

Chapter 5

The Remains of Cities and Monastic Establishments

Here in this chapter, the researcher will make modest attempt to throw light on the archaeological remains which have been lying scattered in the concerned field. The information and analysis in this chapter are outcome of surface explorations and subsequent examinations of the materials collected from the surface collections of the archaeological sites of the study area. This chapter dealt with such kind of archaeological sites, which are lying completely unprotected and have become an open field for the antique smugglers. Some educated personalities of this region have played an important role in protection of such archaeological remains. The archaeological sites of this part of land have been destroying not by these morons only, the growing population, lack of awareness of the people about the historical values of the artefacts and encroachment in the archaeological sites are also responsible. Here an example of ignorance can be relevant. When a sculpture is recovered from a place, the busybodies of that place usually arrive and take possession of the antique to collect donations from the godly rural people. Because of this condition, the district authorities fail to take the sculpture in their custody. After some days, when the enthusiasm and donation of the godly people become wane, the sculpture remains unprotected and taking advantage of the situation, the antique hunters become active. In this chapter, mention of such sites or antiquities, which have already been discussed by the previous scholars, would be avoided so far as possible. The archaeological patterns and the central place theory of the archaeological sites have already been discussed in previous chapter. Almost all the sites are situated on the banks of the river courses of the region.

Aminhat

Aminhat (25°16'48.7"N 88°07'08.2"E) is situated in the vicinity of Amati. The entire village stands on the debris of an ancient urban site. This site is full of archaeological fragments. A big water tank, called *Chhaghāti* measuring 330m x 670m, is the most important place in this site. The water tank has six pucca bathing *ghats* on its four sides (two each in northern and southern sides). (Picture 23) Other important remains are:

1. A modern temple is there, which house many mutilated parts of sculptures. The modern temple stands on the remains of an old building structure. (Picture 24)
2. First discovery in this list by the present researcher is a broken pilaster of a giant sculpture, which is densely carved with floral designs and human figures. Possibly, it is the right portion of the sculpture. The pilaster rises on a square base which shows in the middle of each sides with tiered decorative motifs surmounted by lotus rosettes and leaves. More than half of the shaft is octagonal, the rest being cylindrical. The two sections are demarcated by a projecting octagonal part with a sharp edge. At the base of the pilaster, the shaft is decorated with abstract floral motifs. Above this portion, five female figures are placed. Two of them are playing drums and rests are holding *chāmara* and flowers for offering. These two portions of the shaft are divided with by a circular *āmalaka* design. The portion above is embellished with festoons and bells hanging from a chain. At the bottom of this portion, five abstract floral designs take place. Above this portion, the abstract design of flowers is going around the shaft. Near the top section of the shaft, we find a figure on an abacus of octagonal shape supported by three *āmalaka* designs. The abacus has geometrical designs of triangles carved in relief with their apex pointing downwards. At the top, a composite bulky female figure takes place. The attributes in her hands are not recognizable. A full-blown lotus is placed at the left side of the figure.

The bevelled left side of the pilaster is rich in carvings. We can visualise the entire lost sculpture by analysing a miniature temple design placed at the extreme bottom of the fragment. The sculpture is of a trefoil arch supported by two monolithic pillars and surmounted by a *śikhara* with *āmalaka* at the top. In the middle of the temple, an image of female divine figure takes place, which carries a *chāmara* in her right hand and the left hand rests on her waist. The image is standing in *ābhanga mudra* on a full-blown lotus. The image is densely ornamented. She wears a cloth for her lower part only, carries a scarf, which is hanging from the elbows. Above this, a horse rider is pulling up the rein of a horse, which is placed on a crouching elephant. Near the top, a

kneeling male figure is placed in *anjali mudra* facing the principal image.
(Picture 25)

3. Next finding is a Viṣṇupaṭṭa, (Picture 26) which bears an image of Viṣṇu on the one side and his ten incarnations on the other. However, it is a damaged specimen; the principal figure is in good state of preservation. The slab is carved in low relief on both sides with various figures. The obverse seems to be divided into nine compartments. The arrangement of the figures in the compartments is shown below-

(mostly damaged) Vidyādhara (?)	(partly damaged) Image of Śri (?) sitting on a <i>padmāsana</i> , two elephants (one is visible) are pouring water over her from either side.	Lost
(partly damaged) Image of Laxmi (?) standing on a <i>padmāsana</i> with lotus in her left hand.	Image of Viṣṇu, sitting with cross legs on a <i>padmāsana</i> holding <i>cakra</i> , <i>gadā</i> , <i>padma</i> and <i>saṁkha</i> (clockwise).	Lost
Lost	Lost	Lost

Diagram 5: Viṣṇupaṭṭa, obverse

The reverse contains a thick circle with a lotus in low relief within it. On each petal, there is an incarnation of Viṣṇu. Only four incarnations can be visible properly and two partially. The arrangement is clockwise 1. Matsya (partly visible), 2-5 are missing, 6. Trivikrama (?) with mace, 7. Rāma with bow and arrow, 8. Balarāma with plough, 9. Buddha with lotus and 10. Kalki on horseback.

Joyhat (25°17'11.5"N 88°06'46.8"E)

Joyhat is situated at the east of Amati and on the confluence of the rivers Mahananda and Suin (সুই).¹ The site was definitely a Buddhist site of the Pāla-Sena period. The findings are

1. Two votive *stūpas* along with a Nandi house in a modern temple near the confluence of the rivers. First votive *stūpa* is of wide-shaped. The dome (*aṇḍa*) is placed on a base of single inverted lotus shaped pedestal. The dome is not hemispherical, rather of flat top design and divided into three sections by two round circles. Another circle at the bottom from where four geometrical designs of triangles, carved in four sides with their apex, running from top to bottom of the dome by piercing the circles. The dome is perforated and placed on a monolithic octagonal column, which holds the abacus and *chhatra* at the top. The abacus has eight conical points in eight directions. (*pūrva, paścim, uttar, dakṣin, isāna, agni, nirṛti*) The *chhatrābali* is like a *āmalaka* design with rounded top. (Picture 27)
2. Second votive *stūpa* has vigintuple four-layered pedestal. The dome (*aṇḍa*) is missing but the monolithic pillar is there, which ends with a round *chhatrābali*. (Picture 28)
3. Third votive *stūpa* is discovered from a house nearby. It has double pedestal of vigintuple four layered tapering based. The dome has four niches on cardinal sides containing figures of Buddha seated in different *mudrās*. The *hārmika* and *chhatrāvalīs* as same as v.1. (Picture 29) some fragments (*chhatrāvalī*, pedestal etc.) of votive *stūpa* has also been recovered from this site. (Picture 30)

Jot Narattam (25°18'47.3"N 88°08'07.7"E)

Jot Narattam is another archaeological site situated in the north of Amati. It has good number of mounds, which contain brick and stones. A heap of mutilated sculptures has been found from this site. (Picture 31) Saraswatī holding a *bīṇā* (harp), some *Vidyādhara*s, *kr̥ttimukha*, a male god possibly Viṣṇu, because it still have the lotus in his left upper hand and *kiriṭmukuta* on his head, which is a typical feature of Viṣṇu iconography. (Picture 32) The eyes are closed in deep meditation and an

aesthetic smile of his face clearly indicates the development of Bengal Art of that time.

Kotbāri (25°18'30.2"N 88°08'14.4"E)

Legend has it; Kotbāri is the site of the palace of Rāmapāla, the great Pāla ruler. The mound of this village is covered with dense forest, but big brick built walls are still visible. A round piece of stone, possibly a part of a Votive *stūpa* has been recovered from here. The round shaped piece of stone has four niches with four Buddha images, seated on full-blown double petalled lotuses. (Picture 33)

Jagdala (25°17'15.5"N 88°08'27.4"E)

This site of the Amati range inspires one moot question of the history of Bengal, i.e. identification of the present location of the Jagaddala Monastery. Here an attempt should be made to find out the answer of such type of hypotheses of the history of Bengal. The present study is based to a great extent on findings from the several sites and remains of the villages named as Jagaddala in undivided northern Bengal.

However, before setting out on this journey it is worth taking a brief description of Jagaddala Monastery and its glory. Haraprasad Sastri in his presidential address of the *Bangiya Sahitya Sammelana* in 1321 BS referred to the Jagaddala Monastery and to Bibhutichandra, a celebrated scholar of that Monastery, as one of the twenty resplendence of ancient Bengal. As Nalanda *Mahāvihāra* is in Magadha, *Kanishka Vihāra* in Peshwar, *Dipadattam Vihāra* in Colombo, so is Jagaddala *Mahāvihāra* in Bengal. In a lamenting tone, he mentioned our deficiency of knowledge about the location of this Buddhist University. Ancient relics are being brought to light through archaeological excavations in different parts of India but not an inch of earth was dug to identify the location of this great university of Bengal. For this Sastri expressed his deep sorrow. Since then about a century is elapse, but no attempt from any corner has so far been taken for this. (Sarkar, 2009, pp. 16-24) Among the five universities of the Pāla period, Jagaddala *Mahāvihāra* was a prestigious and glorious monastery during that time. We know the present locations of other monasteries like Vikramaśilā, Nālandā, Somapura and Nandadirghi. However, the location of Jagaddala University has not yet been identified. Tibetan sources reflect that all of the monasteries formed a network; all of them were under state

supervision and there existed a system of co-ordination among them. Towards the end of the Pāla rule the fame of Jagaddala Monastery as a seat of learning spread throughout the Buddhist world. Many Buddhist luminaries from all over India came here as teachers and thousands of students from various parts of the country and abroad thronged here to learn the Buddhist scriptures. Some of the gems of Jagaddala Mahavihara were Ācārya Bibhūticandra, Dānaśilā, Moksakaragupta, Dharmakara, Abhayākaragupta etc. Moksakaragupta was the high priest of this monastery. (Vidyabhusana, 1921, p. 346) Sakya Śrībhadrā, a learned monk from Kashmir, came to Magadha in 1202 CE and visited all the Buddhist centres of learning. When he found that both Odantapuri and Vikramasila had been destroyed by the Muslims, he proceeded to Jagaddala, which was still in existence, where he stayed for three years and found many pupils, prominent among them being Dānaśilā and Vibutichandra. The learned monk Subhakaragupta accepted him as his pupil. (Cordier, 1914, p. 293) After the devastation of Odantapuri and Vikramaśilā Mahāvihāra by the Muslim invaders, many Buddhist scholars like Sākya Śrībhadrā and his disciple took asylum at the Jagaddala Monastery.

