



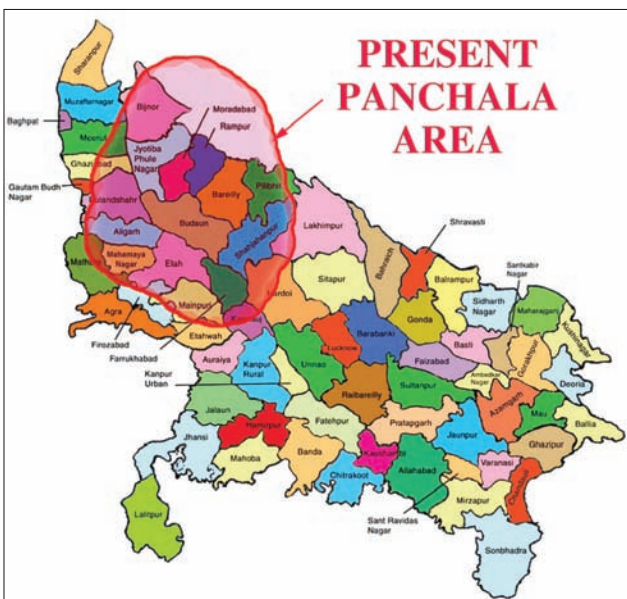
Rameshwar Temple with Ashok Vatika Shivlinga



Draupadi Kund, with Kapil Muni Kutia in the background

Kampilya is a Vedic era heritage city with rich composite cultural heritage of Bharat, located in Kaimganj Tehsil under present Farrukhabad District of Uttar Pradesh. Farrukhabad got its name from Farruk Shiyar son of Aurangzeb in 1714, later coming under United Provinces. Panchala was independent till 10th century, and started drawing attention of various rulers, finally coming under Mughal rule during Akbar's time. Aurangzeb too travelled to Kampilya. British surveyor General Alexander Cunningham visited Kampil in 1878 and identified it with the original ancient Kampilya. In 1920 it became a protected site under the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

Kampilya came to great prominence during Mahabharata period, as capital of Panchala. This kingdom extended from Ganges River, Himalayas in the North to the River Charmanwati in the South. Panchala consisted of Central UP, on both sides of Ganga (*see map*). It had Kuru, Surasena and Matsya kingdoms to the West and the Naimisha Forest to the East. After division of Panchala, between Drupad and Dronacharya, Kampilya became capital of Southern Panchala. The ruins of Kampil's Drupad Quila were quite apparent till a decade ago. Now even the Kushan era temples on this mound has been destroyed.



Kampilya's importance can also be accessed from Panchala's contributions to Bharat. Panchala area was the culmination of Indian intellectualism. It was a land of philosopher kings and learning that created synergies between Spiritualism, Materialism and 'Purshartha' got relevance. It was also a land of protests; Aruni Uddalika protest against Karamkanda or Draupadi's protest against injustice (Dr B R Mani, ADG ASI, GoI). See Map (Map: RC Majumdar, Publisher: BVM. Graphics Shri SK Sharma ASI). Vatsyayana mentions that *Rigveda* was aptly called *Chatuhshashti* due to Galava-babhravya works of text planning, and Babhravya composed original version of *Kamasutra*. Both were from Panchala.

The historical and cultural importance of Kampilya can be visualised from the large legacy it still retains, though in torn and destroyed form, gasping in neglect and anonymity. The oldest is the Kampilvasini Temple of Vedic era, and Kapil Muni's 'Tapasya Sthal' linked to 'Satyuga'. Treta era is represented by Rameshwar Mandir, where Shivlinga from 'Ashok Vatika' was brought and established by Sri Ram's brothers Shatrughan and Lakshman, (*Kampilya Mahatamya*).

The city's Dwapar era prominence is visible via the 'Yajna Kund' (*Mahabharata*, ancient texts, Gazette of Farrukhabad) where King Drupad prayed for a 'yoddha' son and Queen was blessed with Drstadyumna and Draupadi, which exists in a dilapidated condition. Kaleshwar Mandir was established by Draupadi, to honour Shiva. Buddha and his mother visited Kampilya, as Sankisa nearby fell within its ancient areas.

Meenpur Gram is where Arjuna heroically, pierced the revolving fish eye, at Draupadi's Swayamvar Tournament. This is immortalised through the Arjuna Award, and UP State's symbol. Rudayain is a holy place as Pandavas did *tarpan* for their ancestors here. Other places linked to Mahabharata period are Dhampura of Dham Rishi (where Pandavas lived during Swayamvar), Durvasa Rishi Ashram at Panchal Ghat, in city Farrukhabad. Chinese Traveler Hiuen Tsang also passed through this region. The vast span of its rich antiquity, its strength in maintaining history through centuries of turmoil, Kampilya, or 'Choti Kashi' is truly 'incredible', deserving attention towards revival and preservation of this intangible and tangible heritage wealth.

(The writer is chairperson, Draupadi Dream Trust)