pali, University of Calcutta; and Prof. (Dr.) K. Venkat Ramanan, Director, Cheena Bhavan, Santiniketan, West Bengal.

Books comprising the Wheaton Loan Collection given by the U.S. Government are also an important donation, consisting of valuable dictionaries, encyclopaedias, journals and other reference books, a good collection of books on modern thought, including books on psychology, metaphysics, ethics, logic, sociology, and cultural anthropology.

Myanmar (Burma), Sri Lanka, Thailand and Kampuchia (Cambodia), Japan and South Korea donated complete sets of the Tipitaka published in their respective scripts, and other miscellaneous works to the Mahavihara. A complete set of the Chinese Tripitaka and other miscellaneous works presented by the Peoples' Republic of China, a complete set of Kanjur and Tanjur donated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, a complete set of the Tibetan Tripitaka (Peking edition) with its catalogue, Derge and Lhasa editions of Kanjur and Derge as well as s-Nar-thang editions of Tanjur are also invaluable treasures in the library of the Mahavihara. Bearing in mind the current trends in research, the library of the Mahavihara subscribes to research journals and periodicals related to Indology and Buddhist learning.

The Mahavihara also houses a collection of Manuscripts. Currently, planning is going on to catalogue these manuscripts and rare book collection. The process of computerization of the Library has already started and is in progress. Adequate facilities for library work are available.

Xuanzang Memorial Hall

The great Chinese traveler and monk scholar, Ven. Xuanzang, was a student at Nalanda and subsequently became the teacher of the ancient Nalanda Mahavihara. He gave a vivid geographical and historical account

about the life of Nalanda Mahavihara, which was a great centre of learning in the 7th century AD.

During a visit to China in the 1950's, Ven. Kashyapji had the opportunity to meet the Premier Zhou-en-lai with whom he discussed the possibility of the Chinese Government giving some of the part of body relics of Ven. Xuanzang, said to have been carefully preserved in Buddhist shrines in China for over 13 centuries to Nava Nalanda Mahavihara. On January 12, 1957, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, on behalf of the Government of India, received the relics of Ven. Xuanzang from His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama in a function at the Mahavihara, along with a cheque for the construction of a Xuanzang memorial at Nalanda. The relics, which will be enshrined in this hall, are currently kept in the Patna Museum, in Patna. The dream of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru to develop Xuazang Memorial Hall as a symbol of Indo-Chinese friendship has materlized. On 12th February, 2007 the Xuanzang Memorial Hall was inaugurated with the grand success and opened for public.

Getting to Nalanda

Nalanda is 90 kms from Patna by road. Private and State Transport buses leave for Biharsharif (district headquarter) every ten minutes and pass through Nalanda on the way to Gaya. Tempos and taxis are available from Biharsharif. There is one direct train from New Delhi to Nalanda, 2391/ 2392 Shramjeevi Express. Many other trains comes to Patna from New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and is also connected by air. The Mahavihara is 3 kms from the Nalanda Railway Station.

Joint Academic Collaboration

Nava Nalanda Mahavihara has signed Academic Collaboration with Pune University, Pune and K.J. Somaiya Center for Buddhist Studies, Vidya Vihar, University of Mumbai.

An academic collaboration was signed with Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalaksetra Society, Guwahati; Bahujana Hitaya Educational Trust, Tripura.

Programmes of the Courses of Study

1. Certificate Course in Pali
2. Diploma Course in Pali

3. B.A. Hons. Course in Pali
4. M.A. Course in Pali
5. M.A. Course in Philosophy
6. M.A. Course in Ancient History, Culture and Archaeology
7. M.A. Course in Buddhist Studies
8. Diploma Course in Sanskrit
9. M.A. Course in Sanskrit
10. Diploma Course in Hindi
11. M.A. Course in Hindi
12. Diploma Course in English
13. M.A. Course in English
14. Preparatory Course in Tibetan Studies
15. Diploma Course in Tibetan Studies
16. B.A. Hons. Course in Tibetan Studies
17. M.A. Course in Tibetan Studies

Eligibility for Admission

Admission is eligible for all provided a person fulfills the prescribed rules of admission. Preference will be given to the Buddhist recluses according to the Motto of the founder Director Late Ven. Jagadish Kashyap laid down in the aims and objective of the Mahavihara.