Jagaddala Monastery had a close connection with Tibet and for this reason; much of the translation from Sanskrit to Tibetan language was done in Jagaddala Monastery. Some of the great literary works of this great monastery is Bibhutichandra's five books on Buddhist scripture and their translation to Tibetan language. Dānaśilā translated sixty books, Mokshakaragupta's wrote *Tarkabhāṣa*, which was translated by Sthīramatī into Tibetan language. Subhakaragupta's *Siddhika Viratantraṭīkā*, Abhayakaragupta's commentary on *Aṣṭa-sāhasrikā Pajñāpāramitā* and Vidyakara's *Subhāṣitaratnakosa* are worth mentioning.² The Muslim invaders destroyed this great centre of learning of Eastern India approximately by 1210 CE. The invasion of Muhammad Bakhtyar gave a severe blow to Buddhism but it could not sweep away that religion altogether. Some of the Buddhist scholars and their followers were bound to flee from this monastery too with their lives and books to keep Buddhism alive. Sastri quotes (1897, p. 27) 'this explains the discovery in Nepal of a number of Buddhist manuscripts of the 12th and 13th centuries, written in proto-Bengali script that was then prevalent both in Bengal and Magadha. Buddhism became very popular there, having lost its hold on Bengal.'

The most valuable and authentic description about Jagaddala Monastery we find from the *Rāmacaritam* of Sandhyākarnandi, the court poet of Rāmapāla, in the 7th *sloka* of the third chapter of this book the description of Jagaddala Mahavihara.

মন্দাগাং স্থিতিমুঢ়াং জগ-দল- মহাবিহার-চিত-রাগাম।

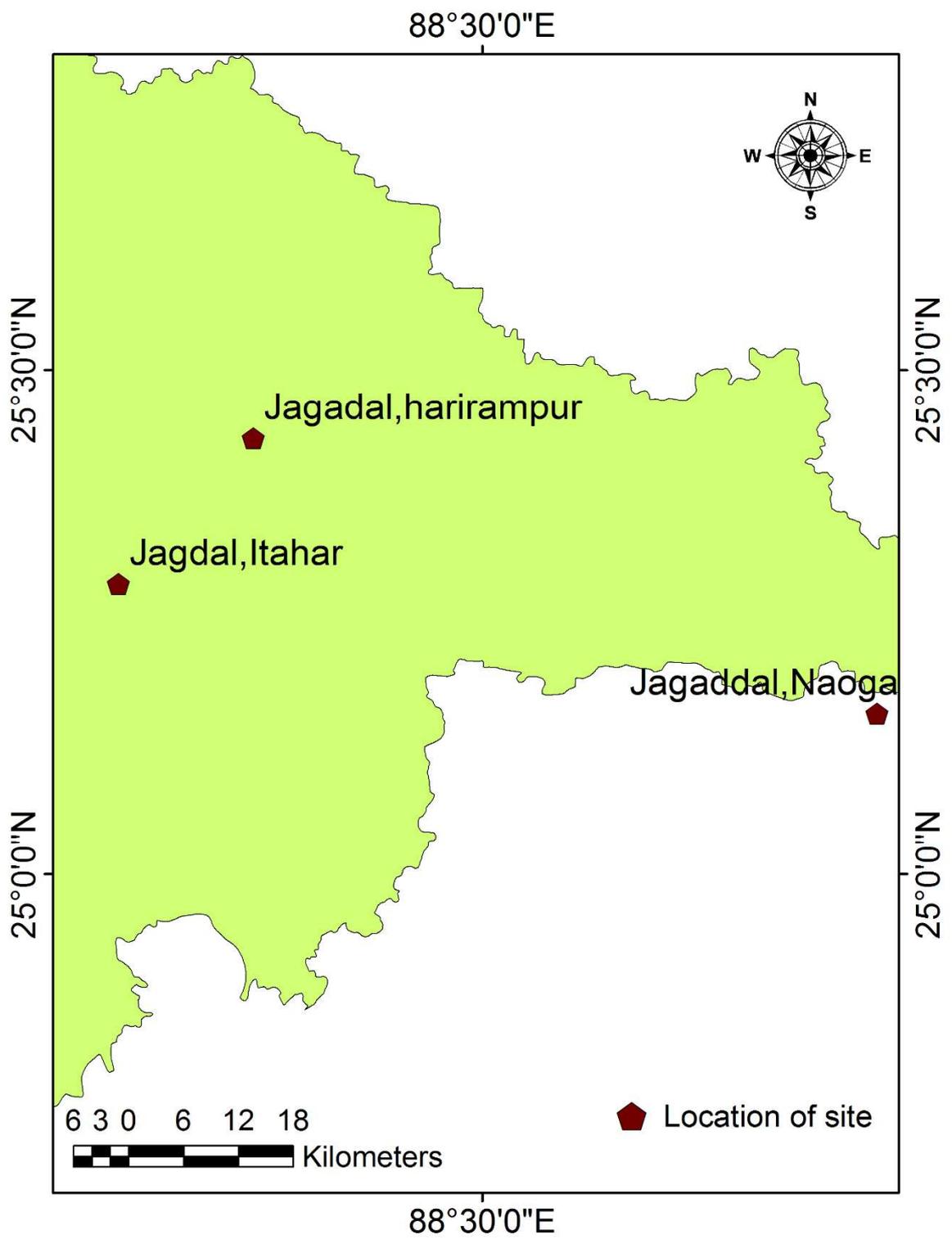
দধতীং লোকেশ-মপিমহত্তা-রোদি-তোরু-মহিমানম।। (III, 7)

‘(Varendri) – which had elephants of the Mandra type imported (into its forest) – where in the great monastery at Jagaddala kindly love for all was found accumulated – which country bore (in its heart) the image of (Bodhisattva) Lokeśa – and great glory was still more increased (or pronounced) by (the presence of) the great (heads of monasteries) and the (images of) Tārā (the Buddhist goddess)’ . (Sastri, 2012, p. 62)

Probably it was established by Rāmapāla, the great king of Pāla dynasty of Bengal, in the second half of the 11th century CE. Erudite historians like HaraprasadSastri, Rakhal Dasgupta, Nalininath Dasgupta, Rahul Sankrityana have undisputedly stated that Rāmapāla was the founder of the Jagaddala Mahāvihāra. After the victory against the Kaivartya rebels Rāmapāla set up a new capital city at Rāmāvātī. Before setting up the city, the coronation ceremony of Rāmapāla was done in this *Mahāvihāra*. Avalokitesvara was the dwelling god of Jagaddala Monastery and its dwelling goddess Mahattāra. (Roy, 1414 BS, p. 605) The important reference to Jagaddala monastery can be found in the Catalogue of Cordier. Here mention has been made of Rāmapāla as *Jagaddalanivāsin*. Scholars like P. Niyogi are not sure about the exact location of the Jagaddala Monastery. Niyogi (1980, pp. 59-60) mentions, ‘there is confusion about identification of Jagaddala. In my opinion the site of the *Vihāra* should be identified with a village named Jagaddala in the district of North Dinajpur, located near Āmātī or Rāmāvātī.’ Niyogi mentions about another village which also bears the same name Jagaddala, situated near Rāmāvātī at a distance of one km in the east. Scholar like M. Bhattacharjee (2008, p. 15) is in tune with Niyogi and added ‘As the surge of ecclesiastical and academic activities went on many more like Jagaddala were added to their number which subsequently dominated the academic world for centuries.’

There are differences of opinion regarding the actual location of Jagaddala Monastery. (Mookerji, 1947, p. 595; Sastri, 2012, xxxvi (Introduction) Evidently while referring to the reputed monastery, Cordier in his catalogue locates Jagaddala in Varendrī (*Jagaddalaen Varendra*). (Cordier, 1914, p. 122) From the

references in the *Rāmacaritam* it is not clear when and by whom it was founded, although it appears from it to have been a flourishing institution in Rāmapāla's time. It must have existed at least for about a century after Rāmapāla. King (*nṛpati*) Rāmapāla is said to have resided at Jagaddala (*Śrī Jagaddalanivasin*). (Cordier, 1914, p. 285) In this chapter an attempt should be made to identify the location of Jagaddala monastery on the basis of three conditions; **1) archaeological remains:** As the sources suggests, the Jagaddala Monastery might had colossal architecture, which in the course of time was destroyed. So the present location of Jagaddala Monastery might have huge archaeological remains. **2) Distance from capital city i.e. Rāmāvati:** Presently, Amati of Itāhār PS of North Dinajpur district has been identified as its present location. From the sources it is clear that the Jagaddala Monastery was situated in the vicinity of the capital city of Rāmāvati. (Sarkar, H., 2009, pp. 1-3) So search can be done on the neighbouring places of Amati, and **3) the epithet ŚrīJagaddalanivasin of Rāmapāla:** from this epithet it is clear that Rāmapāla, very likely, spent some time at the monastery regularly which earned him the epithet. As we know Rāmapāla defeated the Kaivartya rebels and re-established the Pāla empire with capital at Rāmāvati (Amati). So it was not possible for an emperor to go far from the capital city, because the rebels were still active. We have lots of villages, particularly in Malda, North Dinajpur and South Dinajpur, having same type of names like Jagadal, Jagdal, Jagdalla, Jagaddala e.t.c.³ After surveying the vicinity of Rāmāvati (Amati), considering many possible sites having the same name, we concentrate only on two villages with high probability. First, Jagdal village of Itahar PS, North Dinajpur, situated just one km east to Amati (Jagaddala 1) and second, Jagaddal near Mahendra, South Dinajpur district (Jagaddala 2).



