

# Overview of Vedic Education System of Nabadwip in Ancient India

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## ABSTRACT

Once described as Vidyatirtha all over India. Nabadwip was a famous centre of learning and cultural practice since ancient times. Nadia formerly called Nabadwip. It was situated of the Confluence of the Ganga and Jalangi rivers in Bengal. Nadia University was imparted three centers Nabadwip, Shantipur and Gopalpur. On the east Bank of the Ganga is Nabadwip present West coast. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's appearance and pre-sannyas life is blessed with this Nabadwip. This is the reason why this Nabadwip Dam has become a great pilgrimage for the world humanity. In the glorious pages of history Nabadwip is regarded as the Oxford of Bengal, thousands of years ago. Nabadwip was the seat of not only Sanskrit but also various type of knowledge. The Nabadwip place is mentioned in the Ramayana by Kritivias Ojha and the Mahabharata by Kashiram Das. In ancient India Nabadwip education system and culture spread over a large area.

**KEYWORDS:** Education system, Culture, Nabadwip, Sanskrit, Oxford of Bengal

## INTRODUCTION

Nabadwip means combination of nine Island or new Island. A pilgrimage seat in Nadia district of West Bengal and the birthplace of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, a Vaishnava Saint. Nabadwip was the capital during the Shane kings of Bengal. Bakhtiyar khajji conquered Nabadwip in the year 1202 during the

reign of Raja Laxman Sen, which marked the beginning of the Muslim empire in Bengal. Nabadwip was the seat of the school at the time. In Bengal, Sanskrit was known by the names of higher educational institutions.

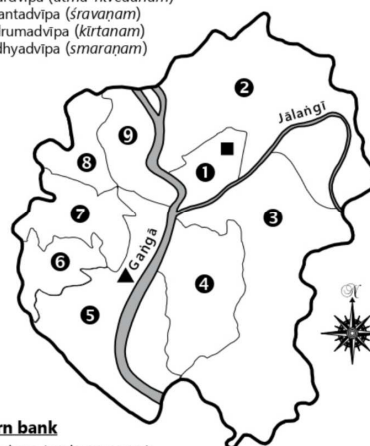
### Nine Islands of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

#### Eastern Bank

- 1 Antardvīpa (ātma-nivedanam)
- 2 Simantadvīpa (śraṇam)
- 3 Godrumadvīpa (kīrtanam)
- 4 Madhyadvīpa (smaraṇam)

#### Western bank

- 5 Koladvīpa (pāda-sevanam)
- 6 Rtvadvīpa (arcanam)
- 7 Jahnudvīpa (vandanam)
- 8 Modadrūma-dvīpa (dāsyaṃ)
- 9 Rudradvīpa (sakhyaṃ)



<http://brajdhama000.wordpress.com/maps-of-navadvipa/>

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Nabadwip Oishi-bhumi is the seat of Bengali culture and knowledge. Nabadwip's reputation as the best Educational Centre in Eastern India was established throughout India. Culture by which Sanskrit is achieved. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was born in the year 1486 AD, rising on the tide of Jotsna on the chest of the gangas in the sky of Nabadwip. Mahaprabhu took initiation from Keshav Bharati. Nabadwip is a centre of mixed culture, we can divided into 5 parts-

- A. Buddhist culture
- B. Shiva culture
- C. Strong culture
- D. Vaishnava culture
- E. Islamic culture

#### **Objectives of the study:**

1. To review the educational culture of Nabadwip during subjugation period.
2. To review the education system of ancient times during the Sena dynasty period and letter Kings.
3. Realizing how influential Chaitanya Deva was a social reformer and teacher.
4. Reviewing the role of "Toll" and "chatuspathi" as educational institution in ancient times.
5. Highlighting the education system and culture of Nabadwip in ancient India.

#### **Research methodology:**

It is essentially a work of historical research; the method of this research work is to collect various research data and analyze and review them to arrive at a conclusion gradually. The secondary source of this work is taken from various journal, articles and magazines. The educational system and culture of that era as a source of many historical researchers and writers from its journals, newspapers and many articles related to education of that era have been used.

