

**HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL STUDY OF DABUS OF
BHAKTAPUR CITY**

Thesis

Submitted for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

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LETTER OF APPROVAL

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This dissertation prepared and submitted by *Mr. Rajesh Gaiju* entitled "*Historical and Cultural Study of Dabus of Bhaktapur City*" has been accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Master Degree of Arts in Nepalese History, Culture & Archaeology.

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Recommendation

This is to certify that Rajesh Gaiju, Student of the Central Department of Nepalese History, Culture and Archaeology has conducted a study on **Historical and Cultural Study of Dabus of Bhaktapur City** as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Arts (MA) under my supervision.

Bhadra 2077

Prof. Dr. Mala Malla

Preface

The Kathmandu Valley often referred to as the Nepal Mandal has the eminent value of culture and religion and it shows the richness of cultural heritage and religious beliefs. Kiraṅta dynasty managed their rule methodically from the *Paurānikakāl* or mythological period in the Nepal Mandala. The Pashupaṅti naṅtha was genesis at the time of Gopaṅl dynasty and still, it becomes a central belief of Hindu society. The renowned self-created stupa, Swayambhunaṅtha is one of the ancient originated heritages of Nepal and it's a sacred place for both Buddhists and Hindus. Nepal Mandala contains some of the other most important Hindu and Buddhist sanctuaries and monuments in Nepal, and still attracts large groups of pilgrims from different parts of the world.

The period of the historical dynasty of Nepal has made marvelous art and architecture during Lichchhavi rules. Many Lichchhavi inscriptions and even, Chinese Traveler mentioned the excellence of art and architecture. During the Malla rule, many art, architecture, culture, festivals, and sacraments were begun and developed and almost all of them are still alive in front of us. The Malla rulers were encouraged to make Buddhist and Hindu art and architecture in a different style. Likewise, many festivals and cultures have been developed and society used to be delighted in different kinds of festivals, cultural and religious activities. After King Yaksha Malla, the Nepal Mandala was divided into three main Kingdoms and many Malla Kings showed their superiority in the religious and cultural aspects and art and architecture too.

Malla Kings used to write a story and drama for play-showing purposes. Many dramas and plays were written and Kings personally played those dramas with other characters. They used to shows such a special drama and other cultural performances on a special occasion, like royal *bratabandha* and *vivāha*. Same like, people, show their performance on various occasions during every year, especially on the occasion of *Sāpārū* or *Gaijaṅtraṅ*, *Indrajātra*, and other *Parva*.

The practice of dabu culture must start from the Lichchhavi period, but still, no archaeological remains were found. Many cultural festivals and religious and social activities were mentioned on the Lichchhavi inscriptions, like, *Malla Yuddha*, *Go*

Yudhha, Kailāsh Yātrā, Mandapi Yātrā, etc. Therefore, Lichchhavi ruler and a society apparently used the dabu for such cultural and religious aspects.

The Mallas of the medieval period has become a boon for art, architecture, and culture. Malla rulers show their literary capacity by writing many pieces of literature and many plays shown to the royal and local community, then after the dabu culture was strongly prioritized for the different royal, cultural and religious aspects.

Bhaktapur was a center of the Malla rule and of course, many different cultural and religious art and architecture were installed and buildup around Bhaktapur and its periphery. Dabu culture is the most essential way to make them aware of the community in various aspects. Some particular medieval dabu is still being used on special occasions, but many medieval dabus lost their identity and it needs to make them alive again with the various kinds of cultural, religious, social aspects.

Bhaktapur is an open museum for all visitors of the world, where people could see well-ploughed norms and values on cultural behavior and activities of Bhaktapur. Visitors and Travellers can be refreshed during the visit to Bhaktapur. The art and architecture, culture, tangible heritage, sustainable society, household activities, etc. are the main attraction for them. But, neither any local people share the importance of dabu nor visitors try to get information about that. Now it seems to be timed to make enlightened people about dabu and its importance in the society

The present study mainly looks into the importance of dabu and its uses. This thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter I give an introduction to the study. Chapter II gives a brief history of Bhaktapur city with geographical, cultural, religious, and also included some of the festivals which are directly related to dabus. Chapter III deals with all historical cultural dabus and its function and importance too. And lastly, Chapter IV describes the summary and conclusion of the study.

In the last section, adequate numbers of photographs and illustrations are appended to support the text believing that the pictures and illustrations speak more precisely than the columns of text. And, the researcher believes that with completion of this research, adds one more light on the documentation of art and architecture of Dabu and believe that this thesis will be an open and useful resource to the information seekers and related students.

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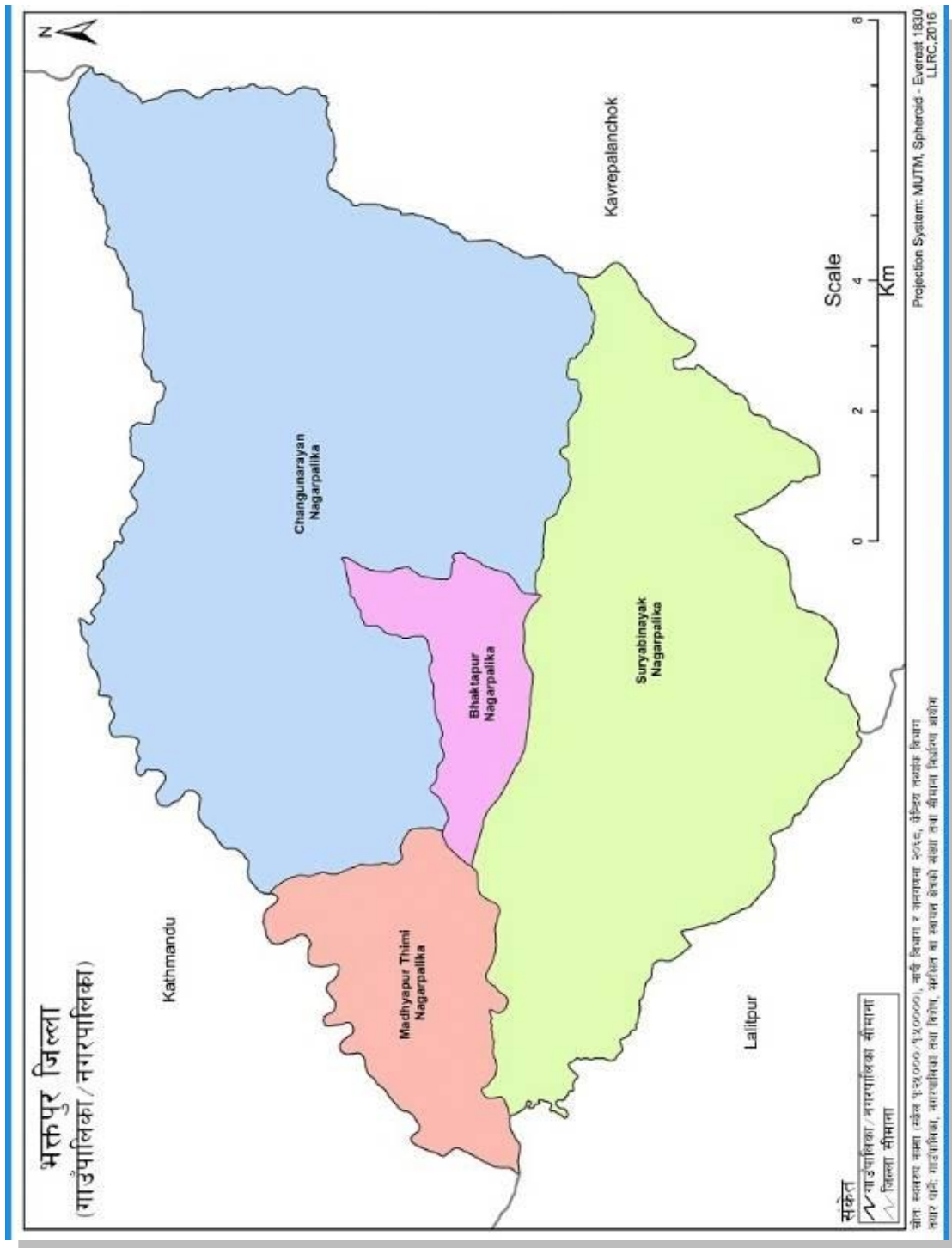
Newari Transliteration

अ	a	क	ka	ड	ḍa	म	ma
आ	ā	ख	kha	ढ	ḍha	य	ya
इ	i	ग	ga	ण	ṇa	र	ra
ई	ī	घ	gha	त	ta	ल	la
उ	u	ङ	ṅ	थ	tha	व	va
ऊ	ū	च	cha	द	da	श	sha
ए	e	छ	chha	ध	dha	ष	ṣha
ऐ	ai	ज	ja	न	na	स	sa
ओ	o	झ	jha	प	pa	ह	ha
औ	au	ञ	ña	फ	pha	क्ष	kṣha
अं	aṁ	ट	ṭa	ब	ba	त्र	tra
अः	aḥ	ठ	ṭha	भ	bha	ज्ञ	jña

Acronyms

A.D.	Anno Domini
CAD	Century Anno Domini
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
N.S.	Nepal Samvat
SWOT	Streng, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat
V.S.	Vikram Samvat

Map 2: Administrative Map of Bhaktapur



Map 3: Administrative Map of Bhaktapur of Core Bhaktapur Municipality



(Source: A tourist brochure published by Bhaktapur Municipality)

Chapter One

Introduction of the study

1.1 Introduction

Nepal is one of the small landlocked countries of the world, but it has a very huge value in its tradition, social life, sustainability, art, and culture, etc. Nepal is known as a live cultural country and she has different types of diversity in culture, religion, social, ethnic, etc. Every ethnic group got many different types of own culture, festivals, sacraments, *jātrās*, religion and religious activities, etc. Among them, Newa□rs are the indigenous inhabitants of Kathmandu Valley having a distinct identity, language, and culture that is unique in the world. Although the Newa□rs are spread throughout the country in different regions, the majority of them are still concentrated in the Kathmandu Valley. Nepal is anciently known as “Nepa□: manda” for the territory of Kathmandu Valley and its surroundings is very rich in its culture, traditions, art, customs, etc. The Newa□rs are fully richer in tangible and intangible heritages and other customs. The tangible heritage was founded in this area from the period of the beginning of the Christian era and some even much older.

Bhaktapur is the smallest district of Nepal and it's especially known as the important city of art and culture. It is an important city for cultural, historical, social, religious, and many more. Most of the people are from the Newa□r community in Bhaktapur. In Newa□r culture, many entertaining programs were conducted in many places on many occasions, like cultural dances, dramas or plays, singing, musical live performances, etc. All of these cultural shows are held at *Dabu* (stage). Dabu is the place that was made certain feet higher than ground level where many programs were conducted or organized. Dabu plays a vital role to save the culture of Newa□r's society in Kathmandu Valley before, now, and will be in the future too.

Dabu is used for performing cultural and religious dances, songs, plays, dramas, and other shows. Dabu got great significance before existing of modern gadgets and live performances. Malla Kings used to write a drama and perform it in Dabu. Dabu is used to show dances of God and Goddess, cultural dance, to show *Mallayuddha*, local legislative and judicial tasks in the medieval period and still, now such a job was done on some places of Bhaktapur and all over Kathmandu Valley.

Nowadays, the importance and significance of Dabu are decreasing. It was said that nobody climbed the dabu without any reason, if someone needs to go they bow down their heads to dabu. But unfortunately, at present, it seems to use for small shops, grain drying, play cards, etc which can be taken as a bad activity of people to use Dabu or misuse of it.

Dabu is a very important component of the culture of the local Newar community. Many Dabus can be seen in many places of Bhaktapur, like, *Nāsamanā dabu*, *Tarhān Dabu*, *beta Dabu*, *Snehamandap Dabu*, *Simha Dabu*, *Bhindyo dabu*, etc., which is described in coming chapters.

1.2 Statement of The Problem

Dabus of Bhaktapur has its great significance. Still, it is used to show the religious and cultural activities, programs, and other purposes. But some Dabu lost their values and identity. Nowadays Dabus is not used for such a cultural and religious purpose but people used to put their grains in sunlight to dry on dabu, put small shops, and for other non-related purposes. No one has time to think about such a historical and religious dabu for preservation and conservation. Thus some of the problems are listed below:

- Lack of search for the historical and cultural identity of Bhaktapur in the background of the establishment of Dabu
- Lack of study of the historical tradition of the establishment of Dabu in Bhaktapur
- Lack of cultural exploration of the Dabus of Bhaktapur

Dabus of Bhaktapur needs to study deeply to know and show the tangible and intangible heritage and culture of the past, which could be the milestone of exploring the old cultural and religious heritages and history of Nepal.

1.3 Objectives of the study

To collect more documents about the Dabus of Bhaktapur and inform people about its preservation and conservation, is the main objective of my study. This research will help to find more historicity and cultural importance of Dabu/s and will help a related person to know about Dabu.

As mentioned the problems above, the objectives of this research are listed below:

- Exploring the historical and cultural identity of Bhaktapur in the background of the establishment of Dabu
- To study the historical tradition of the establishment of Dabu in Bhaktapur
- A cultural exploration of the Dabus of Bhaktapur
- To keep good documentation about Dabus of Bhaktapur.

1.4 Significance of the study

This research will help to know more about the significance, importance, historicity of Dabus of Bhaktapur city. All the Dabu was used on different occasions for performing musical shows, dances, and many plays, and other cultural activities for the whole year on a specific occasion. To add to its significance, it also helps to some extent in the field of preservation and conservation of the Dabu. Last but not the least; it would highlight the importance of Dabu and its right uses.

1.5 Literature Review

No one had written and published any book or an article on Dabus of Bhaktapur particular yet. Some writers wrote about the cultural and religious dances of Bhaktapur but nobody points out where the dance program and other cultural programs were run. The researcher tried to make a documentary about the Dabus of Bhaktapur.

As this study is concerned with one of the tangible heritage of Bhaktapur district, the researcher has consulted various books, journals, articles regarding cultural and religious dances, but no such books, journals, and articles describe Dabu. However, these books are really indeed very helpful for studying the importance, significance, and history of Dabu.

- मृगेन्द्रमान सिंहप्रधान, नृत्य, काठमाडौं: प्रधान नाट्य मण्डल, वि.सं. २०४० (1983)

In this book, he mentioned the introduction of folk dance, a comparison between folk and classical dance form, etc. The writer tried to prove that the tradition of dance was developed from an ancient period with the example of *Kirāteshwara Mahādeva's* dancing image. The *Gosthi* was made for musical and dancing in ancient times is mentioned. But he did not give importance to those places where the dances were conducted. The mentioning

of the Dabus is inferior in this book, which is the most vital part of traditional cultural and religious factors.

- Jagadish Shamsheer Rana, **नाचगानको राजधानी भक्तपुर**, New Delhi: Nirala Publication, 2045 V.S. (1989)

In this book, the author has correlated the different importance of old and cultural dance and its significance, method, and wrote about the plan of preservation and conservation of such dances. Mr. Rana proved that Bhaktapur was the capital city of dancing and singing. But there is not any description of Dabu is mention.

- Robert I Levis, MESOCOSM, Delhi : Motilal Banarasidas Publisher Pvt.Ltd., 1992 AD.

It mentioned and studied the culture, cast, festivals, occasions, dances, society, Navadurga, Astama-trika, etc of Newar society. And this book had been include and described the statement about Astama-trika Dance.

- Prof. Dr. Purushottam Lochan Shrestha, **भक्तपुरका सांस्कृतिक नाचगान, दबु, पहिरन, अलङ्कार**, Kathmandu: Department of Archaeology, 2057 V.S. (2000)

In this report, a list of Dabus from Bhaktapur has been mentioned including the names of the places only. Mr. Shrestha also gives some introduction to the dance form, some traditional jewelers, cloths, which is used during the special traditional cultural and religious performance on the Dabus. but he did not give any historical and other factors of Dabus were mentioned in this report.

- Dr. Janak Lal Baidhya, **Siddhyagni Kotyahuvi Deval Pratistha: Nyatapolan Devalko**, Kamaladi, Kathmandu, Nepal Rajakiya Prajna-Pratisthan, 2061 V.S. (2004)

The book is translated and descriptive research of the making of Nyatapolan Temple (Five Storied Temple) of Bhaktapur, based on the old literary source of handwritten paper related to the making of Nyatapolan temple. The source is on the Newari script and the Newari language. The researcher mentions the *Siddhyagni Kotyahuvi Mahayajna* in front of the

Nyaṅtaṅpolaṅn temple and according to local, the area of *yajña* was converted into dabu later on. But this book also doesn't mention the dabus.

- Shrestha, Surendraman, **Newā: Sanskritiya Itihas**, Kathmandu, Indra-Jawahar Charitable Trust, Nepal Sambat 1129 (2009)

The author gives a small introduction to Dabu in this book. According to this book, many historical and religious dances and other performances showed in Dabu in Nepal Mandal (Kathmandu Valley). The book makes a list of cultural dance and some heritages of Kathmandu Valley, but the importance, history, situation, and uses in nowadays of Dabu was not mentioned.

- Wolfgang Korn, **The Traditional Newari Architecture of the Kathmandu Valley: The Sikharas**, Kathmandu, Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 2014 A.D.

The author elaborates on the development of Shikara Styled Temple inside Kathmandu Valley in this Book. Same like, he gives different types of Shikhara temples and mentioned the used materials of the temples. The Dabu is also directly related to religion and temple or God and Goddess. Dabu architecture is the most important part of the temple and its activities. The author didn't give any importance to dabu in his book.

- मुक्तिसुन्दर जधारी, महाकाली नाच, भक्तपुर: मुक्ति संगीत प्रशिक्षण केन्द्र, २०७२ (2015)।

The historicity of Mahakali dance is mentioned in this book and according to this book Maṅhaṅkaṅli dance was developed from the time of King Arideva Malla and it was continued till now. The writer wrote the time phase of the development of Maṅhaṅkaṅli dance but lastly, he also didn't mention Dabu where kinds of music and dances were performed.

So far, various writers and scholars have studied various traditional dances, songs, kinds of music, festivals, etc. in the cultural and religious history of Nepal, but they do not seem to have studied about the Dabus, the important elements of conducting these activities. Therefore, this thesis will study the pressures of cultural and historical importance within Bhaktapur city.

1.6 Limitations of the study

This study is focused only on the study of the Dabus of core Bhaktapur city. Many Dabus can be seen in the core of Bhaktapur city which needs to be published and known by every person to keep alive our heritage and culture. And almost all the activities related to dabu and its culture are related basically to the Newar community. The area of Bhaktapur municipality and core Bhaktapur is the biggest boon for the history and culture of Nepal. The vivid culture and religious activities can be seen in the various places of Bhaktapur at present. Dabu is one of the most important parts of such religious and cultural activities during medieval to the present date. This research can't cover the entire Dabus of the whole country but has related it as possible. Therefore the researcher tried to cover all the historical dabus of Bhaktapur Municipality only.

1.7 Methodology

The present study obtained both primary and secondary sources of information. This study focused on a descriptive type of research design. Primary and Secondary data are obtained. In the course of study direct observation, library methods are adopted in order to maintain accurate details related to the Dabus of Bhaktapur.

1.7.1 Primary Source:

- Direct Observation: The study area has been properly researched through direct observation and was properly documented as well.
- Interview: Interviews were conducted with different informants such as local cultural experts, local people, and different scholars from the related field.
- Photographs and Maps: Different photographs and maps have been collected from the study field.

1.7.2 Secondary Source:

Help has been taken from books, magazines, newspapers, articles, and journals related to the topic. All the data had tried to be analyzed to fulfill the objectives. The personal experience, field observation, and pieces of information from individual and focus group discussions have been used while elaborating and specifying data.

After collecting all the information required for this thesis, the study will be completed by analyzing the necessary facts of the collected data, and based on the information obtained from this thesis, it will be presented in the qualitative writing method of the thesis.

Chapter Two

Historical & cultural introduction of Bhaktapur city

2.1 Geographical situation

Bhaktapur was the capital of Nepal Mandal (Katmandu Valley) during the 12th to 15th centuries AD. The city thrived as a transit point of trade to Tibbet, China, and India, during this era and until today the glory, rich cultural tangible and intangible heritage, and historical and cultural architecture are evident in the city of Bhaktapur, and center of education, medical as well.

Bhaktapur, also called Bhadgaon, Khwopa, a 'city of devotees', as the name carries the meaning in Newa□ri, lies around 14 km east of Kathmandu. Bhaktapur district is the smallest district over 77 of Nepal. The area of Bhaktapur is 119 sq. km and lies at 1401 meters above sea level. Being a cultural city is considered as living heritage and is known for its fabulous cultural and indigenous lifestyle. It is listed as a World Heritage site by UNESCO for its abundant rich culture, temples, and craftworks in wood, metal, and stones as well.

King Yaksha Malla expanded the landmark or boundary of capital city Bhaktapur to outside of Kathmandu Valley, to east Morang, to west Gorkha, to north Digarcha□ or Shika□rjong of Tibet, and south till Tirahut Bbodhgaya□ (Pradhananga, 2067 V.S., p.55).

Bhaktapur District comprises of 4 municipalities, viz, Bhaktapur Municipality (6088 sq. km), Madhyapur Thimi Municipality (11.47 sq. km), Changunarayan Municipality(62.98 sq. km), and Suryavinayak Municipality(42.45 sq. km). The total population of the district is about 303,027 (CBS, 2011). Among all the population in Bhaktapur is 55.85 percent are Newa□r. According to Bhaktapur municipality, 310 casts were registered inside Bhaktapur Municipality.

Although, Bhaktapur is a small town in Nepal, but very rich in indigenous religion and culture, and its history is related to the national history of Nepal.

In the east of Bhaktapur town lies Na□la□, in the west lies Madhyapur-Thimi, in the north, is Cha□nguna□ra□yan and in the south lies the shrine of Suryavina□yak.

The oldest name of Bhaktapur is *Khwopring*. The non-Sanskrit name Khwopring as a name prevailed even before the advent of the Lichchavis, i.e. in the

Kirat period. This ancient place name for Bhaktapur was first mentioned in an inscription dated 477 A.D. as '*Khwopringrāmpradesha*' during the reign of Manadeva the historical Lichchhavi King (Shrestha, 2016, P.9). The name, later in the medieval period popularly known as *Khwopa*, and notably, without any change the very name still in prevalence even to this day. The Sanskrit name of Khwopa was *Bhaktagrām* which appeared to have prevailed in the early medieval period and as the Bhaktagrām evolved as a city then it was called Bhaktapur/ Bhaktapattan. The corrupted form of Bhaktagrām was Bhaḍgaḍun (Shrestah, 2016, P.9-10).

2.2 Historical Introduction of the Bhaktapur

The Naḍga tribes, the Gopal dynasty, the Mahispal dynasty, and the Kirat dynasty, the Saḍkya dynasty of Kapilavastu, the Videha dynasty of Mithilaḍ can be placed under the mythological (*Paurānik kāla*) period of Nepal. All of these ancient dynasties appear to have been mentioned and described in different chronologies (*Vamsāvali*) and *Purānas* in a different way. Wright's Vamsaḍvali including Swayambhu Puraḍna mentioned about the Naḍga Tribes, who ruled over Nepal Mandala (Kathmandu Valley), And it mentioned the Nepal Mandal (Kathmandu Valley) was once a lake, It is believed that Manjusri saw a lotus flower in the center of the lake and Manjushree cut the gorge of *Chobhār* with by his sword to allow the lake drained out. The place where the lotus flower has blossomed there erected the Swayambhunatha Mahaḍchaitya. Likewise, the Valley thus became habitable and he established Dharmakar as a King (Chettri & Rayamajhi, 2060 V.S., P.36). And some of the Hindu texts mentioned Lord Krishna who came to Nepal Mandal from the south and he cut the gorge of Chovaḍr and drained out the water and make habitable and established Bhumi Gupta as King.

During the *Tretāyuga*, Manjushri Bodhisattva came from Mahaḍchin (Greater China) after *Shikhibuddha*. He stayed in a cave which was called *Manjushri Mandap* (Jitpur), about 1 mile east of Bhaktapur. He stayed to meditated there for three nights and four days. In the cave, he completed his meditation. Nowadays, that place is regarded as a sacred shrine for both the Hindus as well as for the Buddhists.

The Vamshaḍvali also mentioned that Mahaḍmanjushri received *Jyoti darshan* of Lord Swayambhunaḍtha at *Mahāmandap*. Then he drained the water out

of the Valley cutting George from a particular place which was called *Katawāla*. The Naṅgas (snakes) of Naṅgadaha also flowed out from the Daha, as a surprise, Mahaṅmanjusri beg pardon to the serpent King (Naṅgraṅj) *Karkotak*. He requested Karkotak to stay at Taudaha. Therefore, the entire Naṅgas sifted to Taudaha on the sacred day of *Mesha Sankrānti* (Munankarmi, L., 2048 V.S., P.13-15). Therefore from the aforementioned fact, it is to be known that there was already a semi-civilized settlement existed in Bhaktapur during the time of Nāga tribes.

The Nāga tribes followed by *Gopāls* as well as the *Mahishpals* who ruled in Nepal Valley respectively. As is known from the *vamshāvalis*, although no recorded history nor archaeological remains found yet to prove the aforesaid fact.

The Kiraṅtas ruled in Nepal before the Lichchhavis. Although not a single contemporary archaeological evidence has been found yet but the later Lichchhavi inscriptions prove the fact of the historical existence of the Kirat rule in Nepal. The Hanumandhokaṅ inscription of Amshuvarmaṅ mentions the word 'Kiraṅta'. So as the Lichchhavi inscriptions mentioned several Kiraṅta administrative offices as well as the place names viz. 'Maṅpachok', 'Shulli', 'Kuthera', 'Lingwala', 'Khwoparing', 'Tenkhu', 'Sanga', 'Changu', 'Kurpāsi', *Khripung*, *Mākhodulu*, *Tyagal*, *Tostung*, *Themring*, *Bosing*, *Hamhu*, *Kumhu*, *sin*, *Jaren*, etc (Vajraṅchaṅrya, 2053 V.S., P.23-347).

The Lichchhavi inscriptions found from different parts of Bhaktapur mention the names of specific places of Bhaktapur, such as the inscription of Shivadev and Amshuvarmaṅ of Golmadhi Tole of Bhaktapur mentioned '**Mākhopring Dranga**,' and in another hand, next inscription of Shivadeva and Amshuvarmaṅ (594 A.D.) of Tulaṅchhen Tole of Bhaktapur mentioned '**Khripung**'. Likewise, '**Mākhodulun**' mention on the inscription of Shivadev Amshuvarmaṅ at Bolachhen of Bhaktapur. Bhaktapur appeared as a 'Dranga' (a commercially enriched, evolved city) since the 6th century A.D. Moreover, the Changunarayan stone pillar inscription of King Manadeva is also located in Bhaktapur which has raised the historical importance of Bhaktapur since the remote past.

The Matsyendranaṅth was brought to Nepalmandal during the reign of King Narendra Dev (634-671 AD) from *Kāmarupa Kāmākhyā* of Aṅssām. King Narendra Deva is said to have established Matsyendranaṅth at Bhaktapur because Bhaktapur was one of the culturally well off city at that time. According to local legend, Lalitpur

deceived Bhaktapur and carried the image of Matsyendranath to install it in *Bungamati* of Lalitpur. The Matsyendranath became an inevitable part of local cultural life. It is believed that peace and prosperity prevailed after the establishment of Matsyendranath in the Nepalmandala. Local legend also marks out that Matsyendranath was first installed at Tapalachhi tole of Bhaktapur where he has been popularly known as 'Red Matsyandranath'. There is a three-storied temple dedicated to him and a Vihar close to the temple is called 'Lokeshwara Maha^{Viha^{ra}}'. In the local dialect, Matsyendranath is called *Laska Dya*: He is regarded as the God of grains. Bhaktapur was the area where adequate grainary products raised in comparison to the other major cities of Nepal Mandal. It was because of the establishment of Lord Matsyendranath (Shrestha, 2045 V.S., P.51). This legend points out that Bhaktapur was the center of agriculture and grain products in particular, and its supplies to other places of Nepalmandal and it was developed as a city of trade and commerce.

Besides the ancient and medieval inscriptions, '*Shree Khwopu*' is mentioned on the inscription of **Nirbhaya Deva**, dated 1062 BS, at Bhairavnath temple of Bhaktapur. According to *Gopalaraj Vamsavali*, from 201 N.S. to 216 NS (1147-1153 BS) King Harsha Dev ruled to the throne and similarly Kings Indra Dev, Shihan Dev and Aananda Dev become Kings respectively. King Aananda Dev built the developed Bhaktapur city with 12000 houses and families during his reign (267-287 N.S.) (Shrestha, 2061 V.S.,P.51). King Aananda Dev built many artifacts, cultural architecture, and a royal palace called 'Tripura-ra^{jkula}'. *Tripura Durbār* is one of the precious gifts of King Aananda Dev to the history of Nepal which was the first medieval royal Palace of Nepalmandal which was built at Tripura^{sundari} site, the heart of Bhaktapur city (Shrestha,2058 V.S., P.1-12). Bhaktapur enjoyed as the capital city of Nepalmandal for more than three hundred years since his reign.

Malla Kings contributed to developing Bhaktapur city as the cultural center of Nepalmandal as well. It was the capital city and highly enriched in art and architecture, religion and culture, and the heartbeat of the Nepalmandala. Due to the political weakness, i.e, the dual government, political unrest, conspiracies political rivalry between the two dynasties (Deva and Malla), and other reasons led Bhaktapur a very weak capital-city, and therefore it had to face several invasions in course of time. As a result of this, there emerged two strong Kingdoms in the 12th century A.D. the Khasa Kingdom in the far west and the Doya or the Tirahut Kingdom in the south-

east of the Terai belt. The newly emerged rulers of these Kingdoms repeatedly invaded Bhaktapur terrifying the people, looted their property of the Nepalmandala. Moreover, the Muslim army of Benga (India) headed by Sultan Samshuddhin Illia also invaded Nepalmandala. As Bhaktapur was the capital city, so the Muslim army first attacked Bhaktapur and the Bhaktapurians had to suffer a lot (Vajrachaarya, 2022 V.S., P.6-13). The Gopalrajvamsavali including other historical documents is the best examples to prove this fact. The Swayambhu inscription, dated N.S. 470 mentioned that the people of Bhaktapur suffered from big grief during the attack of *Samasuddhin*, they also destroyed Pashupa-tina and Swayambhu, looted the property, and devastated these holy shrines (Vajrachaarya & Malla, 1985, P.36).

Simraungadh Kingdom was fully deserted by the formidable invasion of Gayashuddhin Tuglok of India in N.S. 446. After the fall of Simroungadh, Harisimha Deva with his wife Devaldevi, son Jagatsimha and other people, carrying their lineage deity Goddess Taleju Bhava-ni headed towards Bhaktapur for political asylum. In route to Bhaktapur, Harasimha died at Tinpa-tan, eventually, Devaldevi reached Bhaktapur with great difficulties, got asylum in the Yuthunimam durbar (the present-day Bhaktapur durbar) of his brother Rudra Malla. (Vajrachaarya, 2019 V.S., P.232-236)

Rudra Malla had no son but a daughter Nayak Devi and after his sudden death, Nayakdevi enthroned as *Uparaja*. Devaldevi (grandmother of Nayakdevi) became her regent. Nayak Devi married with Harishchandra of Vana-ras, but the jealous courtiers conspired against him and poisoned him to death. Then after Nayak Devi got married to Jagatsimha, (they were the brother and sister by relation) and they gave birth to Rajalla Devi. Nayak Devi died on the 10th day of Rajalla Devi took a step to the world. Then, Devaldevi also compelled to become the regent of Rajalla Devi. Devaldevi brought Sthithi Malla from the south as the groom for Rajalla Devi. The marriage was conducted through Dolaji-system, and as being the husband of Rajalla Devi, Sthithi Malla came into power. (Vajrachaarya, 2032 V.S., P.108)

Devaldevi ruled over Nepal for more than forty years. After her demise, Sthithi Malla not only successfully suppressed his enemies but also overthrow Jayarjundeva and became the sole King of Nepal. Political peace and stability prevailed in the country. As a result, he brought reforms in each aspect. He built many culturally and religiously important architectural heritage, images, performed socio-economic reforms, Likewise, education and literature also developed, several dramas

were composed and shown on the dabus of his capital city Bhaktapur. King Jayasthiti Malla is being spoken of as *Daityanārāyana* in a drama, *Abhinava Raghavānanda*, by his court poet **Manika** and the drama was played during the *Bratabandha* ceremony of his eldest son Dharma Malla (Regmi, 1965, P.346). Therefore, during the reign of King Jayasthiti Malla, such a drama and other religious and cultural shows appear to had been shown for the rulers inside the royal palace in particular and for the public demonstrating in the open courtyards (Chuka) where the dabus were built for such purpose.

Jayasthiti Malla, followed by his successors Dharma Malla, Jyotir Malla, and Yaksha Malla respectively. King Yaksha Malla did many religious and cultural works in Bhaktapur. The stone inscription (dated 573 N.S.) attached to the western wall of the Golden gate of Bhaktapur royal palace unveils the fact that he fortified his capital city with moats and walls covering all-round of Bhaktapur (Regmi, 1966, P.73-76)). Bhaktapur became a center of all kinds of religious, cultural, social activities. The colophon of a *text* named *Narapāti jāyacharyasvorodayātikā*, mentioned that King Yaksha Malla expanded the boundary of Nepal Mandal to by Gorkha, Palpa to west, Gaya to south, Banga to east, and Shikarjong (Tibet) to the north (Vajra cha rya & Shrestha, 2031 V.S., P.20). The text was written during the reign of King Jagajyoti Malla. According to the following colophon, Bhaktapur and Nepal Mandal were developed as a well-managed city during Yaksha Malla.

Nepal Mandal was politically divided after the death of King Yaksha Malla, by his sons. King Raya Malla, the elder son of Yaksha Malla, was unable to unite all Nepal Mandal and he became compulsive to rule Bhaktapur only. Nepal Mandal was completely divided into three major kingdoms.

Some outstanding rulers of the independent Malla-Kingdom of Bhaktapur were Jagatprakash Malla, Jitamitra Malla, Bhupa tindra Malla, and the last ruler Ranajit Malla. Credit goes to Jitamitra Malla and his son Bhupa tindra Malla for the beautification of the city with wonderful artifacts. Golden Gate, the main entrance of the Bhaktapur royal palace was the fabulous masterpiece, built by Ranajit Malla

2.3 Religious and Cultural Introduction

Nepal has cultural diversity from ancient times and the development of religion was the high ratio in the period of Pauranik, Lichchhavi, and the medieval of

Nepal. Vamsa□vali, Inscription, and some archaeological evidence show that Saivism, Vaishnavism, Shaktism, and Buddhism were adopted by people and royal members in the ancient period. The Changuarayan inscription of King Ma□ndev dated 486 A.D. (521 V.S.) mentions the worship of lord Bishnu or *Dolādrī Hari* after he suppressed the rebellions of the feudal lords of Mallapuri of western Nepal and the feudal lords of eastern Nepal. He also issued 'Sri-ma□na□nka' coins on which the Goddess Laxmi is depicted. He also built a temple dedicated to 'Vishnuvika□nta' (Regmi, 2007, P.275). Likewise, his wife Kshemsundari installed Shivalinga, so as *Vijaya Svāmini*, an influential woman of the then elite class built the Vijayashvari temple (Vajra□cha□ry, 2053 V.S., P.40-68).