Map 7: Jagaddal villages

The Jagaddala1

Here we come first on the discussion on the Jagaddala village near Rāmāvati. (Picture 34) Jagaddala 1 is situated just one km east of Amati. The mound of this village is about 100x80 mtr in measure. During a visit in winter of 2014, present scholar found a part of a colossal gargoyle with *Makarmukha* design. (Picture 35) Sandhyākarnandi in the *Rāmacaritam* highlights Varendrīas the fatherland of the Pāla emperors (*Jakakbhu*) and mentions the importance of Jagaddala Monastery. (*Rāmacaritam* I,38; ii,28; iv,3) In 2015, during another visit present researcher finds a road (approximately 20 feet wide) between Amati (Rāmāvati) and Jagaddala 1. (Picture 36)

The archaeological remains of this mound are not fit for such a colossal structure of a Mahavihara. The question of the epithet of *Śrī Jagaddalanivasin* is also relevant with the Jagaddala 1. The epithet suggests that, Rāmapāla got this epithet because of his frequent visits or as the permanent and impermanent dweller of Jagaddala. And the distance from capital city is very short.

The Jagaddala2 (25°25'16.8"N 88°15'42.0"E)

Sarasi Kumar Saraswati had much interest in the archaeological sites of Dinajpur. The present researcher made a tour along the river course of Chiramati in winter, following the footprints of S.K. Saraswati. Saraswati indicates sites like Daharol, Kachra, Eshnail, Aminpur, Katashan, Dehabandh, Patiraj, Adhyakhanda, Mahatur, Jagdalla, Mahendra, Surohor, and Harirampur, which prove the richness of the area and gives a clear indication of the existence of a fully flourished human society and culture of the past. (Saraswati, 1932, pp. 185-95)

The biggest mound (Picture 37) of this area is **Mahendra**. Mahendra, known to the local people as *Gadādhum* or *Kadhūm*, is situated on the bank of river Chiramati (or Śrīmatī). The mound is 200 feet wide, 180 feet long and 30 feet high. Here a legend of *Gadadhūm* is current. A hero namely Gadā once fishing on Chiramati from the mound with palm tree as his fishing rod and an ox as his bait, saw Behulā with the dead body of her husband Laxmindar, the famous *Behula Laxmindar legend*, sailing through the river Chiramati. Gadā overwhelmed by the beauty of Behulā stopped her on her way and tried to get her.⁴ Anyway, this mound looks like a

hillock from the plains. Potsherds, bricks, stone fragments and stone pillars are scattered everywhere. The pillars are lavishly carved with bow and arrow design. First one is of 163 inches x 32 inches, with two bow carvings of same size. (Picture 38) The second one is of 110 inches x 50 inches in size. (Picture 39) Just nearby Gadadhūm another mound measuring 53 feet x 110 feet is also visible. It has also same type of architectural fragments, like bricks, potsherd and stone pillars like other Pāla sites. Two of the pillars are of same size, i.e., circumference of 93 inches and height of 160 inches with beautiful carving on them.

Next of Gadadhūm mound of Mahendra, we can see, the Jagaddala mound (Jagaddala 2), situated just opposite side of the river. (Picture 40) The distance of Gadadhūm with Jagaddala is less than 1 km. The name of the mound 'Jagaddala' is stirring the debate of the identification of Jagaddala monastery. The crow fly distance between Jagaddala 2 and the capital city of Rāmāvati is not more than 15 km in the present measurement. This site was well connected through the rivers with Rāmāvati during that time. One can sail to Rāmāvati from Jagaddala through the river Chirāmāti to the river Mahānandā/Suin. Therefore, the meaning of the epithet, i.e. *Jagaddalanivāsini* of Rāmapāla seems to be applicable to this site also. The Jagaddala 2 of Chiramati is colossal and accompanied with many more architectural sites. As it is already mentioned, the way to Jagaddala and Rāmāvati are not so far to an emperor. At **Mahatur**, a mile to the south of Jagaddala, there are further evidences of ancient settlement. Just close to the road a tank stretch north to south called **BaghaMuzraDighi** is situated, which has traces of a pucca bathing Ghats on each of its four sides. The high embankments are strewn with bricks, and there are three small mounds to the east of the tank known to the people as *Deul* (temple). Bricks are in abundance in the mounds, and one mound has several huge architectural stones, most probably still in their respective places. Saraswati witnessed a sandstone image of Chamunda dancing on Mahākāla. (Saraswati, S., 1932b, p. 190) **Surohor**, another neighbouring mound on the course of the river Chiramati, strengthen the claim of identification of Jagaddala monastery with this Jagaddala 2 mound. So in respect of geographical location and archaeological fragments this village appears to be the tentative location of Jagaddala monastery. The Jagaddala 2 assumes to be more capable to accommodate such a good number *Ācāryas*, students and other associates.

Another place in the district of Naoga, Dhamoirhat in Bangladesh also has the same name, i.e., Jagdalla, where a monastery like structure of 45x45 feet in measure still exists with many architectural remains, which shows Buddhist architectural features. But the theory of *Śrī Jagaddalanivāsin* and the distance from Rāmāvati is far. This monastery is also not colossal in respect of its counterpart.

Full-scale excavations of these sites can help us to identify the present location of this great monastery. Otherwise, it will be very difficult to reach any decision. The Jagaddala near Rāmāvati fulfilled the condition 2nd, i.e. closeness to Rāmāvati, but the 1st condition, i.e. the archaeological remains, are not adequate. The Jagaddala 2 near Mahendra fulfilled the 1st condition very well but it is quite far from the capital city. And the third Jagadala is far from the capital but have a monastery like structure. So, in this context, we can conclude that, the Jagaddala monastery might have many campuses like present day's universities. As all clauses suggest it might had its head administrative unit at Jagaddala near Mahendra village.

Bangarh

Bangarh (25°24'47.5"N 88°31'51.2"E), also known as *Koṭivarṣa*, *Soṇitpura*, *Umāvana* and *Devikoṭa*, is identify with the extended ruins of Gangarampur, situated at a distance of 23 km from Balurghat, district headquarters of South Dinajpur. During 1938 to 1941 CE, K.G. Goswami discovered various strata of habitations of different periods of Indian History. (Goswami, 1948) The excavations made some impressive discoveries like, remains of houses, temples, public buildings, rampart walls. And other engrossing discoveries are NBP ware of Mauryan period, punch-marked and cast coins of the Śuṅga period, pottery jugs, shell, terracotta, copper bangles, rings made of copper, glass and paste, ornaments like amulets and pendants made of gold and copper, beads made of stone and glass, collyrium sticks of copper, combs made of ivory and bone, spindle whorls, whet stones, plumbing bobs of alloy metal, flesh rubbers, clay sealings, iron implements like nails and chisel, weapons like daggers, swords and spear-heads and stone images and architectural fragments. As we know, this effort of Goswami was not a full-scale excavation of this great site, which it actually deserves. Goswami himself believed that this was 'only a fringe of her past glory to the notice of the civilized world.' (Goswami, 1948, p. 39) Goswami recovers a terracotta female figure of Śuṅga period. It has a bird (parrot) in her right hand,

probably a duck (*hamsa*) on the right side and a deer on her left. (Goswami, 1948, p. 19) this plaque can be hung by a hole at the top of it.

This site yielded many stone sculptures of Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain god and goddess. Some inscriptions also discovered from this site or its fringe. Many scholars already mention most of them. Here, present researcher will discuss his own findings collected through fieldworks.

1. A figure of couchant bull (*nandi*) adorned with a garland acting as a horn ornament, a bell (*ghaṇṭā*) tied to the neck besides, is placed at the Siva temple. (Picture 41) It is simple in ornamentation and difficult to assign its time.
2. A Bhairava image is find from Hāṭkhōlā of Gangarampur. This image has six arms, holding a *cakra*, *khaṭvāṅga*, *kapāla* in the left and a *damaroo*, *pāśa* and (unidentified object). The god has flabby belly and a long garland of skulls. Flames are coming out of his body. The eyes are round and rolling and the lips are parted in a horrible smile. The figure is not naked. This description categorizes it as the **BatukaBhairava**. The god is standing on an animal (unidentified). Iconographically, Batuka Bhairava is shown with dog as his *vāhana* (vehicle). Between his legs and on the back of the animal a human figure, possibly a defeated demon appears. This human figure holds a sword in his left hand and right hand is stretching upward in direction of the god, seeking mercy. Irrespective of some odd features, like the *cakra* and the animal it can be identified with Batuka Bhairava in local form. The entire figure is placed on a full-blown double petalled lotus. (Picture 42)
3. A recent discovery of a Vajrasattva (Picture 43) sculpture is worth mentioning. This discovery placed this region in the realm of Esoteric Buddhism. Vajrasattva images are found wherever Esoteric Buddhism spread, both in its earlier and later forms. (Linrothe, 1999, pp. 3-9, 306-8, 325-31) This is a unique type of sculpture – not frequently discovered from India. It is discovered from a nearby water tank of Rajivpur. The image is measuring 27 inches X 14 inches. The principle deity is seated on a *padmāsana* in *Bajrāsana* posture (cross legs). Though as per iconographic prescription, Vajrasattva should seat on *siddhāsana*. The posture of *siddhāsana* is the right leg on the

left calf or thigh. The later Tibetan images of Vajrasattva are represented as cross legged. (Linrothe, 2014, p. 10 foot note) He holds a *vajra* (thunder) in his right hand at his chest and a *ghaṇṭā* (bell) with *vajra* shape handle in his left hand at his proper left hip. So, the image might have some Tibetan influence. He wears *jaṭāmukuta* and also a bejeweled crown.⁵ The image is heavily ornamented.

The image has many other figures. At the top of the stele, an image of the Tathagata Buddha (?) takes place. Here he is seated on a full blown lotus in similar posture. Four other female deities appear, two on each side, in similar posture and attributes. This is a unique feature of the image. Nowhere in India Vajrasttva is represented with such type of female attendants. Iconographically, the principal deity of Vajrasttva should be represented with four inner offering deities⁶ with perfume, incense, a lamp and flowers in their hands. Here, they hold *vajra* and *ghaṇṭa* like the principal deity. Not only that, the pedestal of the sculpture has four other images and an altar in the middle. A Vajrācāriya, who holds *vajra* and *ghaṇṭa* in his respective hands, is placed at the right side of the altar. On the left an image of devotee, possibly the donor of the sculpture, takes place. He is kneeled near the altar and his both hands are in *namaskāra* posture. And two dancing figure is giving support to the *padmāsana* of the god on each corners.

