

The Return to the Source

The Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama Visit India



The Dalai Lama arrives in Sikkim on his way to India



The Dalai Lama received by Apa Pant the Political Officer in Sikkim

In 1956, the Dalai Lama was invited to attend the Buddha Jayanti celebrations to mark the 2500th birth anniversary of the Buddha.

He recalls: "I was ecstatic. For us Tibetans, India is Aryabhumi, the Land of the Holy. All my life I had longed to make a pilgrimage there: it was the place that I most wanted to visit. ...I finally left Lhasa ...full of joy at the prospect of being able to move about freely without the constant supervision of some Chinese official or other."



The Dalai Lama with Nehru and the Panchen Lama



The Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama and other Buddhist dignitaries

"...[While travelling in India] I reflected on how different India felt from China. I had been there for no time at all, but already I was aware of an immense gulf between the way of life of the two countries. Somehow, India seemed so much more open and at ease with herself".

"...I was able to give myself wholly to deep feelings of joy and veneration as I journeyed across the country from Sanchi to Ajanta, then to Bodh Gaya and Sarnath. I felt that I had returned to my spiritual home..."



A ride with Nehru



The Dalai Lama with President Rajendra Prasad



Buddhist delegates with Jawaharlal Nehru, the Maharaja of Sikkim and Burma's Prime Minister