King Ma□ndev built *MānaVihār* and King Amshuvarma□ built *RajVihār* for Buddhist nuns and monks. According to Chinese evidence, King Narendradeva used to wear a belt, which has the image of the head of the Lord Buddha on its buckle (Vajra□cha□rya, 2053 V.S., P.27, 35, 36, 39, 42, 484). The evidence of Saptamatrkas was found from Changuarayan dated to 2nd CAD, Bagalamukhi of Patan dated to 2nd/3rd CAD, Balkhu dated to 2nd/3rd CAD, Jayabagiswori, Chabahil dated to 6th CAD, Maligaun dated to 2nd/3rd CAD, etc.(Shrestha, 2060 V.S., P.7). People used to worship the mother Goddesses during the Lichchhavi period as well. The images of Vedic Indra, Varun, Maruta, Surya, Bramha□, Uma□-Mahesvara were highly revered during the Lichchhavi period. Therefore, Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism, and Buddhism were flourished side by side during the Lichchhavi period.

The Malla rulers also ruled over the country through the Hindu way of life. Due to the impact of Tantra, religious tolerance and cultural harmony were prevalent among the rulers and the common people. For example, the Buddhists worship Lord Ganesh, Maha□nka□la, Bhimsen, Guyheshvari including Goddess Saraswati as well. They also build temples close to the Vaishnava and Shaiva images and other Ma□trikas to show their reverence to them. Malla Kings were followers of Hinduism and they also followed the Ta□ntrik process during the worship of any Hindu God and Goddess. And the King and people use to donate land as Guthi to temples and much medieval art and architecture are standing in front of us till now, because of such a medieval Guthi (Chhetri & Rayamachi, 2060 V.S., P.186).

Bhaktapur seems one of the important religious hubs during the Lichchhavi and Malla periods. Kings used to gives good priority to other religious even they believed in other particular religions. King Ma□ndev , Amshuvarma□, Narendradev

built different temples as the practice of secularism. Chaṅgunaṅraṅyan and Anantalingeshwar is the gift of the ancient period to Bhaktapur and many stone sculptures and inscriptions too. Tulaja Bhavaṅni of Bhaktapur, Nyaṅtaṅpolan, Dattaṅtraya, Bhairava Temple, Til Maṅdhanba Naṅrayana, Doleshwara Mahaṅdeva, Nila Baṅraṅhi, Ashta Maṅtrikaṅ and Navadurgaṅ piths, etc, Aṅdipadma MahaṅVihaṅr, Deepankar MahaṅVihaṅr, Prasannasil MahaṅVihaṅr, Manjuvarna MahaṅVihaṅr, Dharmadeep Vihaṅr, Indravarna MahaṅVihaṅr, Chaturvarna MahaṅVihaṅr, Baudhasamakirti Vihaṅra, Jayakirti Vihaṅra, etc are the best sign of religious tolerance into the community. It is said that Bhaktapur had many Temples more than residential houses and more Gods and Goddess is lives than people. It is clear that Bhaktapur was developed as one of the important religious and cultural heartbeat of Nepal during the Lichchhavi period and the Malla period.

Hindu influence is still alive in Bhaktapur, and the Bhaktapurians observe both Hindu and Buddhist fairs and festivals. Many religious activities and cultures were alive and took part equally in various rites and rituals, caste and creed were not be interferer for such social-cultural activities. Bhaktapur is one of the best examples of a secular place. Buddha Jayanti, Gaijaṅtraṅ, Sithi Nakha, Ghantaṅkarna *jātrā*, *Nāg Panchami*, *Krishnā Ashtami*, *Panchadān Parva*, *Yo-māri Purnimā*, *Dashain*, *Tihaṅr*, *Saraswati Pujā*, *Shri-Panchami*, etc. are the best-known festivals celebrate by the cultural life of Bhaktapur.

2.4 Important festivals of Bhaktapur

Bhaktapur is famous for its tradition and culture including jaṅtraṅs and Parva. Most of the fairs and festivals of Bhaktapur are continuity of Malla culture, some of them could be ancient festivals too. But many cultures, festivals were gone lost their identity by the time. And still, Many cultural and religious festivals are celebrated in Bhaktapur even today. Here are some alive festivals of Bhaktapur which is related to dabu culture:

2.4.1 Gunhu: Punhi/ Sā-pāru/ Gāijātrā/ Sā-yā

'Saṅ' stands for cow and 'Paṅru' is stand for jaṅtra and special day in Newaṅri language. At this festival people and family honor the souls of the departed member of the family. According to Hindu belief, there is the most dangerous

imaginary river named '*Baitarani Nadi*', which must be crossed after death to reach *Svarga* (heaven). But it will be easy and safe to cross Baitarani Nadi with the help of *Gāi*- Cow. Therefore every family worships a real cow and many families make artificial Gai of Bamboo on this very day dedicated to the departed soul. The Gai took around the city with *Ghintāngisi nāch* (one of the names of dance), it is called '*De Chāhikegu*' in the local dialect.

Saṅgaru start from the day after *Shrāvan Shukla Purnimā* for eight days in every year. And this festival ends on *Krishna janmāstami* with the last Ghintāngisi for a year and took an *Ārati* to the round of city in Bhaktapur. During these nine days, many local and traditional dances, dramas, etc. were shown on various dabus of Bhaktapur city.

2.4.2 Mohani Nakhā/ Dashain

Dashain is the National festival of Nepal. The Dashain is the most auspicious festival of Nepal which is celebrated to dedicate Goddess Durgā. It is believed that the Goddess Durgā is a collective force assuming the powers of the Navadurgā (Nine mothers Goddess) and she defeated the demons named Mahishāshura to protect all her followers (Shrestha, 2060, P.23). Nowadays, this festival is regarded as a great festival signifying the ultimate victory of good over evil.

The Dashain has been celebrated all over Nepal in different ways for different purposes. In Bhaktapur, the Navadurgā were worshiped during Mohani or Dashain. On the day of *Vijayā Dashami*, the Tantrik *Guru* handover a new mask to the Navadurgā Ganā. On the night of *Vijayā Dashami*, Navadurgā Ganā went to Bhaktapur royal palace from Bramhāyani temple to worship Tulaja Bhavāni. Many worships were done in different dabus in between of Bramhāyani to *Mul Chok* of Bhaktapur durbar. A *Snehamandapa* dabu is used for the worship of Tulaja Bhavāni by Navadurgā.

2.4.3 Navadurgā

Navadurgā is a group of nine mother Goddess or referring to nine different forms of the great Goddess Durgā. It is believed that the Navadurgā is the divine mother, protector of Bhaktapur city and it is the highly adorable Goddess in Bhaktapur. And the Navadurgā also related as presider over the seasons of life,

death, and birth of a human. "Bhaktapur is the place where people born, grow and died, and God Goddess as well." (Shrestha, P.L., Personal interview, 13 Sep. 2018). Every year the Navadurga is died on the day of Bhalbhal Ashtami or Bhagasthi. Every year new masks are made at the beginning of the Navadurga cycle and then cremated at the end.

The Navadurga Naach or festival is the longest festival in Nepal. The Naach is run for about nine months in every year. The Navadurga is worshiped by whole families of Bhaktapur and other places of Kathmandu Valley and its include many specific ritual and ceremonies, and encompassing several other festivals too.

Mahalakshmi, Mahakali, Baharahi, Kumari, Bramhayani, Bhadrakali, Indrayani, Maheshvari, and Tripuasundari are the nine mother-Goddesses or the Navadurga gana who protected the Bhaktapur city and people worshiped it with high preference. And Mahadeva, Ganesh, Bhairava, Sveta Bhairava. Simha, Dumha: also a renowned additional characters of the Navadurga Gana. The Navadurga Gana born with new God and Goddess mask on the day of Vijaya Dasahami and Nya Lakeu Jatra starts from Maghe Sakranti with the whole character of the Navadurga gana.

Banmaala is the main community that is responsible to conduct the Navadurga Naach and they are known as the low caste group that traditionally farmed and sold flowers to the greater community (Hrodrigues, 2015, P.1). Still today, the Banmaalas are doing such a respected job to preserve the culture and traditions in their daily life. And they are known as "Tradition Keeper".

The Navadurga Naach is a unique and different Tantrik tradition, use of masks, its mobility, and in its social roles. It is believed that while wearing the masks, the Gods who are represented come to manifest themselves in the human. And the Banmaalas were becomes regarded as divine and assumes a position on the top of the social hierarchy while wearing the Navadurga masks. All kinds of Tantrik worship and Naach were conducted for each particular whole day to end at different Dabus of the cities.

2.4.4 Biskā: Jātrā

Biska: Jatra is one of the most popular and entertaining festivals of Bhaktapur, which is dedicated to Lord Bhairavana and his terrifying wife

Bhadrakali. The Biska: celebrate for nine conjunctive days and is celebrated with great joy and fanfare by the city crowds. During the Biska:, a chariot of Bhairavath and Bhadrakali has been pulled and a fifty-five hand long *Yosing-Dyo* erected at the festive place called 'Yousinkhel'.

A dabus were used to worship the different deities during the Biska: ja:tra. The Beta dabu is a remarkable dabu for Biska:.

2.4.5 Panchadān

Nepal is a secular country. It has celebrated all kinds of religious festivals, especially Hindu and Buddhist. Among the whole of Nepal, Bhaktapur is the place where all kinds of Gods and Goddesses are worshiped on different occasions. Panchadān is a Buddhist festival actually, but all people and society heartily welcomed five Deepankara Buddhas to their door and offer five summer gifts, like rice grains, pulses, maize, rice, etc.

The five Deepankar Bodhisatva Tathagat bring to Sujamari dabu and done Tantrik activities and worship and offer many agricultural products to Deepankar. Money, rice, and other products also offer to the Shakya and Bajracharya tribe. The five Deepankar took a round of Bhaktapur city and ensconced many places of Bhaktapur and on some of the cultural dabu of Bhaktapur. Gunla ba:ja and Ponga ba:ja is the main traditional musical instruments which are played during the five Deepankar visit to the whole Bhaktapur city on a particular day. There is a belief that if we donate as much as we can to Dipankar Tathagata, the agricultural work will be successful and there will be economic prosperity and happy life.

2.4.6 Sakimanā Punhi

Sakimana punhi is especially dedicated to a kind of arum vegetable, which is easily available around Bhaktapur and it is one of the popular vegetables of peasants. On this special day, boiled *saki* (Yam) and other sweetmeats were eaten by the Newar community. The dabus occupied with the notable art or design (Photo no. 1), dedicated to particular God and Goddess, were made by the group of Bhajan khala: with a variety of cereals and sweetmeats. A group of Bhajan khala: sing a bhanjan for about midnight and people came and give them *saki*, *chaku-hi* (Sweet Potato), other

traditional *rotis*, *chhusyā*, *musyā*, *lājā*, etc and it goes till midnight on Bramha□yani dabu.

2.4.7 Gāthāmaga Charhe/ Ghantākarna Chaturdashi

Ga□tha□maga Charhe is one of the biggest ja□tra□ of Kathmandu Valley. It is celebrated on *Shrāvan Krishna Chaturdashi* for the whole day. A horrifying giant devil, named 'Gatha□ma' was killed on this day and people celebrate his death and beg their Gods for protection against the evil spirits (Anderson, 1977, P.72-73). A giant devil Gatha□maga has made with the use of straw and *Narkat*; a small-sized bamboo and take it out of the city and holy place of the city to burn. It is believed that celebrating this festival will ward off the evil spirits, get rid of the witches and evil eyes, and ghosts.

The dabus has been used to store the *narkat* bamboos and straw and the Gathamaga has been made on dabu. Ma□rcha□ dabu is the best example of such activities.

2.4.8 Nāsa Dyo

Na□sa Dyo is the highly venerable deity in Newa□r tradition. It is worshiped by local Newa□r before they learn to play or practice a different kind of musical instruments and dances. It is believed that Na□sa Dyo is the God of etiquette and successful presentation of music, dance, and other performance. Whenever the tradition needs to perform, the Na□sa Dyo should be worshiped before the performance, therefore, a small temple of Na□sa Dyo is established nearby or around the dabu.

Chapter Three

The historical and cultural Dabus of Bhaktapur city

3.1 Meaning and historicity of Dabu

The Sanskrit word for Music is 'Sangit'. The combination of Git+Va□dhya+Nriya is called 'Sangit' in general. And no doubt, the Dabus appear to have customarily been used for musical performances since the remote past. Several documents i.e, literary sources, like ancient religious texts, Vamshavalis, sculptures, wood, and bronze arts, etc. indicate the practice and popularity of music during the ancient period. Notably, the dabus appear to have built-in particular places of the town during that period. The Lichchhavi inscription of Naxal-Na□ra□yan chaur mentions 'Man□dapi ya□tra□' (Vajra□cha□rya, 2053 V.S., P.565). It not only indicates the prevailing of such festivals or ceremonies but also points out such ya□tra□ belonging to the Dabu or Mandip. Moreover, 'Vaditra Gosthi' also reminds us of the Dabus as well. Therefore, traditional dances, musical instruments, and dramas show the dabu-culture as well. The dabus seems built not only for musical performance but also for social gathering, to sit on the dabu for a while to talk, fun, to rest for a while (a□ra□m), and so on.

Culturally important religious songs, dances, and dramas appear to have developed during the Lichchhavi period, which consecutively popular during the medieval period as well. Musical performance on the dabus under the royal patronage seems evolved and survived more richly in the ancient and medieval periods. For the particular musical purpose, the dabus appear to have been built in such public places

Dabu is built a little higher in level than the ground level that's why people stay around the dabu from where they easily see all performances shown on the dabu. Construction materials such as bricks, clay, and stone appear to have been used to build a dabu, from ground level and the top of dabu is covered and decorated with *chikan appā* and stone carving. The main purpose of dabu is specially related to Gods and Goddesses, therefore the initial process of construction dabu is worshiped its foundation or 'Shila□nya□s'. Image of God and Goddess, snake, lion, etc are installed on different sides of dabu, so, people used to bow down before climbing the dabu. It is also believed that Gods lives in a dabu.

Dabu is generally square-shaped, nevertheless, there are different types of dabus in particular shape and size which seems according to their making purpose. If the dabu has made for the installation of image of God, Goddess, and worship it, dabu will make a small size and if traditional dance, musical shows and play or drama has to shown on the dabu, it will be made relatively bigger. Open space can be seen around the dabu to observe the activities and performances of the artist by the audiences.

Mandapa is a structure like a dabu but it is built for *yajña* and for daily worshipping purposes. And somewhere dabu is also used as *mandapa* for a special occasion. Mandapa is specially used for religious purposes, so, mandapa may construct in an open area as well as a close area too. Four poles have made stand nearby middle point of mandapa and decorate it with wreaths and cover a mandapa with the roof of straw or religious cloth from upside. An inscription of Naxal mention *Mandapi Yātrā*, where the mandapa was built to conduct *yajña* and take it round to the city, but which festival was related to Mandapi Yātrā! is not confirmed yet (Kafle, 2062 V.S., P.75).

The Mandapa is a temporary four-pillar structure with a canopy that forms the sacred space for traditional Hindu religious and cultural activities and rituals. Traditionally the Mandapa is designed using organic pillars made of wood, bamboo, sugarcane, or young banana stems. In every Hindu Vedic tradition every ritual has a meaning. Even the mandapa design and décor are rich in meanings. The four pillars of Mandapa signifies the four-stage of life as per the Hindu Vedas- Bramhaçarya, Grihastha, Vaçnaprastha, and Sanyaçsa. The Pillars also signify the four aspects of human life – Dharma, Artha, Kaçm, and Moksha. A Mandapa Plays a vital role in a different kind of Hindu ritual to complete the aspect of life. The Mandapa is made during the cultural ritual Ihi:machha (Bel Bivaçha), Bivaçha, and Bhimrathaçrohan in Newar community.

In the ancient and medieval period dabu was constructed and used for special religious rites and rituals and *yajña* as well as a performance dance related with Gods and Goddesses, musical presentation, make vivid to story by characters, give information and royal order in the name of people, judgment decision for people by the King or member of the royal family. The Pashupati Suryaghat inscription of

Vijayavati, daughter of King Mañdeva, mentioned "Prakhyat vividha kalā vilakshan tatwa" which means eccentric and popular in art, and it indicates to Vijayavati that she was a well-known person of dance, songs, or musical instruments (Vajrañchañrya, 2053 V.S., P.82). Lele inscription of King Amshuvarma mentioned "Ya: ma 12 Vaditra Gosthika Naamma 10..... rasyama.....", with the statement easily said that the Gosthi was managed to manage traditional dance and music in various place (Vajrañchañrya, 2053 V.S., P.282). Anantalingeshvar inscription of King Narendra Dev mentioned about *Dās Dāsini* or *Devdāshini* and in the inscription "10 *Devdāsh harulāi jammā 140 mānikā Muktika dhān*, 20 *Devdāshi harulāi jammā 360 mānikā dhān*.....*Devdāsh harlāi 120 Purāna*, *Devdāshi harulāi 80 Purān*....." was mentioned and according to the inscription the facilities gave to *Devdās Dāshini* for their life by the royal administration. The *Devdās Dāshini* were mainly used for traditional dances and the dabu were made at *Nrityasālā* for dancing program in main squares (Vajrañchañrya, 2053 V.S., P.485).

According to the literary sources of Nepal, King *Champādev* made the vivid play of *Rañmañyan*, which had four volumes (Vajrañchañrya & Malla, 1985, P.77). King Ananda Dev wrote *Sudhapan Natak* on Friday (Vajrañchañrya & Malla, 1985, P.81). *Vāditra Gosthi* used to teach play traditional musical instruments in the ancient period (Kafle, 2062 V.S., P.71). According to the Chinese traveler, 'Nepalese are fond of dancing'. It is known from *Yatrāvritānta* and Nepalese used to play *Damāha*, *Dhol*, and sing *Bhajan* all together (Kafle, 2062 V.S., P.75). Likewise, many archaeological and literary pieces of evidence show that some religious and cultural activities were done on various occasions during the Lichchhavi period, and the dabus, no doubt was built for such activities although not a single remains of the ancient dabu has yet found.

During the medieval period, the Malla Kings used to write or compose drama and took part in it and they were shown in the public places where there were dabus around the city. *Kha: Pyākhañ, Pardā Pyākhañ*, also shows, which was shown phase-wise (it may take around a month to finish the *Pyañkhan*), together with Devi dance. Under the patronage of King Jayasthiti Malla, music and literature flourished. Valuable texts on literature such as dramas were written in Sanskrit and Nepal Bhasha. The *Chaturānka Rāmāyan Nātaka* (Vajrañchañrya & Malla, 1985, P.85)

and the play of *bhairavānanda* were played during his reign (Shrestha & Shing, 1972, P.51). *Dīpāl Rāga* was composed during his reign to accompany the funeral procession of the Kings and to cremate them in accompaniment (Shrestha & Shing, 1972, P.51). King Yaksha Malla showed the *Chaturānka Mahābhārat Nātak* on dabu on the occasion of *Suvarna Tulādān* at Pashupa□ti in the name of Prince Ra□ya Malla (Joshi, 2003, P.8). *Ekādashi Brata Kathā* (1633 V.S) by King Shiddhi Narasimha Malla of Patan is the first and oldest play among founding documents. According to the historical evidence *Ekādashi Brata Kathā* was showed in many places. King Jitmitra Malla of Bhaktapur wrote many plays and dramas like *Madalasaharan Natak*, *Ashvamedh Nātak*, *Jeminibhārata Nātak*, *Geetgobinda*, etc. King Bhupa□tindra Malla wrote *Ushāharan Nātak*, *Vidyāvīlap Nātak*, *Mahābhārat Nātak*, *Pashupāti Prādurbhāva Nātak*, and many other kinds of literature. *Indravijaya Nātak*, *Krishnācharitra Nātak*, *Rāmāyan Nātak*, *Gorakshapākhyān*, *Dikpāl Ganeshopākhyān*, *Krishna Kailash Yātrā*, *Shddarshan Kathā*, *Rukmaniharan*, etc are famous play and drama or literature of King Ranajit Malla of Bhaktapur (Dahal, 2060 V.S., P.91-101). King Jayaprakash Malla of Kantipur built a golden dabu in *Kanhetole Cho* at the Kantipur Darbar area. Likewise, the Malla Kings and queens of Kantipur and Patan as well as outside of Nepal Mandal wrote songs, plays, or dramas and showed in main squares of the city by early and they fixed date to show. Such an activity to show it needs a particular and special area and therefore dabus were built in the Malla period. The study of Dabu provides adequate information about the history and culture of a particular period. So, Dabu needs conservation and preservation and it needs good documentation for the coming generation.

3.2 Significance

According to Hindu doctrine, in the age of Puran (*Paurānikkāl*) the *Panchatatwa* or after the creation of *Jal*, *Thala*, *Pātāla*, *Akāsha* and *Agni* (water, land, hell, sky and fire), a life was given to human by efforts of Shree *Bramhā*, Shree *Vishnu* and *Sankarnāth* Maha□deva and these Trishakti created needs for human beings for life. They also created the inevitability of leaving each being's body or face their death. In the aegis of Shree *Pārvati*, who was based on Ta□ntrik Viddya□ (Tantrism), may other Gods and Goddesses start to dance with many dancing forms

by being happy with the death criteria of the human beings. All the dancing forms were performed in the various '*Raga*' and '*Taal*' by the King on their own dancing position (Munankarmi, 2062 V.S., P.38). From the Pauranic period, the dance of God and Goddess was imagined and it can know that people used to give vivid to traditional dance. But the place and particular was not mentioned in any source of history.

Literature reached its apex in the Lichchhavi period and no doubt that the dramas might have performed on many occasions in many places particularly on the Mandap or Dabu. '*Vāditra Gosthi*' was popular in the Lichchhavi period, much *Gosthi* uses to form for different works, among *Vāditra Gosthi* related to the group of the traditional music played in a particular place for the special occasion (Vajra□cha□rya, 2053 V.S., P.283). Besides performance, the prime operation of the *Gosthi* was to conserve and preserve traditional musical instruments and culture of music, perform from place to place, etc. The *Gosthi* manage all needy goods for performance, like, dabu decoration and other objects. The attraction has been added during the shows when the decoration will complete on dabu why the dabu has big significance form the ancient period.

Dabu appears to have been built for multi-purpose use. It was used for small to big *Yajña* as well. Besides *Yajña*, many *Pujāpātha* and *Kshemā pujā* had been conducted in the Lichchhavi period. Same as the Lichchhavi Kings used to be head of the judiciary and the dabu was used by the King and Royal members for a judicial decision to their people. But the remains of Lichchhavi dabu was not found yet. Not only dabu, but any kind of Lichchhavi architecture has been not found yet.

The tradition of performing various processions and dances during the Lichhavi period has been mentioned in the various inscription, archives, and literary sources. However, it is well known that the search for the remnants of ancient Dabu was used to perform the mentioned processions, dances, and musical instruments performance. There is a dabu in the Bhansa□r Tol of Cha□pa□ga□un, which is known as 'Bhansa□r dabu'. A stone inscription of Lichchhavi king Shivadev was installed about 5 meters north of the Bhansa□r dabu. The settlements of Cha□pa□ga□un and the Bhansa□r tol of Cha□pa□ga□un have been prosperous since ancient times (PL Shrestha, personal interview, December 20, 2020). The

Bhansa□r dabu of the Bhansa□r tol should also be a remnant of the ancient dabu, but with the course of time, the ancient form of this dabu is disappeared. At present, the road surface and the height of the dabu is only 6 inches as the highway has been constructed from the side of the dabu. Therefore, in the name of so-called development, it is necessary to conduct an archeological study of the disappearance of the remnants of such Lichchhavi-era Dabu.

The early medieval period is known as the Dark Age because of the lack of enough archaeological sources of history to know about that particular period. Many archaeological sources, remains and literary sources are available along with the reign of King Jayasthiti Malla, and it was found in whole Nepa: Mandal. Religious texts, literature, inscriptions have mentioned that many forms of dance and musical performance, related to God and Goddess, were performed in many main places of Malla Kingdom from the start of the post-medieval period. As mentioned in Gopa□ra□j Vamsa□vali, the '*Ratnāgat*' dance was performed in the presence of Jayari Malla and notably, Rudra Mallla Deve performed this dance in the year 440 N.S. (Vajra□cha□rya, 2053 V.S., Folio 45) '*Bhairavānanda*' was written during the reign of King Jayasthiti Malla (Vajra□cha□rya, 2053 V.S., Folio 61) King Bhupa□tindra Malla of Bhaktapur wrote many plays and dramas, and he used to participate in such play as the main character. Malla Kings use to inaugurate plays and drama and also take to another state for performing and he offered the bell to *Nātyashwor* (Dahal, 2060 V.S., P.96). The dabu was made in three Malla Kingdom for such a program during the Malla reign and still, medieval dabus can be seen in the three major towns of Nepalmandala.

Inside of Nepal Mandal, many cultural and religious activities were conducted in daily life, basically where Newa□r community habituated. Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, and the surrounding of Kathmandu valley is the place where Newa□r people believe the daily basis religious activities to make day and work or job success. Therefore, Newa□r community believe and worship a different kind of God and Goddesses and do conduct various kind of Ja□tra□s and festivals annually and many dabus were made for such activities. During the Malla reign, many cultural and religious activities should be conducted mandatorily in a specific month or day of each year.

Dabus have been constructed for various purposes in Kathmandu Valley. The existence of ancient and medieval dabus can still be seen in the districts of Kathmandu Valley. For example, among the existing Dabus in Kathmandu, Naṅga Dabu of Basantapur, Dabu of Kilaṅgal, Dabu of Baṅgemudhaṅ, Dabu of Asan, etc. are some of the notable Dabus. On that dabu, various Devi dances were performed in Indraajatra as well as in the procession of pulling the chariot of a Goddess Kumaṅri. Dabu activities, like, Dances dramas, etc. related to various stories played an important role in providing sustainability to the society and these customs are still alive today. (Mala Malla, Personal interview, 14 Dec. 2020)

The Kaṅrtika Naṅch is one of the precious gifts of Malla ruler. Siddhi Narasingh Malla, the king of Patan, established the Kaṅrtika Naṅch on 1641 A.D., which is performed every month of Kaṅrtika month of the solar calendar. A 'Kaṅrtika Dabu' is made in front of Patan Durbar Square and the musical dances and plays are performed on Kaṅrtika dabu for 27 days. Originally, Kaṅrtika Naṅch was shown for two days; Shree Nivash Malla, son of Siddhi Narsingh Malla, added 7 days; and Yog Narendra Malla, the grandson of Siddhi Narasingh Malla, added 15 days. Most of the music and dances of Kaṅrtika Naṅch were composed by King Siddhi Narasingh Malla and it is presented with 17 tales of Hindu God Vishnu, on Kaṅrtika dabu.

The *Katuwal* brings the royal order, rules, and regulations, new law, information for people, issued by the royal family. *Katuwāl* used to stand on dabu and read the particular during the medieval period, even in the modern era too. If necessary, the King should present for the judicial task. The King used to sit on the dabu with the special management for the judgment and the person who needs judgment law-suit-case with the opponent and the audiences were sit or stand downside of dabu. King came to see the nature of arguments among them and gave his decision as mention in *Dharmagrantha*. Likewise, dabu is important for culture as well as politically too.

Naṅsal Chok is a vital courtyard of Malla palace. Every Malla palace has Naṅsal chok and the Naṅsal chok was used for coronation during Malla ruler and even Shaha kings were coroneted Naṅsal chok of Hanumandhoka Durbar before the downfall of the Shaha dynasty. Usually, a dabu is built at Naṅsal Chowk, in which it

was customary for a prince to be enthroned and to be crowned by a royal pandit. While the king is enthroned on the throne, which is situated on Na□sal Dabu, the invited guests sit at the front of the throne and give invaluable participation in the coronation ceremony. This may have been the practice in Nepal since the Lichchhavi period, but since no remnants of the Lichchhavi dabu have been found. But Na□sal Chok has been built in various Malla palaces, which were built during the Malla period, where Dabu is built to perform various political, religious, and cultural activities along with the coronation of the new kings.

Historical and cultural dabus have still existed inside the core parts of Bhaktapur town. Most of the dabus were made with a different purpose. *Tarhāñ Dabu* is situated in front of *Nyātāpolan* temple. It is said that the dabu was made in the memory of *Sidhdagni Kotyahuti Yajña*, which yajña was conducted with the installation of Goddess Shiddhilaxmi in Nyatapola (Shrestha,1991, P.16-18). Like a different purpose, religious purpose also conceived regarding such dabus.

In Bhaktapur, especially on Bhindyo Dabu, Ta:ma□ri Dabu, Na□samana□ Dabu, La□yaku Dabu, only kha: pya□khan is performed. Such stories are especially religious and are based on stories of social and cultural significance. Before performing kha: pya□khan, various tantric rituals are started, which are taught regularly in a certain place, which is called 'Akha□le'. According to the locals, the religious and cultural activities performed in different parts of Bhaktapur will be performed in a tantra-oriented manner after performing rituals. "If it rains while performing the kha: pya□khan on dabu, the kha: pya□khan will be performed on time by completing the Tantrik adore so that there is no rain only in the place where the kha: pya□khan will be performed and the instrumentalists will be present." (Karna Bahadur Gaiju, Personal interview, 13 Nov. 2020) In this way, necessary arrangements were made for various demonstrations in Dabus.

The dabu is not seriously taken as a study subject matter in this modern era and the dabu are misused in a different way by the local people. The belief of people that there reside Gods and Goddesses in dabu is totally banished from the mind which is the cause of a negative impact on the conservation and preservation of dabu. People used to bow their heads to go up to dabu sometime before because the belief of Gods resides in dabu, but nowadays people see dabu as the sum of bricks and stone. Neither

any governmental body has attempted any act and regulation to the preservation of dabu nor any local body has. Dabu has been misused in a different way, like, dry-grain-to-sun, gambling, run a small temporary shop, use personally as right, etc. The existence, beliefs, and importance of dabu lost their significances because of such activities.

3.3 Function

The *Gosthi/s* was constituted to run social, religious, political activities, royal level activities, as well as entertainment, shows to make publicly in ancient times. The *gosthis* used to organize *Jātrās*, *Malla yuddha*, judicial judgment, and cultural activities. Dabu was used for such activities and many dabu were constructed in many places of Bhaktapur. But unfortunately, the remains of dabu of the ancient period were not found. But the medieval dabus are found and still now can be seen in Bhaktapur city. The historic dabus of Bhaktapur was made with a different purpose. As a whole, the functions of dabu are below:

- To perform traditional dances of Gods and Goddesses
- To show a social, religious, and cultural cause of drama, dance, and musical instruments to give information and knowledge
- Bhajan and Yajña and other socio-cultural rituals
- To enjoy cultural and traditional festivals and ceremonies
- To conduct the Malla yuddha
- Use as the court or for political judgment and social justices on the presence of the King or royal family

3.4 Dabus of Bhaktapur city

The historic city Bhaktapur was developed as *Dranga* in the ancient period, which is mentioned in the Shivadev and Amshuvarma's inscription of Golmadhi Tole. Such a developed area may group was managed, by '*Gosthi*' which conducts a social, religious, cultural as well as entertaining Jaṅtraṅs and ceremony openly for the public. *Vaditra Gosthi* is mention in the Shiva Dev and Amshuvarma's inscription of Lele, Lalitpur (Vajraṅchaṅrya, 2053 V.S., P.283). The main function of

the Vaṁditra Gosthi was to manage all programs of traditional music, dance for the King, royal family, or the public on various occasions. Bhaktapur used to be a center of Lichchhavi administration and many religious and entertaining as well as judicial activities should be conducted. But till now no remains of ancient dabu have been found, apart of the dabus of the Malla period.

3.4.1 Sujamāri Dabu

Sujamaṁri or Suryamadhi is locally very popular for cultural and religious purposes. It lies in the eastern part of Bhaktapur city and starting square inside of the east gate of the city entrance of Bhaktapur (at Chyaṁmhaṁshimha). Many religious and cultural (political as well) activities are conducted in this Sujamaṁri square and for a similar kind of purpose, a big dabu was built east side of the square, facing west (Photo no. 2/ A.Design 1, 1.1 & 1.2). Open area and the walking road is managed in front (West) and left side (South) of the dabu for people to watch the activities of dabu and right side (North) and backside (East) of dabu, lays walking road decorated with cooked brick. As a characteristic of dabu and square, the stone water spout and *Pāti* s, *Chiva:dyo*, pagoda temple, and other stone images are installed around the Sujamaṁri dabu. A small Ganesh temple and two-storied *Wakupāti Narayan* temple can be seen in front of the dabu.

As the Dabu architectural structure, the height of the four corners of the dabu is not in the same measurement. The sloped walking road lays the right side and backside of dabu, so, the height of the back part is about double heightened more than the front part of the dabu. A stapes are made to go on the dabu and a circular shape had constructed both sides of the steps to give attractiveness to the dabu. A carved stone has arrayed to all sides on the top of dabu to make dabu strong and attractive. The dabu is covered inside to array stoned area by squared *chinkan appā* to give more attractiveness to the dabu.

An inscription is attached to the wall of the dabu (Photo no. 3). The inscription is badly damaged, and hard to decipher its contents, even the date is missing. Whatsoever, the language of the inscription is in Newaṁri and the script is in Devnagari, therefore, the inscription might have installed during the Shah period. And

hardly it is somehow known that a local person 'Prajapaṭi' by caste appears to have reconstructed the dabu in the memory of his deceased parents.

According to local legend, a Shiva temple has existed on Sujamaṭri dabu. The temple collapsed in the course of time and later, only the dabu was reconstructed. The Shiva Linga is still under the dabu (Nhuchhe Kumar Prajapaṭi, Personal interview, May 21, 2018). The dabu was renovated a decade ago (Bishnu Keshari Koju, personal interview, May 21, 2018). Although the time of the construction of the dabu is not known, it might have built during the Malla period.

The Sujamaṭri dabu is very popular for religious and cultural activities as well as for entertainment-performances. Such performances start every year from *Bhadra Shukla Pratipada* to *Bhadra Krishna Astami*. It is called *Gaijātrā*. Many cultural and religious dances, *Khyāla*, *nātak*, etc; shows every *tole-to-tole* of Bhaktapur. It is mandatory to show every *Gāijātre* performance to the whole *Khwopa-des* within 8 days of Gaṭijaṭtraṭ. The Gaṭijaṭtre items show on Sujamaṭri dabu at least once and the audiences used to watch the show sitting around the dabu. The Sujamaṭri dabu played a vital role to give knowledgeable moral messages and change political, social, and religious circumstances. On the day of Gaṭijaṭtraṭ, the group of performance gives any kind of message and knowledge to people by using *bitter-truth*, even King, royal family, and governmental-high-post officers were affected, are they committed any mistake and nobody can't be arrested on the Gaijaṭtraṭ occasion 58 (Bishnu Prajapaṭi, personal interview, May 21, 2018). And such performance was conducted on the Sujamaṭri dabu. According to local legend, the social and cultural performance was showed against dead-customs and wrong-companionship and wrong political issues as well in this dabu. Likewise, knowledge of religious-customs, social welfare also can learn from the performance of the audience from the dabu.

Navadurgā is one of the most important groups of mother Goddess in Shaktism of Nepal. The group of Navadurgaṭ-gaṭa of Bhaktapur is specially worshiped by the local community. The Navadurgaṭ-naṭch starts from the second day of *Maghe-sakrānti* (Magh 2nd) and it continues for about 8 months. On the starting day of Navadurgaṭ-naṭch, the Navadurgaṭ-gaṭa performs dance and other activities with *Tāntrik-process* for the whole day. Many people came to Suryamadhi to see the Navadurgaṭ-naṭch and take a part in it. '*Ngā-Lakeugu*' is a special performance of Navadurgaṭ and many people took part in it. At the end of the

day, Navadurga-gana ends the *nāch* with Tañtrik-process and take all *Gana* to *Navadurgā-dyochhen*, Kwathandau, Gachhen, Bhaktapur. At present, Navadurga-gana performs their ritual and dance in front of Sujamañri dabu and the audience use to go up to Sujamañri dabu and worship and watch other activities of Navadurga.