4. A colossal Viṣṇu (Picture 44) image is placed in the custody of Gangarampur PS. This image is a clear example of highly developed iconoplastic art of the Pāla-Sena period. The sense of anatomy of the artist/s can surprise any scholar of Bengal art. The image is in damaged condition. The remaining part is 8 feet long. It lost its three hands. The top left hand holds a *cakra*. The face, slightly damaged, has an aesthetic smile. (Picture 45) This could be one of the best examples ever of the plastic art of Bengal.
5. Another Viṣṇu (Picture 46) image is placed at the temple of the Police Station. It has *samkha*, *cakra*, *gadā* and *padma* in his four hands. The conical topped stele is simple in carving. Two *vidyadhara* is placed on both sides of the deity. One male god on the left and female god on the right of the principal figure is placed. Here Viṣṇu wears a *karaṇḍamukuta*.

6. This site has yielded a huge variety of sculptures. We can find traces of the workshop in the threshold of the great city of Bangarh. At Dargah Para, near Alta Dighi, fragments of stones vouchsafe this statement. (Picture 47)
7. A fragment of a pillar (Picture 48) is found from Rajibpur, measuring hight 54 inches x periphery 52 inches, which shows class of Bengal art. The pillar is round in shape except its middle portion, which is densely carved. From the bottom, the pillar has beautiful floral design hanging from a chain. Over this portion, an abstract floral design is placed. The middle portion is square in shape. Four composite male figures with wings are placed on four corners. In the middle portion *āmalaka* design is placed between the designs of two lotuses. The craftsmanship is hard to believe that someone creates it without the help of any machines.

Bindol

Bindol (25°46'1.19"N 88°10'45.96"E), an obscure village of Uttar Dinajpur district, is famous for the Bhairavi⁷ temple of Mārtaṇḍa Bhairava. (Picture 49) The temple is situated on the bank of the river Kanchan.⁸ Here both the Hindus and the Muslims worship the Bhairava.

1. The temple was in very worse condition. Some restoration work has been done already. Nevertheless, the original structure was different. It has some beautiful terracotta works of floral design (Picture 50) all over the temple.
2. The idol is iconographically recognized as the Martanda Bhairava. The *Rāmāyana* describes, when whole universe is waiting for the result of Rāma-Rāvana war, just on the eve of the Great War Rāma was confused about his future plan of action against Rāvana. *Ṛsi* Agasthya enlighten Rāma like what Kṛṣṇa does with Arjuna in *Mahābhārata*.

rāmarāmamahābāhoṣṛṅguhyāmsanātanam |
yenasarvaanariinvatsasamarevijayishhyasi ||
ādityahṛdayaṃpuṇyaṃsarvaśatruvināśanam |
jayāvahaṃjapennityaṃakṣayyaṃparamaṃśivam ||

(Ramāyana, yudhyakhanda, 107, ‘Āditya Hridayam)

Mārtanda is a form of the sun god. According to Prof. Macdonell, (1897, p. 43) in respect of number of Ādityas ‘in the last book of the R̥g-Veda, the number is once stated to be 7 and once 8.- Aditi at first representing to the gods that she has borne only 7 children and afterwards bringing in eight, viz: Mārtanda.’ In the later *Purānas*, this number is varied and the following comparative lists of the names of the Ādityas will be an interesting study. (Table 5)

Bhairava is a form of Siva. The *Siva-Purāna* calls Bhairava the *puṇarupa* or the full form of Sankara, because he protects the universe (*bharana*) and because he is terrific (*bhisana*). The description of Bhairava is also found in *Vishnudharmottara*. Gopinath Rao mentions eight different forms of Bhairava, viz: *Asitaga, Ruru, Chada, Krodha, Unmatta, Kapāla, Bhiṣaṇa and Samhāra*. Each one of these forms is divided further into eight subordinate forms, thus making sixty-four in all. In this respect, Mārttanda Bhairava is under *Asitānga* group. (Rao, 1916, p. 180) So Mārttanda Bhairava is a composite form of the Siva and Surya. Mārtanda Bhairava, who is described in the *Agni Purāna* (301), as red in colour: his right half is Īshāna / Shiva and the left half is Ravi / Sūrya. He has four faces (connected with four cardinal points).

The figure in the temple is measuring 1.3 mtr X .7 mtr. The image in well state of preservation, all the hands of principal deity and faces of all accompanied deities are damaged. T.A. Gopinath Rao (1916, p. 177) mentions, ‘Bhairava should have a flabby belly, round yellow eyes, side tusks and wide nostrils, and should be wearing a garland of skulls. He should be also adorned with snakes as ornaments. Beside these, there should be other ornaments also. The complexion of Bhairava is dark as the rain clouds and his garment, the elephant’s skin. He should have several arms carrying several weapons. He should be represented as frightening Parvati with a snake.’ The principal figure is sitting on the center over three storeyed *ratha* in the *Ardhaparyanka* attitude over a double petalled lotus (*padmāsana*) supported by a *saptaratha* pedestal which carved with the figure of seven horses of the sun chariot. Prof. Macdonell, (1897,p. 31) of his ‘Vedic Mythology’ says that Surya’s horses represent his rays, which are seven in number. The position of the horse in the middle, the wheel and the position of Aruna,⁹ the charioteer of the Sun god, on the

Makara head is effaced. The principal figure is placed on a full blown lotus over a *shayitapurusa*. Here the principal deity has 14 hands. Though all the hands of the deity are broken but it is not too hard to count the number of hands it possessed. The portion of protruding belly is also affected. It has three eyes, a fierce look with curly beard and crude smile on his face. He wears a *JataMukuta* (crown of matted hair) and his curly hairs fall in locks over the shoulders. In ornamentation, it has *keyurabāhuband*, comparatively big *karnakundala*, *vaijayantimālā*, *aksamālā*, *hāra*, *upabita*, *udarabandhya*, the girdle which holds his cloth tight round the waist, is profusely ornamented and is further decorated with artistic hangings, *keyurabahubandh* (two each), *kankana* and so on. Though, the front portion of the image is damaged. The snake, which he wears, is clearly visible. The backslab, which is flat¹⁰ at the top and partially broken at left side, is too much crowded with the accompanying deities and floral designs. The entire backslab is well carved with flower design in its edges. It started from the middle lower point and finished it at the same point. At the top of the backslab *kṛtimukha* is placed with two female figurines, of which the right one is reverse and the left one is in obverse. Just next from the *kṛtimukha* a garland bearing flying Vidyādhara with another accompanied deity is placed on a circle of the garland. *Agniṣrava*, just back of the principal figure, is filled up the entire blank space of the backslab.

At the left lower part of the principal deity stands Niksubha, the earthy double of Sun god, raises her right hand with a flywhisk and left hand, which holds a *kapāla* (?), resting on her waist. At the right lower of the principal deity stands Rajni,(?)¹¹ daughter of Visvakarma, bent her right hand at the elbow with a flywhisk and left hand raises up with a *pustaka*(?). Above the figure of Aruna and just in front of the principal deity, an effaced miniature female figure of Mahasveta(?) is sited on *sukhasana*. In each side of Mahasveta, Usa and Pratyusa stands respectively in *pratyalidha* and *alidha* posture with bows and arrows. Pingala is placed on sitting posture, though partly damaged but can still be identifiable through his protruding belly and beard. Just opposite side of Piṅgala, a sitting figure can be seen. But it is in

bad state of preservation. According to the iconography of Sun god, this image may be that of Daṇḍi.

All the deities are positioned in separate full-blown lotus. It is interesting to note that all accompanied deities are separated from the principal deity. All of them are figured out of the *ratha* except Aruna, the chariot bearer, and Mahāsveta. Another interesting feature is about the boots of the accompanied deities. All accompanied deities, two figures of *krttimukha* and *Vidyādhara*s in this sculpture are booted while the principal deity is not. But iconographic prescription is that the Sun god and his accompanying deities is that, all the figures, except the two females shooting arrows at the edges, wear boot like the Sun god. (Bhattashali, 2008, p. 149) But here the shooting figures is also booted.

We can see some minor remains in the temple complex. Some stone pillars, blocks, pedestal, and lotus designed stone blocks are worth mentioning. (Picture 51)

Dwip Rajar Dighi

Dwip Nagar (25°40'57.04"N 88°05'32.02"E) is situated on the course of the river Kānchan¹¹ at a distance of 8 km from the district head quarters Raiganj and beside NH34. Some Muslim and Santhal families now populate this area.

1. Here a big water tank (Picture 52) of rectangular size measuring approximately 200 mtr (N-S) x 400 mtr (E-W) is situated, which seems to be very ancient with the evidences of considerable settlements of the past. An annual fair is held around this tank on the 1st day of Bengali calendar. This site has good number of ponds with pucca bathing *ghats*. The bricks measure 8x8x2 inches and are in a good state of preservation.
2. A terracotta-disc (Picture 53) of 9.5 inches with a hole at the center is found. Probably this is a part of a toy cart.
3. One sand stone image of Jambhala (Picture 54) of late 12th century is recovered from this site. The pot-bellied god carries the *jambhara* (lemon) in

his right hand and in his left hand holds the mongoose vomiting jewels. The god has three eyes and wears a five-peaked tiara, a single neckwear and heavy earrings. His lower garment is well patterned, as may be noticed in the back view. He is seated on a lotus and his right leg with pendent rests in a jewel pot.

4. Next finding is a giant slabs with bow designs of which one bears a seated image of a four-armed Viṣṇu. (Picture 55) He holds clockwise from the right lower *padma*, *gada*, *cakra* and *samkha*.

