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MARKET CENTRES AND TRADE ROUTES IN LATE ANCIENT BIHAR

Anil Kumar

The complex of trade networks that existed in early India gave way to a new pattern of commercial transactions by the end of the Gupta period. This indubitable shift is poignantly articulated by the decline in major attributes of a commercial economy, like towns, coins, etc. A dominant strand of contemporary historiography positing the currency of feudalism in late ancient times interprets this development as a negation of commercial activities during the period. This is, however, an erroneous view because a feudal society also admits of an exchange network, the only different being its relative diminution. The near disappearance of a currency tradition further weakens its status. To posit the complete absence of trade in late ancient India and that too with the full appreciation of the differing patterns of regional formation is also no one's argument. The post Gupta period not only witnessed the emergence of a new cultural region in lower Ganga valley, but it also marked the beginning of extensive agriculture leading to the production of surplus that came to sustain a number of complex institutions and practices. It needs to be realized that some of the areas of eastern India became participants in trading network for the first time during this period. The study of trade and commerce of Bihar, therefore suffers from an apparent dichotomy between the feudal relations and the constraints of trade inherent therein on the one hand and the horizontal expansion of complex socio-political structures at the regional levels on the other. The present survey seeks to analyze the available data to mediate between these two seemingly contradictory positions.

North Bihar has a large area of alluvial land which is well known for its fertility and on the other side south Bihar is famous for its mineral reserves. Bihar may be divided into two physical zones — North Bihar, and South Bihar, the Ganges flowing between the two. North Bihar is about 22000 sq. miles, and comprises a flat alluvial plain except for two hills, i.e. Sumeswar and Dun hills. South Bihar has two types of land — plain and plateau. The plain stretches to the south of the Ganges for about 13000 sq. miles, but it is not free from hills. The Barabar hills, the Rajgir-Jethian hills, and Kharagpur hills lie in this belt. The plateau called Chotanagpur plateau extends for about 35,000 sq. miles. The dynastic history of Bihar from the post-Sunga period until the rise of the Guptas in early 4th century A.D. is undocumented and

therefore very sketchy. After the establishment of the Gupta Empire, the economic condition of Bihar does not seem to have changed. The economy of Bihar during the Guptas was also predominantly rural. Land became the main source of sustenance. Two copper plate inscriptions of Samudra Gupta — suggest that peasants and artisans were confined to their respective villages so that their self-sufficient economy might not be disturbed.²

The overall pattern of agrarian economy affected the nature of contemporary urban economy. The existence of towns in late ancient Bihar seems to have been well – rooted in the contemporary milieu. Towns, being a super structural manifestation of the techno-economic base, underwent a decisive transformation in their prime features, a development that was in consonance with the new economic pattern. Earlier urban centers of Bihar declined or disappeared by the beginning of the 7th century A.D. Centres like Pataliputra; Chirand, Vaishali, Rajagriha, Katra, Champa, etc., lost their urban identity³ primarily due to their disassociation from mercantile activities. The new towns that emerged during the period – the two most representative centers being Nalanda and Vikramshila – had a distinctive character compared to the earlier urban centers. These transformed towns revolved around two functions – political and religio-educational. Their rudimentary exchange pattern was geared to meet the needs of the dominant institutions of the respective centers. An attempt to identify such centers in different parts of Bihar brings to the fore either their explicit sacred or secular basis for existence; they were either religion centered or fortified administrative nuclei. This phase of urbanization in Bihar stands in opposition to the well developed urban ethos, of the pre-A.D. 600 periods. Similarly, the trade and currency network of the period also admits of a sluggish existence. Trade was sought to be localized, a development well articulated by the growing popularity of *hattas* (local market places) which were periodical in nature and tended to become the centers of exchange of their respective localities thereby undermining the chances of the continuation of long distance commercial contact with such areas. Trade primarily due to the constraints of the new social formation footnote 4, actually diminished to the level of marginalia in the context of contemporary economy. The lessening requirements of a monetary exchange pattern in the new milieu, the contradictions in the economy making trade unprofitable and the apparent impact of feudal ideology and realities upon the mercantile activities as well as upon the community attached to it, generated a tendency on the part of local merchants and traders to transgress into an alien domain to acquire landed property,⁵ thereby

shifting them from their own profession to the ranks of the ruling landed aristocracy.⁶