1. **Certificate Course in Pali:** - A Buddhist monk student who has passed 10th class examination or its equivalent examination from a recognized Board or Council in India or abroad is eligible for admission to this course for a period of one year. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara conducts a proficiency test for admission in this course.
2. **Diploma Course in Pali:** - A Buddhist monk having passed certificate course in Pali of Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda is eligible for admission to this course for a period of two years. University conducts an examination and for award of certificates of Diploma in Pali.
3. **B.A. Hons. Course in Pali:-** A candidate possessing the Pali Diploma of the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda or Pali Diploma of any recognized Board of India and abroad or I. A., I. Sc., I. Com. or UpaShastri in Pali of any Indian University or any recognized foreign University or possessing the degree of Pandit Parikkha in Pali of Sri Lanka or Pathamagyi examination in Pali of Myanmar or Mahapatyatti Uttama Vijja of Buddhika Vidyalaya of Combodia or Visaradal (Pali) of Bangiya Sanskrit Parshad, Government of West Bengal or Upadhi of Assam Sanskrit Association or Upadhi of Bangladesh in any one of the Pali Tipitakas or other equivalent oriental degree of a recognized Board/ Association/ Council/ University is eligible for admission in this course. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara conducts a proficiency test for admission in this course.
4. **M.A. Course in Pali:** - Graduates (B.A. Hons.) of an Indian University or abroad in Pali are eligible for admission in M.A. Pali course. The students of other disciplines may also apply for admission. Preference will be given to the holding of B. A. Honours in the concerned subject. The course is of two years duration and examination conducts in semester system. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara conducts a proficiency test for admission in this course.
5. **M.A. Course in Philosophy:** - The course is open for to all such applicants who have obtained B.A. Hons. Or equivalent degree in Philosophy of an Indian University or any recognized foreign University. The students of other disciplines may also apply for admission. Preference will be given to the

holding of B. A. Honours in the concerned subject. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara conducts a proficiency test for admission in this course.

6. **M.A. Course in Ancient History Culture and Archaeology:** - The course is open to all such applicants who have obtained B.A. Hons. Or equivalent degree in Ancient History Culture and Archaeology of any Indian University or any recognized foreign University. The students of other disciplines may also apply for admission. Preference will be given to the holding of B. A. Honours in the concerned subject. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara conducts a proficiency test for admission in this course.
7. **M.A. Course in Buddhist Studies:** - The course is open to all such applicants who have obtained B.A. Hons. Or any equivalent degree in Buddhist Studies from any Indian University or any recognized foreign University. The students of other disciplines may also apply for admission. Preference will be given to the holding of B. A. Honours in the concerned subject. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara conducts a proficiency test for admission in this course.
8. **M.A. Course in Sanskrit:** - The course is open to all such applicants who have obtained B.A. Hons. Or equivalent degree in Sanskrit from any Indian University or any recognized foreign University. The students of other disciplines may also apply for admission. Preference will be given to the holding of B. A. Honours in the concerned subject. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara conducts a proficiency test for admission in this course.
9. **M.A. Course in Hindi:** - The course is open to all such applicants who have obtained B.A. Hons. Or equivalent degree in Hindi from any Indian University or any recognized foreign University. The students of other disciplines may also apply for admission. Preference will be given to the holding of B. A. Honours in the concerned subject. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara conducts a proficiency test for admission in this course.
10. **M.A. Course in English:** - The course is open to all such applicants who have obtained B.A. Hons. Or equivalent degree in English from any Indian University or any recognized foreign University. The students of other

disciplines may also apply for admission. Preference will be given to the holding of B. A. Honours in the concerned subject. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara conducts a proficiency test for admission in this course.