Tamasari Mathbari

Tamasari Mathbari (25°32'42.39"N 88°17'12.35"E) is located at the distance of 21 km from Raiganj by road. The approaching way to *Tamsari Mathbari* is from Raiganj-Durgapur to Itahar- Kunor- Tamasari Mathbari. The particular mound is known to the local people as *Patalsiri*. Tamosari is known for her relics; possibly of a Buddhist monastery. The name *Tamasari Mathbari* is very interesting as well as confusing. The shape of the mound and its mutilated archaeological remains suggest that it was a Buddhist settlement probably a monastery. The word *Tamasari* itself is curious. Whether this name is derived from *Tamachar*, (meaning adultery) or *Tama+chari*, (*Tama* = meaning darkness and *chari* means to live or practiced), which means leaving the darkness is often debated. And the word *Mathbati* means monastery. Probably it was a centre of Tantric Buddhism.

1. The mound is situated on the bank of the river Rohitā, which was once a navigable river and now completely dried up. The Sanskrit names of the river and the area i.e., *Varuna* are quite fascinating and points to a time when Sanskrit was a state language. The mound is round in shape, built with 10x12x2 inches bricks. The name of the mound, i.e., '*Patalsiri*', (Picture 56) has probably come from the stairs of the monastery which led to the river. Moreover, in the architectural designs of Buddhist monasteries, stair is a common feature.
2. On the mound, some pillars are still visible. The first pillar measures 41x20 inches, the second one is of 49x27 inches, the third one is of 67x20 inches and the fourth one is of 26x36 inches. All of them have same type of carving. But

most significant among them is the third one. It has an iron bar inserted in it as we can see in the architecture of *Nalanda Mahavihara*. It was a chief feature of the Pāla architecture. To keep the stone blocks together iron rods or bars were inserted through perforations on the stone blocks. (Picture 57) Probably the pillars were part of a massive structure. The use of iron in Patalsiri distinguishes itself from its counterparts of the study area. Such perforations are found in some stone blocks discovered from Amati (the last Pāla capital). But iron spikes or rods have not yet been spotted elsewhere. This feature also indicates that the settlement of Tamasari Mathbari is of later times compared to the other Buddhist sites of Dinajpur. The extant piece of iron measures 1.4cm x 12.7 cm and 7cm x 1.2 cm.

Kamlabari

Kamlabari (25°40'10.79"N 88°11'45.89"E) is situated on the bank of the river Kulik at a distance of 12 K.M from Raiganj. It is very interesting to see a large number of architectural fragments and a good number of bricks is scattered in this remote village, where the villagers still live in mud houses. We can see a good number of mounds in one square km area. (Adhikary, S., 2010, pp. 49-52)

1. One of them is known as Ganesh Bhita, the most important and quite large in measure. Legend says that this place is known as Ganesh Bhita because of the Ganesh image (Picture 58) found from this mound. Another myth of Ganesh Bhita is that, it evokes the memory of king Ganesh, the only Hindu king of the sultanate period of Bengal. Five pillars are found from this mound, all of them are made of black stone. (Picture 59) Two of them are 77 inches long with circumference of 40 inches. One of them has inscribed words of ten letters altogether. (Picture 60) The inscription is so indistinct that it is quite hard for decipher. This mound looks like a courtyard or hall of audience in a ruined state with an area of 210 square meters. Small ponds are also there on the eastern side of the mound.
2. Another mound is situated at a distance of 200 meters from the Ganesh Bhitā. A well-decorated Dashdala mosque (Picture 61) was constructed over a Hindu architecture. Some pillars of the earlier structure are also visible inside the mosque. The mosque was built by 6"×6" bricks. The pillar of the mosque is

well decorated. The rectangular mosque is measuring 42 feet X 25.5 feet at the outer side with four corner towers. It has ten domes. Four obtuse type of arches face the east. All of them are measuring 7.5 feet X 6.4 feet.

3. On the southern part of the mosque, the third mound is situated. Its 21 pillars, all made of black stone, standing in three rows create a structure of a big building. The mutilated pillars cover an area of 450 square feet. All the pillars are of the same size. On the eastern part of this structure, a big pedestal of a pillar stands separately. The circumference of the pillar is 9 feet. (Picture 62)

Other important findings from this site are a fragmented sculpture, (Picture 63) an Islamic inscription (Picture 64) and a giant *kalasa*. (Picture 65)

Tenohari

Tenohari (25°34'47.4"N 88°06'11.6"E) a village, borrowed her name from three Lord Viṣṇu images (Tin Hari) found from this area, is situated at a distance of 7 KM from Raiganj, the district headquarters of North Dinājpur. All the three images were found from a pond nearby namely Patalghorā.¹² (Picture 66) The findings from this site are:

1. The first image is the Dasavatāra Viṣṇu image, (Picture 67) measuring 1.905 mtr high and 0.9144 mtr in length. The principal deity stands on *samapadasthānaka* posture on a full-blown lotus with four hands holding *gadā/mushala* (mace) in right upper, *padma* (lotus) at lower and in left upper *cakra* (wheel), lower *śaṁkha* (conch). Conch-shell is symbolical of eternal space; the wheel is symbolical of eternal time; the mace is symbolical of eternal law and the unfailing punishment, consequent on its breach; the Lotus is symbolizing the ever-renewing Creation and its beauty and freshness. (*Varāhapurānam*, chap. 31) According to *Rupamandana*, regarding the attributes, description is made for *Caturvimsati Murtaya* of *Sthanaka murti* or standing images of Viṣṇu. (Table 6)

In this respect it is categorized as *Trivikrama* type of Viṣṇu. In ornamentation it has *Kirit Mukuta*, *Makara Kundala*, *Vaijayantīmālā*, *Akshyamālā*, *Hāra*, *Upabita*, *kaṭibandhya*, *Keyura Bāhubandh* (two each), *kankana* or bangles (two each), *Vanamālā*, *bindi* (sandal work) on forehead etc. The half-closed

eyes show the sense of deep meditation. The curly hairs fall in locks over his shoulders. The stele of the image is crowded with many designs. In the place of *kr̥ttimukha* appears the figure of separate lotuses.

The most remarkable feature of this image is the miniature figures of ten incarnations of Viṣṇu represented around the central figure. It is interesting to note that the figures of the incarnations of Viṣṇu are supposed to be represented in chronological order in accordance with the different stages of evolution of the animal world and civilization. (Bhattashali, 1929, pp. 93-107) In many Bengal sculptures, Viṣṇu is represented with ten incarnations in proper order. But in this image the chronological order is not properly followed.

The following couplet is found in the *Mahābhārata* (Hopkins, E., 1915, 217):-

Matsyaḥkūrmovarāhaś ca narasiṁhothavāmanaḥ,

RāmoRāmaś ca Rāmaś ca Buddhaḥ Kalkītitedaśa,

Ordinarily, the order is as follows: 1. *Matsya* (fish), 2. *Kurma* (tortoise), 3. *Varāha* (boar), 4. *Narasimha* (man-lion), 5. *Vāmana* (dwarf), 6. *Parasurāma* (the ideal warrior), 7. *Rāma* (the ideal ruler), 8. *Balarāma* (the ideal ploughman), 9. *Buddha*¹³ and 10. *Kalki*. This is the list followed in Bengal with slight variations here and there, and it is an oft-quoted *Sloka* in the mouth of Bengali *pandits*. Jayadeva, (circa 1170 CE) in his *Gita-Govinda*, (Telang & Pansikar, 1899) in the famous hymn to the Ten Incarnations, follows the same list. (Bhattashali, 2008, p.95) In this image, five incarnations from the beginning take place at the right side of the principal image and in the left the rest. But the problem arises in the identification of the eighth figure (Picture 68) (clockwise from the left). Each *avatāra* is placed on a separate lotus pedestal and separate stele with a long lotus stem. *Matsya* and *Kurma* are represented in their respective animal forms. The figure of *Varāha* is effaced. *Narasimha* is shown as engaged in ripping open the belly of the demon *Hiranyakāsyapa*. He has a lion face as usual. *Vāmana* in the fifth position is pot-bellied and dwarf. Next to him is *Parasurāma* carrying his *Kuthāra* in his right hand. *Rāma* in the seventh carries his bow and arrow. The unidentified figure depicted in the eighth position has his right hand raised in *abhayamudrā*

while his left hand carries the *kamandalu*. His hair is tied up in a knot on the top of his head and supported with a *ratnamukuta*. *Buddha* comes next with his right hand raised showing the *abhayamudrā*. His left hand is broken. The curls of his hair cannot be overlooked. The last *avatāra* i.e., Kalki riding a horse is shown in profile. He holds his weapon in his right hand. The matter of interest is the eighth one. The eighth figure cannot be identified with Balarāma since it has no weapon like *Mushala*, *Hāla* or *lāngala*.¹⁴ Its identification as *Krishna* is also ruled out for he is not supposed to carry a *Kamandalu*. T.A. Gopinath Rao (1914, p. 203) mentions, “*Krishna* should be made to have a *kirita* on the head or it should be shown that the hair is tied up in a knot on the top of the head. In the right hand a peculiarly carved stick should be carried, and the left arm should be lifted up and bent at the elbow: the palm of the left hand has to be facing downwards. This hand may carry a *śaṅkha* also.” Ramesh S. Gupta (1972, p. 33) also repeated the same “The right hand (of *Krishna*) holds a carved stick, while the left is lifted and bent at the elbow. He may carry a conch in this hand.” It will be quite understandable that the sculptor of this image has shown his caliber in the making of the principal deity. M.S Bhattacharyya mentions that “in all probability the mysterious figure indicates an error committed by the tenth century sculptor.” (Bhattacharyya, 2002, p. 39)

Here Viṣṇu has Laxmi on his right and Saraswati on his left. Both of them stand on separate full-blown lotuses. They wear *Jatāmukuta*, *karnakundala*, *Vaijayantimālā*, *Akshyamālā*, *Hāra*, *kaṭibandhya*, *Upavita*, *Keyura* *Bāhubandh*, *kankana* or bangles. Laxmi in her right hand holds *Cāmara* and the left hand is stretched downward. A comparatively small figure of *Cakrapuruṣa* stands with her. He has a *Cakra* at his head, *Sarpakundala* and other ornaments. His right hand raised on *abhayamudrā* while the left is resting on his waist. Saraswati holds *vīṇā* (lute) with her two hands. *Sanṅhapuruṣa* stands with her.