In this socio-economic situation, the people of Bihar were left with sufficient surplus and time for intellectual as well as religious activities. The horizon of Buddhists was widened by the philosophical ideas of Aryadeva, Vasubandhu, Buddhaghosa and Dinnaga. Inscriptions and seals found in various places of Bihar testify to the phenomenal growth of Vaisnavism, Saktism and Saivism during the Gupta age. In the period under survey, there was also a restatement of values of life and affirmation of the Puranic values, which never denied the authority of the Vedas and held the *Śruti* as the infallible source of religion. An outcome of the greater intellectual activity were the controversies between the rival religious movements and philosophical schools.⁷ Steps taken by the Gupta Kings strengthened the growth and spread of Brahmanical religion among the masses.⁸ Inscriptions of the Gupta period suggest that the people of Bihar during this age were well acquainted with Vedic and Puranic myths. The prowess and qualities of the king have been expressed through Puranic analogies. In one of the inscriptions Samudra Gupta has been described as equal to the Gods Dhanda, Varuna, Indra and Antaka and who was the very axe of the God Kṛtanta.⁹ The inscriptions of the Maukharis who ruled in the Gaya region in the first half of the sixth century A.D. frequently alluded to the Puranic deities.¹⁰ The personal religion of Gupta rulers i.e. Budha Gupta, Narasimha Gupta, Kumara Gupta III and Vinaya Gupta whose royal seals have been found at Nalanda,¹¹ must have helped to increase the influence of Vaisnavism in Bihar. The Basarh seal proves the popularity of Vaisnavism in North Bihar.¹² Popular during the period was the *Avatara* concept of Vaisnavism.¹³ This *Avataravada* may be taken as an example of religious conflict and accommodation, because believers in this theory were trying to incorporate the Buddha into their own faith. Evidence to this is apparent from the famous late ancient historical sites in Bihar i.e. Nalanda, Ghosrama, Kurkihar, Valguda and Itkhori etc. where ancient Buddhist mounds were encroached to construct Brahmanical temples. Whether it was the Buddhist *Dharmachakra* or the debate over the worship of the footprint of the deity, the believers of Brahmanical religion have their argument that Buddhism adopted these forms of worship from Vaisnavism. The practice of worshipping foot print first started with the worship of the foot print of Vishnu at Vishnupada temple of Gaya since the 4th century A.D.¹⁴ Not only Vaisnavism but other branches of Brahmanical religion were equally popular in contemporary Bihar. Aniconic and iconic forms and representations of Siva have been found

in a number of places like Basarh, Bhagalpur, Nalanda and Gaya. Other than these Saktism is known from the inscriptions and images in Barabar hills. There is clear evidence for Sun worship from various places i.e. two seals from Basarh,¹⁵ image of Surya from Barauni,¹⁶ etc. The existence of the votaries of the Sun in Gaya, Shahabad and Bhagalpur, a temple of the Sun at Deo-Barunanak and Nalanda are enough to prove the popularity of Sun God among the masses.

Besides these forms of worship by the common people, the idea of *Bhakti* was also prevalent among them. Reference to the veneration of the footprints of Vishnu and Siva at Gaya, Basarh and Baiskaran are available. Ridge from Baiskaran, a place near Bhagalpur, show the influence of the doctrine of *Bhakti*. The cult of *Bhakti* meant that the universe was the abode of God and human beings should earn his grace by complete surrender.¹⁷ References opposing this concept are also available during this period as Buddhist scholars like Aryadeva, Bhavaviveka and Chandrakirti who flourished in Bihar during the Gupta age have criticized the Sankhya, Vaiseshika and Mimamsa schools.¹⁸ Hsuan Tsang's account reveals that Brahmanical temples were more numerous in Vrji (Vaisali) and Kajangala (Rajmahal) areas.¹⁹ He found nearly fifty Buddhist monasteries as compared to some tens of temples in Magadh.²⁰ From these two references by Hsuan Tsang it is clear that temple construction in Bihar started during the Gupta period.