Navadurga-gana celebrates for about 8 months, except various places and squares of Bhaktapur, Navadurga-gana shows in Thimi, Banepa, Sankhu, Dhulikhel, Pashupañti, etc. On the day of *Bhalbhal-Ashtami* or *Bhagasthi* (Asadh Krishna Ashtami), Navadurga-gana act as dead and conduct the final funeral through Tañtrik ritual. Before 4-6 days of Bhalbhal-Ashtami Navadurga-gana used to visit Taleju temple (Bhaktapur durbar) to receive and eat *Si-ja* (*death-feast/last meal*). After having Si-Ja it is said that Bhaktapur city will be completely divine-free (PL Shrestha, personal interview, February 27, 2018). On the day of Bhalbhal-Ashtami the Navadurga-gana circumambulate the city that is called '*Nhesa Twa Chāhikeu*'. After this act, the *Navadurgā. Gana* returns to Navadurga-dyochhen. But the *Nakin* didn't let them in and all Navadurga-gana came to Sujamañri and all masks of Navadurga put on the Sujamañri dabu. There is that once believe of Navadurga took a rest on Sujamañri dabu, afterward, Navadurga-gana can't go to another place except Brahmayani shrine via Chamhasing (Shrestha, 2060 V.S., P.93).

Nhesa-Twa-Chāhikeu, The last visit of Navadurga-gana at Bhaktapur, complete in the mid of the night and put all 13 masks of Navadurga-gana including *Sipho-dyo* on the Sujamañri dabu and sacrifice a sheep. All Navadurga-devgan took an oath or promise to keep confidential all secrets of Navadurga, otherwise, if anyone broke the oath, he/she will be sacrificed like sheep (Shrestha, 2060 V.S., P.93). After such a Tañtrik-process, Navadurga-gana visits to the cremation ghat of Brahmayani shrine along with their thirteen masks where the masks are ritually cremated same as in the the Newar death sacrament.

According to Indra Bahadur Banmala, Sujamañri dabu is the home of Mahakali Goddess and all 13 Navadurga-ganas took rest by placing all masks on the Sujamañri dabu after *Nhesa-Twa-Chahikeu* process and before taking all Navadurga mask, worship was conducted by Tañtrik-process (Indra Bahadur Banmala, personal interview, 6 March 2018). Such sacraments show the cultural

significance of Sujamañri dabu since the high days of Tañtrik Shaktism during the Malla period.

The Dabu is worshiped during the Buddhist Performances. Such as Deepankara Buddha is worshiped with special deference among the Buddhists as well as non-Buddhist too. Deepankar is known as "*Buddha of Fixed Light*" and born on an island (*dvipa*) to the miraculous display of lamps (*dipa*), Deepankara Buddha was one of the many predecessors of Gautam Buddha and *Panchdan* offered to Deepankara on the Sujamañri dabu (Slusser, 1982, P.292). *Pnchadan* is observed on *Bhādra Krishna Ashtami* of each year in Bhaktapur. The five images of Deepankara Buddha are carried out and take to visit various squares of Bhaktapur for worship by the local *Sākya* and *Bajrāchārya* community with playing *Pongā bājā* (Ranjitkar, 2063 V.S., P.1). In the *Panchadān* festival, local people of Bhaktapur were being prepared for a grant or *Panjara* to *Deepankara Tathāgata* and Bajrachary and Shakya ancestry. Buddhist and non-Buddhist as well took a part in *Panchadān* and Sujamañri dabu play a vital role on the day of *Panchadān* too.

The images Deepankara Tathagat bring and took on Sujamañri dabu with various traditional Newañri musical instruments including *Pongā Bājā* on the day of *Bhādra Krishna Astami*. An image of Sañkyamuni Buddha is established in *Aadipadma Mahavihar* to the east-south of Sujamañri dabu. Before annoying *Panjara* to Deepankara s on Sujamañri Dabu, the image of Sakyamuni Buddha is offered 'Panjara' in Aadi-Padma Mahavihar, then after Vajrañchañrya and Shakya ancestry come out and offered Panjara to the five Deepankara Tathañgats (Ranjitkar, 2063 V.S., P.85).

The day of *Panchadān 'Tuti Lichāyekegu'* custom should complete in front of Sujamañri dabu by the elder person of *Chaturbramha Mahāvihār* of Bhaktapur, which mean welcoming Dipakar Tathañgat to Sujamañri and afterward *Tuti Lichāyekegu* sanskara, the images of Deepankara Tathagat arrange on Sujamañri dabu. Nearby communities start to worship and offered 'Panchadañn to Deepankara Tathañgat. After a while, raise the images of five Deepankara and place the south part of Sujamañri dabu for Panchadañn -offerings. The *Panchadān Parva* or festival of Bhaktapur continues every year and it started by placing and worship or offering Panchadañn to Deepankara Tathagat in Sujamañri dabu. In the perception of Buddhism also the Sujamañri dabu is one of the important dabu for Buddhist sacred activities.

Sujama□ri Tole is one of the main places in Bhaktapur city that lays in the east direction. Any kind of religious and cultural ritual starts for this place and Sujama□ri dabu is used for such purposes. In the present day, the Sujama□ri dabu is using in various ways. There is a custom of '*Thi-Macha*' or '*Bel-Vivāha*' in the Newa□r community for the younger daughter of the family. *Bel* is a kind of fruit which is regarded as an incarnation of Lord Shiva and *Bel-Vivāha* means conducting a marriage ceremony of any younger daughter of the family with *Bel*. It is believed that after completing *Bel-Vibāha* no woman will be a widow even her human form husband dies. On the occasion of *Bel-Vivāha* ceremony, the Sujama□ri dabu decorates with traditional colors and cloth, paper art, a banana plant, and mandap for yajña or Yagya. Many parents come with their younger daughters for Bel-Viva□ha ceremony from all over Bhaktapur, even from Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Banepa, and Sankhu too.

Bel-Viva□ha ceremony runs for two days and a girl who is going to *Vivah* with *Bel* does various kinds of worship for the whole two days. For the Bel-Viva□ha, a sacred mandap is made in mid of Sujama□ri dabu and the priest (*Purohit*) starts rites and rituals from mandap and all younger girls follow the guidance of *purohit*.

Likewise, many formal and cultural programs are conducted by schools, groups, political confederations, etc. This kind of organization shows traditional music performance as well as the modern concert, dance, dramas, etc. Such programs aside people used to play *kashi-malā-pāyn*, a traditional Newa□ri dice game for fun, grain drying to the sun, drying potteries, put temporary shops, etc on and nearby the Sujama□ri dabu.

Most families are being homeless after the great earthquake of 2015 on April 25 and hundreds of aftershocks. Many families survive to take temporary shelter on Sujama□ri dabu after the earthquake. Temporary shelter or *taharā* was built about one and a half years after the earthquake. Afterward, people collecting old bricks and wood on the dabu from the collapsed building. People forget the importance of our heritage and its conservation, the same as Sujama□ri dabu need to keep preservation and conservation for the next generation.

3.4.2 Bramhāyani Dabu

Bramha□yani is one of the mother Goddesses and it is believed that the Mother Goddess is protecting by surrounding Bhaktapur city including Bramha□yani temple in the east direction of the city. Goddess Bramha□yani is the consort of Lord Bramha and it is worshiped with notable importance in Bhaktapur. It is daily karma to worship Bramha□yani and chant hymn related to Bramha□yani. Dashain, the great festivals of Nepali, start from the Bramha□yani temple by the people of Bhaktapur. Special worship is conduct in Bramha□yani temple on the day of *Vijayā Dashami*. The *Dyochhen* of Goddess Bramha□yani is located at mid-way of Sujama□ri and Dattatraya. The place is known as '*Bramhāyani Dabachā*' among the local people. This dabu is situated west side of Bramha□yani *Dyochhen* and the dabu is specially used for various activities related to Goddess Bramha□yani. So the dabu is called 'Bramha□yani Dabu' (Photo no. 4/ A.Design 2) and the place is named by this dabu.

Bramha□yani *Dyochhe* is located to the east of Bramha□yani dabu and a walking road is made south of the dabu. A *pāti* is on the west of the dabu and a small alley road can see the middle of the dabu to the north side. A private house is joined on the right side of the alley road and Religious *Sattal* is built to the left of the alley road which is joined with Bramha□yani *Dyochhen*.

Bramha□yani dabu is a little raised from the ground level. Pa□ti , house, *sattal*, and *dyochhen* are in the west, north, and east, which means the three directions of dabu is covered except the southern part of dabu. Attractiveness is a theme of attraction to the people, likewise, this dabu is paved by the same size of stones from the top and a half-rounded long stone was attached on the base of dabu for giving attractiveness. As already mentioned dabu is a sacred place of Gods and Goddesses, and old people used to bow-down their heads paying respect to the dabu.

Bhaktapurians perform many cultural, religious, and entertainment activities on this dabu, especially related to this dabu for the whole year. Especially, cultural groups from the Newa□r society of Bhaktapur city used to perform cultural and religious dances, dramas, Khya□las, etc., on the occasion of Gaija□tra□ for seven days, and this dabu used to cover by such cultural and religious item performer and audience for all seven days of Gaija□tra□. If any kind of cultural group came out for performing their cultural or religious item on the occasion of Gaija□tra□, it needs to show to every main square of Bhaktapur city within seven days for compulsory, which is called '*Des or de chahikeu*'. During the *de chahikeu*, any kind of item should show on this Bramha□yani dabu, and it is compulsory, otherwise, the Goddess

reveals resentment to the people (Indra Bahadur Banmala, personal interview, 6 March, 2018).

Mahakali Pyākhañ, *Devi Pyākhañ*, and *Bhaila Pyākhañ* are famous mask dances in Bhaktapur which is related to *Sapta Mātrika*, *Asta Mātrika*, *Navadurgā*, and *Dashamahāvidyā*. These religious and cultural dances show on this Bramhañyani dabu during the Gaijatrañ. Besides these dances, Bhañlu Pyañkhanñ , Khichañ Pyañkhanñ , Kawañchañ Pyañkhanñ , Jangali Pyañkhanñ , Lañkhe Pyañkhanñ , Gañicha Pyañkhanñ , Phañkandali Pyañkhanñ , Lusichañ Pyañkhanñ , Hanumañn Pyañkhanñ , etc., and many dramas with social messages also show on this dabu. This dabu has been busy with such traditional items from Gaijatrañ to Bhadra Krishna Astami.

Goddess Bramhañyani is one of the most significant members of Navadurgañ. Each and every auspicious moment, the local habitat family celebrates with special worship to Goddess Bramhañyani at Bramhañyani temple. Likewise, living Navadurgañ Ganña adore Bramhañyani with special rituals and offerings along with the sacrifice of *Kha:me*, the incarnation of Mahisasur, to Bramhañyani as well as all member of Navadurgañ ganña on the day of Vijaya Dashami. These activities were performed for being Tañntrik enlightened by Navadurgañ ganña. It is believed that Navadurgañ and Navadurgañ ganña is a very powerful religious group of deities that can do good or harm to the people or anything. So many people and families offer many things to Navadurgañ at Bramhañyani for being a good turn to individual and their families. New Navadurgañ masks are offered to each particular human God or Navadurgañ ganña after being Tañntrik enlightened, which is called '*Khopā-Lalāyagu*'.

Navadurgañ ganña performs Navadurgañ dance and adore to Bramhañyani temple and return from Bramhañyani shrine by the dark to visit Tañntrik Goddess *Tulaja Bhavani* at Bhaktapur durbar square. Navadurgañ ganña starts heading to Tulaja Bhavani temple with their particular masks by the way of Sujamañri and Bramhañyani Dyochhen. According to *Nāike* of Navadurgañ ganña, Navadurgañ ganña can't go forward from *Bramhāyani dabucha* without encounter to *Achaju* or Purohit of Bramhañyani Dyochhen. The *Achaju* use to stand at the door of Bramhañyani dyochhen while Navadurgañ ganña arrived from Bhramhayani temple and a representative of Navadurgañ ganña goes to Bramhañyani dabu to meet *Achaju* and *Achaju* handover a *Tasi* (fruit), which tradition is called '*Tasi-lalāyagu*'.

Then after only Navadurga □ gan □ a can go forward for Tulaja Bhavani, otherwise, *Āchāju* clasps all members of Navadurga □ gan □ a with his *Tantra Vidyā* (Indra Bahadur Banmala, personal interview, 6 March, 2018). At the same time, if any person or family shows a desire to offer a *Dyo-Boyakeu*, all Navadurga □ gan □ a take rest and put all masks on Bramha □ yani dabu for *Darshan* and worship. Local people throng to worship as well as offered various Newa □ ri food items and traditional drinks, *thon* and *Aila* to Navadurga □ . During a *dyo-boyakeu* many Ta □ ntrik pray and worship perform by Navadurga □ gan □ a on the dabu for the family. It is believed that the family, who offered *dyo-boyakeu*, endures from a good time and all prosperity comes to the particular family and fulfills their wishes. This kind of social and religious activities of Navadurga □ and society shows the importance of Bramha □ yani dabu in social life.

Bramha □ yani dabu is important in the perception of *Biskā: Jātrā*. It is one of the most famous festivals of Bhaktapur, but it is celebrated all over the Newa □ r community of Kathmandu Valley as their different rituals and customs. Bhaktapur, as well as Madhyapur, Banepa, Dhulikhel, Kirtipur, Tokha, including other Newa □ r dominant settlements, are famous for *Biskā: Jātrā*. The *Biskā: Jātrā* is to be performed on the basis of the solar calendar. The *Biskā: Jātrā* is started before three days of ending solar year or Bikram Samvat (BS) and ending on the fifth day of new year BS. On the starting day of *Biskā: Jātrā* a chariot of Bhairavanatha starts to pull from both sides, like a tug of war or competition, by the group of *Thane* and *Kone*.

From the starting day of *Biskā: Jātrā* , many traditional and religious activities are conducted all over the Newa □ r community of Bhaktapur. A *Yosingdyo* (Lingo) is raised on the last day of the solar year at Bhelukhel of Bhaktapur and it is thunder down on the next day or very first day of the solar year or New Year of B.S. Same as the second day of New Year, all images of protective Gods and Goddesses of Bhaktapur city took out from *dyochhen* and put it on *Khata* to take around to particular squares of Bhaktapur city. Bramha □ yani dabu is related to Goddess Bramha □ yani and wooden *Khata* made on this dabu for Goddess Bramha □ yani and installed an image of Bramha □ yani on the *khata*, where the *Āchāju* performs Ta □ ntrik rituals, cultural life watch the puja with great reverence. The *khata* with an image of Bramha □ yani carries the help of local youth from four sides of *khata*, takes round its related area, such as *Bramhāyani dabachā*, *Sujamāri*, *Taulāchhen*, *Twa: chā*, etc. It is believed that Goddess Bramha □ yani and other Goddesses from Bhaktapur

city took to visit every house and family for keeping away the harmful and negativity and gain prosperity to the families. For this reason, *Bramhāyani khata Jaṅtra* started from Bramhāyani dabu (Rameshwor Prajapati , personal interview, May 21, 2018).

People from the Newār community like to spend much of their time on religious and cultural activities. Traditional *Bhajans* are one of the best ways to pray to God and Goddess every day. The older generation and some of the youth generation took a part in *Bhajan Khala:* and sing a *Bhajan* every day in the particular area, *Pātis* or dabus. The *Bhajan* culture was developed from the ancient period. A Lichchhavi inscription mentioned the word '*vāditra-gosthi*', which is referred to a group of traditional music instruments player dedicated to God and Goddess. Till today we can see such *vaditra-gosthi* culture and *Bhajan* culture in the Newār community. A group of *Bhajan khala* conducts their performances on *patis* and dabu with their traditional Newār musical instruments and a traditional folded book *Thyasafu* which consists of *Bhajans*. The *Bhajan* is related to the story of God and Goddess and some of *Bhajan* related to commemorative of royal families. The Bramhāyani dabu is also famous for *Bhajan* specially dedicated to Goddess Bramhāyani. A member of *Bhajan Khala:* managed to sit roundly on the dabu and settled a small image of God and Goddess with *pānas*, worship materials, and a book of *bhajan* collection in between of the round. A *Naike* starts worship to an image and a book of *bhajan* collection and sing a *Bhajan* in a group. A *Bhajan* group sings a *Bhajan* in the late evening, but it goes for a late midnight on special occasion. Therefore, Bramhāyani dabu is one of the important dabu for religious purposes.

On the day of *Sakimanā Punhi* a notable art or design is portrayed on the Bramhāyani dabu, using a variety of cereals and sweetmeats i.e. *Lājā, Mushyā, Chhusyā* and covered the design with *Jeri, Swāri, Māripā,* etc. All members of *Bhajan Khala:* sit around the traditional design and sing *Bhajan* with the rhythm of traditional Newār musical instruments. *Saki* is a kind of arum which is eaten, is the especial attraction of this day or *sakimana punhi*. During singing *bhajan* on the dabu, local people used to come and give them *saki* , *chaku hi*, other traditional *rotis, chhusya, musya, laja* etc and it goes for midnight Bramhāyani dabu.

The Bramhāyani dabu is nearby the Brahmayani God house: *dyo-chhen, pāti* by its three sides except for the south. If any kind of performance shows or runs religious rituals, people used to go and sit on the same dabu as remaining space as

enough covered after performer. Nowadays temporary shops used to installed in the morning and evening on this dabu. Sometimes local people use this dabu for grain-dry-to-sun. After the massive earthquake of 2015 many houses were damaged and collapsed, to renovate or rebuild the house and other heritage the Bramha□yani dabu is using storage the building materials.

3.4.3 Mārchā Dabu

'*Mārchā*' is Newa□ri term for a kind of small dome on land which is little raised in, but not on big height, from normal surface of the land. '*DaMārchā*' is the opposite of *Mārchā*, which means a dome with big size and height comparatively. So, the Ma□rcha□ dabu (Photo no. 5/ A.Design 3 & 3.1.) is raised in from walking road level, but not in the usual height of dabus. As the name, the Ma□rcha□ dabu was made on a small elevation. The dabu has been constructed behind the popular and renowned Dattatraya temple at Tachapa Twa: or Dattatraya Square of Bhaktapur. The Ma□rcha□ dabu is closely related to the Dattatraya temple and the dabu used for many religious activities. The Ma□rcha□ dabu has its own important history, people used to tell the story related to Ma□rcha□ dabu. But the exact date of Ma□rcha□ dabu is unknown. but no doubt, it might have built during the Malla period.

According to the legend, the *Mahanthas* of **Pujāri Matha** (where the National wood art Museum has been housed) and **Chikamphale Matha** (National Bronze art Museum) had a cold war and the cold war becomes a personal ego between the mahanthas and their families. The Mahanths even don't want to see the face of each other. Therefore they decided to build a big size of wall between Pujari Matha and Chikamphale Matha as they do not need to see their cold war enemy as they came to the windows and doors. It is believed that the height of the wall was as height as both Mathas. During the time past, somehow the wall was collapsed and remains a small height of the wall. The remaining wall has been conserved as it is and builds as dabu. It was being too used for religious and cultural purposes (Indra Prajapa□ti , personal interview, 13 Aug 2020).

The Ma□rcha□ dabu is made in between of square behind Dattatraya. It is joined with a walking street from four sides of dabu. A *pāti* is in the east, Chikamphale Matha to the North, the backside of Dattatraya temple is in the west and Pujari Matha is to the south of the Ma□rcha□ dabu. Normally *Pāti s*, *Dharas*, a small temple, and image of God and Goddess used to install nearby dabu, but there is a lack

of dhaṛas or water spout and image of God and Goddess nearby Maṛcha dabu. The dabus of Bhaktapur is conserved and preserved by the municipality by sanitation activities from time to time for using of dabu and renovating way. The Maṛcha dabu is recently renovated and used stone plates to cover from all sides of the dabu. Before the renovation of Maṛcha dabu had been made with baked bricks and widely small and long sized stones were wide along the edge of the dabu from the top.

The month of *Shrawan* of Vikram Samvat (V.S.) is the most important month for, especially female, devotees of Shiva, and Dattatraya. Hindu women devotees come to Dattatraya temple for worship every Monday of *Shrawan* for the whole month. The Dattatraya temple is also known as the head of **Kāshi** and many people from the whole country as well as a foreigner came to adore the Dattatraya Guru. On the day of *Shrāwane Sombār* (every Monday of the month of Shrawan) the crowd of Hindu women devotees throng surrounding of Dattatraya temple for worship and to receive blessings from *Pandit* or *Purohit*. The devotees of Dattatraya used to get entertainment by playing traditional Nepali musical instruments; specially *mādal*, and they dance in a group on the rhythm of music and singing. The Maṛcha dabu is used for such a purpose on *Shrawane Sombār*. Many groups perform their performance, music, singing, dancing, on the Maṛcha dabu for a whole day of *Shrawane Sombar*. And sometimes Pandit of Purohit cover space on Maṛcha dabu for sharing, offerings, and *Tika* to devotees.

Shaiva Dharma or **Shaivism** is dominantly popular among the Newari community. *Sakimanā Punhi* celebrates **Kartik Sukla Purnima** and this is particularly related to Shiva and other Shaiva Gods and Goddesses. On the day of *Sakimanā Punhi* a notable art or design made on the Maṛcha dabu by using *Lājā*, *Mushyā*, *Chhusyā* and covered the design with *Jeri*, *Swāri*, *Māripā*, etc; by its edge. A group of Bhajan Khala used to draw a design of Dattatraya guru with such materials and all members of Bhajan Khala: sit around the traditional design and sing Bhajan with the rhythm of traditional Newari musical instruments. 'Saki' is the special attraction of this day or *sakimanā punhi*. During singing bhajan on the dabu, local people used to come and share them saki, chaṅku hi, other traditional rotis, chhusya, musya, laṅja, etc and it goes up to midnight on Maṛcha dabu.

The Maṛcha dabu is located aside from the main road of Bhaktapur city or behind the Dattatraya temple, where people can easily see any kind of activity on dabu. During Gaijatra festivals, it is not compulsory to perform on this dabu, but

some of the cultural groups perform their performance and entertained audiences form the Maṛchaṁ dabu. The dabu used to throng by local people for the whole day during the Gaijaṁtraṁ.

Gathe-mangal Jaṁtraṁ is one of the renowned festivals of the Newaṁr community in Kathmandu Valley, which is celebrated on *Shrāwan Krishna Chaturdarsi*. People used to purify their bodies and house and go to nearby temples to ward off evil spirits from the house and family (Munankarmi, 2043 V.S., P.21). A giant figure of **Ghantākarna** is made and it is believed that all kinds of negative power will burn with the cremation of Ghantaṁkarna. The Maṛchaṁ dabu is used to keep maKing materials of Ghantaṁkarna and a particular group makes a big size of Ghantaṁkarna by using the Maṛchaṁ dabu. Special worship performs after completion of Ghantaṁkarna, takes to an open area for the burn as a symbol of took out a demon far from the city and burn. Likewise, a Ghantaṁkarna used to bring and burn nearby Maṛchaṁ dabu from Jenla tole. People stand on the Maṛchaṁ dabu to celebrate to keep out the bad aspects of life as burning Ghantaṁkarn.

A cultural program and inaugurate the cultural and political rally are conduct on the Maṛchaṁ dab on various occasions. Local families use it for grain-dry-to-sun at the Maṛchaṁ dabu. Especially, peasant families dry rice at the dabu before taking it to the house. The bikers, who visit Dattatraya, park their bikes nearby the dabu, as a result, the beauty of dabu is lost, and its effect on various aspects of society. After the massive earthquake of 2015 many houses were damaged and collapsed, to renovate or rebuild the house and other heritage the Maṛchaṁ dabu is used as a storage of the building materials.

3.4.4 Bhindyo Dabu

Bhindyo dabu (Photo No. 6/ A.Design 4 & 4.1)) is situated in front of *Bhimsen* temple at *Dattatraya Twa*: The Bhindyo dabu is one of the most important dabus from the aspect of culture and religion. '*Bhisin-Dyo*' or '*Bhindyo*' is a local name of Lord **Bhimsen** and the dabu is named after him. The dabu is made with cocked-brick and covered with stone from the top of dabu. An open area or square and Dattatraya temple are into the east and a stone pillar with one palm raising lion on the top of the pillar is attached with Bhindyo dabu to the east part. A small heightened dabu is attached on the north side of Bhindyo dabu and a two-storeys Vishnukamalaja

temple lies in the east north corner of dabu. The Bhindyo dabu related main temple *Bhisin Dyo* is laying next to the walking road to the west and *Ga:hiti*, some medieval stone image, and stone water spout can see behind the Bhisin Dyo temple. The Bhisin dyo temple is a two-storied rectangular-shaped temple. The *Garvagriha/* Sanctum is on the first floor of the temple and the first floor of the temple is used as a resting place or *Pāti* . A modern piped tap is attached to the southwest side of dabu and the *Taj Matha, Dathu Matha, and Sithu Matha* adjacent next to the road in the south direction. According to the art, artifacts, cultural and religious architecture, the Bhindyo Dabu seems important dabu and used for religious, cultural, and political, commercial aspects since the medieval period.

Bhindyo dabu (Photo no. 7) seems to make for special adore aspects of God *Bhisin-dyo* and other festivals as well. Sacred worship is conducted at Bhindyo dabu and Bhisin-dyo temple on every Holi festival of every year by Gaiju families of Jenla Tole of Bhaktapur. It is believed that the *Holi* festival starts from the day of Fagun Shukla Astami, after taking around an image of big seized wooden **masculine** of God Bhisin-dyo to Bhaktapur city and installed at the Bhisin-dyo temple. A guthi of Gaiju family start to sing a Newa□ri song or Bhajan with traditional Newa□ri musical instruments at *pāti* of Bhisin-dyo temple as "भीमसेन घोया लज खङ्ग लो वानला ल्यासे, विस्यूवाने म्वायक स्व भायला" or 'Hi young lady, as the phallus of Lord Bhimsen spellbound you to come to look it without an escape !' from the *Fagun Shukla Astami* and the wooden phallus (Linga) representing God Bhimsen and the female genital organ (Yoni) shaped symbolic red cloth which is inserted into it is regarded as the 'Yoni' of *Draupadi*, is to be hanging nearby the main image of God Bhimsen and the rabble of the people throng to worship and see it. The Bhimsen-linga takes a round of Bhaktapur city on Astami which is called 'Chira Sva□yagu'. It is believed that if anybody worships the Bhimsen-inga during *chira svāyagu*, the person will succeed in his/her business and grow up on the economic factor of their family (Karna Bahakur Gaiju, personal interview, 21 May 2018). The symbolic sexual intercourse is considered as the religious part of the festival which is navigated from the time of the forefather period and it should be continued by the next generation too (Krishna Bahakur Gaiju, personal interview, 23 May 2018).

The Holi festival starts after *Chira Svāyagu* at Bhaktapur and children start to having fun and entertainment from the day of Astami as a sign of welcoming the *Holi*

festival. Sacred worship conducts to Lord Bhimsen on the Holi. At first, initial worship is performed on Bhindyo dabu with a huge sacrificial buffalo, then after, the buffalo take to sanctum from Bhindyo dabu to direct window on the first floor of the temple by using a wooden flack as a bridge and sacrifice it in the name of God Bhimsen (Krishna Bahakur Gaiju, personal interview, 23 May 2018). If the existence of Bhindyo dabu and the temple were searched it can go up to the medieval period, and the aforementioned ritual to the Bhimsen and the Newa□ri Bhajan of Bhimsen can give authenticity for the statement.

Bhindyo dabu was also used to perform Kha:Pya□khan□ show. People get entertainment and knowledge as well as any kind of social message from the Kha:Pya□khan□ and one single Pya□khan□ or drama can go for the whole month on one dabu (Binod Raj Sharma, personal interview, March 4, 2018). There was no electrical light during the medieval period and the *musyampwa* or *masāl* were used for light and a decorated stone with a hole was installed in four corners of the Bhindyo dabu to stand a *musyampwa* light. A *Palephwo* or *Padmākriti* was installed on the east edge of Bhindyo dabu and according to the characteristics of the stone and the decorating art on it, the Palephwo was installed recently. The old medieval period's *Palephwo* should be on the dabu, because without worshiping the *Palephwo*, Kha:Pya□khan□ won't start (PL Shrestha, personal interview, February 27, 2018). Therefore, the Kha:Pya□khan□ gives an account of the historicity of Bhindyo dabu and it goes to a medieval time when the Newa□r society and royal family use to show the vivid live performance basis on various stories.

Yeyān Punhi or Indra Ja□tra□ is one of the biggest festivals of the Newa□r community, majorly celebrated at Kathmandu Valley. Indra Ja□tra□ is particularly related to the God Indra and its *vahāna* or vehicle 'Yera□vat' elephant. The Indraja□tra□ starts from *Bhadra Shukla Dwadashi* to *Ashwin Krishna Chauthi*, for eight days at Kathmandu city and three days in Bhaktapur, from *Ashwin Krishna Dvitiya* to *Ashwin Krishna Chauthi* according to '*Devipurana*' (Munankarmi, 2043 V.S., P.134). People from Bhaktapur joyfully celebrate all three days of the Indraja□tra□ festivals by performing various religious activities. A '*Pulukisi*', symbolic form of Yerawat elephant made from straw, bamboo, and covers by blue fabric, is made and takes around Bhaktapur city on the last day of Indraja□tra□ at Bhaktapur. There is a practice of '*Muli Kāyau*' during the Indraja□tra□ performed on Bhindyo dabu. As the *Pulu Kisi* take a round of Bhaktapur city and its start from

Ga:hiti, nearby Ta:ma□ri square. Dattatraya square is about half of the city and some remuneration gives to the carrier of *Pulu Kisi* on Bhindyo dabu, which is called '**Muli Kāyau**'. The people, who carry the *Pulu Kisi*, took down on Bhindyo dabu to *Pulu Kisi* and did some negotiation with **Achaju** and give some charge (money) to the *Pulu Kisi* carrier (Indra Bahadur Banmala, personal interview, 6 March 2018).

The Gopalraj Vamshavali mentions **Indrajātrā** or **Indradhoj**, which is written in the 14th century AD during the reign of King Jayasthiti Malla. Likewise, an inscription of Ta:ma□ri, Bhaktapur, dated NS 561, mentioned Indrajātrā□ festivals (Joshi, 2060 V.S., P.112-113). On the basis of the Gopalraj Vamshavali and the inscription, the antiquity of Indrajātrā□ dates back to the 14th century and the Bhindyo dabu also used during Indrajātrā□ from the medieval period. These two archaeological and literary source shows the antiquity of Bhindyo dabu relating Indrajātrā□.

3.4.5 Tarhān Dabu

Ta:ma□ri (Taumadhi) square is an important cultural and historical site of Bhaktapur. The Ta:ma□ri square was a part of Bhaktapur Durbar or Royal palace and many religious programs and cultural shows were conducted in this area and at dabu. The Bhaktapur core area was developed as '**Khwopringram Sataladranga**' from the ancient period and the same as the Ta:ma□ri square also introduced as a developed city from the ancient period (Regmi, 1965, P149).

During the reign of King Bhupa□indra Malla, he conducted many reforms and development in the area of art and architecture on the Bhaktapur periphery. Same as the famous temple **Nyātāpolan**; the five-storied temple was built during the reign of King Bhupa□indra Malla. '**Nyātā**' stands for five-storey and '**Polan**' stands for the roof in the Newa□ri dialect. King Bhupa□indra Malla dissolution the small temple '**Nyātāpulan**' on NS 822 (1758 BS) and the present architecture was built within six months (Baidhya, 2061 V.S., P.53). This temple is only a medieval temple that was built as an architectural drawing or map. A German Professor Dr. Burnahard Clover found the architectural drawing of this temple and published it in his book '**Constructing Pogodas According to Traditional Nepalese Drawing**' (1996 AD) (Baidhya, 2061 V.S., P.409). Many Lichchhavi and medieval archaeological inscriptions and **Thyāsaphu** mentioned the practice of **yajña** and **kshemāpujā** after

built the temple and then the main image be installed inside the temple. Same as King Bhupāṅtindra Malla organized *Sidhyāgni Kotyahuti Yajña* for *Vāstu Shānti* and installed an image of Goddess Sidhilaxmi inside the *Garvagriha* of *Nyātāpolan* on the basis of religious texts and with Taṅtrik rituals.

The Tarhaṅn (Photo no. 8/ A.Design 5, 5.1 & 5.2) dabu lies in front of Nyāṅtāṅpolan temple to the south. The *Sidhyāgni Kotyahuti Yajña* was conducted for *Mandir Pratistha Vastu Shanti* (A ritual work dedicated to architecture) where the *Tarhān* dabu is situated. A decorated Mandapa was raised for MahaṅYajña (Shrestha, 2057 V.S., P.9-12). According to the *Thyāsaphu* named '*Sidhyāgni Deval Pratisthā*', the mandapa was started to excavating on N.S. 822 Baisakh Krishna 9 for the yajña. Likewise, installed *Kundapad* on Baishakh Krishna 11, installed a wooden door with tympanum to the yajña mandapa on Baisakh Krishna 13, *Angkurārpan Kriya* (ritual worship) conducted on Jestha Sukla 1 and many other religious adore were conducted for installing Sidhilaxmi inside Nyāṅtāṅpolan Temple (Baidhya, 2061 V.S., P.55).

In N.S.822, Jestha sukhla navami, in the clientship of **King Bhupātindra** Malla, the other including several Brahman priests offer 1102 bundle to the *Agnikunda* (fire-pit). The *Agnikunda* was changed into Tarhaṅn dabu by lifting up from ground level, after adoration, yajña and other various religious activities (P.L. Shrestha, 2057 V.S., P.9-12). To this day, local people believe that the dabu is still hot, the warmth of Sidhyaṅgni Kotyahuti Yajña can still be felt even on this day (PL Shrestha, personal interview, February 27, 2018).

'Tarhaṅn' means 'big' in Newaṅri Language, so, the Tarhaṅn dabu is one of the biggest dabu in Bhaktapur city. Currently, the dabu is decorated by *chikan appā* and roundly paved with stone on the edge. The dabu is raised about 1' from the ground. One of the paved stone is managed to the middle edge of the north side of dabu.

The main gate of Bhairavanaath with two *pātis* to both sides of the gate lies east of dabu. The gate and *pāti* s were completely collapsed by the earthquake of 2072 V.S.. The *Nyātāpolan* lies to the north and an open area for sit and watch the performance for the audience and the waling road was properly managed in between dabu and *Nyātāpolan* temple. The *Kāsthmandap* of Bhaktapur can see to the west of the dabu and double heightened Beta dabu attached half part of the west side of

Tarhan dabu. Likewise, a public house and alley road toward Til Madhava Narayan lies in the south of the Tarhan dabu.

Like other dabus of Bhaktapur, many religious, cultural, social activities were conducted from the medieval period till this day. The Tarhan dabu is one of the most important dabu of Bhaktapur in the case of the festive days of Gaijatra as well. Several cultural and religious performances perform in the various places on the third day of Gaijatra and all cultural items must show their performance on this Tarhan dabu inevitably. The Tarhan dabu situated in the mid part of Bhaktapur city, therefore many people came to see different kinds of performances from various parts of the country. According to the local, all performance should show on this dabu and it's compulsory.

Culturally, Tarhan dabu is used for the whole year by Bhajan Group. All members of Bhajan group reside in the middle of the dabu and sing bhajan on the rhythm of traditional musical instruments. The bhajan describes Bhairavanatha and Siddhilaxmi and also about the royal family. But especially almost all bhajans are dedicated to nearby God and Goddess.

