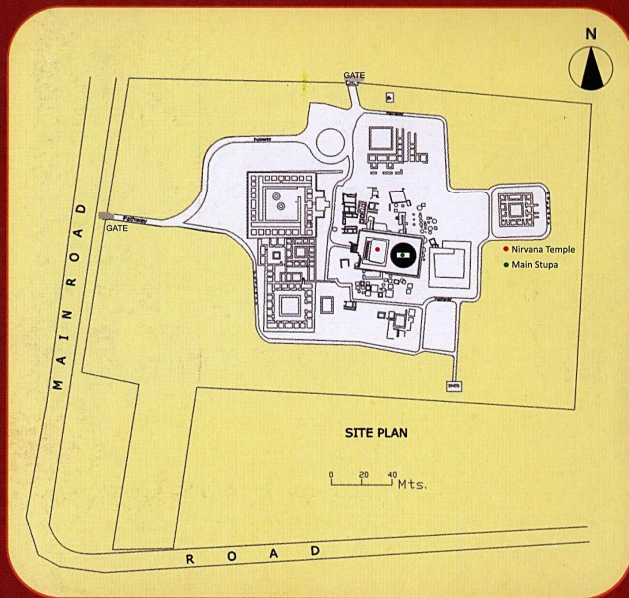




Visiting Hours

Opening time of Monuments : Sunrise to Sunset

ENTRY FREE

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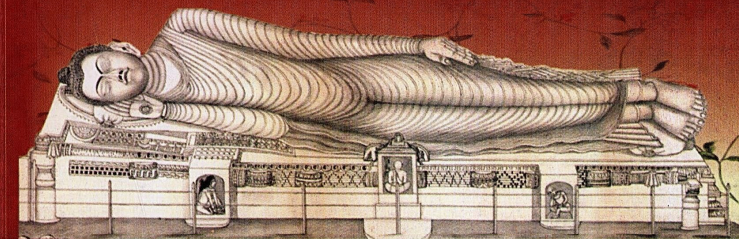
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KUSHINAGAR

SUPERINTENDING ARCHAEOLOGIST
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA
SARNATH CIRCLE, SARNATH
VARANASI, U.P.



Kushinagar (Lat. 26° 45' N and Long. 83° 24' E) is situated about 53 kms. towards east from Gorakhpur on the bank of river Hiranyavati near National Highway-28. It is about 35 kms. north-east from Deoria of Uttar Pradesh. From which on 13th May 1994, Kushinagar became a new district of Uttar Pradesh. Kushinagar was known as Kushawati in Pre-Buddha period and called Kushinara during 6th Century B.C. and Mallas has its two branches with its capital in Kushinara and Pava. Very interestingly both branches of Mallas are the confederation of Republic State and thus called as Gana. It was the capital of Mallas which was one of the Sixteen Mahajanpadas in 6th Century B.C. According to Mahabharata, Pandavputra Bhimasen is said to have conquered the chief of Malla in course of his expedition in Eastern India. Since then, it remained an integral part of the Empires of Maurya, Sunga, Kushana, Gupta and Harsha dynasties. In Medieval Period it was under the suzerainty of Kulchury Kings. Kushinagar was a living city till the 12th Century A.D. and was there after lost into oblivion.

According to "Mahāpariniravāṇa Sutta" Buddha made his last journey to Kushinagar where he attained Mahāpariniravāṇa. The relics were collected by the Mallas after cremation and taken ceremoniously to their town with a view to enshrining it in stūpa as desired by Buddha himself.

A Buddhist pilgrim Fa-Hein, from China, visited Kushinagar in the reign of Kumargupta (413-455 C.E.) and found that some Buddhist monks were residing there. It is said that the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen

Tsang (7th century C.E.) saw three stūpa and two inscribed pillars erected by the Emperor Ashoka. After Hiuen Tsang, another Chinese pilgrim I-Tsing also visited Kushinagar.

Archaeological Excavations:- The archaeological remains of Kushinagar were described first time by Buchanan in 1854. H. H. Wilson casually suggested the identity of Kushinagar but Sir Alexander Cunningham in 1861-62, placed its identification, on solid grounds. The systematic excavations were undertaken by Archaeological Survey of India under the guidance of A.C.L. Carlleyle in 1876-77, Vogel in 1904-07 and Hiranand Shastri in 1910-12 C.E. As a result of all these excavations numerous brick buildings/structures including Nirvāṇa temple, Main Stūpa, Mathā Kuar Shrine, Rāmābhār Stupa, monasteries and cluster of votive stupa were brought into light.