Further in the post Gupta era urban economy deteriorated, trade and currency network were marginalized in the newly emerging structure of society. In this period, there is compelling evidence to prove the emergence of feudalism. Land grants were gifted to the Brahmanas and many restrictions were imposed on the peasantry.²¹ We have definitive evidence of extensive royal grants to Nalanda monastic establishment both by the later kings of the Gupta dynasty and Harsha.²² It is also claimed that the later Gupta King, Damodara Gupta who ruled in the 6th century A.D., created 100 *agraharas*.²³ Similarly, a prosperous village was given to Goddess Bhavani;²⁴ another village was granted to some priests.²⁵ The number of land grants apparently proliferated by the end of the 8th century A.D. due to the extension of Pala rule in Bihar. Many villages were granted according to the *Bhumichidranayaya*, which has been suggested as a tenure of bringing virgin land under cultivation.²⁶

In these economic and social circumstances new religious centers emerged, leading to the construction of temples by the rulers as well as by the locally powerful communities. It must be noted that these temples were not as gigantic or of great artistic value as compared to

the Buddhist monasteries of contemporary Bihar. The reason behind this was probably the fact that the Buddhist monasteries were built by the state or supported directly by them as well as patronized by the rich business community. On the contrary, few of the Brahmanical structures were getting these advantages and they were having support of the local followers. Temples structures of this period have been reported very often in the various excavations and exploration reports by archaeologists. However, the ancient historiography of Bihar preoccupied with the importance of Buddhist, Jaina and other heterodox monuments, has tended to overlook it. The question why such a large number of temples came up during this period, which is spread over the whole of modern Bihar, particularly near the important Buddhist sites, was never posed. Moreover, the question why the Pala rulers who were known for their Buddhist inclination later extended critical support to Brahmanas has also remained unaddressed.

As far as the religious centers of late ancient Bihar are concerned, there are numerous sources which throw light on the existence of important temples. Inscriptions are amongst the main sources which provide important data for the study of the religious centers of Bihar. The Bodh-Gaya stone inscription of Mahanama²⁷ is a case in point. Some of the Later Gupta inscriptions do furnish valuable information about temples in Bihar. The Apshad stone inscription of Aditya Sena records the construction of a temple of the god Vishnu. The Shahpur stone image inscription of the same ruler is inscribed on the pedestal of a standing image of Surya. Shahpur is situated on the right bank of Sakri river, about 9 miles to the south – east of Nalanda. The Deo-Barunarak inscription of Jivita Gupta II occurs on one of the four ornamented pillars of the temple at the village Deo-Barunarak situated about 25 miles south-west of Arrah. The Mangaraon stone inscription of Vishnugupta comes from a village situated at a distance of 14 miles south-west of Buxar in the district of Bhojpur.²⁸ A votive inscription, incised on a slab of stone, was found in two fragments from the Mundeswari temple in the district of Rohtas. A small stone inscription from Vateshvarasthana, a place near Patharghahata, about 8 miles north-east of Kahalgau in the district of Bhagalpur, is of considerable interest. It refers to the celebration of a ceremony styled 'Versa Vardhana' being performed in honour of the God Vaddeshvra.²⁹ It seems to indicate some kind of annual function or anniversary. Some of the Pala inscriptions also refer to religious centers of late ancient Bihar, the well known example being the Bodh-Gaya votive inscription of the Pala ruler Dharmapala.³⁰ The inscription records the consecration of a temple dedicated to the worship of the four – faced Mahadeva.

The Gaya Stone inscription of the time of the Pala ruler Narayanapala is at present in the courtyard of the Visnupada temple at Gaya. The purpose of the inscription is to record the erection of a monastery for the Brahmanical ascetics by a man named Bhandadeva in the 7th year of the reign of the king Narayanpala in the month of Vaishakha.³¹ Mention may be made of a terracotta plaque, said to have been obtained by a person belonging to a village under the Teghara police station of the Begusarai district. Unfortunately the exact find – spot of the terracotta plaque is not known. The inscription on the plaque mentions that three persons named Sadhi, Echi and Aka made a gift of a lotus at the feet of Kesana at Nagaladmka.³² The Munger stone inscription of the time of Bhagirtha, which was found inscribed on a slab of stone built up into the wall of the gateway near the Kastaharanighat of Munger refers to one king Bhagirtha and records the construction of a temple, presumably at the ghat itself. It is dedicated to the worship of the god Shambhu by one Gopalikrama of the Mukteshvara family,³³ not known from any other source. Thus the inscriptions from Bihar are of considerable significance as they furnish information about the existence of the temples in the state and other related aspects, connected with the temple, that might be the religious fares or the local market to fulfill the need, of pilgrims.