On the day of *Sakimana Punhi* a notable figure of *Yosingdyo* and *Bhaila Kha*: drawn on Tarhan dabu by using grains i.e. *Lājā*, *Mushyā*, *Chhusyā* and decorates the figure with the *Jeri*, *Swāri*, *Māripā*, etc. All members of Bhajan Khala: devotees of Bhairavnaath sit around the decorated figure and sing Bhajan with the rhythm of traditional Newari musical instruments. Saki is the special attraction and celebrating with it on this day is called *sakimanā punhi*. During singing bhajan on the dabu, local people used to come and offered them saki, chaaku hi, other traditional rotis, chhusya, musya, laja, etc and it goes for midnight on Tarhan dabu.

A strange practice of '*Mu Pukeu*' was alive in the Newari community and the practice of *Mu Pukeu* activities conducted on this Tarhan dabu. *Mu Pukeu* means to pay back the loan. If a person is unable not pay back a loan, then he/she is brought in this dabu where he is publically punished by reclining him/her on the particular stone which is paved on the north-east corner of the dabu. The main aim of this punishment is to introduce the person who betrays the lone giver and he/she never can take another lone to another person. Tamari is the main point of the city, so people usually went to this area and all people can see the *Mu Pukeu* (Indra Bahadur Banmala, personal interview, 6 March 2018).

The cultural and religious importance of this dabu is still vivid in local life. The Tarhan dabu is used by the group of worshipers and family for playing *Dhimme*, *Basuri*, and other Newari traditional musical instruments; and sit around on the dabu having *Samhebbaji*, a traditional snack, and *Bhoj*. *Chhevara Samskara* or *Bratabandha* sacrament is still alive in the Newari community and is performed for the sons of the family. *Bratabandha* sanskara performs for purity and some of the family come to the Bhairavanatha temple to complete the samskara and conducts special worship and offer an animal sacrifice to Lord Bhairavanatha. All members of family and relatives go to the temple with worship materials and a group of traditional music players. After finishing worship to the temple and do all traditional religious activities, all family members and relatives gather on the dabu for *Samhebbaji* and *Bhoj*.

At present, the Tarhan dabu is also used for governmental and non-governmental; political meetings and conferences, cultural programs, modern musical concerts, etc. Likewise, public awareness programs also conduct on this Tarhan dabu. Other traditional cultural items and shows competition also conduct on this Tarhan dabu. The Bhairavanatha temple was damaged during the 2015 earthquake. The temple is renovating the initiative of Bhaktapur Municipality and all building materials are collected on this dabu and cover by CGI sheets for security purposes. According to a member of the consumers association, the Tarhan dabu will make well decorated and attractive after finishing the renovation of the Bhairavanatha Temple.

3.4.6 Ta:mari Dabu

Ta:mari dabu (Photo no. 9/ A.Design 6 & 6.1) has great significance and it's directly related to the social life of the Newari community. As its architectural structure, the Ta:mari dabu was used for cultural and religious aspects. This dabu is located at the way of Ta:mari square to the west. This dabu is faced to east direction and two steps were attached on the edge of the east part of dabu. Half of dabu of the backside is cover by the road. An open area and Bhairavanatha temple are in front of this dabu, Nyatapolan temple area in the north, traditional styled personal house to the west and a *Bir Dhara* and *Kasthamandapa* are known as 'Aisamhari Sattal' of Bhaktapur lies in the south.

The famous Navadurga dance shows at Ta:ma□ri area by all members of Navadurga gan□a and *Shipho Dyo*, the main God of Navadurga known as Mahadeva, installed on Ta:ma□ri dabu for a day on the second week of the month Ma□gh. The *Shipho dyo* is worshiped with special adoration and Ta□ntrik methods, then all activities of Navadurga starts for the whole day. The Ka□lbhairav of Navadurga Gan□a kills the offering pig with his own nail as a weapon. This ritual was performed at the Ta:ma□ri dabu as well. Afterward, the local people worship Navadurga Gan□a and their masks.

Culturally, Ta:ma□ri dabu has different importance because Ta:ma□ri is the core part of the upper (*Thane*) and lower (*Kone*) Bhaktapur town. As being a central part of Bhaktapur city, many people visit Ta:ma□ri area for religious, cultural, commercial, and for touristic purposes as well every day. Many people gather from the whole Bhaktapur area and from out of Bhaktapur area at Ta:ma□ri square while any cultural and religious program and performance, conducts on the Ta:ma□ri dabu. And this dabu is one of the dabu where the big and longest drama *Kha: Pyākhañ* was shown. Ta:ma□ri dabu is looked like a medieval structure as its characteristics. At Ta:ma□ri dabu, there installed a stone with a hole to the two corners to the front side for *Musyāmpwā* or an oil lamp with a mono stand. This kind of character can be seen in such a dabu where *Kha: Pya□khan□* is shown.

Malla Yuddha* or *Pahalmān Yuddha was a famous entertaining game among the royal family and local life in the past as well. Simply, the meaning of *Malla yuddha* is wrestling. Lichchhavi inscriptions mentioned 'Malla Yuddha' and the Malla Yuddha traditions were started from the Lichchhavi period (Joshi, 2030 V.S., P.264-267). The wrestling culture was alive till the Malla period and Malla Kings and all subjects get fun and entertain by watching Malla yuddha. Ta:ma□ri dabu is only a dabu where Malla Yuddha was conducted at Bhaktapur during the Malla period (Indra Bahadur Banmala, personal interview, March 6, 2018).

Ta:ma□ri dabu is the place where *Mu Pukeu* activities were practiced, which we have mentioned above.

The festivals of seasonal agricultural products and the five Deepankar Tatha□gat brings to took door-to-door of many places for adore. People offers five different seasonal agricultural products to Deepankar and gives money, rice, paddy, etc to Shya□kya and Bajra□cha□rya kinsmen as generosity or *Dān*. on the same day, the five Deepankaras bring with Ponga□ ba□ja□, Gunla□ ba□ja□ and ensconced or

situated on the Ta:ma□ri dabu for worship and offer a variety of agricultural products by local families.

3.4.7 Beta Dabu

Beta dabu (Photo no. 10/ A.Desing 7 & 7.1) is situated at Ta:ma□ri area and it is joined with Ta:rha□n□ dabu in the west part. The Beta dabu is two times elevated more than Tarha□n□ dabu, but comparatively, it occurs in a small area than other dabu and has a square shape. As its characteristics, the Beta dabu is not made for cultural shows and performances. A slab of stone which apex part is oval-shaped having a figure of Vir Betal is portrayed, is established on this dabu, hence popularly known as 'Beta dabu'. The Beta dabu is used only for religious purposes from the medieval period that we can know by the feature of the dabu.

The Beta dabu is attached to Tarha□n□ dabu from the east part of Beta dabu, an open area or square, and Nya□ta□polan Temple is located on the north side of the Beta dabu, The Kasthmandap lies west of this dabu and the Tilma□dhav Na□ra□yana temple lies close to the south. The Beta dabu was uplifted more than normal dabu and it's cover a cooperatively small area of land. Therefore, the beta dabu is specially related to Beta Dyo and Biska□: Ja□tra□, cultural performances were also conducted on this dabu. The purpose of making this dabu is different than others.

Biska□: Ja□tra□ is one of the popular festivals of Bhaktapur. A chariot of Bhairava and Bhadrakali is made at Ta:ma□ri square and the chariot is completed before four days to the end of the solar calendar. The Bhairavanatha chariot is pulled by the cultural mass of *Thane* and *Kone* as a symbol of the start of Biska□: Ja□tra□ on the day of the third last day of ending the solar calendar. Before starting the Biska□:Ja□tra□, an image of *Beta Dyo* take out from ***Beta Dyo Chhen*** and keeps the Ta□ntrik image of Beta Dyo on the Beta dabu; in front of the Beta ***lhohan*** for religious bath and worship (Photo no. 11). After a religious bath to Beta Dyo, various ornaments wore to the image and worships the Beta Dyo on the Beta dabu. After offering some food and animal, the Beta dyo installed on the chariot of Bhairavanatha, tightly bind on ***Beta Sin*** (Aan Sin), because it is believed that Beta dyo is a restless boy and so can run away from the chariot.

The antiquity of Biska: Ja:tra goes to Lichchhavi King Shivadev. According to the myth, the Biska: Ja:tra was started in the memory of Ta:ntrik saint **Guru Shekhar Achaju** who suicides as huge sized python with his wife at Chupinghat, Bhaktapur (Munankarmi, 2043 V.S., P.95). As the mythological history the Biska: Ja:tra was started from the Lichchhavi period and the all culture and ritual related to Biska: Ja:tra also developed afterward of King Shivadeva. So, it is believed that the Beta dabu was also used for Biska: Ja:tra purpose from the ancient period.

As Beta Dyo is the vehicle of Lord Bhairav, is directly related to Bhairavanatha of Ta:ma:ri, Bhaktapur. Whenever God Bhairavanatha is worshiped by the public and *Guthis*, Beta Dyo also worshiped after Bhairavanatha giving as same importance. In Newa: community of Bhaktapur has practice to done **Khulla Hom Yajña** named **Barsha Puja** and **Chikula Puja** each year. Barsha puja is conducted on summer sessions for rain and water for agriculture and Chikula Puja is conducted in winter for not to harm from cold. During both Khulla Hom Yajña a **Samhebaji bhaga** should offer to Beta Dyo and Beta dabu (Binod Raj Sharma, personal interview, March 4, 2018).

3.4.8 Nāsamanā Dabu

The dancing form of Lord Shiva is called Nrityana:th/Nrityashvar. A medieval Nritanath temple is located at this tole. Therefore the tole appears to have been named after Nrityana:th. And so as the dabu of this tole is known as 'Na:samana: Dabu' (Photo no. 12 / A.Design 8 & 8.1)

Na:samana: tole of Bhaktapur is one of the most important places since the ancient period. The inscription of Shivadev (I) and Amshuvarma: was found nearby Na:samana:. The Na:samana: tole seems popular historically, religiously, culturally, and socially during the ancient period. The Na:samana: dabu faced the east and some open area and small temple and Pa:ti lie to the east of dabu. Likewise, an open area and public houses are in the North, a pedestrian road, a small Narayan temple, and private houses lie to the west side and a **Ga:hiti**, installed small stone images, and pa:ti lies to the south of Na:samana: dabu. The water spout, *dhungedhāra*, is faced to east among nine east faced dhungedha:ras of Bhaktapur. Therefore, Na:samana: area and Na:samana: dabu are an important place of

Bhaktapur. The dabu is lifted up as normal other dabus, but it doesn't have steps to climb up. The dabu area observes the following fairs and festivals.

Kha: Pya□khan□ is the most interesting and longest cultural show item of Newa□r community. The Kha: Pya□khan□ shown episode by episode for four to twenty-eight days. The Kha□: Pya□khan□ are shown mainly at some selected dabus and Na□samana□ dabu also one of the main dabu for showing Kha: Pya□khan□. Many families are comes to attend the Kha: Pya□khan□ at Na□samana□ and it was believed that the auspicious time will come after attending the Kha: Pya□khan□. Therefore, local people never miss the Kha: Pya□khan□ of Na□samana□ dabu as possible (Bhakta Bahadur Duwal, personal interview, November 5, 2018).

Bhising dyo or Bhimsen is known as the God of wealth and he supports preventing the loss in any kind of business in Newa□r community. Therefore, a member of Newa□r community goes to Bhimsen Temple weekly who runs their own business. Same as the image of Bhimsen from Dattatraya bring to Na□samana□ and worshiped for the whole day and night on the day of Yoma□ri Punhi. First of all, installed an image of Bhimsen on Na□samana□ dabu and makes the fire of straw (para□l) nearby Na□samana□ dabu and give heat to the Bhimsen image. The Bhimsen is fully covered with various ornaments and flowers. Newa□r families of Na□samana□ area and whole *Kone* area comes to worship God Bhimsen on till whole night of Yoma□ri Punhi (Bhakta Bahadur Duwal, personal interview, November 5, 2018).

According to the local legend, Na□samana□ area is the area where the in-laws of Bhimsen (of Dattatraya) were live and God Bhimsen came his *Sasurāli* on the day of Yoma□ri Punhi. God Bhimsen is one of the most adorable God in Newar's daily life. People came and worship A massive wooden **phallus** of Lord Bhisingdyo and it is believed that the business will grow up by doing such cultural and religious activities related to Lord Bhisingdyo (Punyaswari Silpakar, personal interview, November 5, 2018).

As mentioned before, Panchada□n is one of the special festivals of Kathmandu Valley and it celebrates with big joy in Bhaktapur on *Shrāwan Shukla Trayodasi*. The five Deepankars bring to Sujamari dabu first and it took door-to-door to many places for adore. People offers five different seasonal agricultural products to Deepankar and gives money, rice, paddy, etc to Shya□kya and Bajra□cha□rya kinsmen in generosity or *Dān*. on the same day, the five Deepankaras bring with

Ponga□ ba□ja□, Gunla□ ba□ja□ and ensconced or situated on the Na□samana□ dabu for worship and offer a verity of agricultural products by local families (Ranjitkar, 2063 V.S., P.134-137). During the worship of Deepankar, there is cultural regulation of playing Ponga□ ba□ja□ two times at Na□samana□ (Ranjitkar, 2063 V.S., P.161).

3.4.9 Lāyaku Dabu

La□yaku dabu (Photo no. 13/ A.Design 9 & 9.1) is one of the most important and historic dabu of Bhaktapur. Literally, the meaning of the word 'Layaku' stands for the royal palace. As an old dabu is situated at Bhaktapur durbar square so as the dabu is known as 'La□yaku dabu. The La□yaku dabu was used for royal activities, like legal and judiciary work, administrative work, and religious, cultural, and entertaining performances (Shrestha, 2057 V.S., P.9-12). Hence, the La□yaku dabu is one of the important and vital dabu among all dabus of Bhaktapur. Due to lack of evidence, it is hard to say the establishment of the La□yaku dabu during the Lichchhavi period, but from the 11th to the end of the 15th-century era Bhaktapur was established as the capital city of whole Nepal Mandal and run all administrative work from Bhaktapur for all territory of early medieval Nepal. Therefore, as being in front of Bhaktapur Durbar square, La□yaku dabu was used in various ways, like, traditional dance and musical concert, drama, Kha: Pya□khan□ , religious and cultural activities, etc. But no doubt, it appears to have been built in the medieval period.

The La□yaku dabu is uplifted about 1' from the ground level. The dabu is faced in the North direction and managed open area to east, north, and west direction for audiences. And a medieval terracotta temple of Kedarnath situated behind of La□yaku dabu. There are six artistic stone-carved lotus petal ***Palepho*** (Padma□kriti) (Photo no. 14) objects in a row, which have been installed on the front edge of La□yaku dabu, and it shows the La□yaku dabu multi-symbolic and especially related to the six mother Goddess. According to local legend, a special six kind of different activities or religious dramas were shown on this dabu and before starting the act the main character of the act worship on the related *palepho* and then only the act or drama will start and member of the royal family and local people present for observing the performance. The two corners of the front side of the La□yaku dabu

has installed special engraving stone with the hole for raise up to the *Musyampwa*, a handmade oil lamp with staff (Binod Raj Sharma, personal interview, March 4, 2018).

King Jayasthiti Malla had a special interest in the Newa language and he orders to translate the maximum of Sanskrit religious texts into Newa Language. Likewise, he wrote many dramas and other literary works on the Newa language. The 'Bhairavananda' drama was shown on the occasion of *Bratabandha* of his son (Kafle, 2062 V.S., P.148), and the act was shown such an uplifted are for to be easy to saw. So, the La-yaku dabu was also used for such a purpose and it is said that the La-yaku dabu was established before the reign of King Jayasthiti Malla.

The La-yaku dabu seems to be related to Taleju Bhavani. Before starting any kind of activities, people went to Taleju temple, inside of Bhaktapur Palace, for worship and came to the La-yaku dabu and again worship to the La-yaku dabu with the Prasad of Taleju Bhavani and then only people start their activities (Binod Raj Sharma, personal interview, March 4, 2018).

In the early medieval period, Bhaktapur was developed on art, literature, and traditional musical instruments, and many dabus were built for such a performance for the royal family and society. Many Lichchhavi inscriptions say that such a cultural and religious performance was conducted on various occasions on this badu. But due to a lack of proven sources about dabu, it is hard to say about dabu system for the religious and cultural performance of the Lichchhavi period. In the Lichchhavi period, many inscriptions mention the drama and acts which were shown for the royal family and local, and they must show such a performance on uplifting space. Therefore, the different kinds of dabus must have been made in the Lichchhavi period itself. But no remains of Lichchhavi dabu are founded till now.

The La-yaku dabu is located at the mid of Bhaktapur durbar square (Photo no. 15 & 16) and it easy to see any kind of performance by the royal family, therefore, the La-yaku dabu has great cultural and religious significance. During the built a dabu, there was a special adore had done on the foundation and still, people believed that a God and Goddess lived on the dabu, and people used to bow down and took shoes off before going to the dabu (Binod Raj Sharma, personal interview, March 4, 2018). Till now old aged people bow down only to sit on the dabu because it has still religious significance.

Especially, La-yaku dabu was famous for *Kha: Pyākhañ* and a group of *Kha: Pyākhañ* play a single act or drama for four days to one month, and the La-yaku

dabu is the central place where this kind of *Kha: Pyākhañ* can be seen by the royal family and local people. According to local people, King Bhupañtindra Malla came to the Byasi area to teach the artist of *Kha: Pyākhañ* (Sankha Bahadur Yakami, personal interview, March 4, 2018). As the local says, it is known that the famous act *Kha: Pyākhañ* during the Medieval era was shown on this Lañyaku dabu during various occasions. '*Kanaksundari ra Suvarnaketu*', '*Ekvir ra Ekiyavali*', '*Prabhāvati ra Anirudra*', '*Virat Parva*', etc; are famous *Kha: Pyākhañ* and dramas that are shown at this Lañyaku dabu.

The Lañyaku dabu is used from a cultural aspect too during the medieval period. Many dramas with a political, social, and religious message were shown at this dabu, likewise, religious mask dances, other social-related dances, and songs were performed at the dabu. Various cultural groups of dramas, dances, songs, and traditional kinds of music came out for open shows on various squares within 8 days of Gañijañtrañ at Bhaktapur city. It is compulsory for all religious and cultural items or shows to perform at the Lañyaku dabu during the Gaijañtrañ period. Malla King and royal members call such kind of traditional musical group and drama group to perform for entertaining purposes at any time (Binod Raj Sharma, personal interview, March 4, 2018). Therefore, the Lañyaku dabu has huge significance from cultural acceptance.

The Lañyaku dabu is in front of Bhaktapur palace and it's easy to view every activity of dabu apparently from the royal palace of Bhaktapur. The Lañyaku dabu was used for announcing political rules and regulations; for taking important political decisions and published all information and decisions from this dabu by calling all belonging persons or society on the subject. The King being as supreme of a judicial body, and all kind of judiciary decision was taken by King in front of two sides of the opposite party, by sitting on dabu for the ruling society or person (PL Shrestha, personal interview, February 27, 2018).

3.4.10 Snehamandap Dabu

Snehamandap or Snehamandap dabu (Photo no. 17/ A.Design 10 & 10.1) is one of the most important dabu in the view of the religious purpose of Bhaktapur. The

Snehamandap is directly related to the very renowned Goddess *Tulajā Bhavāni* or *Taleju Bhavāni* of Bhaktapur Durbar. Therefore, Snehamandap dabu is known as *Taleju Dabu* too. Snehamandap is mainly using for religious purposes. The Snehamandap is situated inside *Mulchok* of Bhaktapur palace. So literary it's hard to go inside of durbar for local people during the reign of the Malla period and till the present days, the *Mulchok* will be closed while the special adore was performed. cultural performances are still conducted on this dabu.

The Snehamandap is situated at the southwest corner of *Mulchok*, and the *Mulchok* is covered by two-storied blocks and Circumambulatory *Pradakshinā Path* around *Mulchok*. The Pradakshina Path appears after entered from the main gate of *Mulchok* and the open space of *Mulchok* is about a couple of feet ravine from the Pradakshina Path. And the Snehamandap is laid at ravine part of *Mulchok*, which is raised up to the same level of Pradakshina Path, at *Nairitya* direction (southwest corner) of *Mulchok*. The Taleju Bhavani temple lies to the southern block of the Snehamandap. A tree-shaped oil lamp has been kept in this dabu with 108 *diyos* as leaves of the tree.

Remarkable worship of Taleju Bhavani is done on the Dashain festival. Dashain is the main festival of Bhavani and Taleju Bhavani is the main character of a Goddess of Dashain at Bhaktapur. The Taleju Bhavani and Snehamandap used to decorate in the traditional way and manage worship materials on dabu. Many Buffalos, goats, and chickens were offered to Taleju Bhavani during *Kālarātri*, the 9th day of Dashain. And the Snehamandap dabu is also worship during the Vijaya Dashami.

Different kinds of worship conduct on the day of *Kālarātri* at Taleju of *Mulchok*. On the same day, the *Nikuthuku Jātrā* is conducted by the people of *Byāsi* area of Bhaktapur. '*Nikuthu*' is the local name of a sacrificial buffalo symbolic of the demon King 'Mahishasura'. The *Nikuthu* has worshiped at *Saṅgā Byāsi* of Bhaktapur and took it at *Baṅgākhū* Ganesh with playing various traditional music instruments. At last, the *Nikuthu* bring inside the Taleju chok from *Baṅgākhū* Ganesh by lighting *diyos* and sacrifice the *Nikuthu* offering to Taleju Bhavani. Additionally, people worship the Snehamandap dabu and light oil lamp before sacrifice the *Nikuthu* (Radha Krishan Chhunju, personal interview, November 5, 2018).

The Navadurga is the auspicious mother Goddesses of Bhaktapur and the group of Navadurga worship to Taleju Bhavani as a teacher or source of life and death. After Navadurga Ganā receives the mask at Bramhaṇiyani temple on the day of Vijaya Dashami of Dashain festival, they visit Taleju Bhavani and worship to the Taleju. Navadurga Ganā manages all worshipping materials on Snehamandap and lights a *diyos* on dabu before worshipping Taleju Bhavani.

The Snehamandap dabu is associated with Tulaja Bhavani and while studying the history of Taleju Bhavani we can reach to medieval King Rudra Malla. (died in N.S.446). Devaldevi of Simraungadh brings the *Kalash* of Taleju Bhavani to Bhaktapur during the reign of King Rudra Malla at Bhaktapur and established it inside Bhaktapur durbar (Vajracharya, 2019 V.S., P.232-236). Till the present day, the Taleju worshiped with huge importance.

According to local myth, a Tantrik Agnihotri was lived before where the Taleju was established at the present day. The Tantrik Agnihotri was asked to leave the place and shift to another place. He denied and he committed suicide in the same place. Then, all goods including his stone seat or bed threw away from the particular place and established Tulaja Bhavani in that place (PL Shrestha, personal interview, February 27, 2018). According to local legend, the Tantrik Agnihotri used the *Mulchok* (nowadays) as his own residence. So, the Snehamandap might have been used for daily worship purposes in honor of such a saint.

At the present day, some informative inscription was found about Snehamandapa at Bhaktapur. An inscription of Jagat Prakash Malla dated N.S. 782 (B.S. 1718) has been found which mention the Snehamandapa dabu. According to the inscription, King Jagat Prakash Malla offer a *Mandapa* to Taleju Bhavani and installed his self-image. The inscription lies at Harisankar Temple (Pani Adda Office) (Paudel, 2022 V.S., P....).

श्री ३ भवान्यै नमः

दृङ् मातङ्गनगैर्मिते रविदिने नेपालशाके रहः-

षष्ठ्यां भे श्रवणे सिते शुभदिने योगे ध्रुवे तैतिले ।

नेपालेशजत्रकाशनृपतिभूपालचुडामणि-

दिव्यं मण्डपमुत्सर्जं विधिना मानेश्वरीप्रीतये ॥

Likewise, an inscription of Jagatpraksah Malla, dated B.S. 1719, mentioned that King Jagat Prakash Malla built the Snehamandapa by himself for lighting a

Diyos on the occasion of Ghodeja□tra□, Dashain, and Biska□ Ja□tra□. And to conduct an event of Jogichakra puja□ during Biska□ Ja□tra□ on which King Jagat Prakash Malla granted 24 *Ropanis* of land for conserved such activities which are related with Saneha mandap (Paudel, 2022 V.S., P.44).

.....भक्तापुरैकादशस्वर्णकलशच्छत्रद्वारतोरणगवाक्षपटलस्वर्णपूर्तिराशिनक्षत्रादिनानाप्रकारविचि
 त्रतम्बार्गाप्यधिमसमनोहरप्रासादवासिनीश्रीश्रीश्रीस्वेष्टदेवताप्रीतिकामनया मानवगोत्ररघुवंशीभूदवेन
 श्रीश्रीजयजतत्प्रकाशमल्लदेववर्मणा स्नेहमण्डपे प्रतिवार्षिकदीपप्रज्वालनार्थं
 दधिचिपितिकान्नलडुकमांसदानाथं दर्शनधारीभोज्यकरणर्थं.....

Both of these inscriptions were installed a quite distance from Snehmandap at the present day. One is inside Harisankar Temple and the second is inside Vatsala□devi temple. But there isn't any mention of Harishankar on the first inscription and the inscription started with the word 'Bha□vanyai Nama:', which is dedicated to Taleju Bhavani. Likewise, the second inscription is not related to Vatsala□devi temple, because the temple was built by King Jita□mitra Malla, son of Jagatprakash Malla, in 1752 B.S., and the inscription was dated 1719 B.S.. Therefore, these two inscriptions of Jagatprakash Malla signify that he built the Snehmandap to offer to Taleju Bhavani inside Mulchok of Bhaktapur palace (Paudel, 2022 V.S., P.44-46).

Bhaktapur is a place where people are born, live, and die and Gods and Goddesses too. Navadurga□ is a protected group of mother Goddess of Bhaktapur, and it dies on the day of *BhalBhal Astami* of every year. It is believed that once Navadurga□ died, Bhaktapur becomes Gods and Goddesses less. Before the dying process of Navadurga□, they eat **Si-Ja** (last meal) at *Mulchok*, in front of Taleju Bhavani inside of Bhaktapur durbar. They complete the Ta□ntrik worship to Taleju and Snehmandap is used for the adore process by Navadurga□.

Ka□ga means 'crow' and the crow is known as a messenger of a Yama, a God of Death as well. It is believed that the any of the family members go far away from home and become something bad to the person, the crow comes to their family and gives the symbolic message. Likewise, the crow is the mediator who receives food from family and takes it to the departed soul and it helps the departed soul to go towards heaven. After the death of any member of Newa□r society perform religious and cultural activities for *Ātma Shānti*. During the fifth day (Ka□si Gotra) and seventh day (Ma□nav Gotra), known as Nga□nhuma and Nhenuma respectively,

offer one share out of nine to crow on a bank of the nearest river (Munankarmi, 2016, P.7-8). Especially, a is needed as performing *Bhuta Yajña* in Newar community.

The Kaṅga Puja is annually done on the day of Bhaḍra Shukla Panchami as remarkable Parva and Jaṅtra. During the Kaṅga Puja a Taṅtrik ritual is performed in Taleju shrine and worship Kaṅga Puja at three places of Bhaktapur including Snehamanapa. A set of food with boiled Pancha Tatva, ducks egg, fish, meat, ginger, garlic, etc offer to the crow on the Snehamadap, as well as at Dantali (name of the place) of Bhandarkhal pound and east-south corner of Tudikhel of Bhaktapur (Munankarmi, 2016, P.7-8).

'Ghasapa Jogi chakra puja' is also performed on this Dabu during the Visket festival for the salvation of the dead-spirits.

3.4.11 Yālāchhen Dabu

Yaḷāchhen dabu (Photo no. 18/ A.Design 11 & 11.1) is located at Yaḷāchhen tole and is used by local residents on special occasions. Every square or *chok* has different kinds of cultural and religious diversity in and around the Bhaktapur city. Yalachhe dabu also plays a vital role to keep cultural and religious customs alive among the Newars. The Yaḷāchhen dabu is specially related to Balakhu Ganesh, one of the *Tri-Kunda* Ganesh of Bhaktapur.

Yaḷāchhen dabu is named after the Yaḷāchhen tole situated at the north of Bhaktapur durbar square and Balakhu Ganesh temple. The dabu is attached to the main road and comparatively, it hasn't enough open space to show cultural shows as another dabu of Bhaktapur has. The Yaḷāchhen dabu is covered by private houses from east and north, Sharada Secondary School and a small kind of dabu and stone water spout is lies to the west of the dabu and a small open space and *pāti* laid to south. This dabu is one of the important medieval period dabu of Bhaktapur because Yaḷāchhen and the dabu are believed to be one of the *Unānsaya Chok* or 99 courtyards of Bhaktapur royal palace. It is believed that the Yaḷāchhen dabu is also used for royal, cultural, and religious purposes, etc. Nowadays more than eighty-five courtyards no longer stand and are lost in course of time. Several private houses appear to have built-in the palatial area. Likewise, the historical identity of Yaḷāchhen dabu was also lost.

Especially, the Ya□la□chhen□ dabu is used to install an image of Balakhu Ganesh on the day of *dyo: Swagan Byuwanegu*, on Biska□: Ja□tra□ (Shrestha, 2057 V.S., P.11). Only for one day of the Biska□: Ja□tra□, an image of Balakhu Ganesh is taken out from the Blakhu Ganesh Temple to adore on Ya□la□chhen□ dabu. Many people and devotees come to worship Balakhu Ganesh at Yalachhe dabu from the whole Bhaktapur. A local *Bājā Khala* sits around the Yalachhe dabu and play traditional Newa□ri musical instruments and sing *Bhajan* dedicating to Lord Ganesh and family on Ya□la□chhen□ dabu.

The Ya□la□chhen□ dabu is not highlighted on any occasion nowadays as another dabu gives priority as being a part of Bhaktapur durbar. Local used to store their stuff on dabu, like, bricks, woods, and use to dry-to-sun different kinds of grain. The Ya□la□chhen□ dabu lost their identity and no person and organization become serious in this case.

3.4.12 Dumha: Dabu

The name *Dumha:* is a character of Navadurga□ Gan□a and the name of Dumha: dabu (Photo no.19/ A.Design 12, 12.1 & 12.2) is given after the name of the same character. The Dumha: dabu is directly related to Dumha: the character of Navadurga□ and the dabu is comparatively very small in size than other dabus. The Dumha: dabu is situated nearby Mahesvari temple, south part of Bhaktapur city (near Maheswari playground). The dabu is located aside in the middle of the road, facing north. An installed stone figure which seems immaterial is considered as 'Dumha:'. There viewed two tiny stone lions on each side of the dabu. The dabu is uplifted only for some inches from the level surface and as before mentioned, the Dumha: dabu is the smallest dabu of Bhaktapur.

The Dumha: dabu has no much space to go up and perform any kind of cultural and religious performance. The dabu is made on only about four square feet. The Dumha: dabu is used for only worship purposes by Navadurga□ *Gaṇa* and local residents. This dabu shows that the dabu is not only for such kind of cultural religious and instrumental performance purpose, but the dabu use to make to-do Ta□ntrik worships too (PL Shrestha, personal interview, February 27, 2018). Simha and Dumha: are the children characters of Navadurga□ and among these two characters, Dumha: is the most interesting character. Dumha: has to perform *Ngā:Lakeu Jātrā*

and children to the youngest person running in front of Dumha: and he tries to catch them as fish and punish them. On the second day of *Ngā: Lākeu Jātrā* Navadurga□ *gaṇa* performs all religious and Ta□ntrik activities in front of the Dattatraya Temple. Before the beginning of the second day of *Nā: Lākeu Jātrā*, Dumha: comes to Maheswari temple with a small pig and do worship process and ***pāyo Jātrā***. At the end of *Payo Jātrā*, the pig sacrifice performs to Dumha: *Dyo* on Dumha: dabu, and then only other religious activities run by other members of Navadurga□ at Dattatraya square. The Dumha: *Dyo* is known as ***dwārpāl*** of Ma□heswari *Māi*, and he gives security to the temple and Goddess (Indra Bahadur Banmala, personal interview, 6 March 2018).

Goddess Maheswari is considered as one of the powerful mother Goddesses of Navadurga□, She has her own open shrine known as '*Pith*'. People come to Maheshwari *pith* for great reverence. they worship and offer animal sacrifices to Maheshwari as well. Whenever people give animal sacrifice to Goddess Maheswari, a small part of the sacrifice must offer to Dumha: *Dyo*, at Dumha: dabu even to this day (Binod Raj Sharma, personal interview, March 4, 2018).

5.4.13 Simha Dabu

Simha Dabu (Photo no. 20/ A.Design 13 & 13.1) is also related to God Simha character from Navadurga□ of Bhaktapur. Simha (Lioness) and Dumha: (Tigeress) are known as a *dwārpāla* of Goddess Maheswari (Indra Bahadur Banmala, personal interview, 6 March, 2018). As Dumha: *dyo*, an immaterial stone was installed as God Simha, in-between the stone image of small lions on the dabu, facing north direction. The Simha dabu also a small dabu, where is no much space for cultural and religious performances. An image of Simha *dyo* is installed in-between point of saimha dabu. The dabu is uplifted from ground level for about a foot and the Simha dabu is made on one uplifted layer on the ground surface and the layer looks like *pradakshinā path*. It doesn't much space to walk around.

The Simha dabu is located at Ina□cho tole of Bhaktapur. Private houses and *pāti s* are close to the dabu, a massive stone image of Lord Buddha, and *Chiva Dyo* or *Chaitya* resides to the west of dabu, walking the road and the private road lies to the downside of dabu and a small heightened wall is raised to the east of dabu. A Pa□ti , water spout, pond ware made nearby the dabu as dabu's characteristics. And the more

important thing is a Lichchhavi inscription of Amshuvarma and Shivadev (Photo no. 21) is still available on the south side of the Simha dabu which has mentioned the tax system '*Trikara*' of the ancient period. The Simha dabu is worshiped daily by local residents. But the Simha dabu and Simha *dyo* is worshiped for the special cause of Navadurga during *Ngā: Laḱkeu jaḱtra*.

As above mentioned, on the second day of *Ngā:Lākeu Jātrā* of Navadurga, Simha, a character of Navadurga, came to Simha dabu for *Taḱntrik* worship to show the devotion and dedication to Goddess Maheshwari (Indra Bahadur Banmala, personal interview, March 6, 2018). The Simha dabu is used only for *Taḱntrik* adore and Navadurga *gaḱa* should come for worship at once for compulsory. The Navadurga cult seems highly popular in Bhaktapur since the early medieval period to this day (Indra Bahadur Banmala, personal interview, March 6, 2018). Literary sources trace that the Navadurga cult was in prevalence during the reign of King Amshuvarma, and during the reign of King Anandadev (1204-1224 BS) the Navadurga *Nāch* performed at the city (Jadhari, 2072 V.S., P.95). So, the historicity of Simha *dyo* and Simha dabu was worship for *Taḱntrik* knowledge by Navadurga character every year, and from this point of view, the dabu seems to be much older than other dabus.

This Simha Dabu is of special importance in the religious and social life of Bhaktapur. According to the popular belief of Newar society, if a child suffers from a Colic disease or *Runche rog*, according to the *Baidhya's* advice, worshipping Simha *Dyo* in this dabu cures the Colic of that child. But in this Simha Dabu, while worshipping Simha *Dyo*, the worship material brought for worship should not be brought back to any house, otherwise, the child's Colic will not be cured (Rajesh Joshi, personal interview, February 7, 2020).

Besides the Navadurga, the image and dabu are using for daily regular worship. No briefing about the dabu and the methods of adore to the Simha was recorded yet. Thus it is still unknown to have more information about dabu. Although the importance of this Dabu at present is somewhat limited, due to the heritage around this Dabu and the presence of the Lichchhavi inscription, this Dabu can also be presented as an ancient historical Dabu. But it can be said that Simha dabu is one of the important religious places in daily life for local people.