#### **Background:**

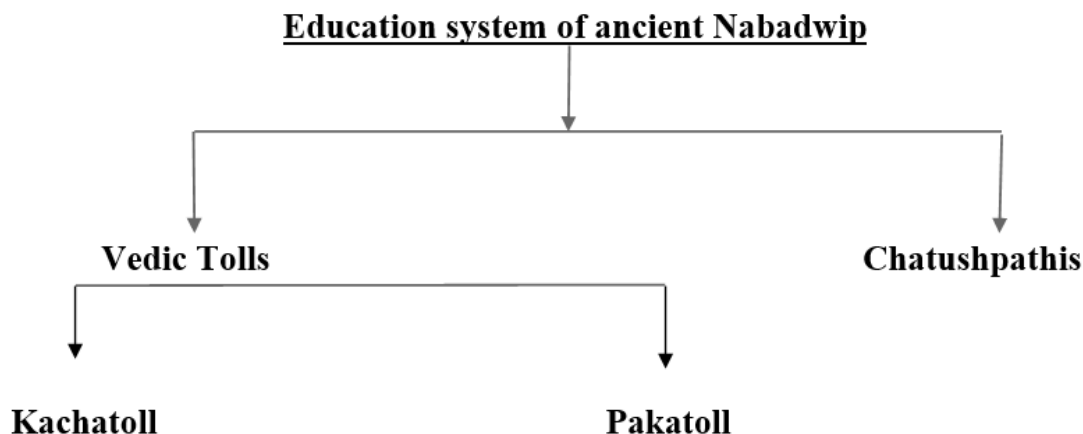
The reputation of Nabadwip as the best educational center of Eastern India was established throughout India. The collective pursuit of numerous medieval scholarly classes made Nabadwip a skyscraper. There are only a few literary works to prove that the development of education in ancient Nabadwip was at its peak. During the Maurya Gupta Pala Sen period and the 13th century, many traces of Nabadwip education are found. Here the practice of Sanskrit practice and the introduction of Vedic practice have been found.

- **Nabadwip of Sena dynasty period:** There is still no source of Nabadwip in the texts written during the Sena dynasty period. However, many historians believe that Raja Samanta Sen lived in Nabadwip. According to Hara Prasad Shastri mahashaya- "Samanta Sen a feudatory Raja of Karnataka, after being repeatedly defeated by his overload, fled to Bengal, where he founded a small Colony on the banks of Bhagirathi. This Colony was probably founded at Nabadwip. A close relationship developed with Nabadwip since the time of Raja Samanta Sen. Vijaya Sen elevated Nabadwip as a capital and a place of pilgrimage. Evidence of the existence of Nabadwip is found during the invasion of Bakhtiar Khalji. Ballal Sen was the best king of Sen Dynasty. In his last years, he handover the kingdom to his son Laxman Sen and he built a residence in the north-west of Nabadwip.
- **Nabadwip in the 13th century:** In 1206 AD the Turks invaded Nabadwip, at the beginning of the thirteenth century Ikhtiar Uddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji attacked. Bengal Sen kings were defeated due to presence and the sun of Bengal's independence has set. Defeated Laxman Sen escaped by secret route and captured by bakhtiyar. After the conquest of Nadia, the city of Nadia was reduced to ruins when he was stationed here. Laxman Sen was defeated by Bakhtiyar. After looting Nadia, Bhaktiyar established his capital at Lakhnauti Nagar. Minhaj Tabqat-i-Nasiri(1206)wrote in his book- " The Fame of the intrepidity gallantly and victory of Muhammad-I-Baktiyar had also reached Rai Lakhmoniya whose seat of government was city of Nudish"(Tabakat-I- Nasiri- tr by H. G Ravarty P-554).
- **Background of Nabadwip and Nadia:** Mothers love to call their children by more than one name, Nickname Good name Affectionate name etc. But this does not apply to the naming of a place. The nomenclature of Nabadwip and Nadia is completely distinct. Prof. Dr. Khudiram Das talks about language evolution. He says the word Nadia, Nabadwip is tadbhava and true form. Rajinikanth Chakraborty said clearly Nabadwip is also called Naodiya which means new country. Nadia here refers to the new land deposited by the Ganges. Nabadwip got its name from the new island. Narahari Chakraborty first introduces "Nabadwip" as a nine island. The word Nadia is a Persian word. Nadia means new island in Persian language. In 1255 AD, the Nadia word appears first written on silver coins. The name Nabadwip is first

mentioned in Kritivas Ojha's, Ramayana. He used the two names Nabadwip and Nadia in his Ramayana. Nadia now does not mean only Nabadwip it means the whole district.