While analyzing the religious centers we find that they were spread over the whole state. The inscriptions not only refer to religious centers but also provide a fairly good idea of the economic activities associated with such settlements. Remains from Nalanda and Kurkihar (place near Wazirganj in Gaya district) are very important findings in this regard. From both the places, we get bronze images in plenty. From Kurkihar alone around 200 bronze images have been reported. Remains of furnace from Nalanda are worth mentioning. This indicates industrial activity at Nalanda. Even the blue granite stone sculptures were manufactured at Nalanda.³⁴ Nalanda does not have any mines nearby. Whatever minerals were required for the industrial activities must have been procured from the mines of Jharkhand area or any other place. Another significant centre is Itkhori. The site is located near modern Hazaribagh, which is not very far from the famous Dudhapani inscription site. It is well known that Dudhapani inscription was situated on the Ayodhya Tamralipti trade route. This centre was connected with the Falgu river also. Interesting feature of this centre is sand stone Buddhist sculptures and a blue stone sculpture of a Brahmanical deity. Both varieties of stone were not locally available, therefore it is obvious that these were brought either from Sahibganj and Chunar or from some other places. Since it was situated near the

Ayodhya Tamralipti route and river Falgu, it is reasonable to conclude that the site was well connected with other parts of the country. River Falgu starts from this region and submerges into river Haruhar at Nalanda via Bodh Gaya, Gaya and Kurkihar.

A large number of Buddhist as well as Brahmanical centers spread over in almost the whole alluvial plain of south Bihar certainly could not develop without links with other regions. The most important thing was the stone used for the making of sculptures and in few places, we get evidence of metal sculptures too. If we trust on the findings of a furnace from Nalanda, then certainly metal sculptures were transported from Nalanda to other regions of Bihar. The connectivity of Nalanda with other parts of the world is a well established fact. Students and scholars from foreign countries were visiting the place regularly. Again, it is difficult to believe that Nalanda developed in the absence of economic activity. Answer to this question may be found from the inscriptions from this region. An inscription on a bronze image from Nalanda refers to *Devapaldevahatta*,³⁵ another seal from Nalanda refers to *Srinalandasrihatta*,³⁶ an inscription on an image of Avalokitesvara found in the Surya temple at Bargaon near Nalanda refers to another *hatta* or mart named *Talahatta*³⁷ (the whole area of this part of Bihar is still known as Tal, because of low land area). Another important centre of late ancient Bihar which draws our attention in near modern Lakhisarai of Bihar. In 1871 Cunningham³⁸ surveyed the area and noticed the Mauryan structure, NBP ware and late ancient artifacts in a small modern village of Rajauna, which is around three kilometers west of Lakhisarai. Cunningham noticed that a large town or city existed here. The place is situated on the confluence of three important rivers of Bihar, i.e. Ganga, Haruhar and Kuil. The site extended upto Jayanagar, which is around two kilometers southeast of Rajuna. Jayanagar situated on the western bank of river Kuil had a width of 1.5 km. In the extreme north of the site Cunningham noticed three mounds of which two were square in shape and were identified as Buddhist monastery and the third as a Stupa. These mounds were also mentioned by Hsuan Tsang as Lo in ni lo and was visited by him. Later on this place became the capital of the last Pala king Indradumma. At Rajauna and the adjoining area large number of Pala artifacts have been noticed. Worth mentioning is the huge Siva linga made of black stone probably during the period of Narayanpala. Geographical location and the richness of the site gives us reason for the hypothesis that probably this centre was a river port during the period under review. Another reason to strengthen this hypothesis is the location of one more significant Pala period site, Naulagarh, situated just opposite to

Rajauna on the north bank of the Ganga. The antiquity of the place was noticed in 1950s. In 1951, D.C. Sircar and R.K. Choudhary brought to notice an inscription incised on the pedestal of a broken image which refers to the 24th regnal year of Pala king Vigrahapala.³⁹ Important north Bihar rivers were connected to this site. Therefore, it can be concluded that goods from Nalanda, Vikramsila or Sahibganj stone were transported to North Bihar either through this place or from Patliputra. The advantage of Rajauna was its river transport. From Pataliputra all the mentioned sites of north Bihar were not connected by the river.

