

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS:PATALIPUTRA (PART-1)

**M.A.(HISTORY) SEM-2 PAPER CC:7**

**DR. MD. NEYAZ HUSSAIN**

**PROFESSOR & HOD**

**PG DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

**M.B.R.R.V. PRASAD SINGH COLLEGE, VKSU, ARA(BIHAR)**

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS (पुरातात्विक उत्खनन)

Major *Rennell* had for the first time in 1783 proposed the possibility of ancient Pataliputra being identified with modern Patna in his *Memoir of a Map of Hindustan*. *Buchanan* was the first to carry out a regular survey of Patna for its ancient ruins. During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century *Alexander Cunningham* and *J.D. Beglar* made several attempts to locate the sites mentioned by the two Chinese pilgrims but without any significant finding.

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS (पुरातात्विक उत्खनन)

During 1892-99, *L.A. Waddell* carried out exploration and excavation at various places in Patna including *Bulandibagh*, *Chhoti Pahari*, *Tulsimandi*, *Maharajganj to the north-east of Kumrahar* and at *Rampur, Bahadurpur and Prithipur in the south of Patna* (Waddell 1892, 1903). At Bulandibagh, Tulsimandi and Maharajganj Waddell brought to light remains of wooden beams of

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS (पुरातात्विक उत्खनन)

about 18" to 20" in diameter arranged in a double row and also wooden drains. He also discovered a colossal capital in Corinthian style. At Kumrahar, he succeeded in finding a broken Asokan pillar at its northeastern corner. In 1897-98, *P.C. Mukherji* also took up excavations at Lohanipur in Patna and came across a ditch extending to 76 m from east to west and also found punch-marked coins, coins of Chandragupta II and fragments of polished pillars .

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS (पुरातात्विक उत्खनन)

In 1912 and onward years, *D.B. Spooner* of ASI re-excavated Bulandibagh and Kumrahar and at the latter site found all over the site remains of brick walls of the period Pillared hall ranging between the Gupta and post-Gupta period. Below these walls was encountered a layer of charcoal and ashes (about 30 cm thick) strewn with innumerable fragments of polished sandstone pillars

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS (पुरातात्विक उत्खनन)

occurring at a regular interval of 4.57 m (15 feet) from each other. Spooner found a total of 80 such pillar remains in eight rows with roughly ten heaps in each row. He surmised that there had existed a Mauryan pillared hall at the site resting on 80 or more pillars (72 pillar spots actually found by then) which in turn had been placed on a wooden support.

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS (पुरातात्विक उत्खनन)

According to him, the belt of ashes and charcoal indicated that before the date of the later brick structures the wooden superstructure of the building had been destroyed by fire which was also responsible for the rending asunder of the exposed parts of the pillars. He also postulated that with the decay of the wooden platform on which the pillars were resting, the pillars sank deep in the soft soil. In the absence of similar

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS (पुरातात्विक उत्खनन)

parallels in India, he favoured a similarity between Achaeminid hall of Persepolis and the Mauryan hall. At another site in the city area known as *Sardargaly* Spooner discovered several fragments of polished stone pieces. Again in 1926-27 the site of Bulandibagh was selected for archaeological excavation in order to determine the nature of wooden palisades. Here, the palisade of about 250 feet in length running in east-west direction was exposed.

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS (पुरातात्विक उत्खनन)

Two rows of upright pillars about 12 feet in height above the floor were seen placed at a distance of 14 feet 6 inches from one another. The space between the pillars was paved with wooden sleepers and their ends were socketed with upright pillars. In 1935 a similar structure was found at *Gosainkhand*, 800 m to the east of Bulandibagh .

(To be continued)