### **Vedic Educational system of ancient Nabadwip:**

Nabadwip is the seat of Bengali culture and knowledge. Nabadwip's glory and knowledge are well-known since ancient times. Nabadwip is located in Rash Bhoomi. Rash Bhoomi was the main center of learning. Many eminent professors of India were here And discussed the scriptures. There is plenty of evidence for him in the literature. Buddhist practice was prevalent from Gupta dynasty to Pala dynasty But there was no shortage of educational practice. A lot of Buddhist influence can still be seen around Nabadwip. To describe the educational system of Nabadwip, the educational system of Nabadwip was originally divided into two parts are "Tolls" and "Chatushpathi". The Toll were again divided into two categories " Pakatol and kachatol".



### **Role of Vedic "Tolls" in education system of ancient Nabadwip:**

- In ancient times the door of education was not open to all. Education was only for the ruling priests and the privileged. Shudras of the lowest caste and women were not given the right to education. Vedanta was a special aspect of education in ancient India. Education in ancient times was Guru Mukhi. One had to get education from Gurukula or Tapavan. Ashram lore was mainly divided into two parts, Paravidya and Aparavidya. Paravidya is the study of the 3 Veda and 6 Vedangas for the purpose of attaining absolute knowledge. Aparavidya is the fulfillment of duties necessary for earthly life. Mathematics was well advanced in ancient India, Advances in astronomy and mathematics took place.
- Institutions of Bengali Sanskrit education were known as Tolls. Just as Muslims had to receive education from madras, Hindu institutions of higher learning were considered cultural institutions. Tolls were educational centers similar to present-day madrasa where Sanskrit language was practiced, But it had a much older tradition than the Madrasa.
- Ancient period Tolls and Chatushpathi were found in Nabadwip. The Tolls of those days were individualistic. Guru Mahasaya would teach and the disciple would take it. In case of the death of the professor, a suitable heir would manage the toll, Otherwise it would have stopped. He who is an expert in this subject would provide. The education system was unpaid, No student had to bear the cost of education. There was no fixed time frame for education. They would continue their studies until the disciples got proper education. Even old students studied in Tolls. The age of education was from seven to twenty years. Education had to be completed at the age of twenty.
- These Tolls had walls made of mud and roofed with of straw, Students lived in them. At the far end was a large house, the house without walls had a thatched roof on top, this is the reading room. Panditamashai used to establish these Tolls in a house of donation and with donated money. Study started in the morning, There was about 3 hours off in the afternoon for Bathing, eating, worshipping and resting. After that the reading started and continued till the evening. If something was not understood, the students could ask questions and Gurumoshai would answer them with interest. As a result of such teaching, the full development of the student was achieved. Chaitanya Dev used to teach in two hours and then give the students a break to rest and eat.
- At the end of the lessons there was an examination system. In the 16th century, Tolls in Nabadwip had a large number of students. The glory of the Tolls in Nabadwip was well known. Some Tolls were taught mainly grammar as well as literature and mythological poetry. A second type of Tolls mainly taught memory

and mythology. In the third type of Tolls jurisprudence was the main subject. Tolls used oral teaching and debating methods as teaching methods. Also recited the book and recited all its verses and had the students listen attentively when he debated between two teachers.