Munger is around 40 km east of the above site and from Munger Vikramsila is around 40 km. All the three sites are situated on the southern bank of the Ganga. Therefore, one could move from Itkhor to Bodh Gaya, from Bodh Gaya to Nalanda via Gaya, and Kurkihar. After Nalanda to Vikramsila important religious or administrative centers like Ghosrama, Apsarh, Rajauna, Jayanagar and Munger are situated. These were certainly not villages or semi urban centers during the late ancient period. The size and the richness of these sites itself speaks about their material activity. Their connectivity with the rest of the late ancient sites supports the hypothesis. The most important in this regard is the discovery of gold plated images from Kurkihar. The place became an important Buddhist pilgrimage centre during the late ancient period. Pilgrims not only from remote places in India like Sakala in Punjab and Kerala but also from abroad like Bali, and possibly from Malaya and other countries were visiting the place as pointed out by Kittoe in 1847 in his report.⁴⁰ A pot full of Pala coins from Ghosrawan,⁴¹ discovery of Sasanka's single gold coin, a coin mould bearing the legend "Jaya" from Nalanda probably refers to Jayanaga, the predecessor of Sasanka, three gold coins of Lalitaditya Prataditya of Kashmir, a large number of silver coins showing Sassanian fire altar and legend "Sri-Vigra", perhaps of predecessor of Bhoja I Pratihara, a silver coin of Bhoja I Pratihara, a gold coin of Govindchandra Chandradeva at Nalanda and copper coin at Rajgir are clear evidence for Nalanda's commercial significance in the late ancient period.⁴²

There are plenty of references in this period to travelers using both land routes and river routes. The routes passing through mountainous areas have remained almost the same since time immemorial. In a hilly region, it is very difficult to chart out or find new routes, and as they have to run through certain passes, their number is always very few. However, roads running through the plains are apt to change, because people can move freely in such regions even without

definite routes and such tracks after some time take the form of usual routes. In the plains, routes can be easily made to facilitate communications. Bihar is not an exception to this. The land being plain, we find plenty of roads running from one part of the country to another. The Buddhist literature throws some light on the highways of the time, which connected important cities of northern India. In those days it was very difficult to cross the Ganga except at specified ferry points. We, therefore, find that roads ran along the South and North banks and again bifurcated.⁴³ Fa-Hien and Hsuan-Tsang traveled by many routes. A trade route ran from Savatthi (Sravasti) to Rajagriha, passing through Setevya, Kapilavastu, Kushinara, Pava, Hathigama, Bhandagama, Vaishali and across Pataliputra by the river and it ran up to Nalanda. The road probably went to Gaya, and there met another route from the east possibly from Tamralipti to Varanasi.⁴⁴ From Dudhapani inscription belonging to the district of Hazaribagh, we learn that an inland trade route from Ayodhya to Tamralipti passed through south Magadha, more particularly through Chotanagpur region.⁴⁵

Fa-hsien entered Bihar by the high road, which led from Vaishali to Kusinagara and further west. He then crossed the Ganga and followed the Pataliputra-Rajagriha road. From Rajagriha he went to Gaya. He then went to Kukuta Padagiri⁴⁶ (identified as Kurkihar) and from there to Pataliputra when he left for Kashi and then went to Champa. Then he followed the old Champa-Tamralipti route and embarked for Ceylon. The route followed by Hsuan-Tsang is not so easy to explain. He entered Bihar from the district of Shahabad after leaving the Chanchu country. He probably followed the old route along the southern bank of the Ganga. He then crossed the Ganga somewhere near modern Arrah and followed the road, which led from Varanasi to Vaishali along the northern bank of the Ganga. From Vaishali he went to Mithila along the highway. He then entered the valley of Nepal. The pilgrim again came back to Vaishali and traveling along the Vaishali-Rajagriha road he reached Tailadheka.⁴⁷ While going to Champa, Hsuan-Tsang started from Nalanda went to Giriyak and then proceeded through the hills of Shekhapura⁴⁸ to Rajauna⁴⁹ (Lo-Pan-ni-10) near modern Lakhisarai. He then went to Hiranya-Parvat in the neighbourhood of Munger and from there Hsuan-Tsang reached Champa after traveling 300 li (80 k.m.). He then followed the Champa-Tamralipti road and entered Bengal. Hsuan tsang actually once traveled through river also from Bodh Gaya to Champa.⁵⁰ In course of his river journey Hsuan Tsang started with the Falgu which extended upto Rajauna through river Haruhar which at this place submerges into the Ganga.