2. The second image (Picture 69) is also an important one. The image is 1.88 mtr high and 0.966 mtr wide. Decoration and carving is simple. The principal deity stands on *Samapadasthānaka* posture on a full-blown lotus with four hands holding *Gadā/Mushala* (mace) in right upper, *Padma* (lotus) at lower and in left upper *Cakra* (wheel), lower *Shankha* (conch). Regarding the

attributes this image is considered as Trivikrama. Śrīdevī is placed in the right side and Bhūdevī in the left. Here two Vidyadharas are placed at the upper portion of the stele. Ornamentation is similar to the previous one. The rounded top of the stele, scanty ornamentation and low relief work of the sculpture lead us to assign it to c. 10th century.

3. A Śiva linga (Picture 70) is also placed in the temple of Tenahari. The Gaurīpaṭṭa is measuring 3 feet 2 inches x 1 feet. The Linga is 15 inches long and 16 inches in round. Most important feature of this Linga is that, a bust image of Viṣṇu takes place at the left side of the *Gaurīpaṭṭa*. this is possibly the Liṅgodbhava-murti. (Gupte, 1972, p. 40)

Karandighi

Karandighi (25°48'34.9"N 87°55'59.9"E) is another place of archaeological interest. This place is situated at a distance of 33 km from Raiganj. The place gets its name from the water body named as Karṇa Dighi, where legend is current that the great warrior Karṇa of the Mahabhārata fame performed *tarpaṇa* (offerings to god). So many sculptures of Pāla-Sena period has been recovered so far from this site. Karan Dighi PS recovers one Gauri image of 11th 12th century. The principal deity stands on *Samapadasthānaka* posture on a full blown lotus with four hands holding *padma*, *śankha*, *darpan* and the left bottom hand is broken. As ornamentation, it has *jaṭamukuta*, *karnakundala*, *vaijayantīmālā*, *akshyamālā*, *upabita*, *kaṭibandhya*, *keyurabāhubandhand kankana*. The principal deity is accompanied by a dancing Ganesha in her right side and Saraswati(?) on her left. The stele of the sculpture is pointed at the top and densely decorated. Two *vidyadharas* appears at the top on each side. Kirtimukha is placed on its respective place with *datura* flower (*daturastramonium*) design. In the right side of the pedestal the image of donor and on the left a *śamkha* with floral design, take place. The middle portion of the pedestal is blank where the name of the donor is supposed to be carved.

Sonapur

The Sonapur village (25°30'33.5"N 88°11'03.7"E) of Itahar PS is full of archaeological materials. In the 1930s scholars like S.K. Saraswati visited this site. He wrote, 'At Sonapur there are several smaller mounds and the area is undulating

throughout. The village shrine is known as the Navadurgarsthan (i.e. shrine of Navadurga) and contains a number of ancient images, such as Uma-Mahesvara, Visnu, Gauri, Mother and child etc.’ (Saraswati, 1932b, p. 193) Finding from this site are:

1. A dancing image of Ganeśa, measuring 30 X 17 inches, is housed in a temple nearby. It has six hands. The right upper hand holds a *Kuthāra*, middle hand holds a *bāla* and the lower right hand is broken. In the left upper hand holds *nagapaśa*, middle hand holds is broken but iconographically it might had a *laddu* (tunnelers) and the lower hand holds a *muśala* (mace). The trunk is bending in *edampuri* posture right on the *laddu*. The dancing pose of the principal god is well supported by the Tabla player positioned at his right side. The figure at his left is indistinct. The principal deity is placed on a full-blown lotus. The stele is very simple. It has three mangoes at the top of the stele, which is a common feature of the sculptures found from Dinajpur and Malda. (Picture 71)
2. A fragment of the figure of a goddess (80 inches X 82 inches) can be seen on the shore of Ena Dighi. The image is heavily damaged. It had ten hands. Five hands on the left are still visible. (Picture 72)
3. Another image of goddess is also there. It stands on *āvanga* posture and holds a *chāmara* (fly whisk) in her left hand. (Picture 73)
4. One sand stone bust image of Ganeśa is kept in the temple nearby. It looks like an early image of the Pāla-Sena school of sculptures. (Picture 74)

Other important findings are two pedestals of same size, and three Śiva Linga respectively 23X74, 16X51 and 11X13 inches in measure.

Raiganj

1. An image of Khasarpaṇa (Picture 75) was dug out from Raiganj (headquarters of North Dinājpur district), while laborers were working for some construction work in college Para region. The image is not in well state of preservation. The right side of the backslab is missing. But in spite of the damage, the sculpture is an excellent piece of example of Bengal art, as well as, Buddhist

art. The principal figure is sitting on the center in the *ardhaparyāṅka* posture over a double petalled lotus (*padmāsana*) supported by a *pañcharatha* pedestal. He wears a *jatāmukuta* (crown of matted hair), curly hairs fall in locks over the shoulders, *akshamālā*, *baijayaṅtimālā*, *karṇakundala*, Armlets, bangles, *ratnaūpabita*, long bejeweled Dhoti etc. with a calm face make a great sense of splendor, supported on the back with three circle of *pravābali*. At the center of the *pravābali* a diamond like shape is placed just behind the top of the principle figure. The principal figure exhibits the *varada* pose by his right hand and holds the lotus with a stem in his left hand. The principal figure is accompanied by four divinities Tārā, Sudhanakumāra, Bhṛkutī and Hayagrīva. In his right side stands Tārā, who is densely ornamented on a separate *padmāsana* with the right hand shows *abhayamudrā* and the lotus flower with a stem held in her left hand. Sudhanakumāra is placed on a separate lotus in *lalitāsana* on the feet of Tārā, also densely ornamented. His two hands joined in *anjālimudrā*. He carries the book under his left armpit and is decked in all ornaments. On the left of the principal deity stands Bhṛkutī on a separate *padmāsana*. It has four hand, three eyes and matted hair. She carries the staff of three horns in upper left hand and the *kamaṅdalu* on her lower left hand. The right upper hand shows the *mudrā* of bowing and the rosary in the lower right hand. A seated image of Hayagrīva is placed in front of Bhṛkutī on a separate *Padmāsana*. He has a protruding belly. His hair rises upwards in a shape of a flame, and he has a snake as his sacred thread. A pair of high and curly mustaches and two big round eyes recognize his face. The lower portion of this image is mutilated that is why the tiger skin, which he normally clad, is not visible. He holds a *Daṇḍa* in his left hand and right hand exhibits the act of bowing. All these deities are meditating on as disposed in a befitting and artistic manner, with their eyes directed towards the face of the principal deity.

Above the top of the backslab appear on separate lotuses, miniature figures of five dhyani Buddhas with Amitābha at the apex with a separate stele. Though the face of this deity is damaged but the *mudrā*, i.e., two hands with palm open lie on his lap, one upon the other forming the Dhyana or the meditative *mudrā*, proves its identity with Amitābha. The form of Amitābha is described in the Pañcākāra section of the *Asvayavajrasaṅgraha* thus: ‘Paścimadale

Ravimaṇḍaloparu rakta-Hrīḥkārasambhū toraktavarṇo Amitābhaḥ padmacinhaḥ samādhimudrādharah samjñāskandhasvabhāvo rāgaśarīrah śukrātmakeḥ padmakulī pratyaveksaṇājñānalakṣaṇo grīṣmartūrupahā mlarasaśarīrah ṭavargātmā pradoṣavān.’(Bhattacharya, B., 1958, p. 49) On the left of Amitābha two Dhyani Buddhas are placed. The first one from the left is also of damaged face, but the *mudrā*, i.e., left hand rest on the lap while the right rests on the right knee with tips of the fingers touching the ground with palm down inwardly; make us clear with its identification with Aksobhya. The second from the left of Dhyani Buddha is in well state of preservation. It is Amoghasiddhi. His left hand lies open on the lap and the right hand exhibits the *Abhaya* (protection) *mudrā*. The right upper side of the backslab is missing. There might be placed the rest of two *Dhyani Buddhas*, i.e., Vairocana and Ratnasambhava.

At the bottom of the principal deity under the *pancharatha* pedestal, which is carved in the middle with lotus rosettes contains at the right the kneeling figure of *Pritā Suchimukha* with an uplifted face, protruding belly and with very pale appearance. At the left of the rosettes, one male and one female figure take place on a separate single *padmāsana*. The male figure has smiling face with beard, clean shaved head and protruding belly.

All of the accompanied deities have separate back slab and *padmāsana*. They played a stereotype role to make the sculpture very artistic. In this art, the shape of men and all subsidiary figures are ordered in order of *śilpāśāstra*. They serve as its symbols and carry out its rhythms.

2. A Viṣṇu image of tenth/eleventh century (Picture 76) is kept in a temple at Kharmujaghat area of Raiganj Municipality. Here Lord Viṣṇu is stands on a full-blown lotus on *Samapadasthānaka* posture. In ornamentation it has *kiritmukuta*, *makara kundala*, *vaijayantīmālā*, *akshyamālā*, *hāra*, *upabita*, *kaṭibandhya*, *keyurabāhubandh* (two each), *kankana* or bangles (two each), *vanamālā*, *bindi* (sandal work) on forehead etc. The half-closed eyes show the sense of deep meditation. The curly hairs fall in locks over his shoulders. The stele is broken in the upper and left upper portion. One flying Vidyadhara is placed on a separate stele at the right upper portion. On the middle of both

sides of the principal figure, standing images of lion appear; their mane coming to their torso and tails are very thick. Below this portion, two goddesses are placed. The goddess on the right side is identified as Laxmi and the left one as Saraswati. Both of them is standing on separate full-blown lotuses and have separate steles. The steles are round in shape with simple dotted designs take place at the edges. From the shape of these steles we can easily assume that the main stele was also round in shape. Right hand of Laxmi is broken. She holds a lotus with long stem in her left hand. Saraswati holds *Bīnā* (harp) with her two hands. At the bottom of the sculpture two separate images is placed. Garuḍa, the *vāhana* of lord Viṣṇu, is placed with *namaskāramudra* on the left and an image with *namaskāramudra*, possibly the donor is placed on the right.