3.4.14 Other Dabus

Bhaktapur was the capital city of Nepal Mandal for more than three hundred years during the pre-medieval period. Its Newari and Sanskrit literature were written and developed in the Malla Kingdom and they use to perform for royal and for local residents too. Likewise, many festivals and Jatra's were conducted for a whole year in many places in Bhaktapur city. As mentioned above, several performances show in the squares of Bhaktapur city, and many other dabus was made in many squares or tole of Bhaktapur.

Gopala Vamsavali mentions about the **Tilmadhava Mandapa** of Bhaktapur. According to the Vamsavali, the Tilmadhava Mandapa was built during the reign of Nayakdevi (Vajracharya & Malla, 1985, Folio 27, P.83) and the dabu is dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The Tilmadhava Mandapa appears to have lost in due course of time. Likewise, Kwathandau dabu is using for Panchadana Parva, but no other uses for the whole year. Nagpukhu dabu is also lost its cultural and historical identity because this dabu is only using for grain-dry-to-sun, nothing else. Some of dabus within some Newar settlements may have become extinct in the womb of history over time due to lack of necessary protection, conservation, and preservation which we have lost forever today and we have some dabus as historical monuments in front of us, but they are in danger of disappearing due to lack of protection and promotion.

Chapter Four

Summary and Conclusion

4.1 Summary

This research is research on the historical and cultural study of dabus of Bhaktapur city. It provides a cultural, historical, religious, and geographical study of dabus and its periphery in brief. Likewise, this research studied deeply about the historical and culturally important dabus situated in a different part of Bhaktapur city. It tries to to to the depth and explore the root of the study to find the reason behind the establishment of dabu, but it gave a feeling of not complete the study yet. The uses of dabu by royal and local residents in a different way have been given in this research. The importance of dabu and how it was used then and now is focused during the research and try to find a different kind of uses during medieval and modern periods. How people show devotion to dabu, how they worshiped to dabu before performing the cultural and religious programs, and how it's going to degradation or misused by locals is the focal study of this research. So, it needs to be conserved and preserved by related local people and concerned organizations i.e. Department of Archaeology, Bhaktapur Municipality, Guthi Sansthan including other local government agencies.

Religious, cultural, and social dances, dramas, musical items were a medium of entertainment before and after the Lichchhavi period and many festivals and *Jātrās* too. Kiraṅtas make Kathmandu Valley as a well-managed city, and they might also give big priorities to such an entertaining medium for their daily life. But no historical records were found about Kiraṅtas. Lichchhavis came from Vaishali to Nepal, and they attacked to Kiraṅt dynasty and got succession to the throne of Nepal Mandal. The Lichchhavis practiced their religious activities and festivals as they have done before and Nepal becomes a center of cultural and religious festivals, *Jātrās* during the Lichchhavi period. They might use dabu for such a festival and *Jātrās* purpose. No such Lichchhavi record mentions the dabu, but many local legends says that many religious and cultural dramas and dances were started from the ancient period and it needs something uplifted area like dabu. They might have made many dabus at many places of Bhaktapur, but such architecture either collapsed because of natural disaster and lost their identity by renovating or reconstruction. So, no any dabu was found that can be identified as Lichchhavi dabu.

Coming to the medieval period, Malla Kings used to write dramas and play by themselves as the main character. They show their play or drama on dabus preferring special occasions and get entertainment. The Malla Kings were dedicated to such literature and religious activities. Many dabus architectures were made during Malla period and show much cultural-religious performance. The highly developed tradition of showing dramas, dance, and music in local life and preserved it by making groups or *gosthi* or *Khala*: of particular cultural and religious performance. The archaeological and recorded history of dabus is found from the Malla period only.

Bhairavānanda, Raghvānanda Abhinava, Chaturānka Rāmāyan Nātak, Chaturānka Mahābhārat Nātak, Ekādashi Brata Kathā, Madalasāharan Nātak, Ashvamedh Nātak, Jeminibhārata Nātak, Geetgobinda, Ushāharan Nātak, Vidyāvīlāp Nātak, Mahābhārat Nātak, Pashupāti Pradurbhāva Nātak, Indravijaya Nātak, Krishnācharitra Nātak, Rāmāyan Nātak, Gorakshapākhyān, Dikpāl Ganeshopākhyān, Krishna Kailāsh Yātrā, Shddarshan Kathā, Rukmaniharan, etc; play and drama were written by various Malla Kings and shown on a different kind of occasion, and the dabus was made at almost all squares of Bhaktapur for such performances. Even Kings and royal members play their drama as a special character and shown to the public. King Jayasthiti Malla was especially interested in Newari language and literature and he made translated Sanskrit literature into Newari language. *Kha Pyākhan* had been played during the Malla period and the *Kha Pyākhan* shows episode by episode for 3 days to 28 days with a single story. *Kanaksundari ra Suvarnaketu, Ekvir ra Ekvaliyā, Prabhāvati ra Anirudra, etc;* are some names of *Kha Pyākhan* which is shown on the dabus of Bhaktapur. A *Kha:Pyākhan* group of *Byasi Tole*, Bhaktapur shown their performance at many dabus of Bhaktapur. About 40 years ago, the *Kha:Pyākhan* was stopped to performed on dabus due to lack of *guru* of *Kha:Pyākhan*, reduction of the interest of it to a new generation, and economic problems.

The Newari community is a highly concerned group on cultural and religious activities. The maximum of Newari belonged to farming and agriculture. They dedicate almost all their time to farming and agriculture as a peasant. Even for them, the Newari community managed a time of performances to get entertainment. Peasants were busy at their field and while they came back home and many cultural and religious performances were shown to make them refresh and relax at various squares and dabus of Bhaktapur. Especially, many groups and *Khala* brings a

different kind of cultural and religious performance, like, dramas, *Khyāla*, dances, musical shows and many more, which has a different message for society and individual. And they use a dabu for their performance as uplifted from the ground.

Kalasha Yātrā, *Varāha Yātrā*, *Mandapi Yātrā*, *Pashupāti Yātrā* are the most popular festivals and Jaṅtraṅgs of the Lichchhavi period. Such festivals are run to show the devotion towards God and Goddesses, and of course to get entertainment and fun too. Likewise, *Goyuddha*, *Mallayuddha*, *Vijayautsavs*, etc; are the medium of entertainment and they use a dabu for Mallayuddha and other public shows activities. The next important thing is 'Dance', the most common part of getting entertainment during the Lichchhavi period. They made a dabu in the main squares for a dance performance on various occasions.

The mother Goddesses are very renowned deities of the Newaṅr community. The cult of *Mātrikās* and *Sapta Mātrikā* was developed during the ancient period of Nepal. The combined form of Bramhaṅyani, Maṅheswari, Kumaṅri, Bhadrakaṅli, Baṅraṅhi, Indraṅyani, and Mahaṅkaṅli called '*Sapta Mātrikās*'. The great natural disaster took place at Nepal Mandal during King Jayadev (II) and it feels to need more Taṅntrik power and hence evolved *Astamātrikā* adding *Mahalxmi* to *Saptamātrikā* and enhanced *Navadurgā* adding *Tripurāsundari* to *Astamātrikā*. The Navadurgaṅ was established in Bhaktapur as a shape of Taṅntrik Sri-*Yantra* for the protection of the King, country, and fellow countrymen from natural disasters, invaders, and to maintain peace, success, and wealth as well.

The Navadurgaṅ Naṅch is shown in twentyone toles of Bhaktapur city and is also takes to Thimi, Devpaṅttan (Vaṅgeshvari, Guhyashvari), Tokhaṅ, Sankhu, Changu, Nala, Banepa, Dhulikhel, Panauti, etc; and other places too. Especially, several dabus seems to be used during Navadurgaṅ Naṅch in such places, and other religious activities relating to Navadurgaṅ Ganṅa. The Navadurgaṅ Ganṅa performs their Taṅntrik and religious performances for about eight months, till *Bhagasthi* and many dabus has been used to perform during their performance at Bhaktapur. After *Bhagasthi*, it is believed that the Navadurgaṅ lost its life and Bhaktapur will no longer remain Navadurgaṅ and it may harm the people of Bhaktapur. *Astami* of Vijayaṅ Dashami is the day when Navadurgaṅ ganṅa become alive again and they receive life-power Pranṅa Pratisthaṅ on the day of Vijayaṅ Dashami and again they do the Taṅntrik and religious performance in many places of Bhaktapur for a whole year till *Bhagasthi*.

Maha□ka□li Na□ch and Bhairava Na□ch are also the popular cultural dances of Bhaktapur, which have eight mother Goddesses known as *Astamatrikās* and other characters. Goddess Mahakali is the main character of Mahakali Na□ch and Bhairava is the main character of Bhairava Na□ch. Among both cultural dance is based on the story of *Shaptashati* text. And it is about the story of the victory of good over bad or untruth. Such a religious and cultural dance was developed since the medieval period and still surviving among the cultural life of Bhaktapur. The Mahakali *Nāch* and Bhairava *Nāch* are performed during *Gunhipunhi* or Gaija□tra□ for eight days at many dabus of Bhaktapur.

The Dabu culture appears to have evolved since the ancient period when people started to celebrate their joy with the group and society when they celebrate the biggest festivals when they perform cultural and religious and entertaining performance, and for legal and royal activities. According to the Lichchhavi inscriptions, many Ja□tra□s and festivals were conducted and many legal messages, decisions, and codes of conduct were declared by using dabus during the Lichchhavi period. It can say that the dabu seems in use normally when the group or society gathered in one place for a common religious and cultural purpose and Lichchhavis would have built a dabu architecture, but still, any kind of archaeological remains of dabu of the Lichchhavi period has not found so far.

Nepal Mandal or Kathmandu Valley was prospering developed on the religious art and architecture and many royal, public and private architecture. Bhaktapur is one of the centric cities of the Kingdom from the early medieval period and it became the capital city of Nepal from the 13th century A.D. until Gorakha□ King Prithivi Narayan Shah captured the Bhaktapur on 889 N.S.(1826 V.S.). It is believed that there were many temples and Gods and Goddesses, houses, and local residents during Malla reign at Bhaktapur. Malla rulers built many temples, *pāti s*, *matha*, *dhungedhāras*, art objects, stone sculptures, and many more in Bhaktapur city. Among them, dabu architecture was one of the most popular relevant structures, which are directly connected to personal and community lifestyles. They were used for religious, cultural, social activities. As Malla ruler made a different temple, a special *Jātrā* and festivals used to operate on special occasions, and many religious and cultural occasions were operated more than the day in the whole year. Therefore, many squares of Bhaktapur have different kinds of dabu with different purposes and different religious and cultural activities.

Malla Kings used to write various pieces of literature and they perform as being a drama character. They also played and sang a different kind of *ragas* and *tālas* on a special occasion. Groups of people use to sit around on the *Pāti s* and dabus to sing *Bhajans* which show profound dedication towards Gods, religion, and rulers. As mentioned above, dabu uses to build in the main squares, where people use to gather and can see properly and make people and rulers happy. So, the dabu culture starts from the medieval period as a proven remaining structure.

Biska: Ja-tra, Sa-pa-ru or Gaija-tra, Panchada-n , Gatha-munga Ja-tra, Indra Ja-tra, Dashain, Tiha-r, Sakimana Punhi, Shivara-tri, etc; *parva* and festivals were run since the medieval period and all of the medieval festivals and Ja-tras is still running at Bhaktapur and the dabu of Bhaktapur also used on a special occasion. On the occasion of Gaija-tra, many cultural groups come to show their performances at the different dabus, like, *Devi Nāch*, *Mahākali Nāch*, *Māka Pyākhañ* , *Hanumān Pyākhañ*, *Bhālu Pyākhañ* , *Nāgāchā Pyākhañ* , *Kha: Pyākhañ* , *Khyāla*, *Bhajan*, *Newa-ri* traditional musical shows, etc. Many social and political performances were also shown during Gaija-tra by using dabu of Bhaktapur. Malla rulers and their courtiers used the dabu for making their decision and gives messages to the residents and make it regulate.

At present, the dabu is going to lose its identity and existence, because the new generation doesn't give any kind of interest in the creations of ancestors and the matter of dabu is valueless to them. The next thing is dabu doesn't get a big intentional matter to any organization and society. Except for the special occasion, the dabu is not using properly as its value. People used to park their vehicles in front of dabu, which cause the ugliness, elegance of the dabu, and its periphery. Likewise, people use to make dry the grains on dabu and moreover to heap construction materials.

Bhaktapur is the best tourist place in Nepal, from the touristic point of view, a glorious cultural past can still be viewed in the city of Bhaktapur. And many tourists come to Bhaktapur to see such beautiful art and architecture. They feel unhappy to see such a heritage being misused. So, for economic benefit from tourists the dabu and its periphery should conserve and preserve from generation to generation. And it should start with individual and local government.

4.2 SWOT Analysis

SWOT stands for strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, which is a planning tool basically used to understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that evolved in research and other sectors. SWOT helps to know the internal and external factors that could be knowledge about the favorable or unfavorable in achieving the objectives. It is often used as part of a strategic planning process; however, SWOT is extensively being used in heritage conservation work as a planning, monitoring, and evaluation tool. The Dabus is one of the vivid cultures which is a big part of social sustainability and its history. And SWOT is a monitoring tool to make heritage preservation and society sustainable. The SWOT analysis is based mainly on secondary sources supplemented by empirical information gathered through direct observation and interviews with key informants.

Strengths: Strength is the positive qualities of traditional architecture from technological, cultural, and historical aspects that help achieve the set objective of preserving as tangible and intangible cultural heritages. It refers to the good composition of traditional materials to build cultural and religious heritages around us. The following are found to be the main strengths of the cultural and historical dabus of Bhaktapur:

- **Square and Rectangular Shape:** The medieval and modern made dabus are made on Square or Rectangular shape, where the traditional and religious shows could conduct easily. And the height of dabus rises up from the ground level as planned, that's why people can easily watch the performance at the dabu.
- **Use of Bricks and Stone:** *Dāchi Apā* (bricks) is still using for to built traditional styled houses, temples, dabus, etc. The maximum dabus of Bhaktapur use such a kind of traditional bricks to cover the top part of Dabu. The border of the dabu used to pave to make strong and attractive. A snake-impressed brick is also used to give more strength, attraction, and a permanent ladder made to climb the height of dabu. Some of dabus of Bhaktapur is made from complete stone, which is comparatively more strong than others.
- **Cultural and Religious Significance:** Newar community is very rich in culture and religious practices. The dabus inside of Newar habitat has

different kinds of cultural and religious beliefs. People use to bow down before climbing the dabu, because it is believed that the dabu is the house of Gods and Goddesses.

Weaknesses: Weaknesses are the deficient aspect of objectives. Some of traditional may have weak point, which needs immediate rectification or change or stop doing. But in the case of Dabu architecture, all dabus were made in well planned and small heightened. Therefore, the dabus of Bhaktapur has no architectural weakness as being used, but comparatively the brick-made dabu is weaker than stone-made dabu. Nowadays, the youth generation doesn't give any attention to conserve and preserve the cultural and historical heritage. And people don't give any importance to dabus for making them alive. It should be a big problem or weakness to conserve and preserve the dabu culture.

Opportunities: Opportunities are the positive qualities of the traditional dabu architecture that could be used to broaden its religious and cultural aspects to the whole country and the world through the dabu culture and activities. Many countries did various types of own cultural and religious activities to the guest and promoting all over the world. The same as conducting traditional cultural activities on dabus could be the best way to give a memento to the visitors. Also, it makes our society sustainable from generation to generation.

- Nepal is a country, which has cultural diversity, art, and architecture, which could be the major attraction for tourists. The Dabu culture is one of the best ways to attract the tourist where they can enjoy seeing the live traditional performance and earn foreign currency. The dabu culture also has great potentialities in terms of cultural tourism point of view. It might help to develop the economic status of the government.
- Culture and religion give vividness and diversity to our society. It makes an important history for the upcoming generation. Many cultural and religious performances are demise because of busyness and lacking interest in our own tradition. Therefore, the dabus of Bhaktapur could be a medium for making alive and handover our culture and traditions to the next generation.

- The Dabu culture is the most auspicious way to make society sustainable and it is a medium to communicate with other societies and countries too. Because it doesn't need a particular language, that's why, dabus could be the national and international stage to flourish our tradition, culture, religion, etc.
- The study of dabus is a completely new subject matter for us because no person didn't give deep consideration for research. So, it could be an interesting subject matter for interesting academic personalities.

Threats: Threats are yet the negative qualities that are harmful in achieving the goals. There are external factors, which are beyond our control that may lead the cultural and historical dabus to great risk. Therefore, we need to address it so carefully for its conservation and preservation.

- The lack of interest in dabus and tradition by the new generation is one of the major threats behind the demise of our culture in Newar society.
- Peoples are fascinated with new technologies and they become busy with their own business. People become uninterested in tradition and culture. Thus the dabu also become out of interest and many cultural activities and traditions were lost along with dabus.
- People use dabu as a private storage area. After the 2015 earthquake, local people used to collect bricks, sand, wood, etc; on dabus and many dabus were damaged unknowingly. And they didn't give any interest in maintaining it.
- Some cultural dabu lost their identity while people built their private houses by the house wall. Some of the dabu become a way to go inside of the house or become a road. Because of it, the dabu are demise and many cultural and religious traditions also demise with dabu.

4.3 Conclusion

- Art and architecture flourished during the Lichchhavi period. Many temples and stone sculptures were built in various places. They use to run different types of *Jātrās* and festivals for religious, cultural, and entertaining purposes. The Lichchhavis shows such festivals and jātrās in an open area for all people. Therefore, they could build a dabus in the core administrative area and

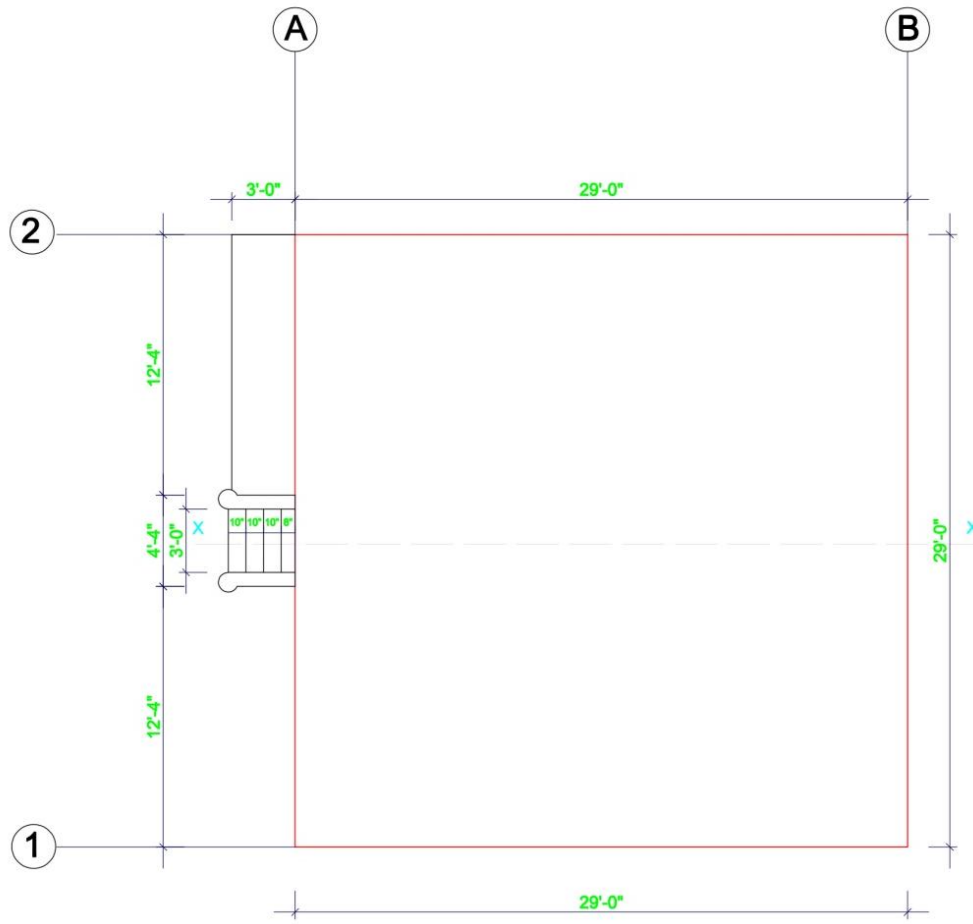
religious area, but no remains of dabu so far have been found in the ancient period.

- The medieval period is the golden age for dabu culture. Many dabus has been built during Malla reign for various kinds of purposes inside Kathmandu Valley. And Bhaktapur was a hub and a center area for such a culture and religious activities.
- The dabu culture was started for culture and religion, as well as administrative purposes too. The King and royal family, and administrative personal use dabu during the legal public hearing, doing judicial decisions, giving the public message, etc. The dabu is a cultural stage that is comparatively high surface than ground level. Therefore, it is easy to see and hear the administrative work out of dabu.
- The Newar community belongs to agriculture, farming, and business. They were hard workers and they work from day-night to survive themselves and their families. Besides farming and agriculture, a local farmer of Bhaktapur developed and continued the cultural and religious activities and has been run until today for being refresh, rest, and entertainment. For such cultural and religious activities, the dabus has made in various squares of Bhaktapur, which play a vital role to conserve and preserve the culture and religion of the forefather in the life of Bhaktapurians. Local people and families play and act in different kinds of dance, drama, and shows in many dabus.
- The dabus are directly related to local life. The Newar community formed a different kind of dances, related to Gods, Goddesses, and animals. The dabu performance tries to give a usable message to make the environment and society conserve and preserve. Like, the rule of God and his punishment for a bad deed, a knowledge of various animals and their behavior, which was become much helpful to make society better and individual too.
- The dabu is used by the public too for a personal reason and people came to dabu and show their griff and punish to dishonesty person where comparatively more public can coming and going or gather and they could know them. It helps other families and society to be more careful of those fraudulent persons.

- In the present days, the dabus of Bhaktapur is only used, and do proper preservation work done occasionally. When it needs to use then the dabus becomes vivid. Local families are not more serious about dabus as they give more priority on special religious occasions.
- The 2015 Earthquake has become more curse for dabus of Bhaktapur. Bhaktapur city is a narrow medieval town, but the town planning gives many open areas, like, *Nani*, *Chuka*, *Jyāsle*, etc, inside the city habitat. And many dabus were used as storage areas as private. People use to store unwanted or wasted woods, clay; constructing materials. They forget that dabu inheritance that we need to handover to our coming generation.

Appendix A

Architectural Drawings of Dabus

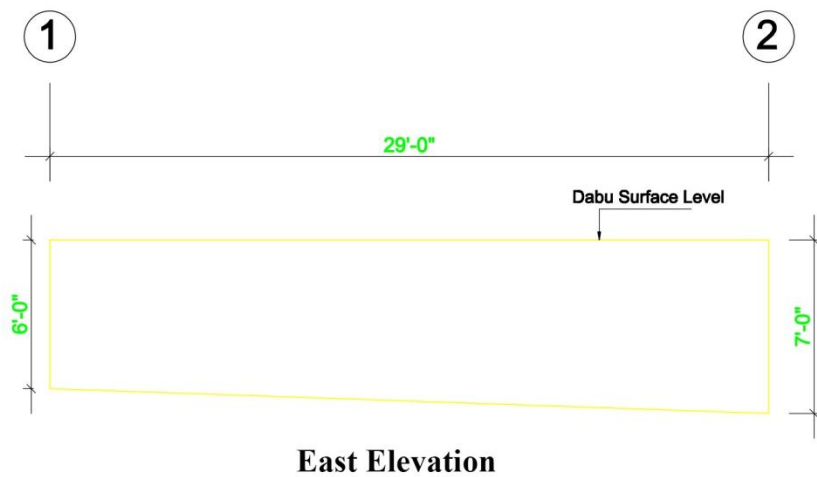
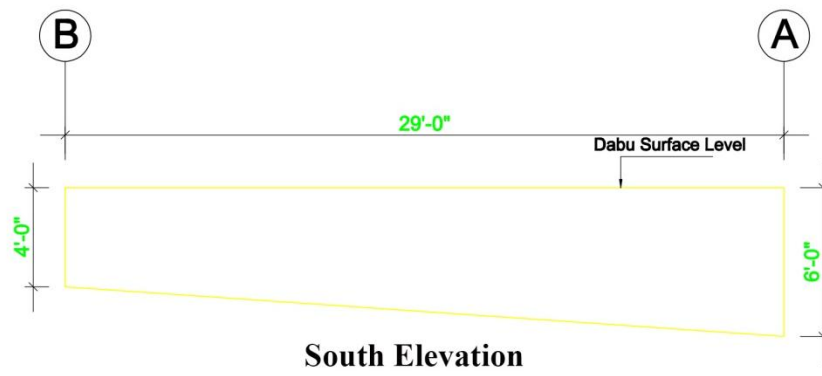
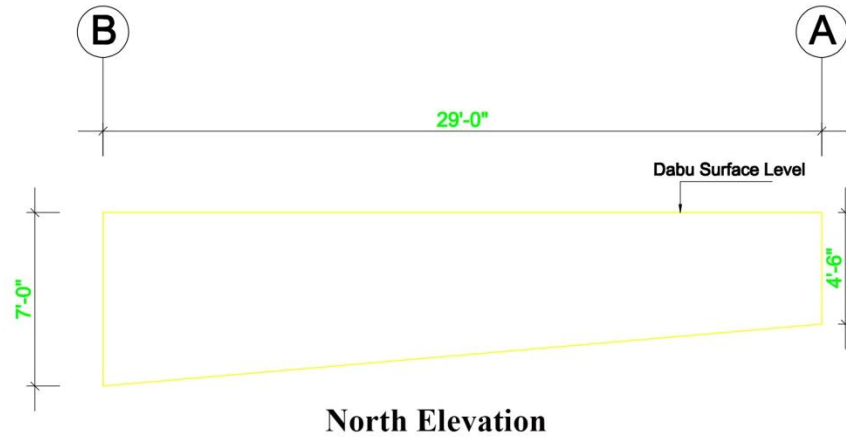


SUJAMARI DABU PLAN

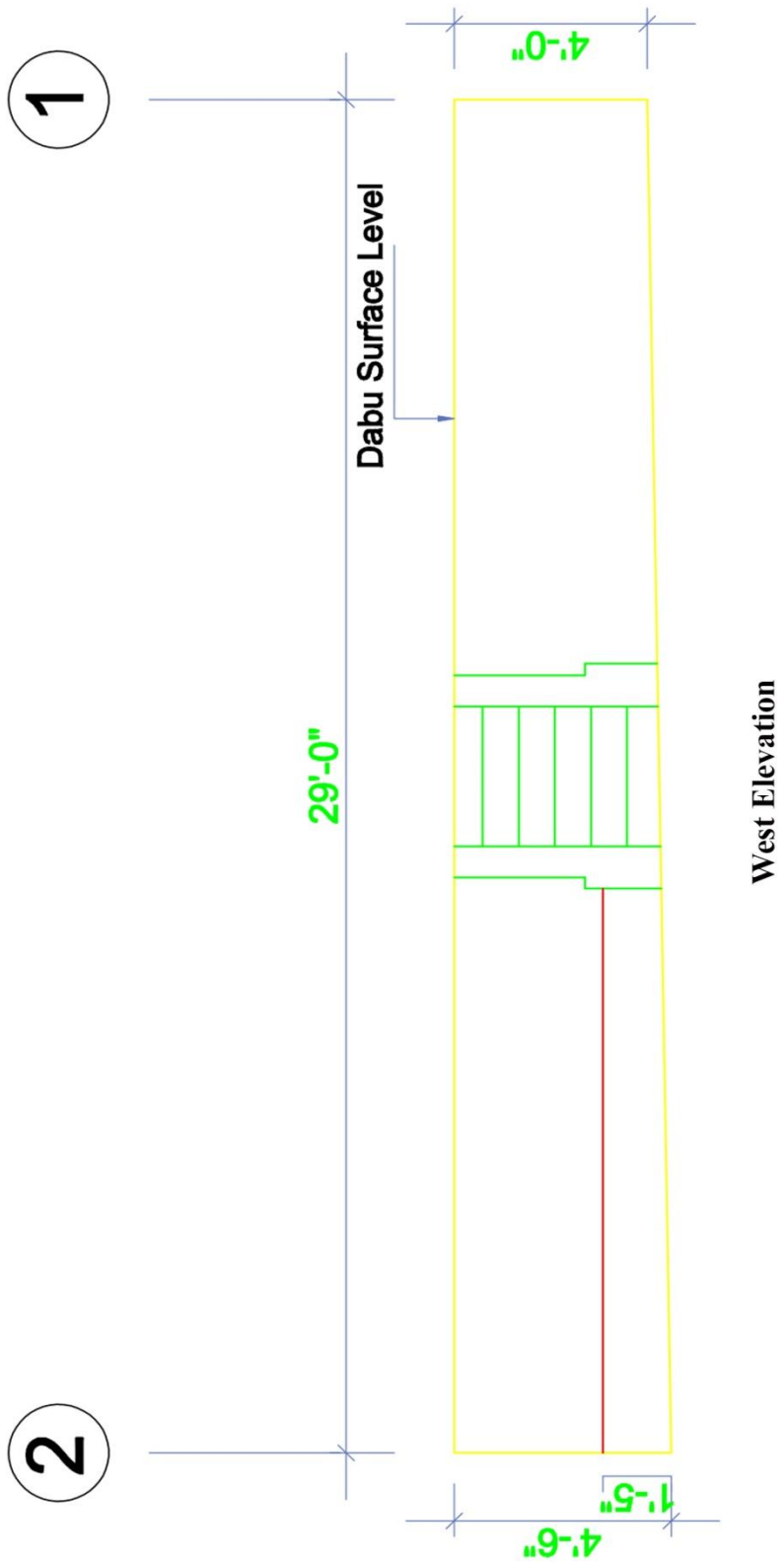


SECTION AT X-X

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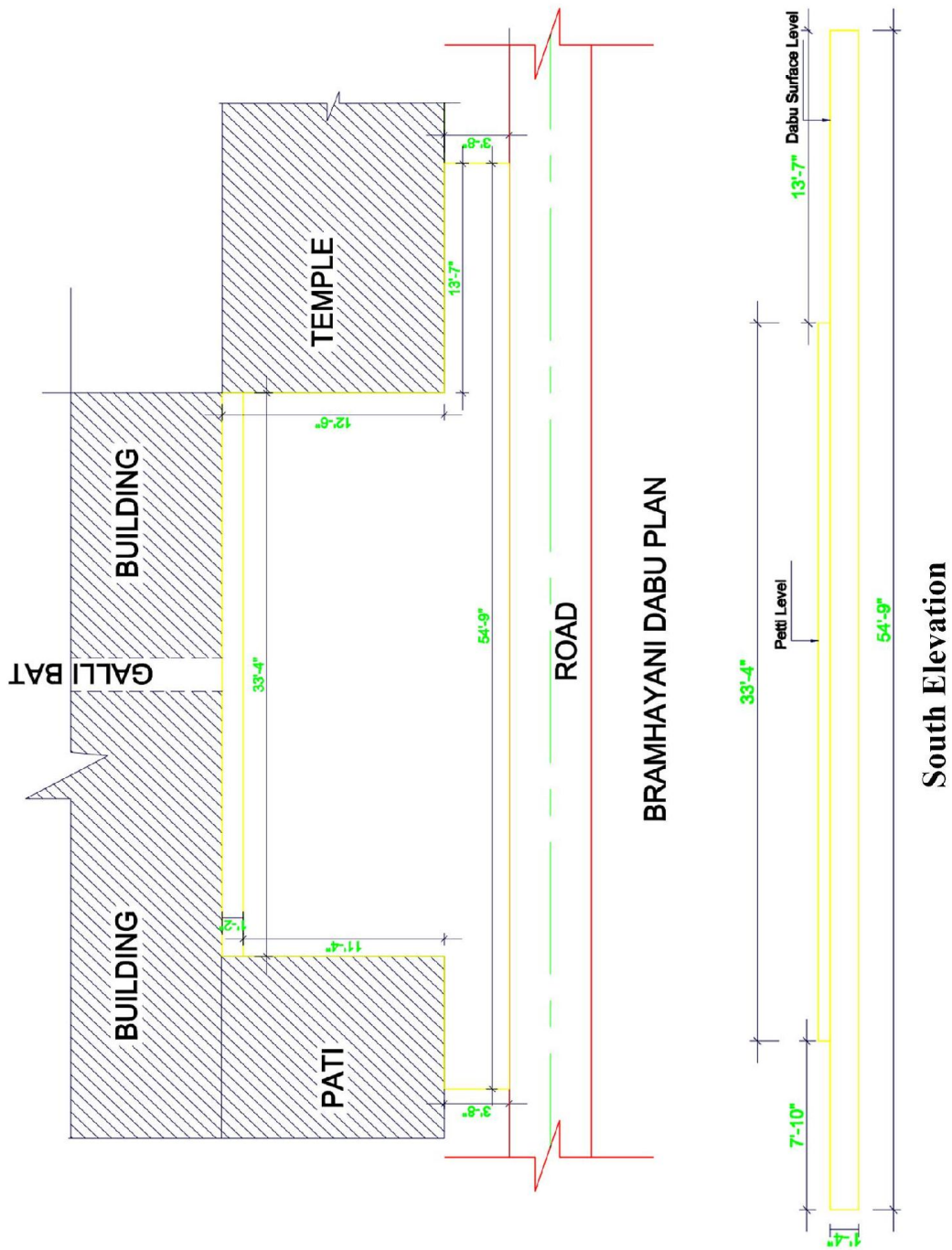


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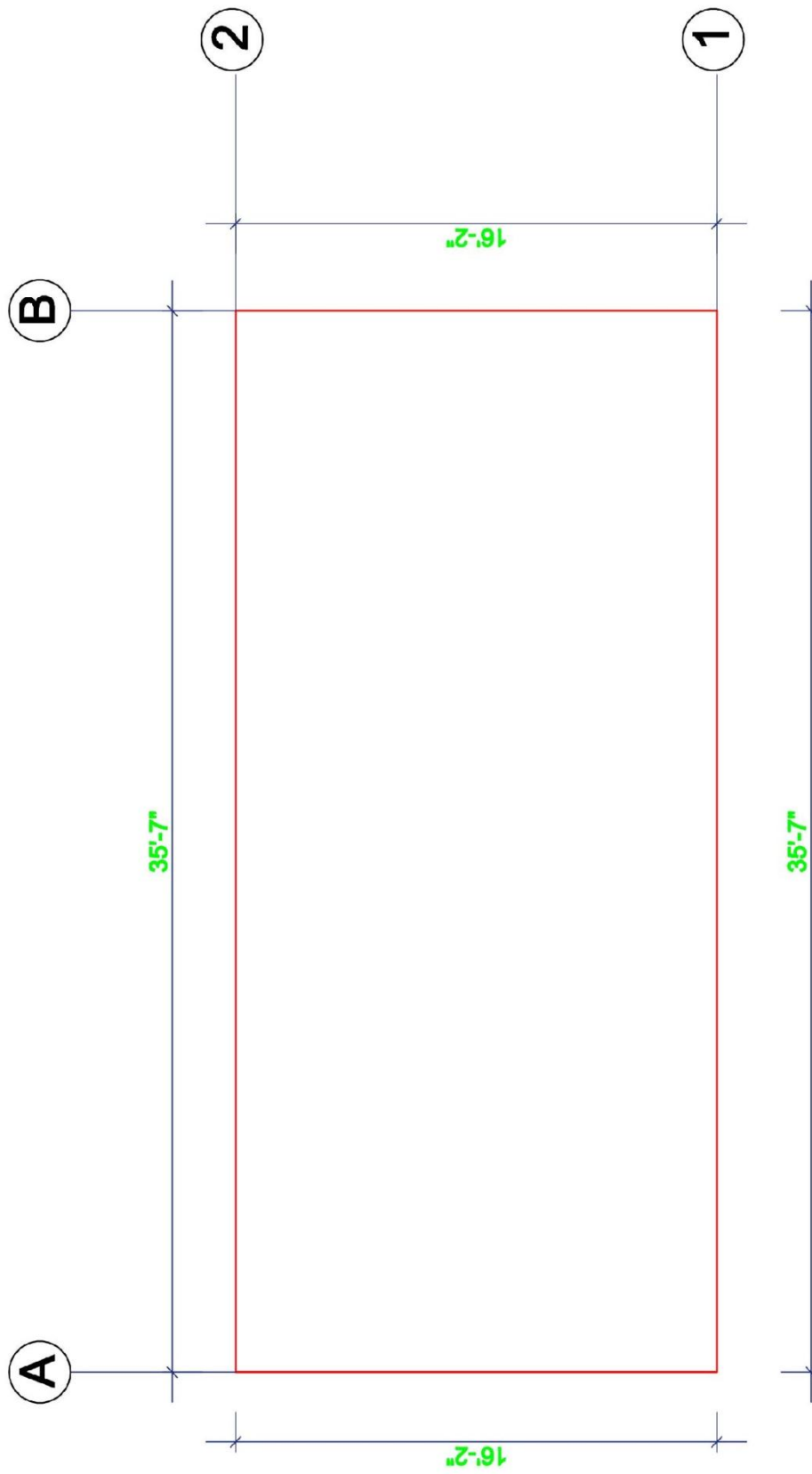


