



Excavation to Uncover Buddha's Relics

Why in News?

Recently, the Union Minister of State for Finance inaugurated an **archaeological excavation at Ramgram in Maharajganj district** of Uttar Pradesh.

- The project, spearheaded by **the [Archaeological Survey of India \(ASI\)](#)**, seeks to **uncover evidence of [Lord Buddha's eighth relic](#)**, which is believed to be buried at the site.

Key Points

- **Historical and Spiritual Significance:**
 - The site is **among the eight places where Lord Buddha's relics were enshrined**, holding immense importance in **Buddhist traditions**.
 - It is situated within the **Sohgibarwa Wildlife Division** and is **historically associated with the ancient Kolia kingdom**.
 - Kolia was an **ancient [Indo-Aryan clan](#)** of north-eastern South Asia whose existence is attested during the [Iron Age](#).
- **Potential for Regional Development:**
 - The excavation is expected to transform the location into a prominent **Buddhist pilgrimage site**.
 - This development is anticipated to **boost tourism and stimulate economic growth** in the region.
- **Focus on Global Recognition:**
 - The project aims to integrate the site into the global [Buddhist pilgrimage circuit](#).
 - Local authorities foresee **increased visits from international pilgrims and scholars**, enhancing the region's cultural profile.

Sohagi Barwa Wildlife Sanctuary

- **About:**
 - It is situated in the **Maharajganj district of Uttar Pradesh**.
 - In the **north, the Sanctuary shares the international boundary with Nepal**, and in the **east shares the border with Bihar's [Valmiki Tiger Reserve](#)**.
 - It was **declared a Wildlife Sanctuary in June 1987**.
- **Drainage:**
 - It is drained by the [great Gandak](#), the [little Gandak](#), [Pyas](#) and [Rohin rivers](#).
- **Flora:**
 - Nearly 75% of the area consists of [Sal forest](#), and other humid areas are covered with **Jaamun, Gutal, Semal, Khair Trees, etc.**
 - The lower region of the sanctuary, which is water logged during rains, consists of **Grasslands and patches of Cane forests**.
- **Fauna:**
 - It is inhabited by a variety of animals which mainly includes [Leopard](#), [Tiger](#), [Jungle Cat](#), [Small Indian Civet](#), [Langur](#), [Deer](#), [Blue Bull](#), [Wild boar](#), [Porcupine](#) etc.

GAUTAM BUDDHA

Believed to be 9th of the 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu (Dashavatar)

BIRTH

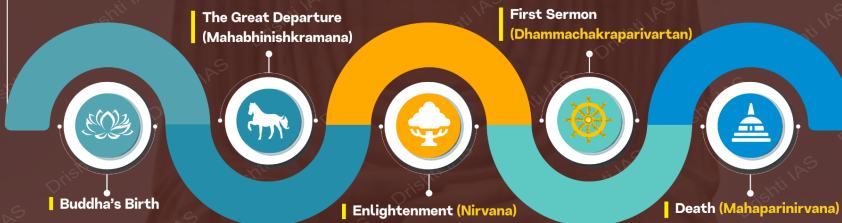
- Born as Siddhartha (563 BC)
- Birthplace - **Lumbini** (Nepal) near **Kapilavastu**

PARENTS

- Father - elected ruler of Kapilvastu; headed **Shakya republican clan**
- Mother - princess from **Koshalan dynasty**



IMPORTANT EVENTS



Buddha referred to himself as **Tathagata** (one who has thus come/gone) and has been addressed as **Bhagavat** (in Buddhist texts)

CONTEMPORARIES

- Vardhaman Mahavira
- Bimbisara
- Ajatshatru

OTHER IMPORTANT PLACES ASSOCIATED WITH BUDDHA

- **Bodh Gaya** (Enlightenment) (named Buddha after attaining enlightenment)
- **Sarnath** (first sermon)
- **Vaishali** (last sermon)
- **Kushinagara** (death place (483 BC))