The invasion of Bhakhtiyar Khilji also gives information about a route. He crossed Sona river at Maner⁵¹ and proceeded to Biharsharif. From there he took a route which led through the wild Pataliputra-Tamralipti road via Dudhapani. Beside land routes, there must have been some communication by water also. The trade of Champa with foreign countries was carried through the Ganga. Boats went further west to Pataliputra, Varanasi and Prayag and to Indraprastha.⁵² The Khalimpur inscription⁵³ of Dharmapala gives a vivid description of boats in the Ganga at Pataliputra. Besides Ganga there is one more river in South Bihar where boats can be rowed throughout the year, the Sona. We do not find any reference of trade on Sona, but the location of Pataliputra at its junction with the Ganga, suggests not only the strong defense of the metropolis but also local trade through the Sona.

The situation in north Bihar is also not very different. Not less than twenty sites that belong to the late ancient period are there, and from every centre we get remains of Brahmanical sculptures made of either blue granite stone or metal. These centers include Dumra, Akaur, Aucchaitha, Manpaur, Durgauli, Devpura, Dhagjari, Kopagarh, Mirankha, Kapileshwara, Rajeshwara, Mangrauni, Balani, Kathaunadih, Navadeganadih, Saharandih, Bahera, Balirajgarh, Andhra Tharhi, Pastana, Nawatoli, Barhpokhara. A significant hint that we get from the distribution of the Pala sculptural remains and associated ruins of temple complexes is the existence of the network of roads for communication. The present road connecting Sitamarhi and Madhubani seems to have a long antiquity. Pala sculptures lying scattered at different sites-all along from Pupri to Madhubani seems significant in this context. Sites like Ahilyasthana, Dumra, Ucchaith, Durgauli, Akaur, Devapura, Dhagajari, Kapileshwar and Mangrauni are situated on either side of the stated road. However, a thorough distribution map of sculptural finds may give supplementary evidences of the possible trade-route. Another significant thing is that certainly either the raw material for the sculptures were imported in this part of Bihar, because this region does not have either any mountain of blue stone or mines for the metal sculptures. Sculptures are similar to the sculptures found in other parts of Bihar. Probably the blue stone was procured from the Sahibganj hills which is far from north Bihar.

The rivers of north Bihar are mostly navigable and so local trade must have been carried on along them since early times. But we have no definite evidence to support this. The foreign pilgrims are also silent about any communication by water in north Bihar. But the survival of old urban centers or emergence of new ones in this area is attested by archaeology. The most important representative of old urban centers

is Chirand in Saran district, representing the middle Ganga basin. A new occupational stratum was discovered in 1968-69 and coins of Gangadeya and other metal objects marked it out to be the late ancient phase of the site.⁵⁴

This survey of the available evidence pertaining to the late ancient religious centers of Bihar does enable one to argue that in a new stage of social formation there is space for establishing commercial activities. Although the commercial activities during this period could not match the previous period, but certainly it had not completely disappeared. Majority of the above mentioned religious sites were centers of more than one religion and large in size. Although direct evidence of economic activity is scanty from these sites, yet we should keep in mind that most of them are unexcavated and even unexplored systematically. Size, location and the artifact lying centers provide evidence of their material background. Their location either on the old trade routes or new charted routes in the plains which were connecting the other contemporary centers may be taken as evidence for routes which were not only providing access to the pilgrims but also the merchants. The number and size of sculptures found from these centers are evidence for their significance.

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35. *EI*, XXV, pp.334-335.
36. *MASI*, No.66, p.103.
37. *EI*, p.334, footnote B.
38. Cunningham, *ASI*, III, pp.151-56.
39. D.R. Patil, *Antiquarian Remains in Bihar*, pp.337-38.
40. *Ibid.*, pp.221-22.
41. *Ibid.*, pp.146-226.
42. B.N. Misra, op.cit.
43. Moti Chandra, *Sarthavaha*, p.17.
44. T. Watters, op.cit., p.178.
45. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p.64.

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- MARKET CENTRES AND TRADE ROUTES
IN LATE ANCIENT BIHAR**
- The map illustrates the geographical distribution of market centres and trade routes in Late Ancient Bihar. The Ganges River is the central feature, with numerous tributaries shown. Market centres are marked with dots and labeled, including Sitamarhi, Dumra Jaynagar, Madhubani, Darbhanga, Bahera, Saharsa, Vikramsiha, Purnea, Chaurand, Patna, Nalagarh, Monghyr, Rajesha, Champā Bhagalpur, Bara, Barabati, Hirat, Gaya, Kumbhar, Buddha, Hazaribagh, and Dec. Trade routes are indicated by solid lines, showing connections between these centres and along the river. A scale bar at the bottom right indicates a distance of 0 to 60 km.