Sujamari Dabu Elevations

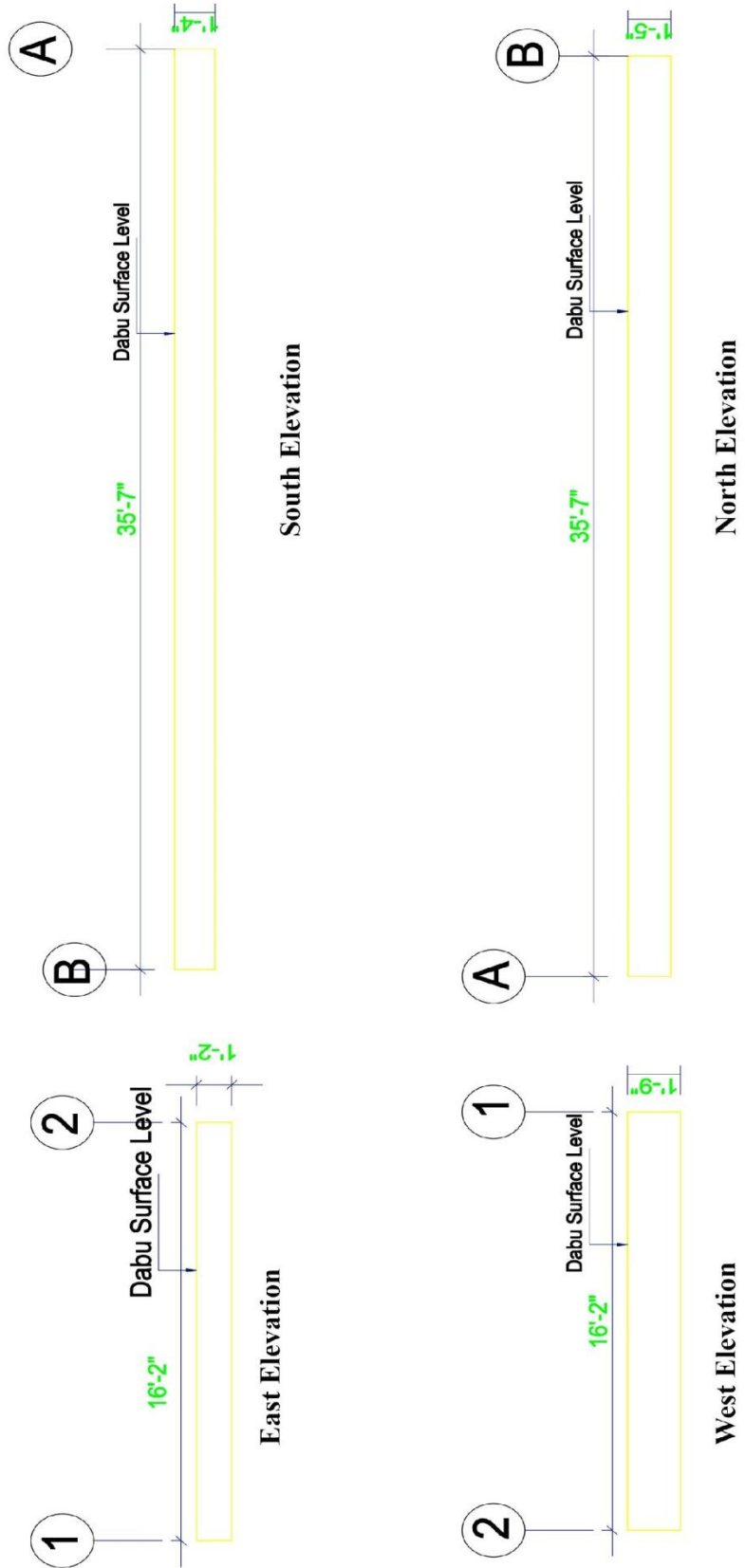
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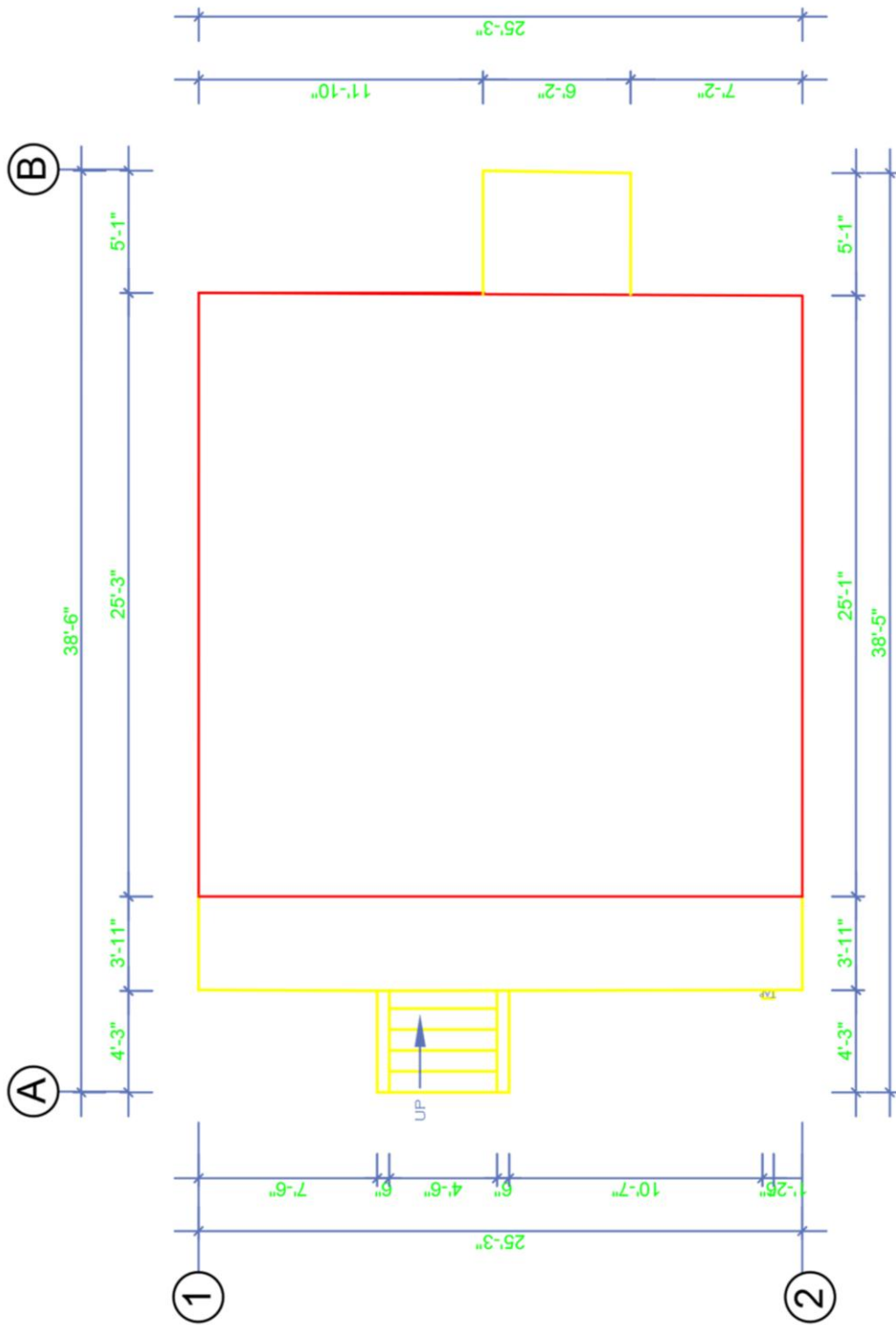
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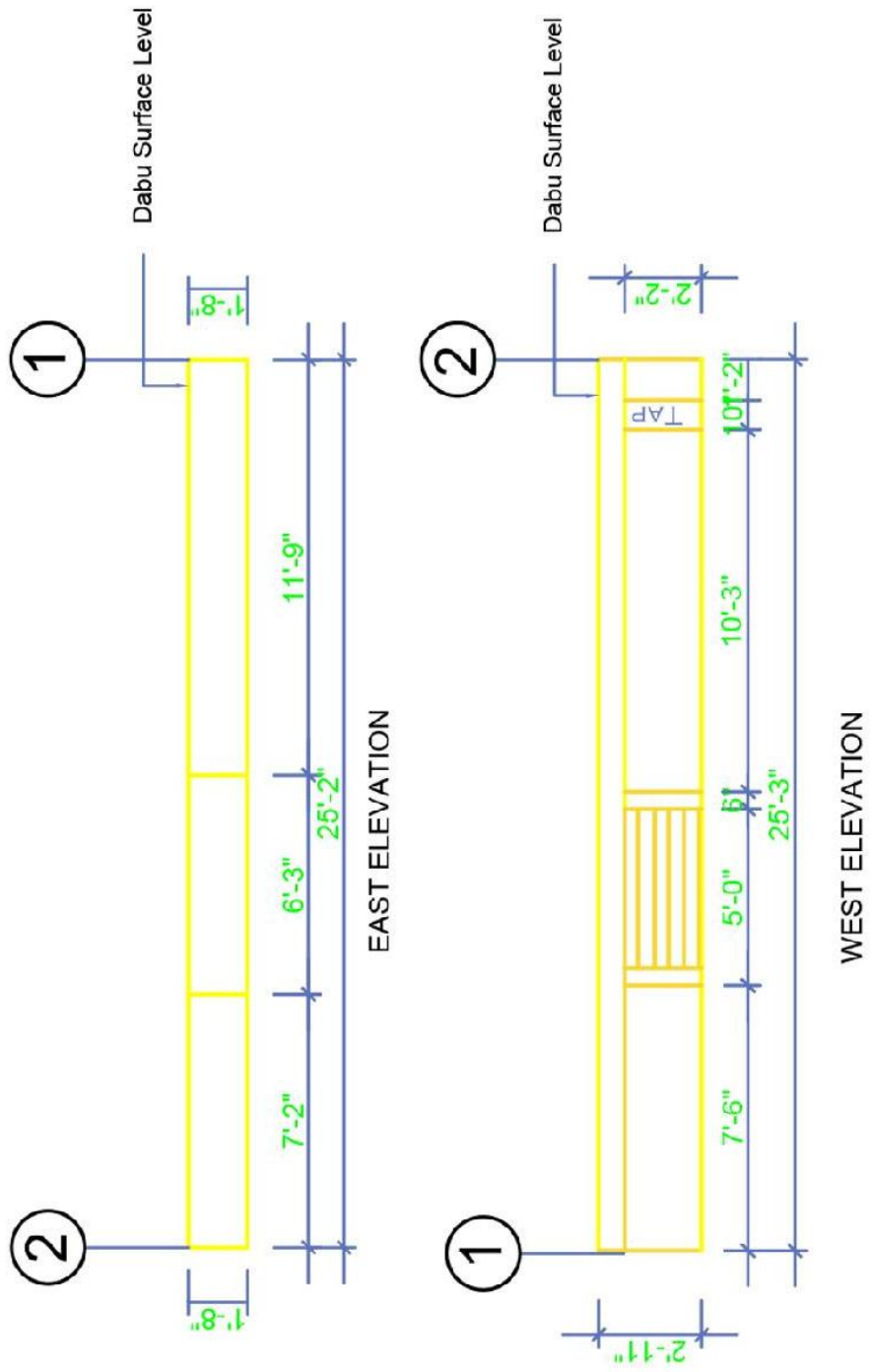
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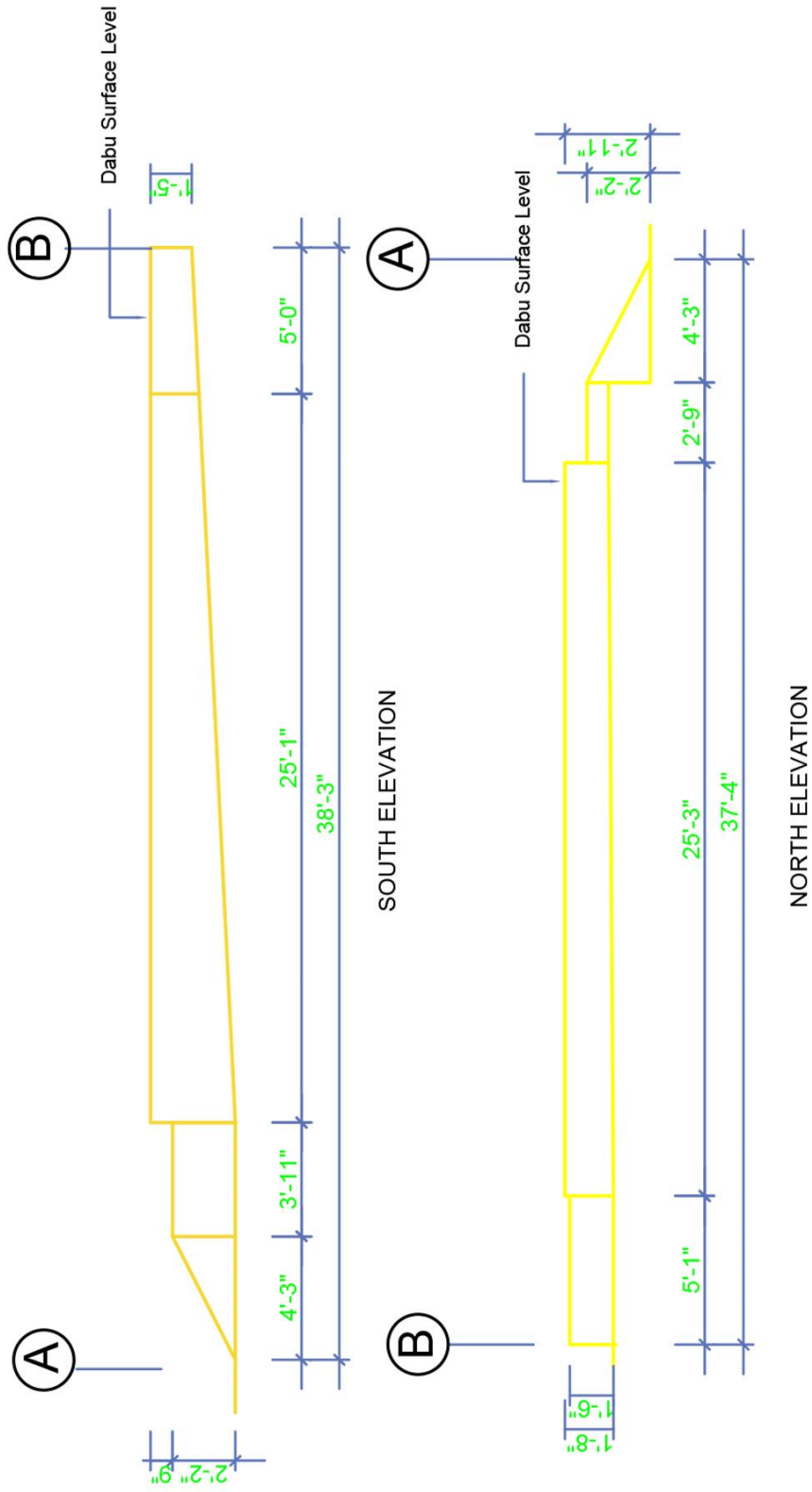
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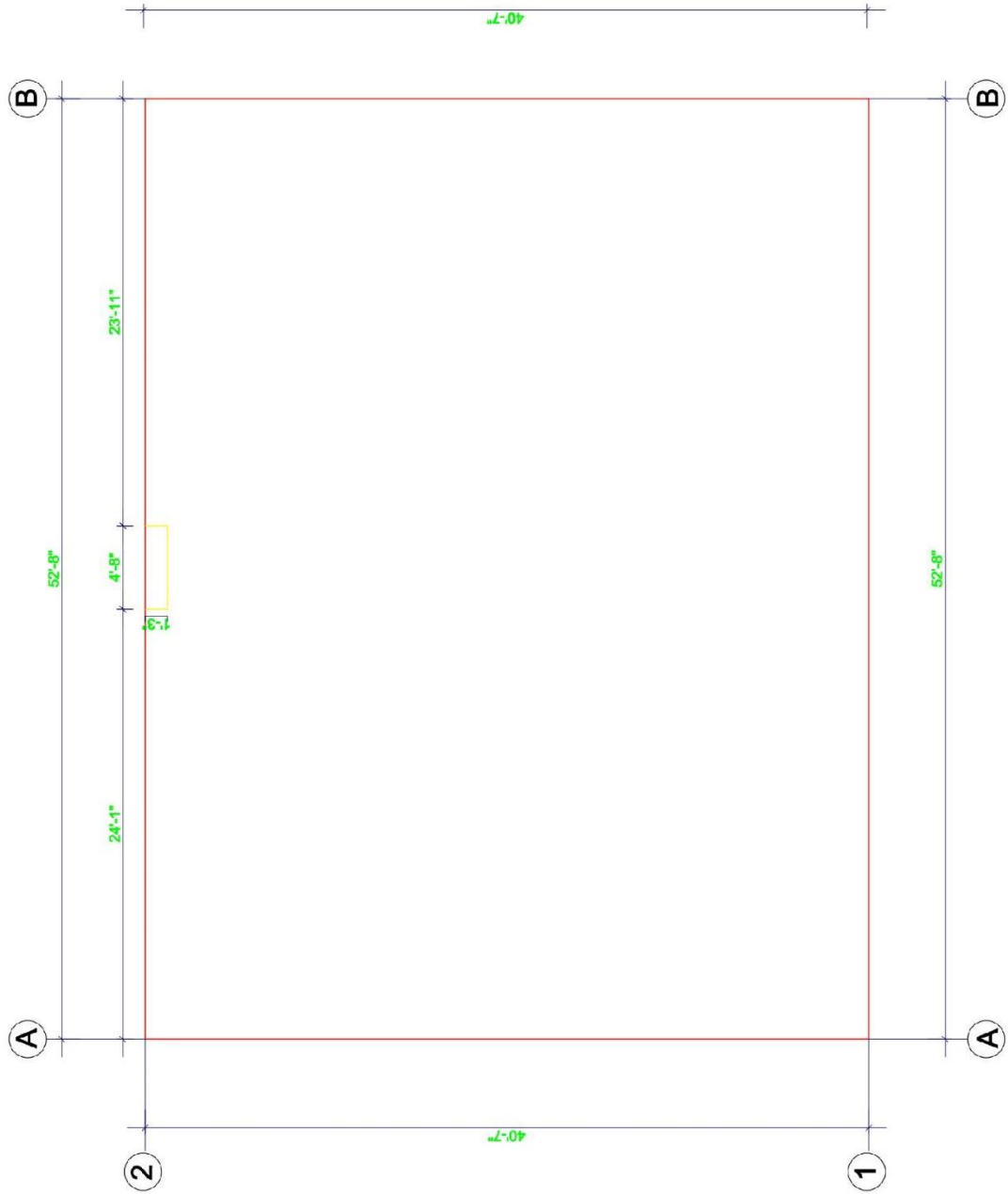
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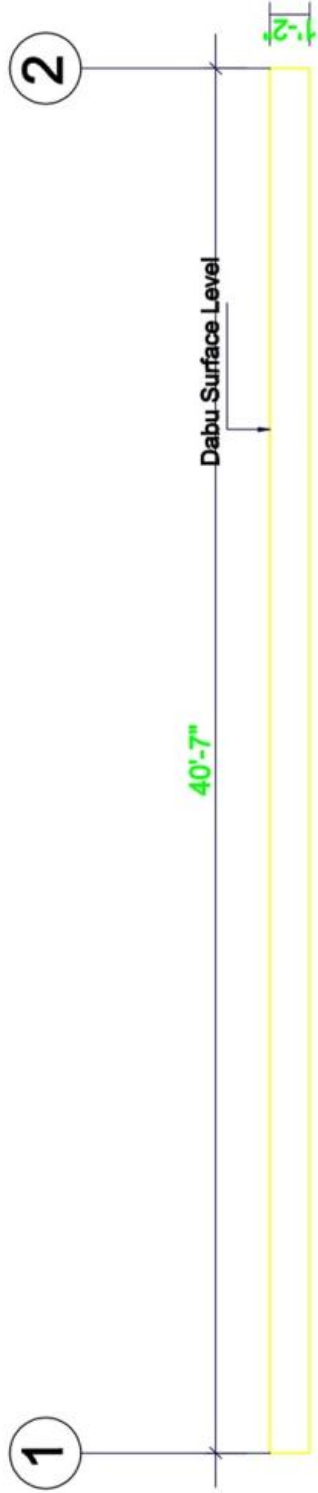
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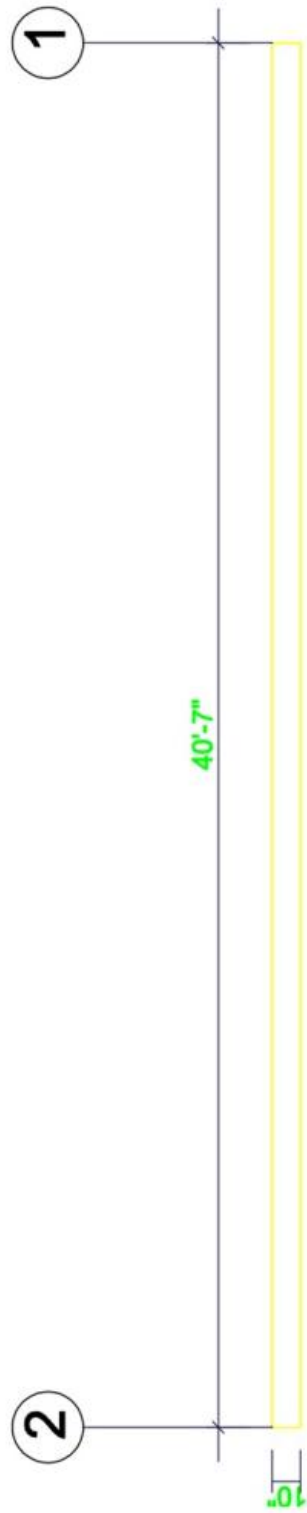
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A.Design 5 Ta:rhān Dabu Plan

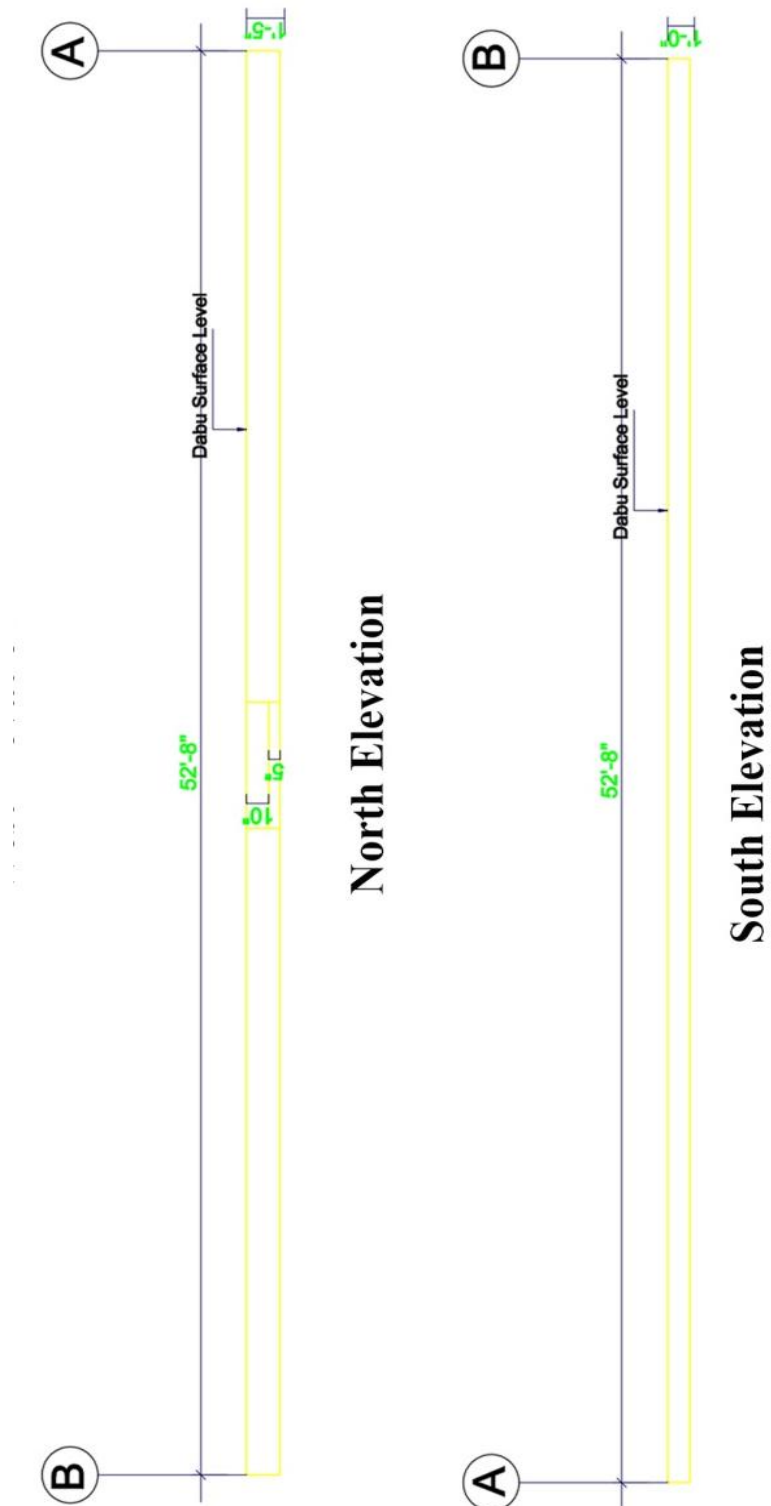


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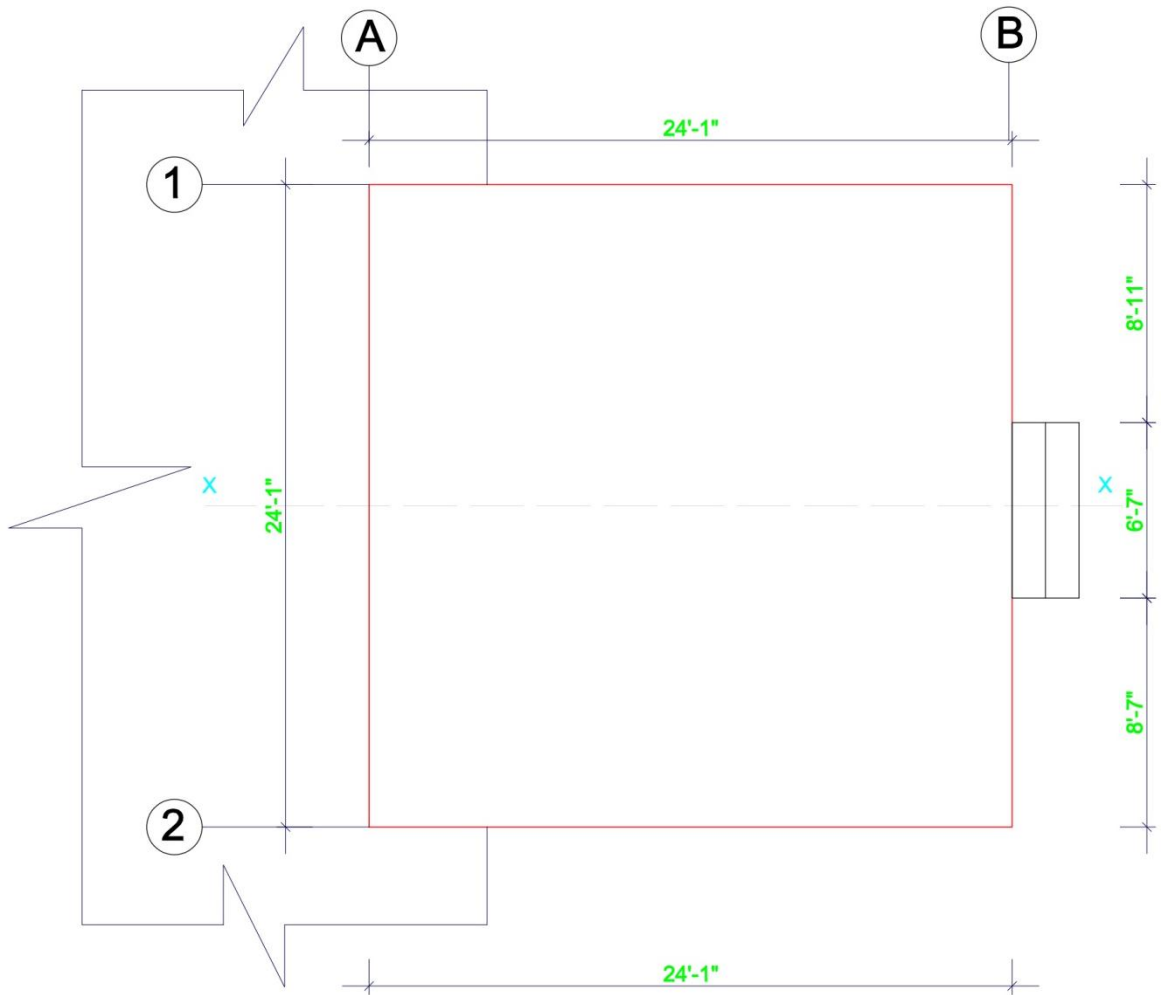


