

Mahabodhi Temple

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Mahabodhi Temple Latest News

The Mahabodhi Temple received donations worth nearly Rs 2 crore in a six-day census of donation boxes, including Rs 1.5 crore from Indian and Rs 50 lakh from foreign countries.

About Mahabodhi Temple

- It is an **ancient Buddhist temple** located in **Bodh Gaya, Bihar**, on the **banks of the Niranjana River**.
- It is **one of the four most sacred sites of Buddhism**, marking the location where **Buddha attained Enlightenment** (Bodhi), along with:
 - **Lumbini (Buddha's birthplace)**
 - **Sarnath (Buddha's first sermon)**
 - **Kushinagar (Buddha's parinirvana)**
- The **original temple** was constructed by the **Mauryan emperor Ashoka** in the **3rd century BC**.
- The **present structure** is estimated to have been erected between **5th and 6th century AD** during the **Gupta Period**.

- The temple was **heavily restored** in the 19th century by **Myanmar (Burmese) Buddhists** and then by the **British** archaeologist Sir Alexander Cunningham.
- It was recognized as a **UNESCO World Heritage site** in 2002.

Mahabodhi Temple Architecture

- It is constructed of brick and is **one of the oldest brick structures** to have **survived in India**.
- Built-in the **classical style of Indian temple architecture**, the temple complex spreads over 5 hectares.
- The temple structure is 180 feet (55 meters) in height.
- Its **pyramidal shikhara (tower)** comprises several layers of niches, arch motifs, and fine engravings.
- **Four additional towers**, each identical to the main tower but smaller in size, **adorn the corners** of the two-story structure.
- A **shrine** inside the temple holds a **yellow sandstone statue** of the **Buddha encased in glass**.
- **In 2013**, the **upper portion** of the temple was **covered with gold**, as a **gift from the King and devotees of Thailand**.
- A **descendant of the Bodhi tree** under which the **Buddha** is said to have **sat until he attained enlightenment** stands adjacent to the temple.
- **Vajrasana (Diamond Throne):** A **stone slab** marking the **exact spot** where **Buddha meditated and attained enlightenment**, originally **installed by Emperor Asoka**.
- Stone railings surround the temple as well as the Bodhi tree.
- **One of the most famous of Ashoka's many pillars** (on which he had engraved **his proclamations and his understanding of religious doctrine**) stands at the southeast corner of the temple.

News: **JAG**

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