3. A broken image of Khasarpaṇa (Picture 77) has been recovered from a pond of Udaypur. This image is now installed in the temple of a household. As it is already mentioned that the image is broken, only the lower portion is there. But the iconographic features of the remaining part indicate it as an image of Khasarpaṇa. Here the principal figure is sitting on the center in the *ardhaparyāṅka* posture over a double petalled lotus (*padmāsana*) supported by a *saptaratha* pedestal. At the bottom of the principal deity the lotus rosettes contains at the right the kneeling figure of *PritāSuchimukha* on a *padmasana* with an uplifted face, protruding belly and with very pale appearance. At the left of the rosettes, one male and one female figure take place on a separate *padmāsana*. Only few part of right hand of the principal figure, which exhibits the *varada* pose. In his right side of the principal deity only the legs of a seated image (*lalitāsana*) possibly of Sudhanakumāra on a *padmāsana* is visible. On the left of the principal deity, here also, a separate *Padmāsana* with legs is visible. Iconographically this place belongs to Hayagrīva and Bhṛkūtī. At the bottom of this sculpture, an inscription takes place. (Picture 78)
4. Chanditala region of Raiganj is in news for several times for its archaeological yields. Many sculptures of the Pāla-Sena period have so far been discovered from a pond near Durgatala.

- a. A basement of temple is recovered from the pond. The bricks are categorized of the Pāla-Sena time. (Picture 79)
- b. The second discovery is a 29 feet long wood, which is possibly a part of a giant boat. (Picture 80)
- c. The third finding is an image of Mahiṣamarddinī (Picture 81) of black stone measuring 42x24 inches. The name of this place, i.e. Chanditala was come for this goddess. The sadly mutilated state in which the image is discovered makes it difficult to identify its weapons in her ten hands. The probability appears to be in favour of the former assumption. Clockwise, the following are the attributes of the goddess. 1. A pointed weapon, the *sūchī* ? 2. Discus. 3. Arrow. 4. Sword. 5. Javelin (*Śūla*). 6. The locks of the demon. 7. Buckler. 8. Bow. 9. Axe. 10. *Añkuśa*, (elephant-goad). The goddess is stepping to the right and impetuously attacking the demon Mahiṣa to her right, who has just come out of the decapitated buffalo, his previous form. The figure of the demon is depicted fully emerged out of the decapitated Mahiṣa, but the right leg still remains within its trunk. The head and left hand of the demon is lost. The upper left hand of the goddess is lost. Possibly, it has seized the locks of the demon and is piercing his breast with a *Śūla*, held in her upper right hand. The left leg of the demon takes place on the head of the buffalo. The lion, the vehicle of the goddess, is absent here. Towards the left of the piece, a demon is seen retreating, fighting with sword and buckler. To the right, a female attendant similarly armed, is advancing to battle. There is no space of decoration in stele. Though the upper portion of the stele is damaged, but possibility is that, it has conical top. A male devotee to the left and a female devotee to the right are depicted below the lotus seat.
- d. Next in this list is a broken image of Manasā. (Picture 82) Only the upper portion of the image remains intact. It has conical top stele with a *kirtimukha* at the center followed by two Vidyadharas. Though the principal image is missing, the snake canopy consists of seven snakes are visible. On its left, an image with crown is visible. Possibly, it may be taken as Āstika, son of the goddess, but the crown on the head may be an

indication that he is to be taken as Vāsukī, the Nāga king, brother of the goddess.

Dehabandh

Dehabandh (25°28'40.09"N 88°15'32.65"E) is situated on the bank of the river Chiramati. This is the biggest mound of this area. It is almost completely destroyed by the villagers. In a visit on April 2012, the present writer had captured some photos of the mound. The remaining mound was circular and 20 feet high. It had two storeys. (Picture 83) Stone chips were used between the layers of burnt bricks as building material. (Picture 84) The use of stone chips as a building material was not known in this part of land. A tentative suggestion is that, it was Buddhist *stūpa* of the Pāla-Sena period. The mound of Dehabandh and its surroundings have huge archaeological remains, which scattered at least over half a square km. The archaeological remains reflect the fact that this site was multi-religious and evolved through long span of time.

1. A strange shaped archaeological fragment of two feet is there. Possibly, it was a part of a colossal *āmalaka* design. (Picture 85)
2. A doorjamb (Picture 86) of 5x2 feet is lying on this site. It has a beautifully carved design of a temple of that time. The temple has *śikhara* type of style. At the top, a *kalasa* is placed on a *āmalaka* design. A circular floral design is carved at the *śikhara*. A standing male god of four hands is carved at the center of the temple design. The god stands on avanga posture. The attributes of this image are not distinct. But *cakra* (wheel) and *gadā* (mace) are clearly visible. Iconographically this image is of Viṣṇu, because the unique feature of Viṣṇu image, i.e. the *vanamālā*, is clearly visible. This image is surrounded by two small human carvings on its each side. A female image is placed beside the temple. The image stands on a *makarāsana* with a *kalasa* on her right hand and a *padma* on her left.
3. A 6 feet long gargoyle is there. The condition is very poor. (Picture 87)

Baragram

Baragram (25°20'47.8"N 88°11'51.3"E) is situated on the bank of the river Chiramati in Itahar P.S. The location of this site can be taken as the peripheral area of Āmātī. Once, this site was covered with huge archaeological remains. Most of them are mutilated and some of them are unfinished sculptures. As we know, the sites of the study area are unprotected and open field of the antique smugglers. This site heavily damaged by the Turko-Afgan rulers and the final devastation have been done by the smugglers. The present writer had visited the site in the summer of 2008 and able to capture some photos. Presently all the artefacts have been lost.

1. A broken Viṣṇu image (Picture 88) is first in this list. A kneeling Garuḍa is placed on a full-blown lotus seat (*padmāsana*). On the left of the Garuḍa, goddess Saraswati stands in a *padmasana* with a Bīnā. A Cakra Puruṣa is also placed in separate *padmāsana* on her left. On the right of the Garuḍa a *padmāsana* is still visible. Possibly an image of Laxmi with Śaṅkha Puruṣa was there. Here the lotus is so beautifully carved that each petals look like real one. Here sculptor/s carved the stem of the lotus beautifully. It seems that the stem is coming from the mother Earth and the lotus supports the main sculpture. Two subordinate stems coming from each side of the origin of the primary stem and support three designs on each side.
2. A torso of an image, about two feet in length was there. Identification of this torso is not possible. *Vaijayantīmālā*, *Akshyamālā*, *Hāra*, *Upabita* and *kaṭibandhya* are there. But these features are quite common in many Hindu and Buddhist images. (Picture 89)
3. A *chhatrāvali* could also be seen. Probably this was a part of a votive *stūpa*. It had eight layers and a *āmalaka* at the top. (Picture 90)
4. Next is a portion of a stele. Upper portion of Garuḍa can be seen. It has four hands spread uniquely. His two wings are well carved. Above this, kneeling elephant is on the ground and a warrior on its back holding a shield in his right hand. A horse shown just behind the elephant. Its right-back leg is placed on

the head of the elephant, left-back leg is on the platform and its front two leg is busy in fighting with that warrior. And an image of a male figure in *namaskāramudrā* is placed on horseback. The entire image makes a sense of war in peace in the end. (Picture 91)

Other important discoveries are a head of a god, (Picture 92) a mutilated *padmāsana* with a female devotee, (Picture 93) a male figure wearing *vanamāla*, (Picture 94) and a Śivalinga with *yonipīṭṭa*. (Picture 95)

