Preface

Japan is situated in the East Asia. It is called the country of Rising Sun. So in the language of Japan the country’s name is Nippon. Japanese people are very humble, hard-working as well as brave. In Asia Japan merely a country which may be compared with first world like Europe and America.

The Japanese people followed Buddhism. It was transmitted to Japan from Korea in the sixth century A.D. The Korean monks brought with them Buddha’s statue and scriptures. Prince Shōtoku Taishō believed in Buddhism from his childhood. At the age of twenty he became regent of his Aunt Empress Suiko. He propagated the Mahāyāna Buddhism in Japan. It is based on Chinese Buddhism, as recorded in the history of Japan. Prince Shōtoku Taisho had proclaimed Buddhism as the state religion and urging the development of the ‘Triple Gem’. The Triple Gem is Buddha (Enlightened One) Dhamma (Truth) and Saṅgha (Order). They are to be the main objects of faith and devotion and are to constitute the fundamental basis of an upright life. Prince Shōtoku built the first Buddhist Pagodas, hospitals, dispensaries, homes etc. for Japanese People. He gave lectures on the Mahāyāna Sutras especially on Śrīmālādevī-Siṃhanāḍa Sūtra (Japanese Shoman Sūtra), Saddharma-puṇḍarīka Sūtra (The Lotus Sūtra) Known as in Japanese Hokke Sūtra and Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra (Japanese Yuima Sutra). Hōryūji is the first monastery in Japan which was built in 596 A. D. Later this monastery became the significant centre for the Study of Buddhists.

The following are the Japanese Sects:
(i) Tendai (ii) Shingon (III) Nichiren (iv) Pure Land (v) Zen (vi) Sanron (vii) Jōjitsu (viii) Hossō (ix) Kusha (x) Kegon and (xi) Ritsu.
In Kamakura Period the common people of Japan became religious by the development of the teaching of Zen school and Pure Land school. Zen was introduced by Eisai and Dogen. The name Zen which came from dhyāna (meditation). The aim of Zen school is self-enlightenment. One may purify one's mind through meditation. The Buddhist is attracted by meditation. Goutama Buddha also attained enlightenment by practicing meditation known as Vipassana.

Zen is practised daily by a person to purify his mind. Goutama Buddha also attained enlightenment by practicing meditation known as Vipassana.

Education and school service are based on Buddhist culture. In the early stage education started in the Hōryūji and other monasteries. Japanese were taught not only religion and philosophy but also practical arts and Sciences. There is some human welfare societies like - (a) Sōka Gakkai (b) Reiyu (c) Risshō Kōsei kai. Now Risshō Kōsei-Kai is the most famous in the world which founded on 5th March 1938. The organization of Risshō Kōsei Kai is based on the three Sūtras, i.e. (i) Muryogi Sūtra (2) The Lotus Sūtra (3) Kanfugen Sūtra. The aim and objects of Risshō Kōsei Kai is to serve the poor people and to develop the nation as a whole.

I must express my hearty gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Bela Bhattacharya, Professor of the department of Pali, University of Calcutta. She not only provided me with all facilities in various ways, but also guided me at every step with affection, while writing the thesis. I would like to convey my gratitude to Indian council for cultural Relation, (ICCR) in extending all financial support.

I am grateful to my respected Gurudev, the most venerable Dharmapriya Mahathera, Vice President of Bangladesh Supreme Saṅgha council. High priest Mahananda Sangharaj Vihar, Mahamuni Pahartali, Chittagong, Bangladesh. He encouraged me for higher studies. Today the place where I am is outcome of his blessings.
I am also grateful to Dr. Sukomal Chowdhury, Ex Principal Govt. Sanskrit College and Dr. Amal Barua, Head Master of Matilal Seals frees College, Kolkata. I am indebted to a Japanese Buddhist monk Rev. Gyochi Oishi and a Korean Dr. Seung Ho Nam who sent me some materials from Japan and Korea. I am thankful to the authorities of the Calcutta University Library, National Library, Japan Indo Language Department, Asiatic Society Library, Mahabodhi Library for giving me permission to consult books and periodicals.

May, 2006
Kolkata
India.

JINAPRIYA SRAMAN