- Puthi was in vogue at that time. Many teachers used to compose pun this and they greatly enhanced the status of education. The predominance of Brahmin children in these schools was particularly noticeable. This is the reason these Tolls were established in the Brahmin populated areas. Mahaprabhu Chaitanya received his education from the Tolls of Nabadwip. And later taught grammar in these Tolls after finishing her study at a young age.
- During that time various kings, zamindars and nobles patronized these Tolls, With their help Toll's education gained popularity. The number of tolls in the past is not half of what it is now. India was once famous for the tolls education system of Bengal and students from many places used to come here for education, But currently this education is facing several problems. The current education is so magnificent that the Tolls education cannot keep up with it. The promotion and effort of toll education is gradually decreasing. Just as one has to accept death when one is born, whatever has its rise has its fall. The very important education system of Bengal is sinking to the glorious bottom today.

### List of tolls:

On April 5, 1873 AD, the municipality was given the administrative responsibility of the Municipal Management Act. 33 primary schools according to municipal records of 1969, a night school, seventeen chatushpathi and Seventeen libraries are reported to have received aid. The existence of 17 chatushpathis is found from "Nabadwip Mahima Grantha" in 1937 AD.

### Below is the list of tolls-

	NAME OF THE TOLLS	NAME OF THE PROFESSOR
1.	Kachatoll	Professor jatindranath Tarkatirtha
2.	Pakatoll	Professor nishikanta Torkatirtha and Ramgopal Tarkatirtha
3.	Tolls of government justice	Professor Chandidas Nayatarkatirtha
4.	Tolls of government justice	Professor Prana Gopal Tarkatirtha
5.	Government Memorial Tolls	Professor tripath Nath smriti Tirtha
6.	Chaitanya Chatushpathi	Professor Atul Krishna pakhyatirtha
7.	Municipal tolls	Professor Manoranjan kabyabekaran Smriti tirtha
8.	Universal Gauranga Chatushpathi	Professor Bhavananda kabyaratna
9.	Shivasangan tolls	Professor Ashutosh Siddhanta
10.	Churachand chatushpathi	Professor shiva Dutta Sharma
11.	Lilavati Bhakti Shastra Pitha	Professor naleenikanta torkatirtha
12.	Vishnupriya Darshan tolls	Professor Gaurkishore vedantatirtha
13.	Kamalakanta Memorial Ratna Tolls	
14.	Ramakanta tarkatirtha's tolls	
15.	Ramgopal tarkatirtha's tolls	
16.	Shivnath tarkatirtha's tolls	
17.	Smriti Kantha Smriti-tirtha's Tolls	
18.	Kedarnath Samkhya-tirtha's tolls	
19.	Surendranath saphya tirtha's tolls	

### Role of "chatushpathi" in education system of ancient Nabadwip:

The Vedas are the ancient scriptures of Hinduism. Another name of Vedas is Shruti as Vedas were memorized by listening to them. The Vedas are divided into four parts Rig-Veda, Sam-Veda, Yajur-Veda and Atharva-Veda. Four Veda, Grammar, Poetic, Memoirs, philosophy these four scriptures and other scriptures were practiced. Four Shastras were taught where, it was called Chatushpathi. Different scholars were experts in different subjects, He who

was expert in that subject practiced only that subject. In ancient times mainly education started after Upanayana, Knowledge was spread through word of mouth and guru-disciple tradition. Chatushpathi list is given below:

### Relationship of Guru and Disciples:

The tradition of Nabadwip is that from time immemorial the relationship between guru and disciple was very affectionate. Guru-disciple used to live here like father and son during education period.



Professors taught students with filial love. Guru Mahashay's role was very important not only in teaching but also in character building. Along with acquiring knowledge, good character formation also acquired good manners. Along with the readings, there was a discussion about worship and religion, To develop piety among students. The king-zamindars used to grant land to meet the expenses of the Tolls. There was a good system of giving monthly stipends to tolls collectors. Students also used to beg from door to door to solve the Toll's financial crisis. They were not interested in anything other than enlightenment. The students were tolerant and patient, they respected and adored people from every strata of society. The Guru and disciple relationship was too good.