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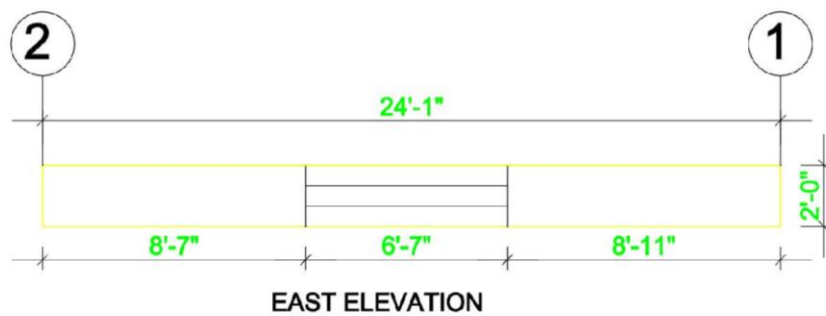
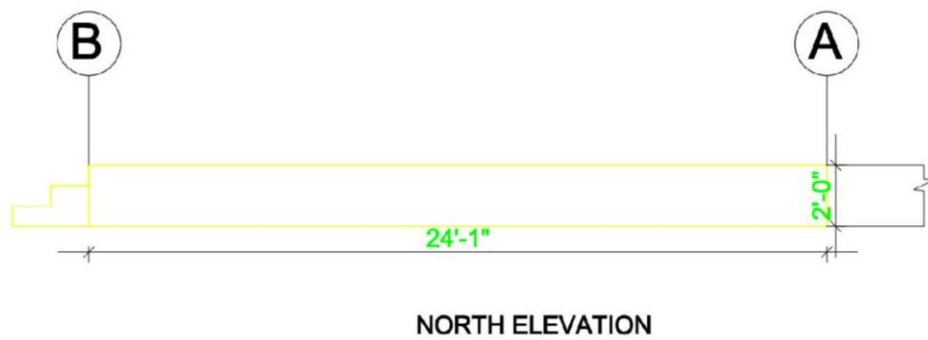
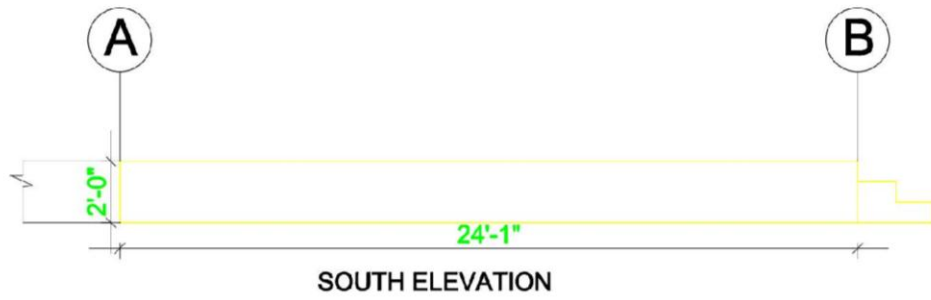
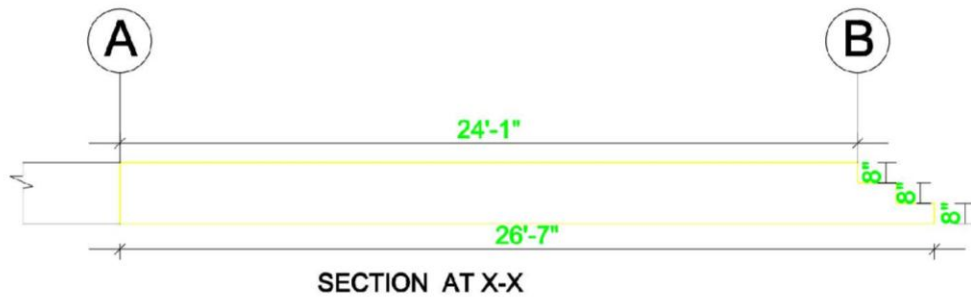
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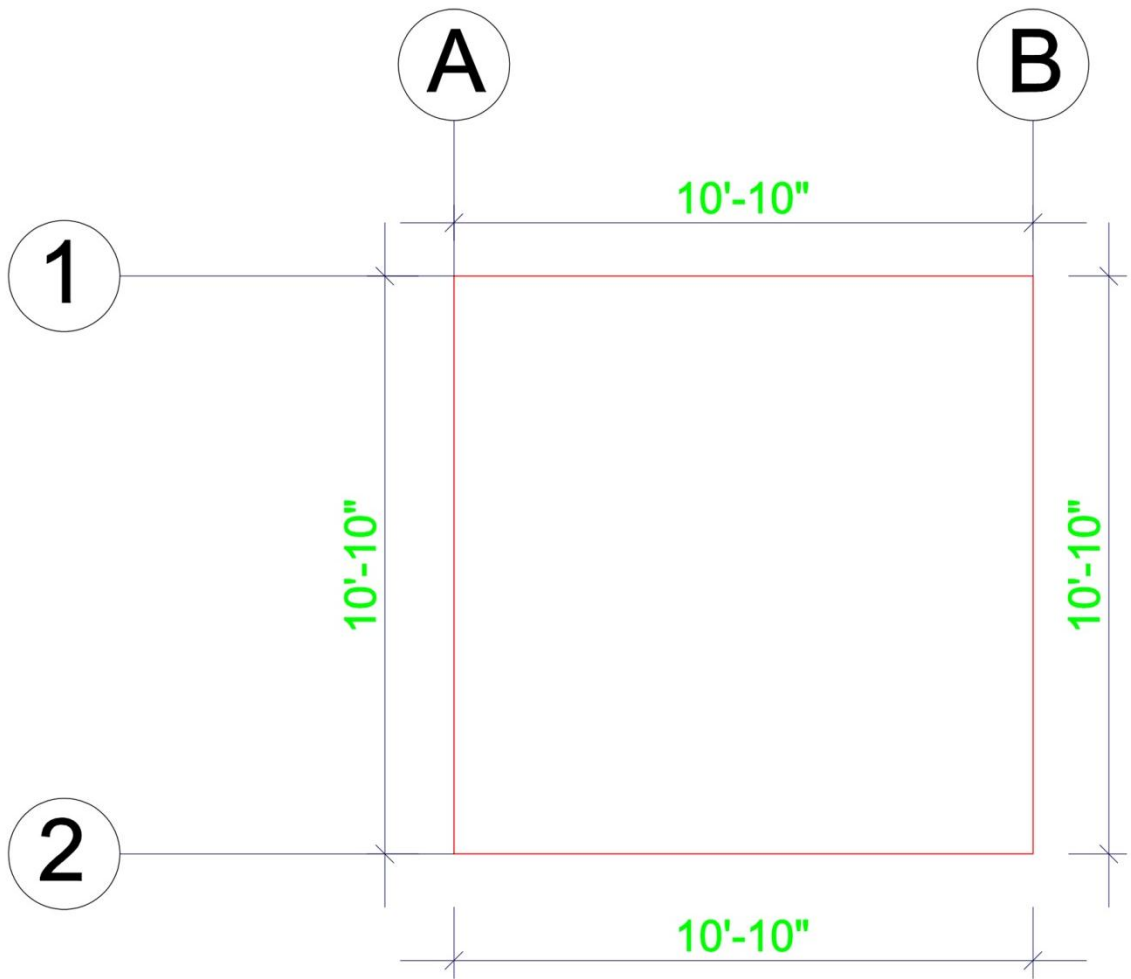
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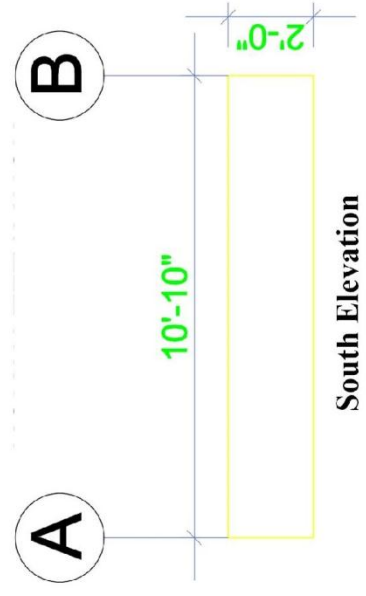
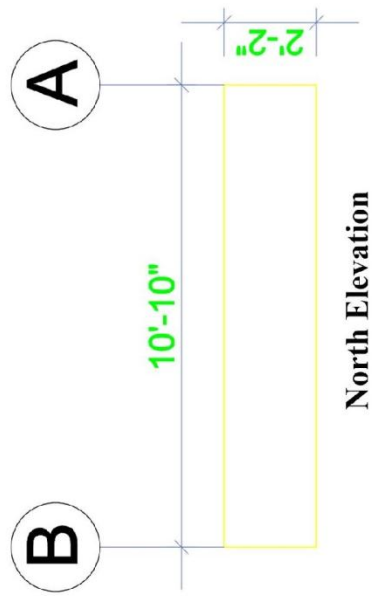
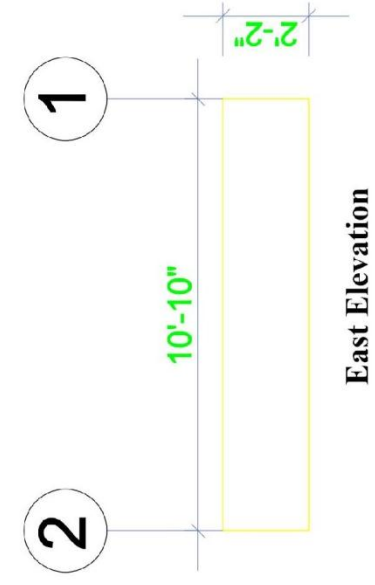
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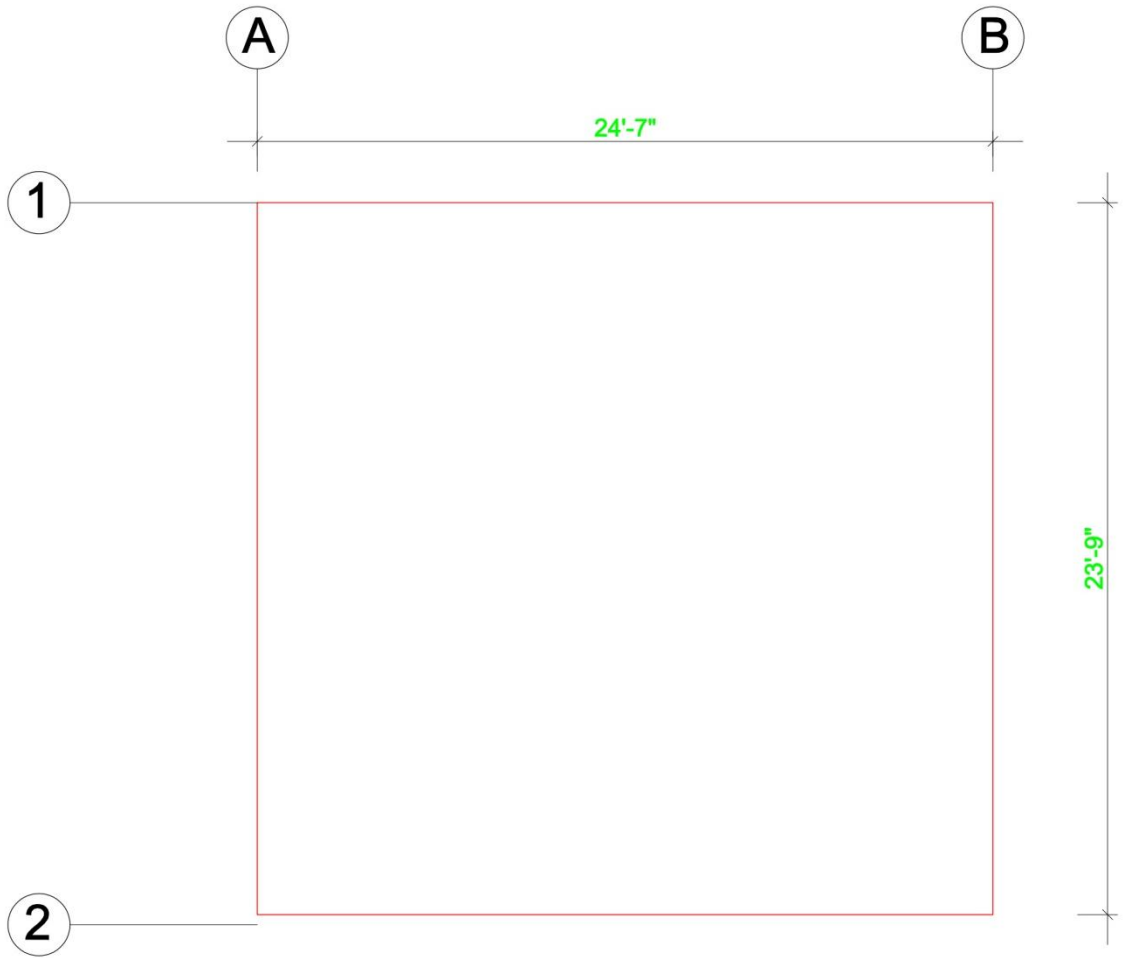
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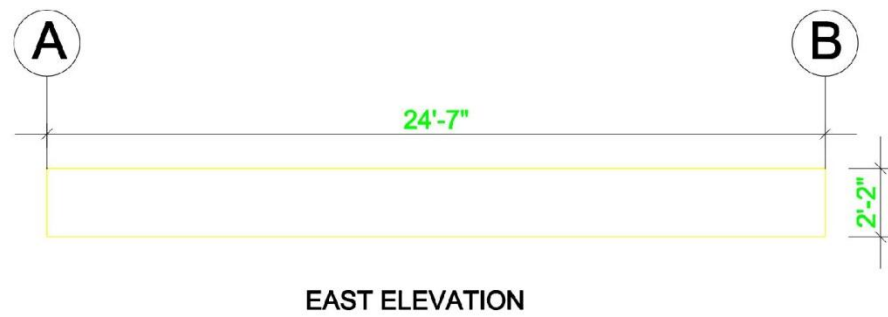
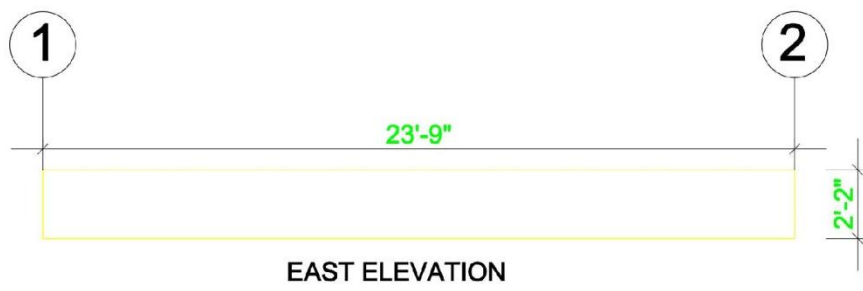
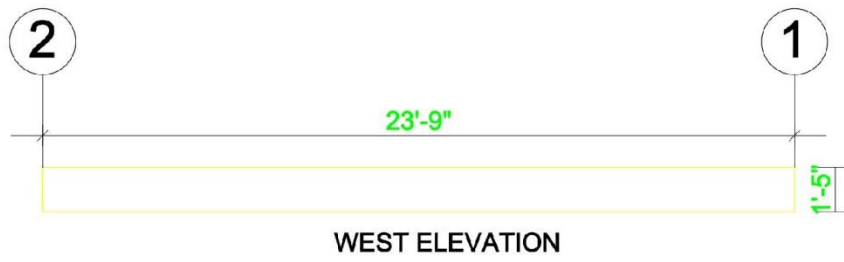
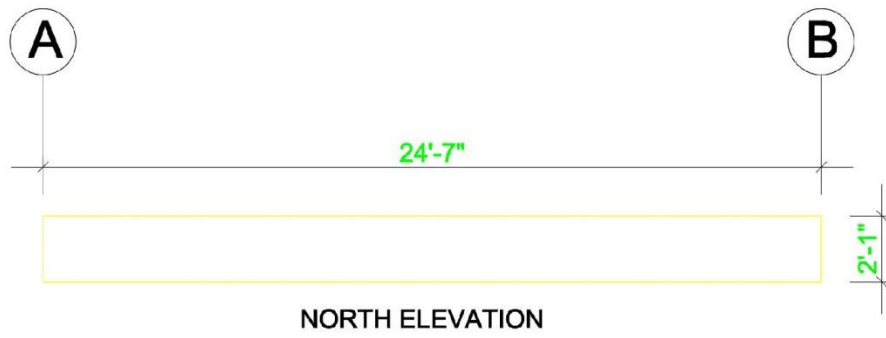
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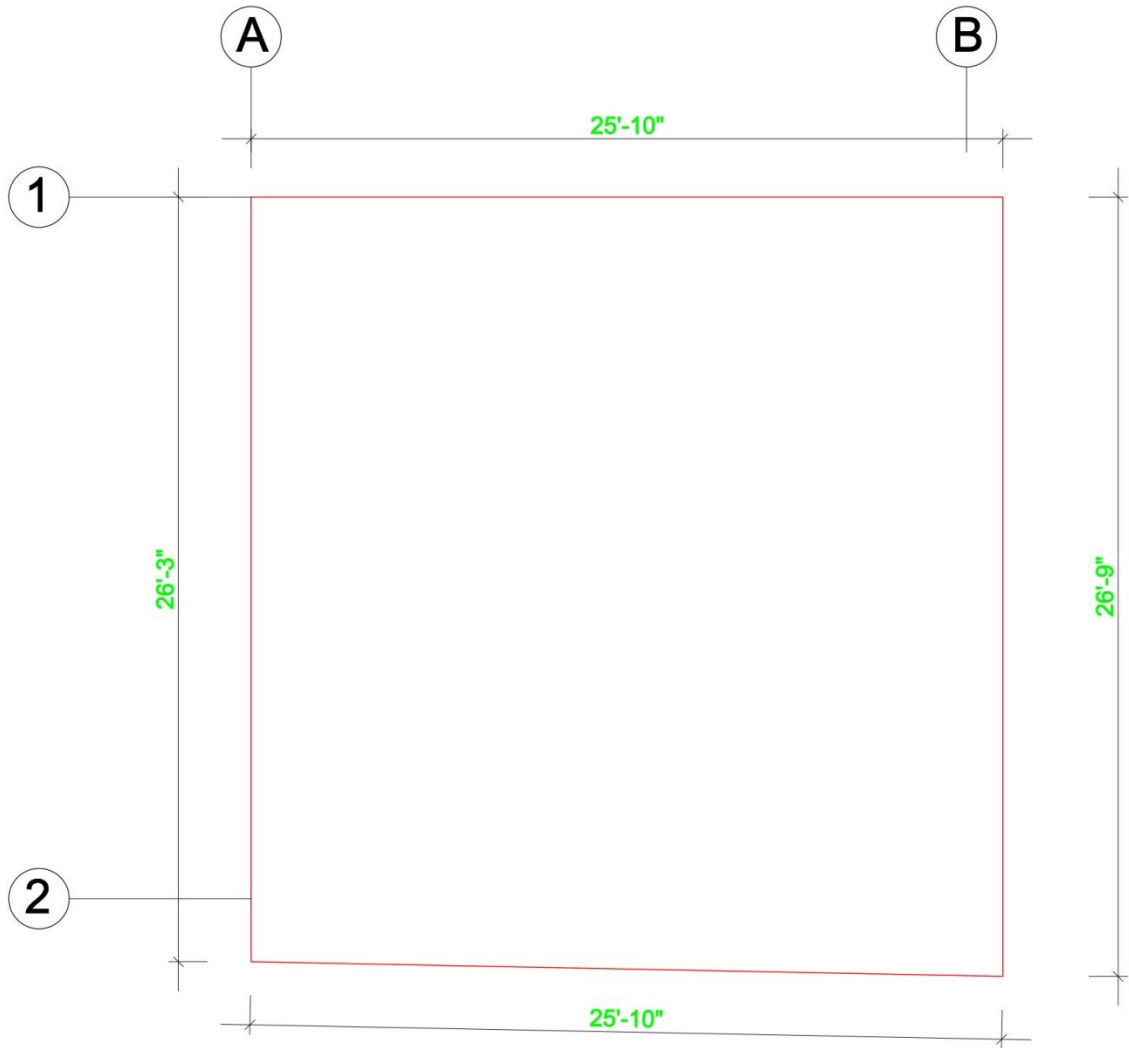
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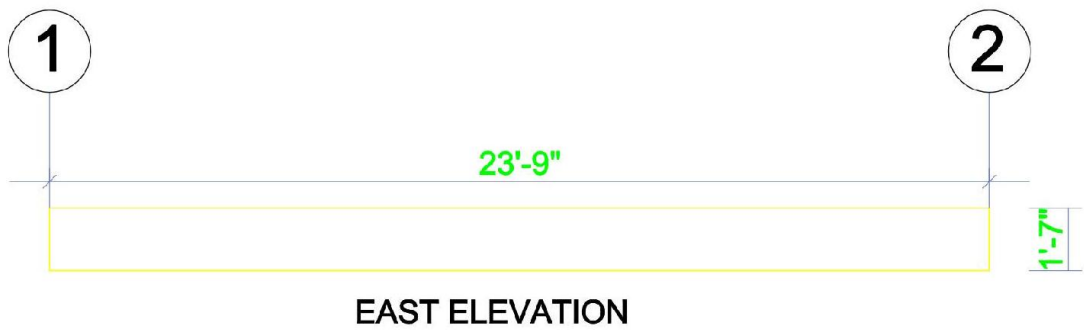
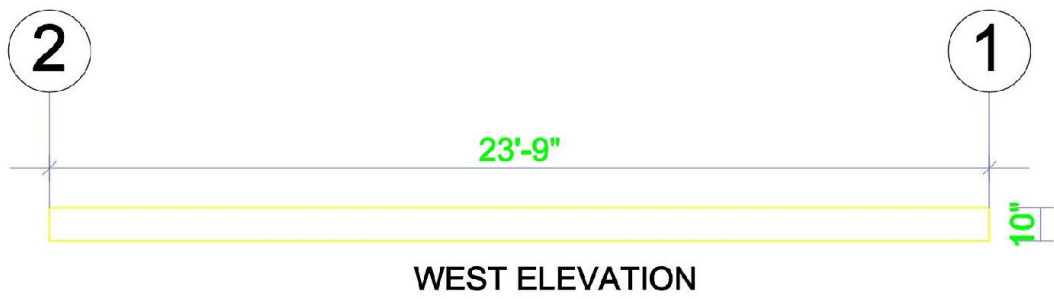
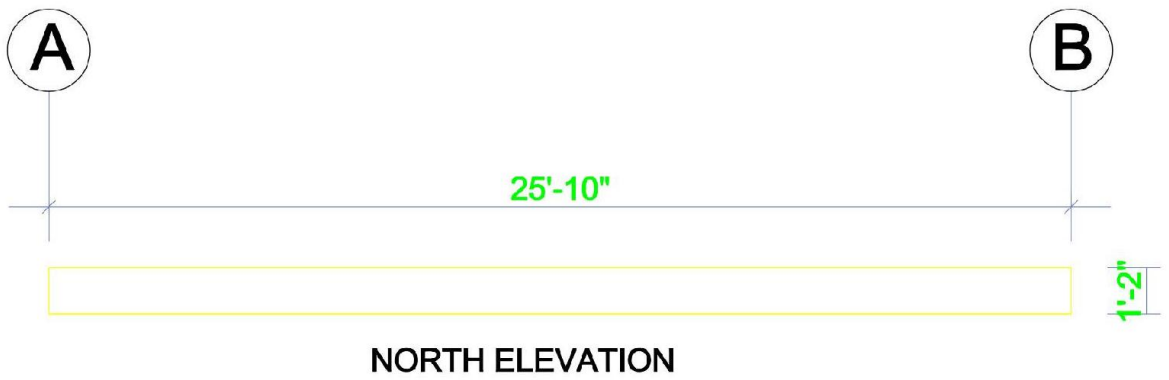
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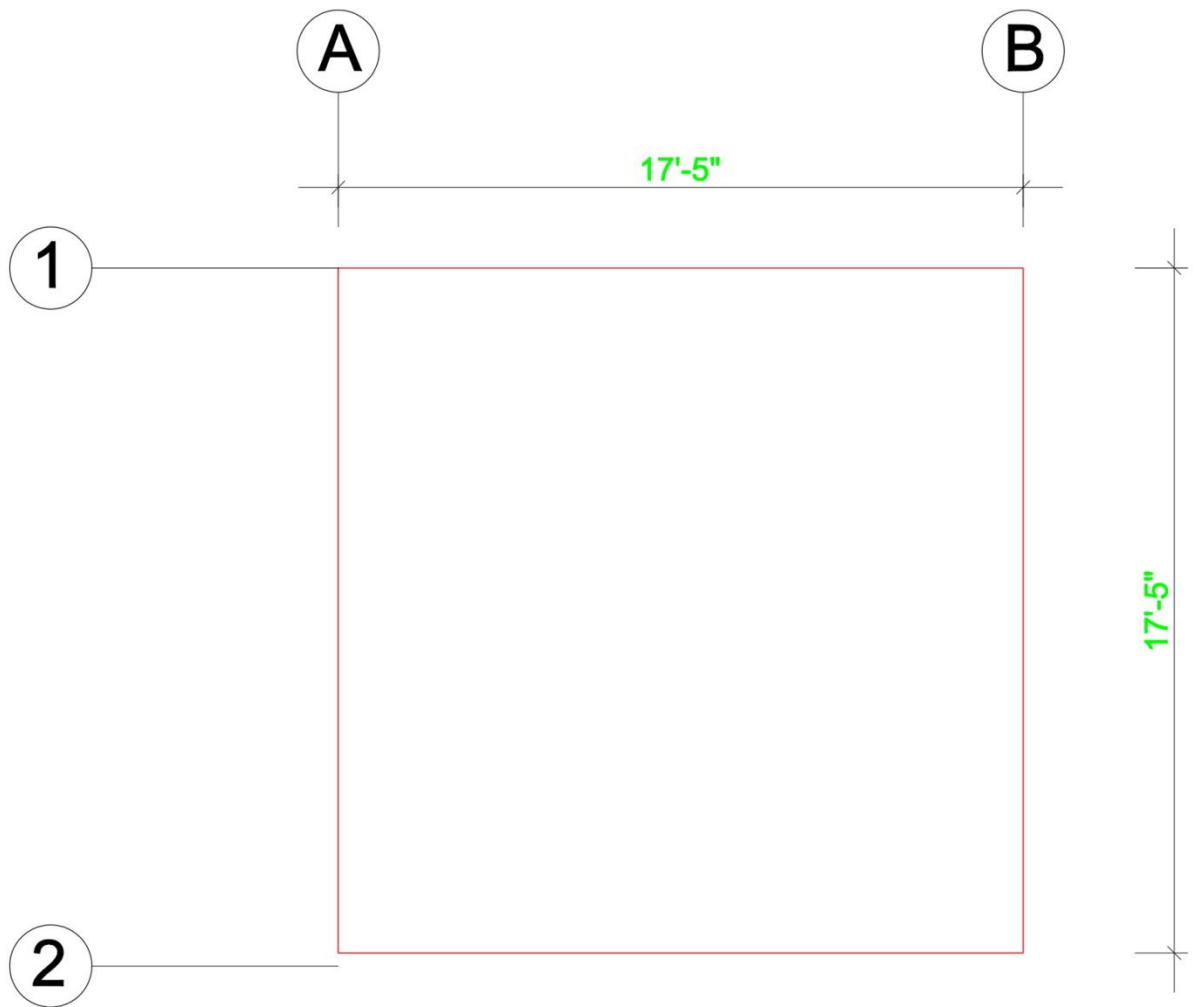
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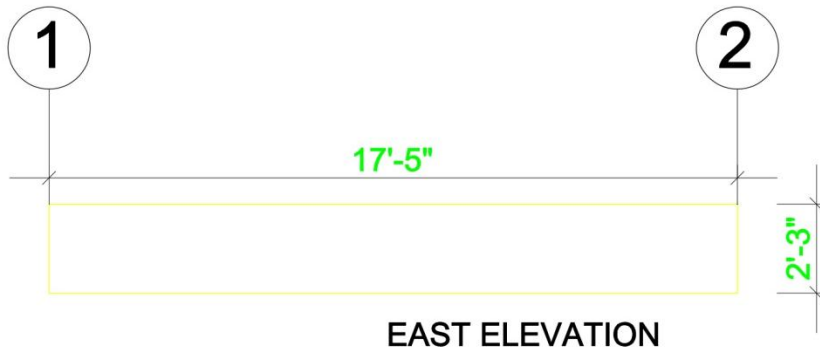
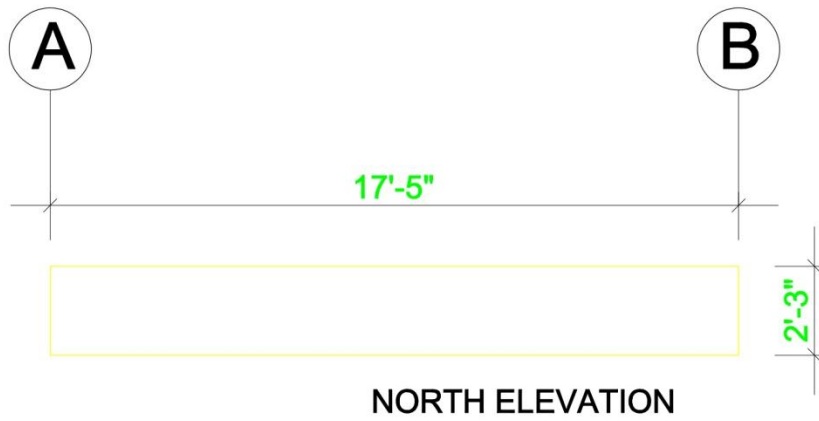
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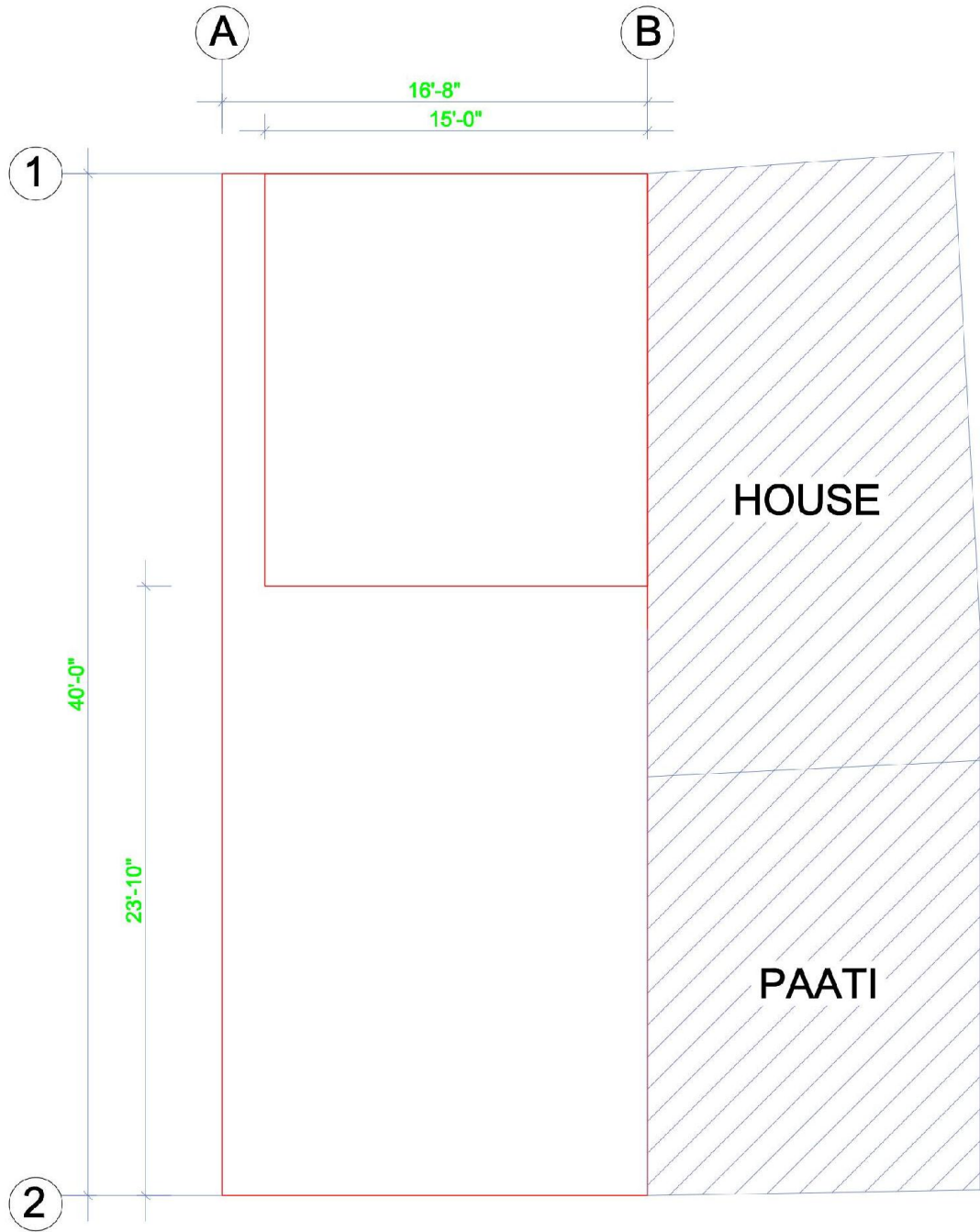
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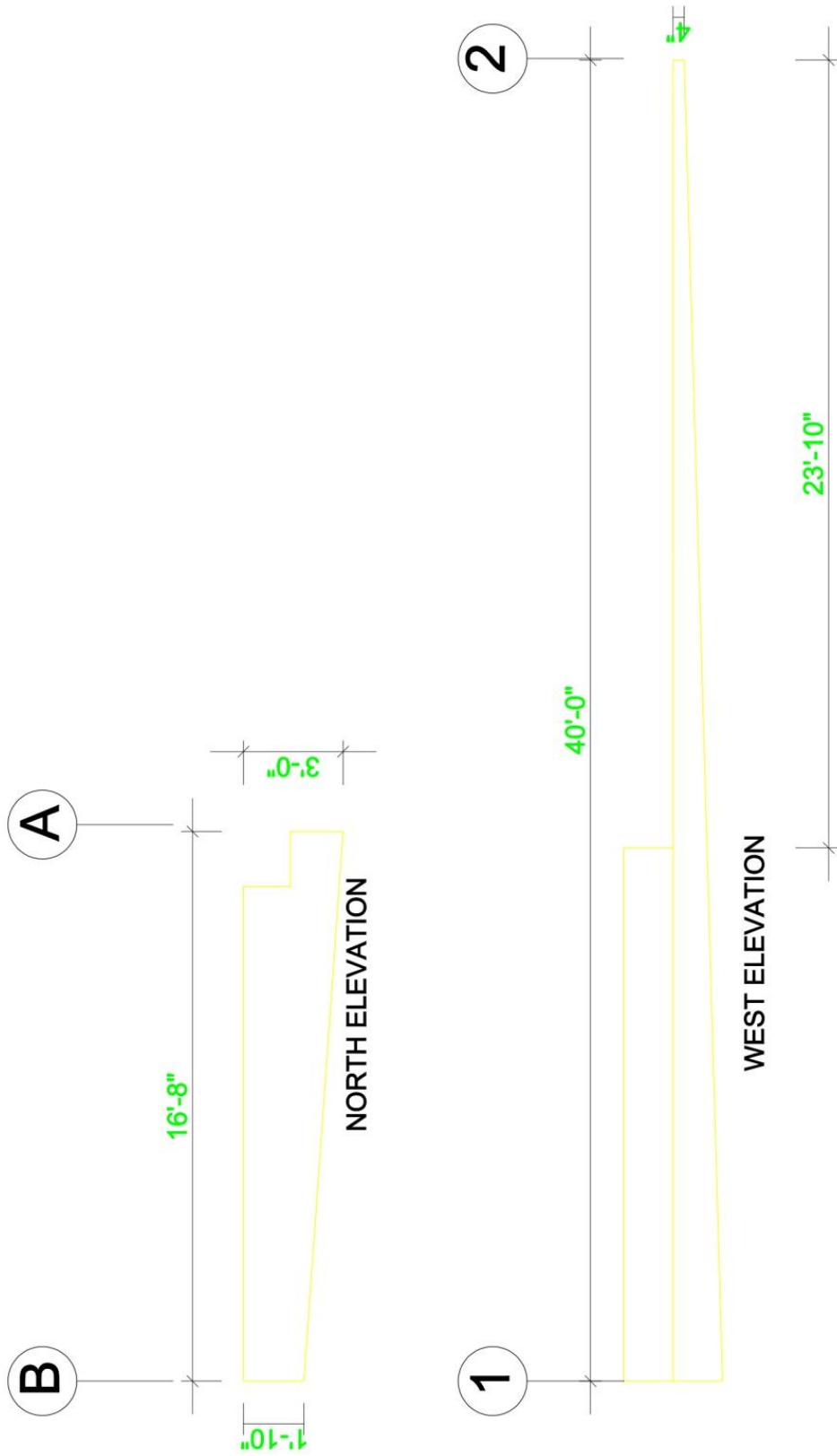
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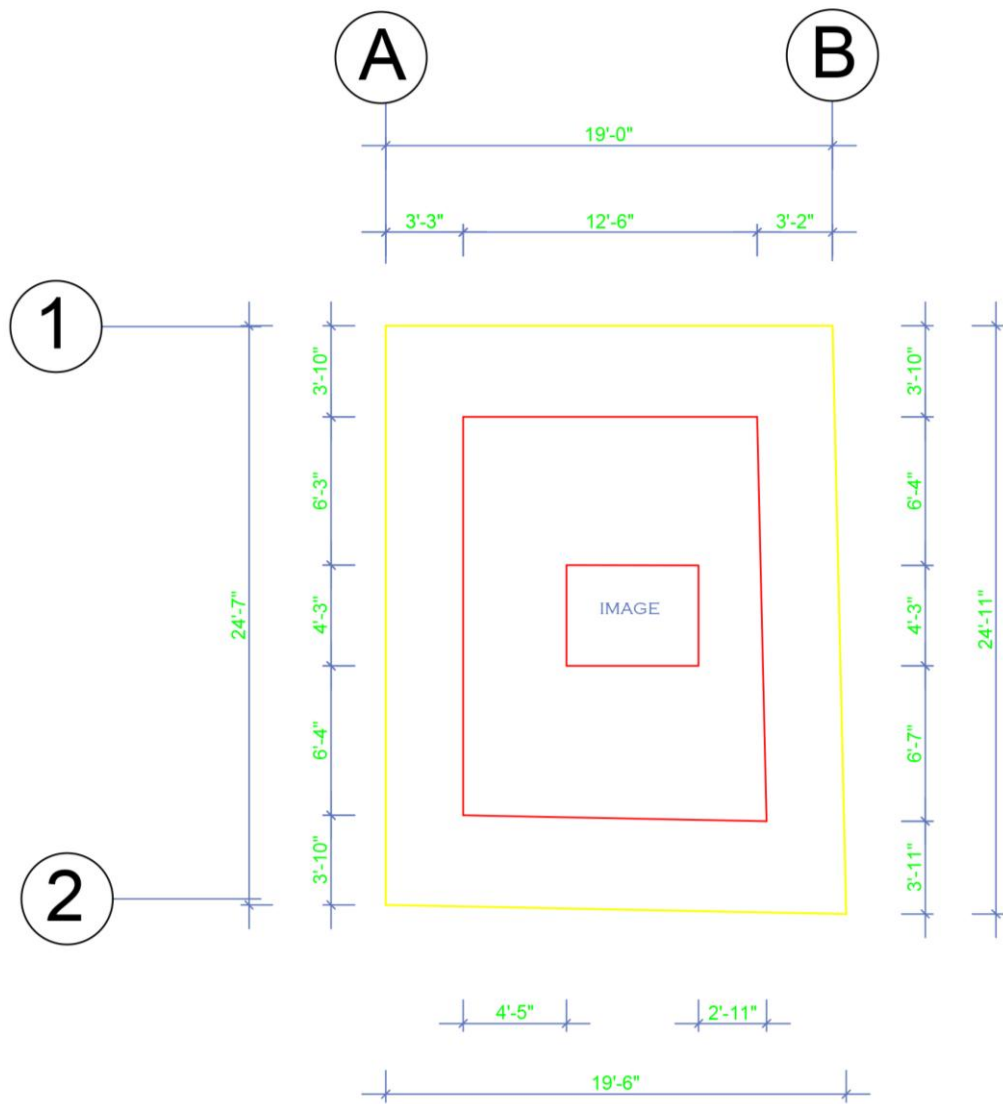
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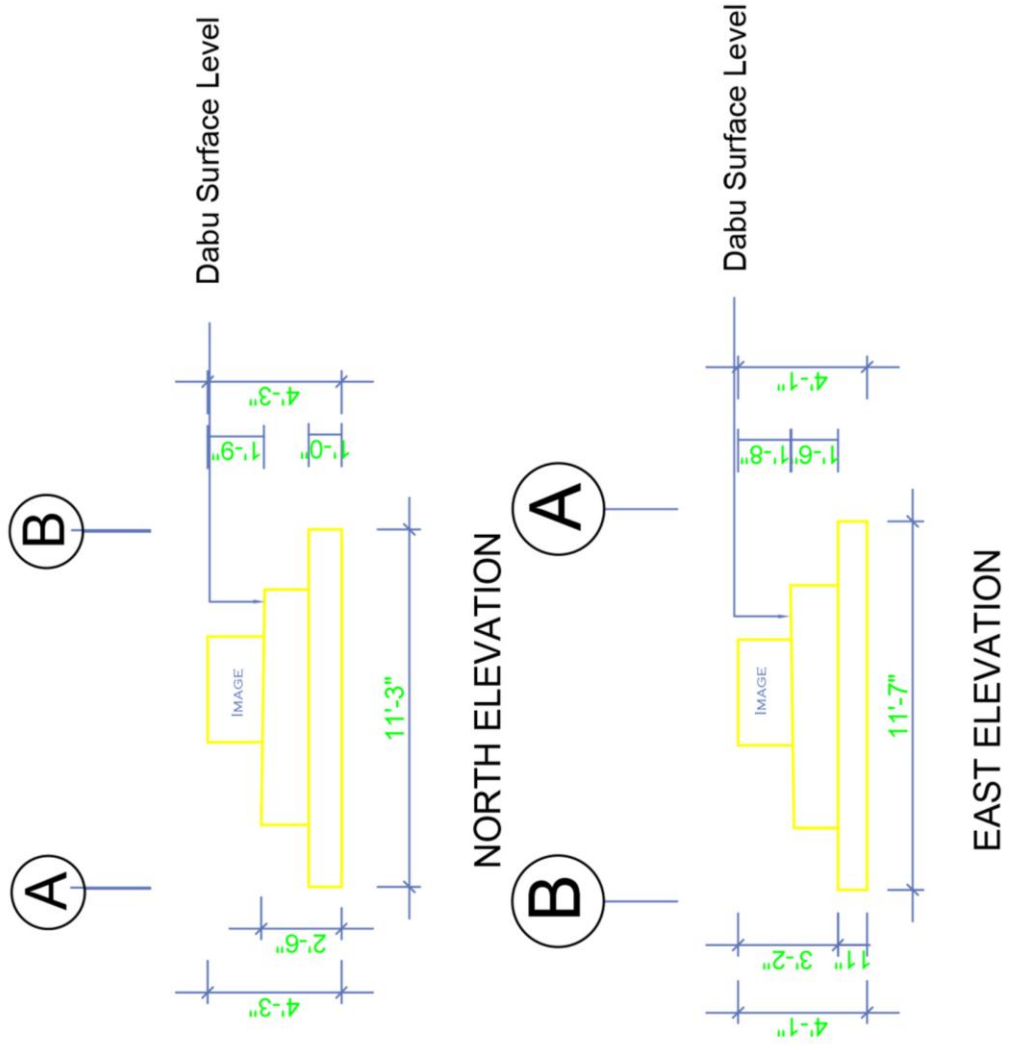
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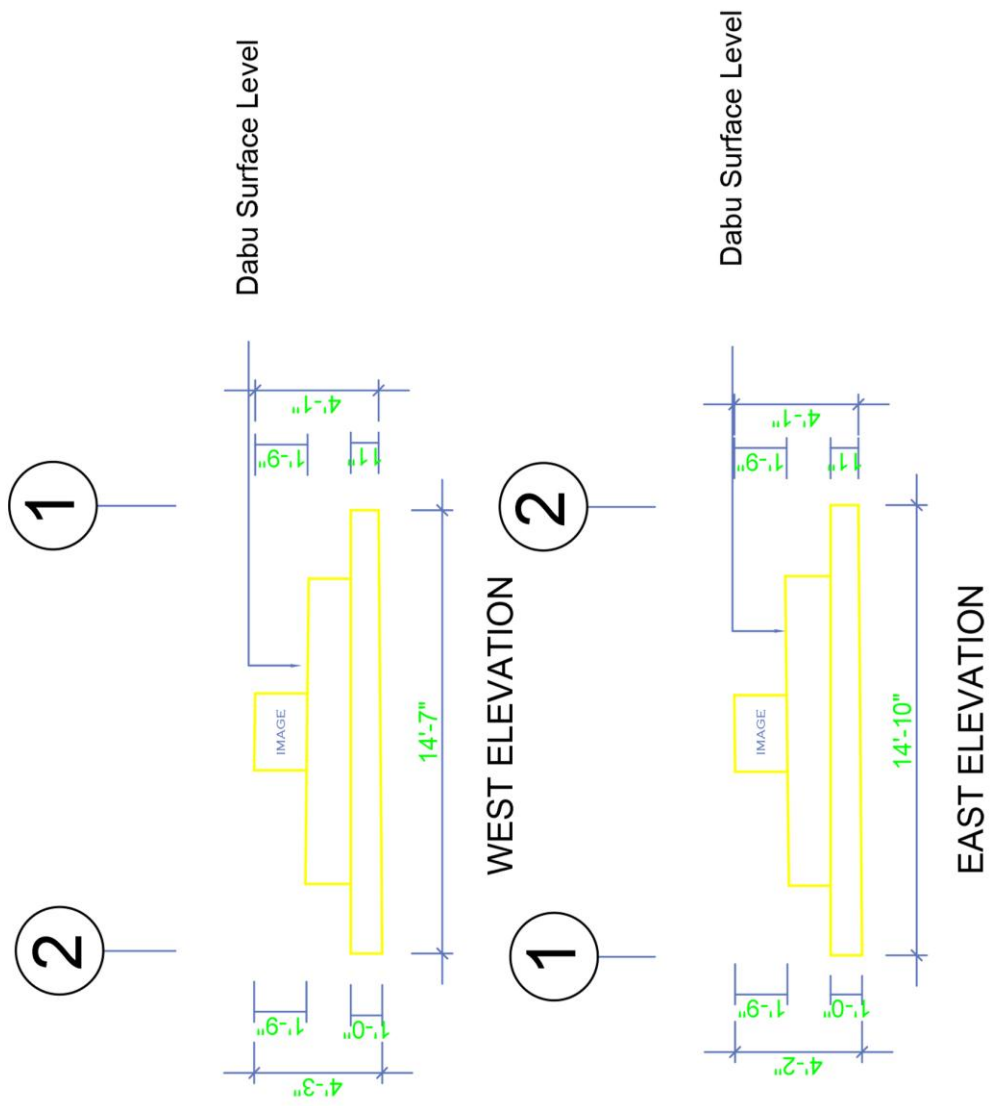
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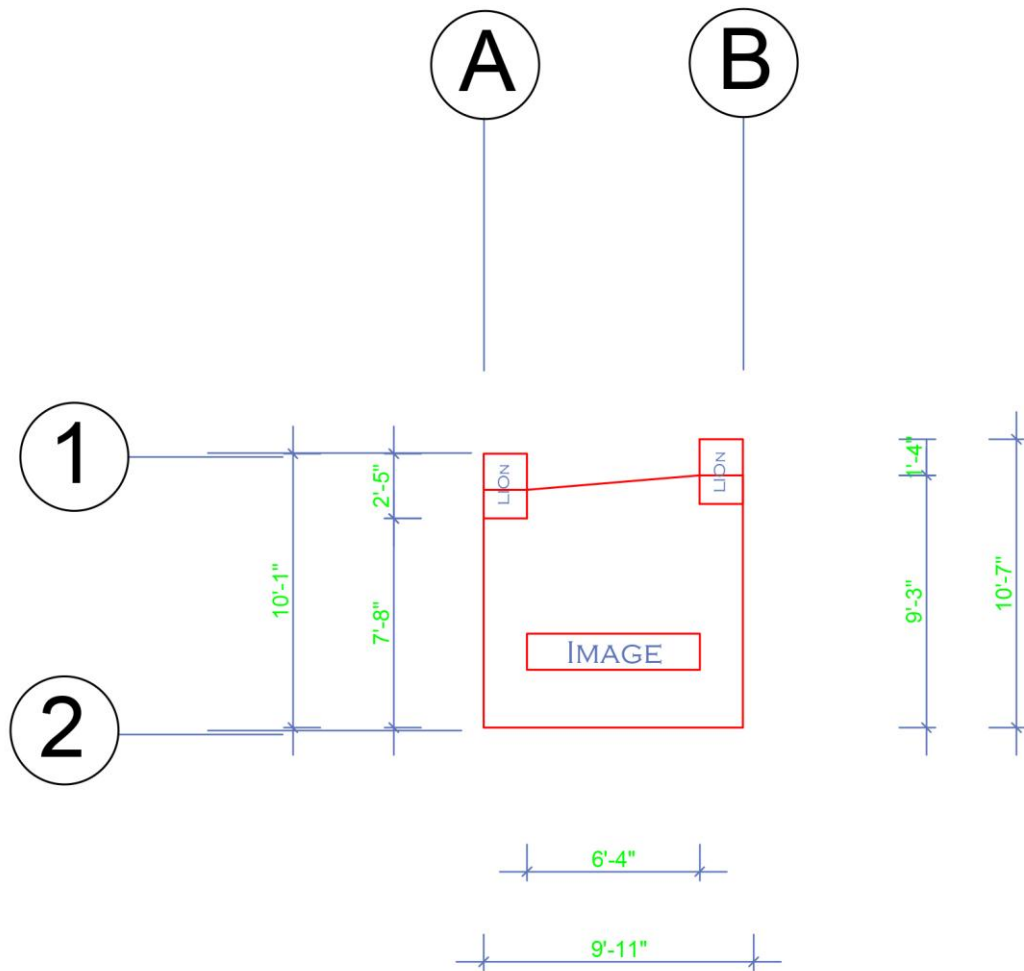
A.Design 12 Simha Dabu Plan



