

Notes on the Chaitya/ Chivas (Buddhist shrine) and 'Om Mani Padme Hum'

The Ranjana script is a beautiful and captivating script, deeply intertwined with culture. It possesses its own unique existence and stands as a jewel with a distinct identity. The *Chaitya* (Buddhist shrine), also known as *Chivas* or *Stupa*, serves as the primary platform where the original form of the Ranjana script is showcased. The structure of the Chaitya represents the Buddha, incorporating the head, body, and the state of meditative posture with legs crossed. These three parts symbolize the Buddha's physical form, gentle speech, and pure mind.

The Chaitya houses five Buddhas, each positioned according to the cardinal directions. At the core or central part of the Chaitya is the Vairochana Buddha, symbolizing wisdom or prudent insight, with white as its representative color. The Akshobhya Buddha, located in the north, signifies purity, clarity, and peace, and is represented by the color blue. In the south, the Ratnasambhava Buddha embodies harmony and equality, symbolized by the color yellow. The Amitabha Buddha in the east signifies foresight and compassion, represented by the color red. The Amoghasiddhi Buddha in the west represents contentment and happiness, symbolized by the color green.

'*Om Mani Padme Hum*' (meaning 'praise to the jewel in the lotus') is written in Ranjana script. This mantra is central to Buddhism, which flourished during the Licchavi and Malla eras, often referred to as the Golden Age in Nepal. This script is an integral part of Nepalese culture and identity, originating from the sacred text '*Prajna Paramita*' (meaning 'perfection of wisdom'). The Ranjana script remains a significant cultural heritage, embodying the rich historical and spiritual legacy of Nepal.