### **Examination Center of Poramatala:**

That famous place in Nabadwip, "Bidagdhya janani's Punyapeeth" is now known as Poramatala. Scholars and students used to gather at this place since ancient times. Here there was not only the study of scriptures, but also worship, meditation, chanting, etc. The greatness of the location of Vidyadevi's presiding form is well established. This Poramatala was the examination center of Nabadwip Pandit Samaj. Then this place was not surrounded by so many big houses. The place was very sacred and solemn. At the root of a huge banyan tree was enshrined the idol of the goddess. That banyan tree was so ancient it's time has not yet been found. Some say that the name Poramatala comes from the mother of the students. The importance of Poramatala as an examination center in Nabadwip is immense. Poramatala is world famous as a special place. Poramatala is known as a special place of Nabadwip.

### **Contribution of Guru Spouses:**

Students could acquire gurugriha education with peace of mind. The Guru's wife used to serve and care for the students like a mother, Pandit Mahashay used to serve them like a son. Students would belong to Pandit Mahashay's family. They used to eat and drink there. The students considered themselves grateful by serving the Guru like a god. Guru spouses take responsibility for bringing up students. They did it voluntarily, no matter how much the number of students increased, there was no fatigue among them. For this reason they were respected even more than Gurumashay. Students developed a sacred relationship with professor spouses.

### **Major findings:**

➤ It goes without saying that Nabadwip contributed to the education system of ancient India. The education system has undergone a special evolution over time. Since ancient times the

relationship between guru and disciple was close and unwavering. The Guru looked at her students as a son. The students respected the Guru and prostrated at his feet. From the ancient times to the present time, the teacher-disciple relationship is close in every educational institution.

- The philosophy of logic has been practiced since ancient times and is still in great demand today. Zero was first used in Bengal from that ancient period. The philosophy of logic has been practiced among students since ancient times.
- Nabadwip was called the meeting place of cultures. Buddhist, Jain, Muslim, Christian, Sanskrit are united here. Cultural ideas are developed here. This Nabadwip was the cradle of ancient Sanskrit language in the world. Due to the cultural practices, the glory of Nabadwip gained worldwide fame. Navaddeep was the "Oxford of Bengal" to foreigners. Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who spread Krishna love all over the world, created a stir all over the world.
- The system of examination has its origin since ancient times with Nabadwip as its focal point. Patience and devotion were taught in the educational system of Nabadwip. The students had concentration which helped them reach their goals. At present we focus on any task by setting our goals. We have been learning about building a close family and unity since ancient times.
- I got to know about tolls and Chatuspathi education system of ancient times. Many people have no idea about its artifacts because they are so ancient. Above all is Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's social life and role as a teacher. It shows how education has progressed from the Sena dynasty period to the Gupta period and today.

### **Conclusion:**

Culture is the medium through which reform is achieved. In Nabadwip there were facilities for reading and reading the differences of other scriptures. The University of Nabadwip was residential and examination system like present day. Exams were conducted as per rules. It was not only the Brahmins in the society that progressed in education, Sanskrit education spread to people of all walks of life. Students could understand the subjects by studying properly. Apart from scholars, royal officials and cultural elites were also present at Laxman Sen.'s meeting. In 1757, after the Battle of Palashi, Sanskrit education was interrupted by the temptation of English education. A new aspect of Bengali literature was unveiled in Vaishnav literary practice. The scholars of Nabadwip practiced

literature not only in Sanskrit, They wrote a lot of literature in their mother tongue.

As a result of writing literature in the mother tongue, the country improved a lot, Many scholars gained fame by writing literature in their mother tongue and became proficient scholars in Bengali. Finally, it can be said that along with the evolution of the education system of the ancient era, many things have been carried over to the present. Which greatly affects our present and future generations. Even though education has evolved over the ages, The education of ancient times will remain sweet and exemplary to all its students. Many learning techniques and learning methods from ancient times have been used in modern times through evolution. It was the golden age of cultural practices that spread across India. From feudal class of Sen period to Vijay Sen period the study of Sanskrit language was greatly expanded. Ballal Sen himself was a scholar of Sanskrit literature, he Published two books in Sanskrit "Dansagar and Adhvudsagar". In ancient times, the education and culture of Nabadwip in India had improved considerably. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu maintained all the Nabadwip with the love and devotion of his heart. Tantra teaching first appeared in Navadvipa, All the religious systems that followed

certain rules were called Tantras. The worshippers of Kali were called Tantrics. Krishnananda was a famous tantra monk in Nabadwip.

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