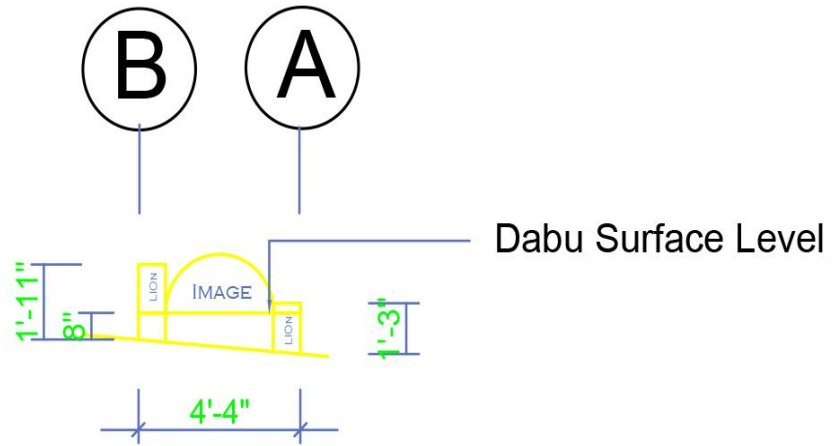
A.Design 12.1 Simha Dabu Elevation



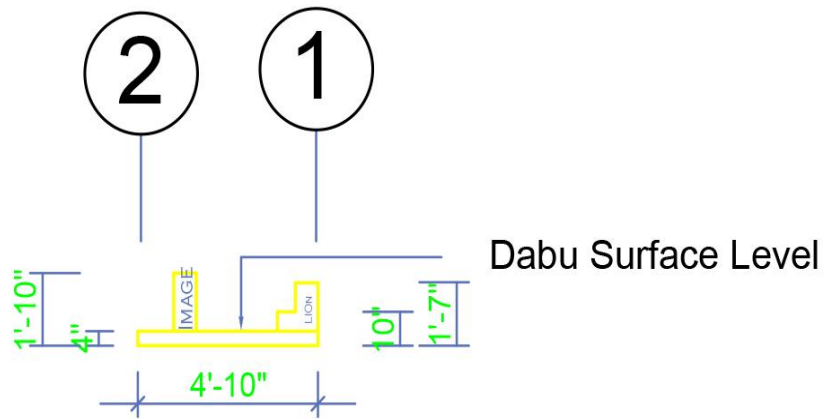
A.Design 12.2 Simha Dabu Elevation



A.Design 13 Dumha: Dabu Plan



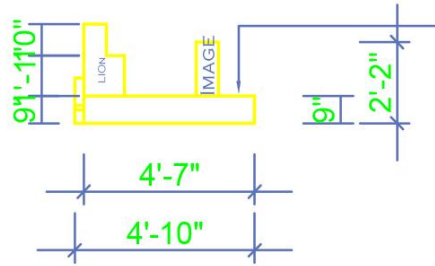
NORTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION

A.Design 13.1 Dumha: Dabu Elevation

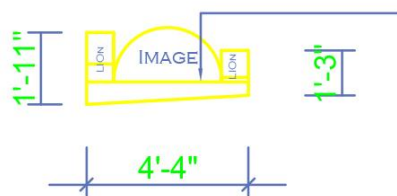
1 2



Dabu Surface Level

WEST ELEVATION

A B



Dabu Surface Level

SOUTH ELEVATION

A.Design 13.2 Dumha: Dabu Elevation

Appendix B
Photos and Arts



Photo no. 1 A art design of roasted mung, soybean, wheat, *rotis* during sakimanā punhi



Photo no. 2 Sujamāri Dabu using dry-grain-to-sun

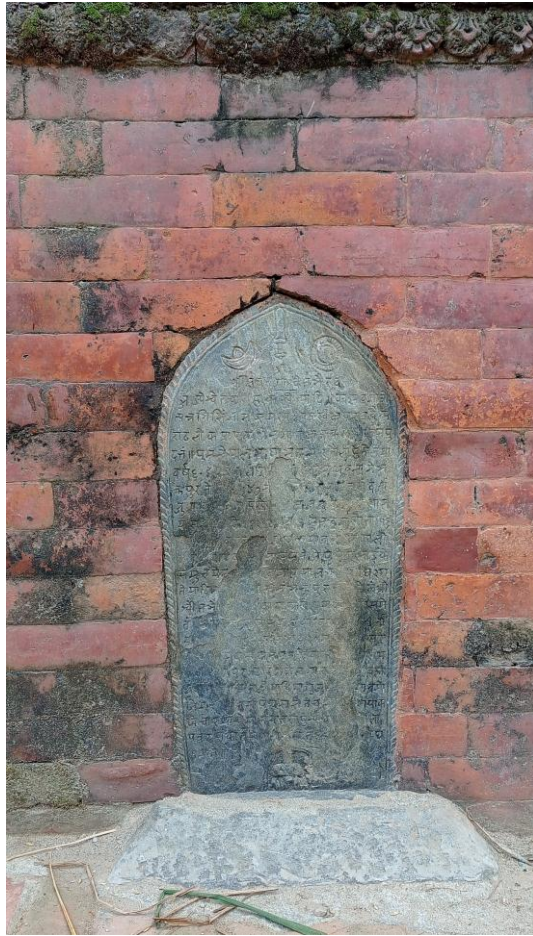


Photo no. 3 Sujamāri Dabu Inscription



Photo no. 4 Bramhayani Dabu



Photo no. 5 Mārchā Dabu, using for storage constructing materials



Photo no. 6 Bhindyo Dabu



Photo no. 7 Bhindyo Dabu - Art by Hennery Ambrose Oldfield, 1855 A.D.



Photo no. 8 Ta:rhān Dabu



Photo no. 9 Ta:māri Dabu, Misusing of dabu



Photo no. 10 Beta Dabu



Photo no. 11 A worship of Beta dyo on Beta Dabu



Photo no. 12 Nasmanā Dabu



Photo no. 13 La□yaku dabu



Photo no. 14 *Palepho* (Padma□kriti) of La□yaku Dabu

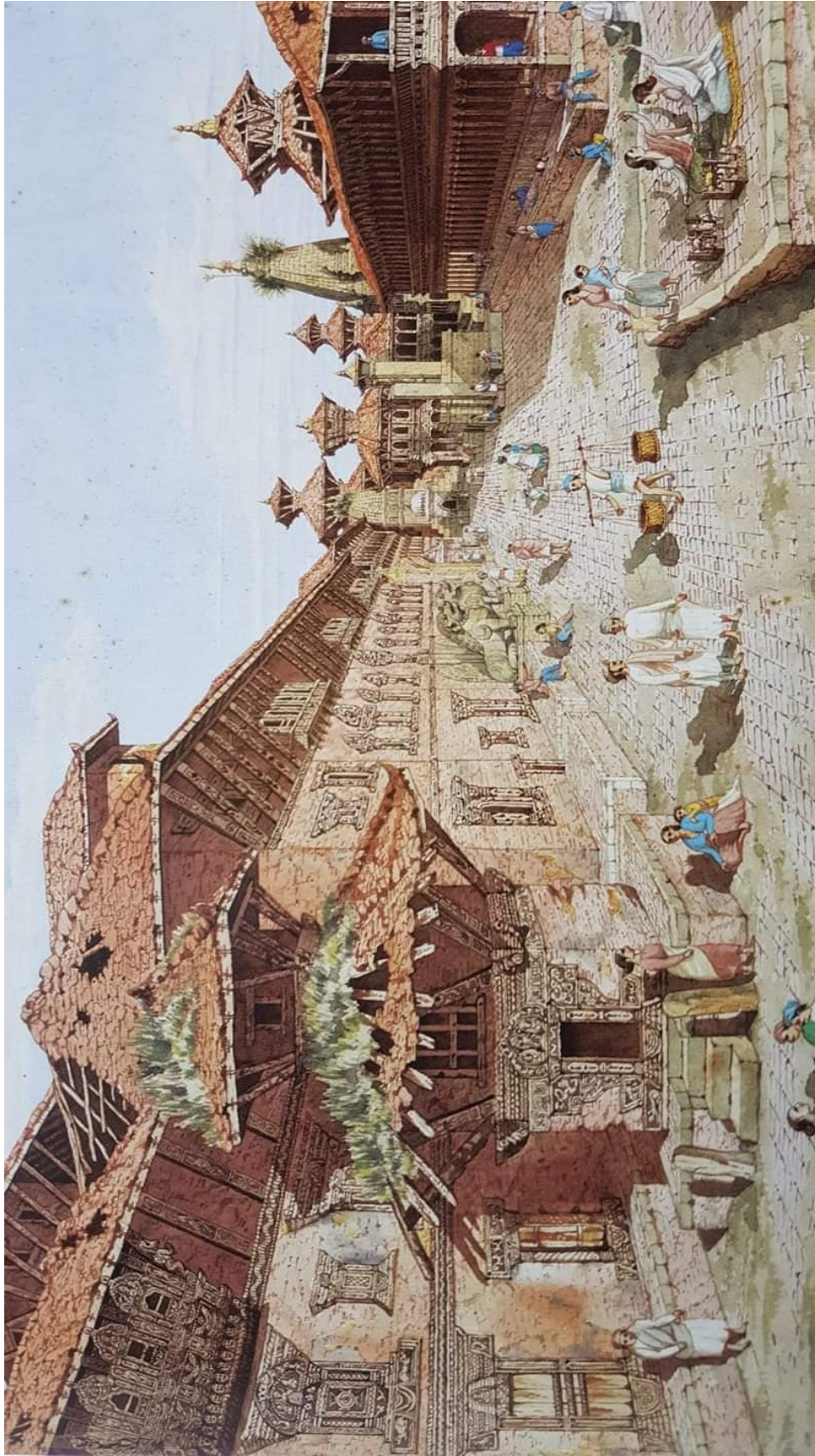


Photo no. 15 Bhaktapur durvar square with La Yakhu Dabu - Art by Hennery Ambrose Oldfield, 1853 A.D.

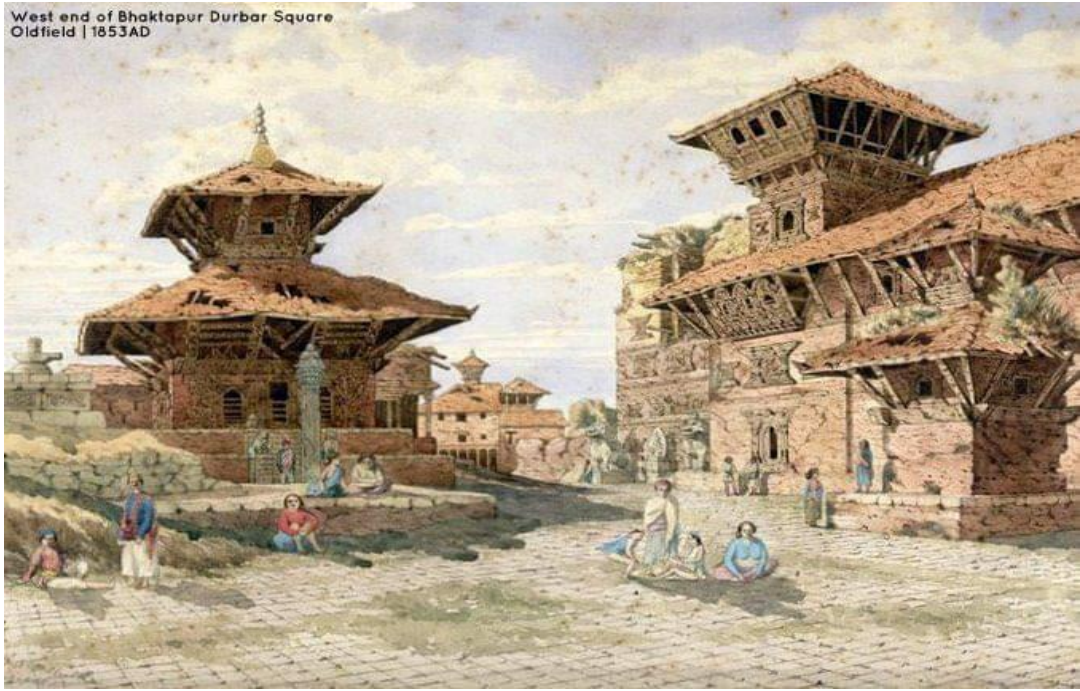


Photo no. 16 La□yaku Dabu - Art by Henner Ambrose Oldfield, 1853 A.D.

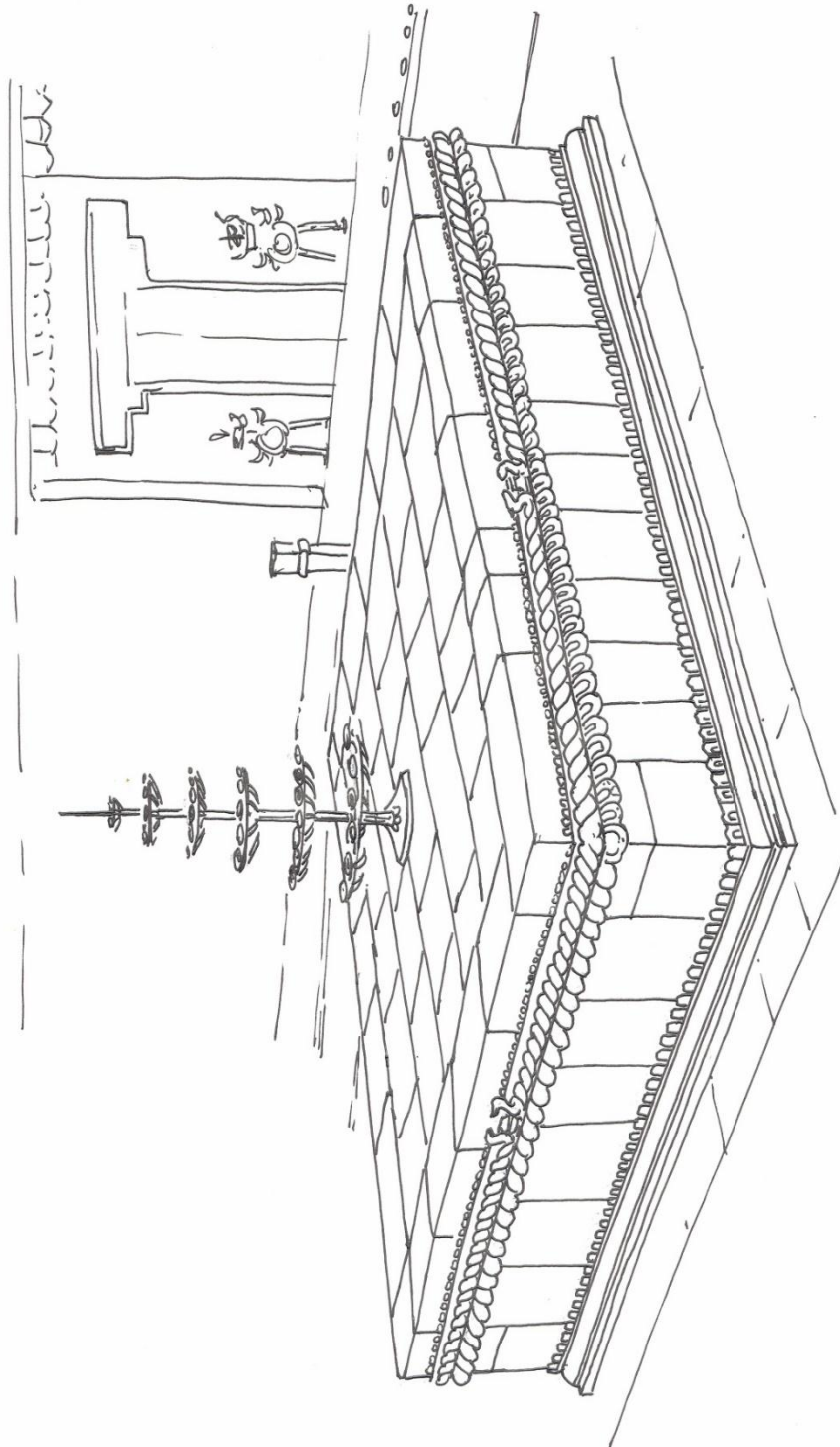


Photo no. 17 Sneha Mandap- Art by Bikas Tamakhu, 2075 V.S.



Photo no. 18 Yälächhen Dabu



Photo no. 19 Dumha: Dabu – for Tantrik Purpose



Photo no. 20 Simha Dabu- for Tantrik purpose



Photo no. 21 Inscription of Shivadev-Amshuvarma at Inacho, Bhaktapur

Appendix C

Lists of people interviewed

- Bhakta Bahadur Duwal, Age 73, Na□samana□, Bhaktapur
- Binod Raj Sharma, Age 66, Bhaktapur Durbar Square, Bhaktapur
- Bishnu Kesari Koju, Age 58, Sujamari. Bhaktapur
- Bishnu Prajapa□ti , Age 78, Sujama□ri, Bhaktapur
- Indra Bahadur Banmala, Na□ike of Navadurga□ gan□a, Age 75, Chorcha□, Bhaktapur
- Indra Prajapa□ti , Guru, Bhaila Pya□khan□, Age 62, Livi, Taula□chhen, Bhaktapur
- Karna Bahadur Gaiju, Age 69, Jenla, Bhaktapur
- Krishna Bahadur Gaiju, Bhisindyo Guthi, member, Age 57, Jenla, Bhaktapur
- Nhuchhe Kumar Prajapa□ti , Age 85, Sujama□ri, Bhaktapur
- Punyaswari Shilpakar, Age 50, Na□samana□, Bhaktapur.
- Purushottam Shrestha, PhD, Itiha□s Ratha, Age 61, Dudhpa□ti , Bhaktapur
- Radha Krishna Chhunju, Ta□la□ko
- Rajesh Joshi, Age 48, Inacho, Bhaktapur
- Rameshwor Prajapa□ti , Age 56, Twacha□, Sujama□ri, Bhaktapur
- Shankha Bahadur Yakami, guru of Kha: Pya□khan, Age 89, Bya□si, Bhaktapur
- Malla Mala, Professor at NeHCA Department, TU, Age 61, Bhanimandal, Patan

Glossary

A□cha□ju or Purohit: Tantric priest who worship in the temples

Aila□: a traditional spirituous liquor

Amshuvarma□: ruler of the Lichchhavi period (but not of the Lichchhavi dynasty)

A□rati: an oil lamp dedicated to God and Goddess; Diyo

Asta Ma□trika□: a group of eight mother Goddess

Bars□ha□ Puja□: monsoon worshipping

Beta Chhen: a house where the image of Beta Dyo to keep

Beta-Sin: a curved long wooden timber of chariot where Vir Betal resides.

Bhajan: A devotional song

Bhajan: A devotional song dedicated to Gods, King, and the fellow countrymen

Bha□lu Pya□khan□ : Bear-Dance, dance wearing an artificial bearskin by Newar□
community

Bhuta Yajña: a small part of food is given to other animal or bird

Biska□:Ja□tra□: a nationwide popular festival of Bhaktapur, falls on the new year of
V.S.

Bratabandha : a cultural act was done to growing boys

Chaku-hi: Sweet potato which is prosper inside underground

Chhusya□: Roasted wheat

Chikan Appa: clay tiles; a traditional cooked brick, especially used for courts and
platforms, are usually square shape and have a smooth bright red
surface

Chikula Puja□: winter worshipping

Chiva:dyo: Chaitya

Chuka: An open area cover by houses

Dabu: Cultural permanent stage where the traditional dances, play, musical
performance were shown.

Dama□ha□: a type of traditional musical instrument

Dashamaha□vidya□: ten female deities (Ka□li, Ta□ra□, S□od□as□i□,
Bhuvanesh□vari□, Bhairavi□, Chinnamasta□, Dhuma□vati□, Vagala□, Ma□tangi□,
Kamala□)

De/Des cha□hikeu: take a complete round to the city

Deepal Raṅg: a type of classical music

Devdaṅs: a male slave belonging to a particular shrine/God.

Devdaṅshini: a female slave belonging to a particular shrine/deity

Dhaṅraṅ: water spouts, tap

Dhol: a type of traditional musical instrument

Diyos: (a place to lit) oil lamp

Dolaṅji Pratha: a system of took a boy from outside of the country yard for a girl to
marry

Dranga: the developed form of city

Draupaṅti : consort of Lord Bhimsen

Dwaṅrpaṅl: Gatekeeper

Dyo-Boyakeu: a tradition to feast Navadurgaṅ ganṅa offering various items of food
and
drinks on the auspicious occasion

Dyochhen: God and deities house

Ga:hiti : a water spout situated to down level from worKing road

Ga:hiti : Stone water spout

Gaṅi: cow

Gaṅichaṅ Pyaṅkhanṅ : a dance of the singers

Ganṅa: a group with a special purpose

Golmadhi: a place of Bhaktapur

Gosthi: (Guthi); a trust highly prevailed since the Lichchhavi period.

Gunhu: punhi: a festival of nine consecutive days (Janai-purnimaṅ-Bhadrakrishna
astami)

Hanumaṅn Pyaṅkhanṅ: Hanumaṅn dance; Hanumaṅn is a closer disciple of God
Raṅm

Indradhoj: Banner of Lord Indra.

Jangali Pyaṅkhanṅ : Wild-dance

Jaṅtraṅ: festival

Jeri : a kind of sweet made from grains

Jyaṅsle: An open area where people used for their traditional family work and the
open
area is cover by houses

Kalasṅ: a sacred vessel, regarded as Goddess Guhyasṅhvariṅ

Kantipur: Kathmandu

Katuwa□l: a traditional messenger

Kawa□ncha□ Pya□khan□ : a dance of skeletons

Kha: Pya□khan□ : a traditional drama based on the religious and social story (showing episode by episode)

Kha:me: a ritual buffalo, as an incarnation of demon King Mahisashur

Khala: A traditional group for music, dance, and another religious aspect

Khata: a small wheelless chariot;

Khata: a small chariot without wheel;

Khicha□ Pya□khan□ : Dog-dance

Khulla□ Hom Yajña: open Ta□ntrik fire-pit ritual

Khwa□pa□: Mask

Khwopa-des□: (Newa□ri): Bhaktapur

Kone: Downside of Bhaktapur city; west side of Ta:ma□ri square

Kone: Lower part (of Bhaktapur town)

Kshama□ Puja□: a forgiveness-puja

La□ja□ : roasted Corn

La□khe Pya□khan□ : Ghost-dance

Lalha□yagu: to Handover anything to another person

Lhohan: stone

Lusicha□ Pya□khan□: a dance with a wood log which is used to beat paddy to make bitten rice in Newa□r community

Ma□gh: the 10th month of Solar Calendar (Bikram Samvat)

Mahanta: Owner of a monastery

Malla yuddha: a kind of wrestling

Malla: a ruler of the medieval era; dynasty

Mallayudha: One-on-one wrestling

Mandapa: a kind of dabu, Create for religious and other purposes.

Mandapi Ya□tra□: a kind of ancient festival connected to a dabu

Manika: a Unit for measurement

Ma□ripa□ : a kind of sweetmeats

Mushya□ : soybean

Musya□mpwa□ : a handmade oil lamp with staff

Musya□mpwa□: a Traditional torch(*masāl*)

Naach: Dance

Naike: the main person of the group; Thakali; Head of a family

Nani: An open area covered by houses where people install a minimum of one image of God or Goddess or a small temple; an open area with a shrine place

Narkat: a small-sized of bamboo species

Natak: Drama

Natyashwor: a dancing form of Lord Shiva

Navadurga: a group of nine mothers Goddesses

Nepal Mandal: Kathmandu Valley

Nhesa Twa Chahikeu: a process to take a round of 700 squares of Bhaktapur

Nrityasala: a dancing place

Nyatapola: five roofed temple

Palepho: Padmakriti (Nep), a lotus shape stone image making for worshipping purpose

Panjarra: a grant that was given to Deepankara Tathagat

Parda Pyakhan : a drama show story based on the social aspect with of big cloth (kapada)

Patan: Lalitpur

Pati : Traditional Resting Place

Phakandali Pyakhan : a dance, holding colocasia

Pith: an altar or open shrine, surrounded periphery of the temple of mother Goddess

Pongabaaja: A kind of musical instrument played by the Sakya community

Pradakshina Path: is a path to take round to the main God at temple or viharas

Pujapatha: religious worship

Pulukisi: the symbolic size of Yearwat elephant made from straw, bamboo and covers it by blue fabric; Aeravat is the vehicle of Lord Indra.

Purana: a Unit for measurement

Saki: Yam; Pidalu (Nep)

Sapta matrika: a group of seven mothers Goddesses

Shivadev: Lichchhavi ruler

Si-ja: a food annoying in the name of the dead person after 7 days in Newar community. (last meal)

Suvarna Tuladana: a ritual offering of gold

Svarga: heaven

Swari : a kind of bread

Tantra Vidya: knowledge of Tañtrik power
Tañtrik: a sacred knowledge
Tasi: a kind of fruit, used for many religious purposes
Tathañgat: a divine form of Lord Buddha i.e. Deepankara
Thane: Upperside of Bhaktapur city; east side of Ta:mañri square
Thon: a traditional Newañri liquor; rice beer
Thyañsaphu: a traditional folded book
Tole: quarter
Vamshañvali: Chronology
Yajña: a fire-pit
Yantra: Tañtrik diagram
Yañtrañvritañnta: an account of tour or visit
Yosingdyo: a fifty-five foot long wooden phallic pole of Lord Bhairavnath

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