

# Kesaria Buddha Stupa

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## In news

Kesaria buddha stupa was waterlogged following floods in east Champaran district of Bihar.

## About Kesaria Buddha Stupa

- Kesariya Stupa has a circumference of almost 400 feet and rises to a height of about 104 feet.
- The stupa is said to be the **tallest and the largest Buddhist stupa in the world** and is one ft taller than the Borobudur stupa in Indonesia.
- Its exploration had started in the early 19th century after its discovery led by Colonel Mackenzie in 1814.
- Later, it was **excavated by General Cunningham in 1861-62 and in 1998 an ASI team** led by archaeologist K.K. Muhammad had excavated the site properly.
- The original Kesaria stupa is said to **date back to the time of emperor Ashoka** (circa 250 BCE) as the remains of an Ashokan pillar was discovered there.
- The locals call the stupa "**devalaya**" meaning "house of gods".
- The ASI has declared it a **protected monument of national importance**.
- It is the tallest ever-excavated Stupa in the world.
- Rising to a height of 104 feet and much reduced than its original height, it is one foot taller than the famous Borobudur Stupa in Java, a world heritage monument.
- The Kesaria Stupa was 123 feet tall before the 1934 earthquake in Bihar.

- In the halcyon days when Buddhism thrived in India , the Kesaria Stupa was 150 feet and Borobudur stupa 138 feet tall according to A.S.I. report.
- **At present the height of Kesaria is reduced to 104 feet and Borobudur to 103 feet.**
- The archeologists believe the Stupa in kesaria **known to the people as “Raja Ben ka DEORA”** was built by Licchivis of Vaishali before Budha attained Nirvana .
- Two great foreign travelers, Faxian (Fahien) and Xuan Zang (Hsuan Tsang), had visited this place.
- The current stupa dates to the Gupta Dynasty between 200 AD and 750 AD and may have been associated with the 4th century ruler Raja Chakravarti.

### **Buddha at Kesaria**

Lord Budha **on his last Journey spent a memorable night at Kesaria.** Here he made sensational announcements, which was later on recorded in Buddhist Jatak Story. Buddha here at Kesaria said that in his previous births he ruled as Chakravarti Raja. Buddha also asked Licchivis to return to Vaishali after giving them “BEGGING BOWL.”

### **Recent excavations**

- Recent excavations of Kesaria Stupa by A.S.I. Patna circle throw light on Buddhist history.
- The excavation reveals the terraces with **“Pradakshina path”** around the stupa.
- More important finding is a number of figures of **Lord Budha in “Bhoomi Sparsh Mudra” and other sitting image.**
- These figures are made of soil and pebbles in each layer. The earthen lamp, decorated bricks and other potteries are other point of attraction.