11. Preparatory Course in Tibetan Studies: - A student who has passed B. A. or any other equivalent ecclesiastical examination from a recognized University of India or abroad is eligible for admission to this course for a period of one year. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara conducts a proficiency test for admission in this course.

12. M.A. Course in Tibetan Studies: - The course is open to all such applicants who have obtained B.A. Hons. Or equivalent degree in Tibetan Studies from any Indian University or any recognized foreign University or Preparatory Course of Nava Nalanda Mahavihara. Mahavihara conducts a proficiency test for admission in this course.

13. M. A. Course in Buddhism and Languages: - The course is open to all applicants who have obtained B. A. Hons. Or equivalent degree in General Linguistics, Comparative Linguistics, Sanskrit Languages (Sanskrit), Pali, Prakrit (Apabhramasha) and Asian Languages (Chinese, Japanese, especially) from any recognized Indian or foreign University. The students of other disciplines may also apply for admission for the two years session in four semesters. Preference will be given to the holdings of B.A. Honours in the concerned subject. However, a candidate who has passed B.A. or equivalent examination from a recognized university of India or abroad is eligible to admission with the Preparatory Course on the subject for a period of one year.

Research Programme

A candidate must possess at least second class M. A. degree with 55% marks of an Indian University or equivalent degree of any recognized foreign University in concerned subject, having passed JRF/ NET/ SLET and RET of any University. A synopsis of the research topic should be attached with the application form. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda conducts a written test for admission in this course.

Admission/Proficiency Test

Eligible applicants for admission, both Indian and foreign, have to qualify in the Admission/Proficiency Test conducted by the Mahavihara for admission in Certificate, Diploma, B. A. Hons., M.A., Ph.D. and other courses.

Enrolment of Students

A student must submit all require documents at the designated time to the office of the Registrar and get himself/herself enroll in the University.

Academic Calendar

During the year normal working hours of the Mahavihara was between 10.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. and on Saturday from 8.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. Classes are of one hour duration. The teaching departments had Summer Vacation from 17th May to 30 June and Puja vacation from 13th October to 22nd October and winter vacation from 25th December to 31st December. The administrative department avails the prescribed holidays as approved by the Government of India.

Educational Tour

Every year the Mahavihara arranges educational tours to place of historical importance.

Hostels and Boarding

The University has two Hostels for monk students. International Hostel accommodating under graduates students and Silabhadra Aarama accommodating Postgraduate students and Research scholars. Hostel accommodation is available to limited number of monk students. Preference is given to foreign students and to Indian students belonging to far off places. A Medical Officer attends the Hostels regularly and a stock of medicines for emergent use is always kept in reserve at the JEEVAK HOSPITAL situated in the hostel campus. The hostel has a set of kitchens and dining rooms. Electricity, drinking water and other facilities are also available.

The authorities of the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara would look after the welfare of the residence students provided no breach of Hostels conduct rules as prescribed by the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara be not found.

Merit Scholarships

Scholarships are available to deserving meritorious students of the University. Scholarship holders should abide by the Hostel Rules Conduct framed by the University from time to time.

Co curricular Activities

Sports- Both indoor and outdoor sports are integral part of the University curriculum. Facilities are available for the both indoor and outdoor sports in the campus.

Water sports – The University has a boat club where facilities for the water sports are available from October to March every year.

Elocution and Debate- As per the tradition of ancient Nalanda Mahavihara emphasize and encouragement is given to the students to develop the ability of oration regular elocution contest are organized to build up the quality of oratory among the students.

Important Days and Festivals

1. Independence Day- 26th January every year
2. Xuanzang Memorial Day- 12th February every year
3. Bhikkhu Jaagadish Kashyap Ceremony- 2nd May every year
4. Buddha Purnima-
5. Independence Day- 15th August every year
6. Pavarana Day-
7. Patthana Sutra Patha-
8. Teachers Day- 5th September every year
9. Hindi Divas- 14th September every year
10. Gandhi Jayanti- 2nd October every year
11. Kathina Civara Daana-
12. Mahavihara Foundation Day- 20th November every year



Xuanzang Memorial Hall, Nalanda