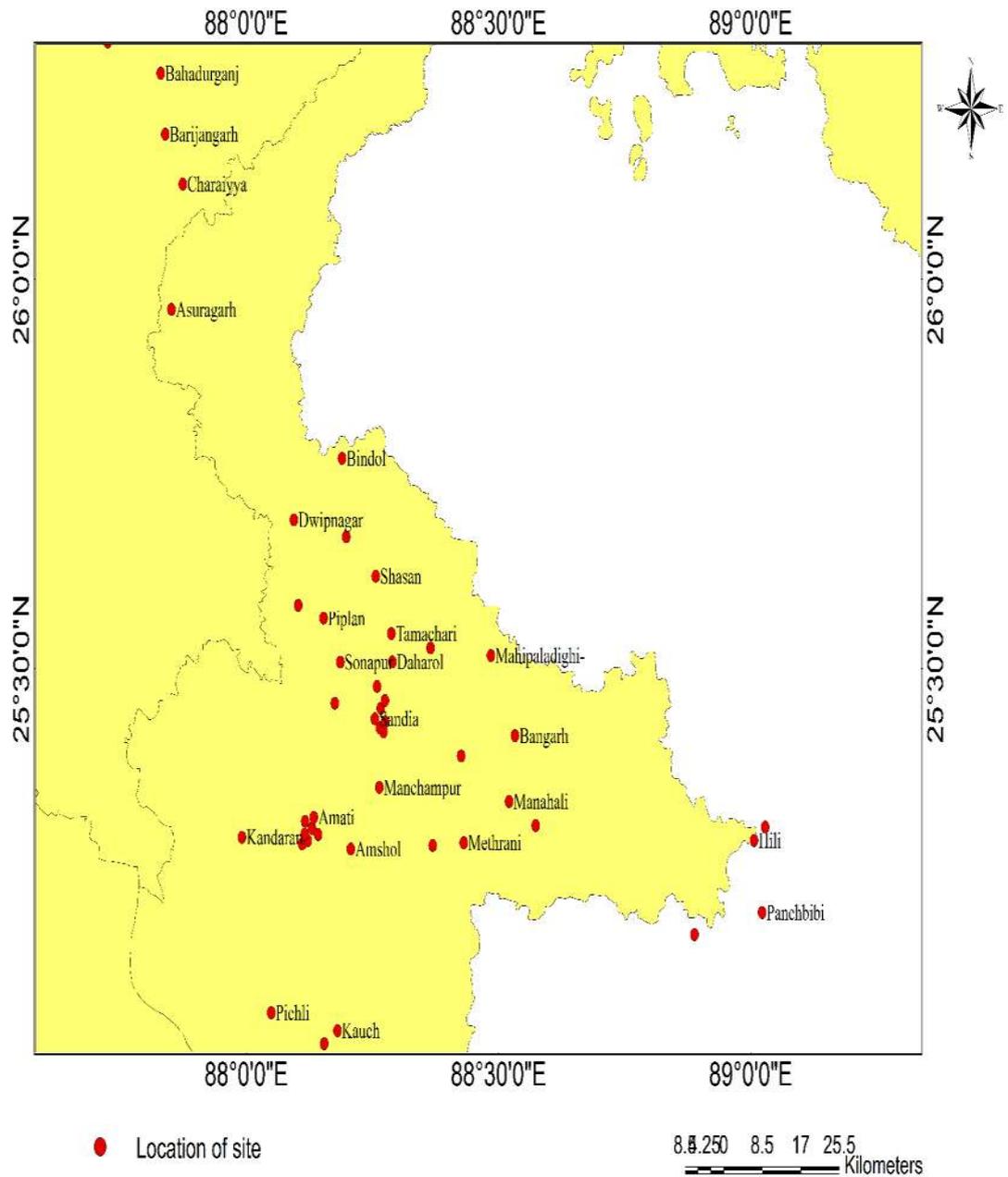
Pauti

Pauti (25°55'22.8"N 88°04'44.4"E) is situated on the bank of the river Nagar. It is an isolated site. No such archaeological remains have so far been discovered from this site. But some small mounds can be seen here and there. This place not yet attracted the attention of the scholars. A small Viṣṇu image of 3.5 x 1.5 feet has been recovered from a pond nearby. (Picture 96)

The principal figure stands on a full-blown lotus on *Samapadasthānaka* posture. In ornamentation it has *kirit mukuta*,¹⁵ *makara kundala*, *vaijayantīmālā*, *akshyamālā*, *ratnaupabita*, *kaṭibandhya*, *keyurabāhubandh* (two each), *kankana* or bangles, *vanamālā*, *tilaka* (sandal work) on forehead etc. The half-closed eyes show the sense of deep meditation. The curly hairs fall in locks over his shoulders. The stele is conical at the top, which is a common feature of eleventh/twelfth century's Pāla-Sena sculpture. Here is placed the *kirtimukha*. Two flying *vidyadharas* are placed on floral designs at both side of the god. Just down to the *vidyadharas*, the *gajasimha* images are carved on both sides. Below this portion, two goddesses are placed. The goddess on the right side is recognised with Laxmi and the left one with Saraswati. Both of them are standing on separate full-blown lotuses and place with separate stele. The steles are round in shape with simple dotted design take place at the edges. From the shape of these steles we can easily assume that the main stele was also round in shape. Right hand of Laxmi is broken. She holds a lotus with long stem in her left hand. Saraswati holds *Bīnā* (harp) with her two hands. At the bottom of the sculpture, two separate images are placed. Garuḍa, the *vāhana* of lord Viṣṇu, is placed with *namaskāramudrā* on the left and an image with *namaskara mudra*, possibly the donor is placed on the right.

This study would not be completed without the analysis of the Hindu artefacts used in the Islamic architecture. First in this list is a monolithic column bearing a warrior hero image holding bow and arrow and followed by another warrior. (Picture 97) Second, one beautifully carved monolithic columns is there. At the bottom of the column four replicas of temple are placed in four sides. The *śikhara* of the temples are covered with floral and *āmalaka* designs and at the top a giant *āmalaka* and a *kalasa* take place. These carvings can be treated as the best example of Pāla-Sena art. (Picture 98) Third, a monolithic block of 30 inches X 42 inches in measurement is looks like a modern toilet. This block is slope-sided at the back with two footsteps and a cut-line in between. (Picture 99) These images are representing the artefacts used in the Islamic architecture of medieval Gour. In the Mohammedan buildings of Pandua, we can see an image of dancing Ganeśa, (Picture 100) an image of dancing female figure is placed in a circle, (Picture 101) an image of Ganeśa seated in a temple structure, (Picture 102) and a male image of garland bearer can be seen with two *kirtimukha*. From the mouth of these *kirtimukha* branches of floral design are coming out. The male image have beard and wears a snake halo, which resulted in an outrageous look. (Picture 103) These carvings can be treated as the best example of lost Pāla-Sena school of art.

Map 5: Location map of the archaeological sites.



Notes

1. The river Suin is a small stream of the river Mahananda, comes out from Khasra (25°30'29.03"N 88° 4'43.80"E) and enters in the Mahananda in Joyhat region.
2. The exact date of the Anthology is not known, but it has been reasonably assigned to a period between 1100 to 1130 CE. It appears to have been compiled in Bengal, probably at Jagaddala *Vihāra*, during the declining power of the Pāla kings. Srīdharadāsa naturally uses it as a source book for his *Saduktikarṇāmṛta*.
3. In the village directory of west Bengal we find a good number of villages having the same name, like *Jagadalla/Jagadal/Jagaddala*. In Bamongola PS of Malda district, we have two mouzas, one named Jagdal and the other named PatharJagdal. In Kaliachak PS of the same district there is a mauza named Jagdulla. In Nachol PS (now in Bangladesh) there is a village named as Jagdail we also find a mauza named Jagdalla in Bansihari PS of South Dinajpur district and in North Dinajpur district we find one mauza named Jagadal in Itahar PS and one in Jagdal village of Kaliaganj PS.
4. Interview of the villagers, 26.12. 2014.
5. Usually Vajrasattva wears a crown with the five directional Buddhas depicted on it. Here, the four layered with one knot at the top of *ḥjaṭāmukūṭa* representing this.
6. The Inner Offering Deities – often male in China and Japan but usually female in India and Tibet.
7. The local people worshiped the deity as Bhairavimata.

8. The river Kanchan is now completely dried up. It is a spill channel between the river Nagar and the river Kulik. Only in rainy season, we can see some water, which come from the river Kulik and fall in the river Nagar.
9. Aruna is the elder brother of Garuḍa, the famous bird-vehicle of Viṣṇu.
10. This type of backslab, which is flat at the top, is not frequent in Bengal art.
11. The object in the left hand is indistinct.
12. The reason behind the interesting name of the pond is that, once a horse (*Ghorā* in Bengali) went down to this pond and never returns that mean the horse reached *Pātāl* (means somewhere under soil surface). (Source: oral tradition)
13. Buddha is the remarkable example of the capacity for assimilation, characteristic of the brahmanical revival during the period of the Gupta supremacy.
14. ‘The figure of Balarāma should carry the *musala* in his right hand and the *hāla* in his left..... according to *Agni Purāna*, Balarāma is required to carry the *gadā* and the *hāla*.....’. (Rao, 1914, p. 201).
15. Here the *kiritmukuta* is unique in respect of the counter parts. This *mukuta* looks like a *kalasa* with a *āmalaka* at the top.

References

- Adhikary, S.K. (2010). The Mounds of Kamalabari. *HR*, 18(1&2), 49-52.
- Bhattacharya, B. (1958). *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*. Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay.
- Bhattacharyya, M. (2002). *Art of Bengal: The Sculpture of The Mahananda-Karatoya Valley. I*, Kolkata: IIOSR.
- (2008). *Glimpses of Buddhist Bengal*. Kolkata: IIOSR.
- Bhattashali, N.K. (1929). *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculpture in the Dacca Museum*. Dacca: University of Dacca.
- Cordier, P. (1914). *Catalogue du fonds tibétan de la Bibliothèque Nationale Troisième Partie II*. Paris, FR.: Imprimerie Nationale.
- Goswami, K. G. (1948). *Excavations at Bangarh*. Calcutta: University of Calcutta.
- Gupte, R. S. (1972). *Iconography of The Hindus, Buddhists and Jains*. Bombay: D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Private LTD.
- Hopkins, E. (1915). *Epic Mythology*. Strassburg, France: Verlag Von Karl J. Trubner.
- Linrothe, R. (1999). *Ruthless Compassion: Wrathful Deities in Early Indo-Tibetan Esoteric Buddhist Art*. London, U.K.: Serindia.
- (2014). Deity and Donor as Vajrasattva. *History of Religion*, 54(1).
- Macdonell, A. (1897). *Vedic Mythology*. Strassburg, France: Verlag Von Karl J. Trubner.
- Mookerji, R. K. (1947). *Ancient Indian Education*. London, U.K.: Macmillan and Co. Limited.
- Niyogi, P. (1980). *Buddhism in Ancient Bengal*. Kolkata: Jijnasa.

- Rao, T.A. (1916). *Elements of Hindu Iconography*. 2(1), Madras: The Law Printing House.
- Roy, N. R. (1414 BS). *Bangālīr Itihās: Ādi Parva* (6th edition). Kolkata: Dey's Publishing.
- Saraswati, S. K. (1932a). Notes on Two Tours in the District of Maldah and Dinajpur. *JPASB, (NS)*, 28. 173-183.
- (1932b). Notes on a Third Tour in the District of Dinajpur- chiefly along the Chiramati River. *JPASB, (NS)*, 28(1), 185-195.
- (1938). Notes on a Fourth Tour in the District of Dinajpur. *JRASB, Letters*, 2, 1936.9-20.
- Sarkar, H. K. (2009). *Itihas, Sahitya O Siksha*. Balurghat: Auto Packagers and Printers.
- Sastri, H. (1897). *Discovery of Living Buddhism in Bengal*. Calcutta: Sanskrit Press Depository.
- (2012). *Rāmacaritam of Sandhyākaranandin* (Reprint). Kolkata: The Asiatic Society.
- Telang, M. R. and Pansikar, W. L. (1899). *The Gita-govinda of Jayadeva*. Bombay: Nirnaya Sagara Press.
- Vidyabhusana, S.C. (1921). *History of Indian Logic: Ancient, Medieval and Modern Schools*. Calcutta: The Calcutta University and The Baptist Mission Press.