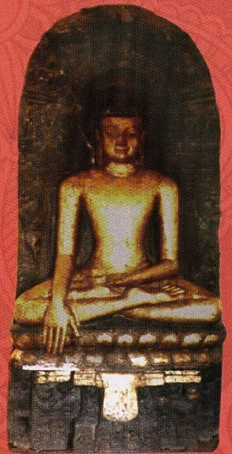
Nirvāṇa Temple:- The ruins of this temple and the reclining statue of Buddha were discovered by A.C.L. Carlleyle in 1876 C.E. A devout Buddhist Haribala donated the colossal image of reclining Buddha and possibly restored or renovated the Main Stupa in the reign of King Kumar Gupta in Gupta Period. The statue of Buddha is 6.1 meter in length and is carved out of single block of sand stone; the image is placed on a large bricks pedestal. It represents the Buddha reclining on his right side with his face turned towards the west. Three human figures are shown on the brick pedestal with mourning and grief. Apart from this an inscription of 5th century C.E. recovered from this site mentioning, the statue was the religious gift of Haribala.

Main Stupa:- This stupa was also excavated by Carlleyle in 1876 C.E. It

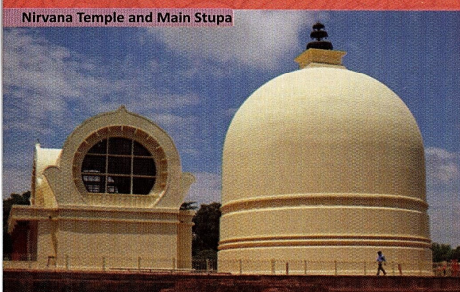
stands on a plinth of about 2.75 meter in height. In 1910, this stupa was further examined by driving a vertical shaft at its centre from top. The operation revealed the filling some carved bricks at the top and a copper coin of King Jaya Gupta. Below which there was a small circular brick chamber, containing a copper vessel with copper plate. Another vessel was also found containing some silver coins of Kumar Gupta.

Mathā Kuar Shrine:- The shrine along with the sand stone image of Buddha was also exposed by Carlleyle in 1876 C.E. The statue measures 3.05 meter in height and represents Buddha in earth touching posture, which symbolically expresses the supreme moment in Buddha's life, i.e. enlightenment at Bodhgaya. The existing shrine built in the year 1927 C.E. to shelter the statue.

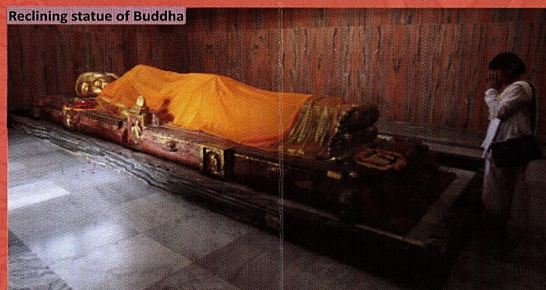
Rāmābhār Stūpa:- This stupa is associated with the spot where Buddha was cremated. The excavation of the stupa was conducted by Hirananda Shastri in the year 1910 C.E. The diameter of the stupa at the base is 47.24 meter. The stupa is made of bricks laid on mud mortar. The subsidiary structures including votive stupas and minor shrines excavated here suggest the religious sanctity of the stupa.



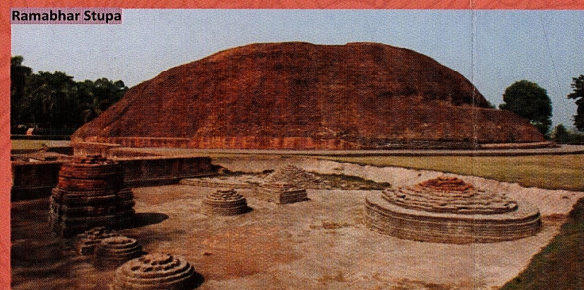
Lord Buddha in Bhumi-parsha Mudra
MathaKuar Shrine



Nirvana Temple and Main Stupa



Reclining statue of Buddha



Ramabhar Stupa



MathaKuar Shrine