



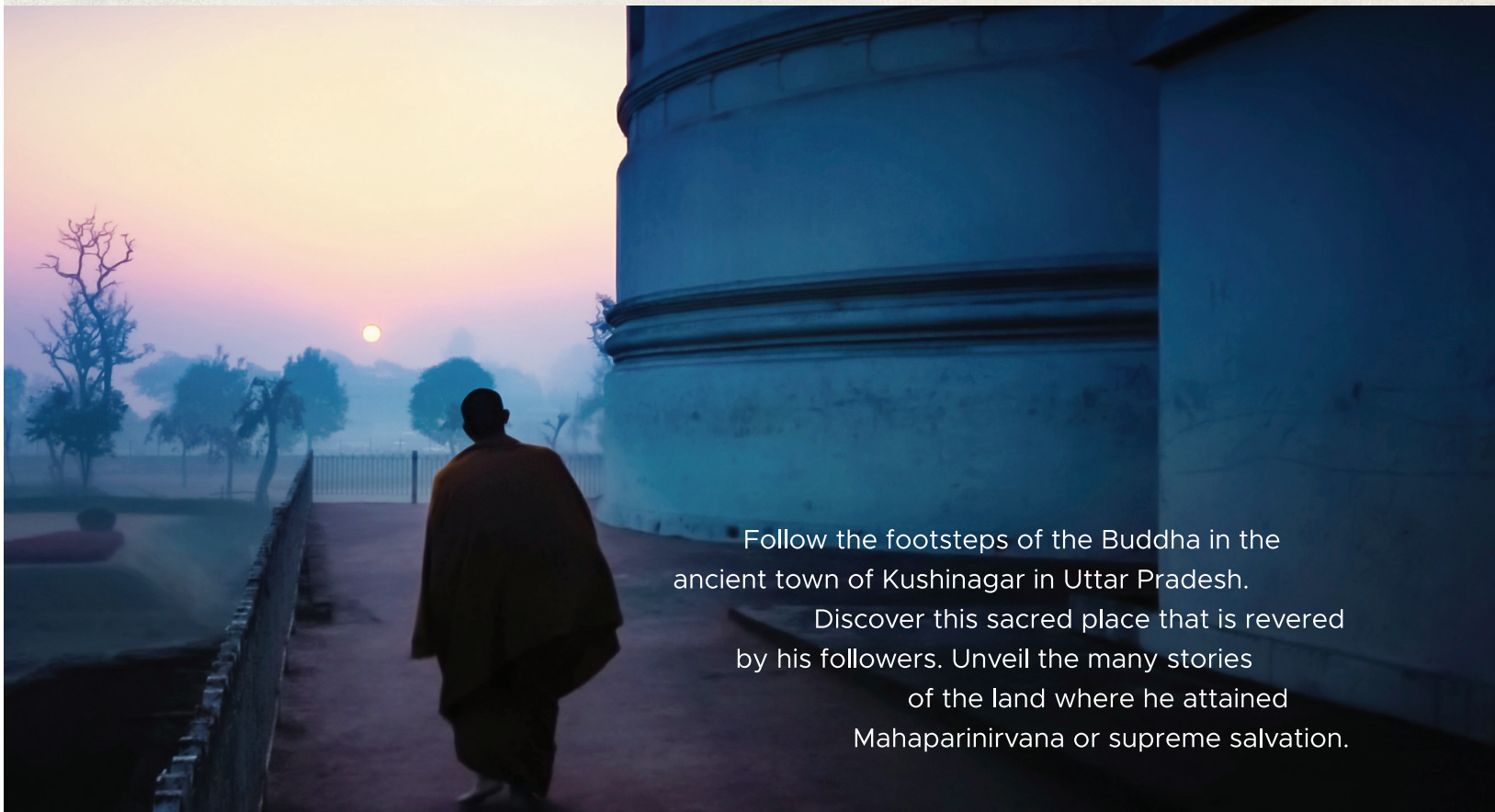
..... KUSHINAGAR

THE LEGACY

..... LIVES ON







Follow the footsteps of the Buddha in the ancient town of Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh. Discover this sacred place that is revered by his followers. Unveil the many stories of the land where he attained Mahaparinirvana or supreme salvation.



PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT

Born a prince, Siddhartha Gautama had a luxurious childhood isolated from the tribulations of the world. But on a rare visit outside the palace walls, he witnessed the pain and suffering of people. In his quest to discover the meaning of life, he left home to live as an ascetic. It was while meditating under the Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya that he received enlightenment and became the Buddha.

ON THE BUDDHIST TRAIL

The Buddha travelled across the land, spreading his message of peace, compassion, brotherhood and righteousness. Places that he visited or stayed in are venerated pilgrimage sites today. Among these are Kapilvastu, his childhood home and Bodhgaya, where he received enlightenment. He also travelled, lived and preached in Sarnath, Nalanda, Rajgir, Sravasti and Kaushambi over a period of time. The Buddha delivered his last sermon at Vaishali and attained Mahaparinirvana at Kushinagar.

FOLLOWERS OF THE FAITH

The Buddha's teachings about an individual's spiritual development are timeless. Buddhism flourished in India in early times, but its influence waned by the 13th century. However, it took root in other countries and today there are an estimated 535 million Buddhists across the globe.





ATTAINING MAHAPARINIRVANA

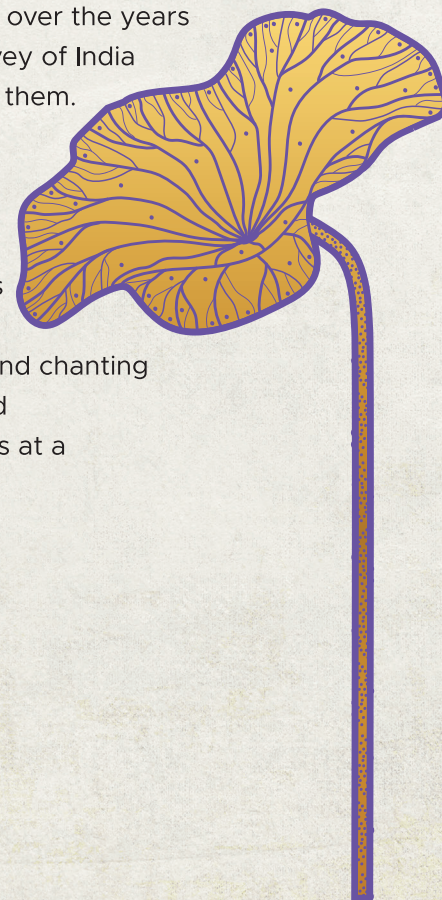
Kushinagar is where the Buddha left his mortal body and attained Mahaparinirvana. Kushinara, as it was then known, was the capital of the Malla dynasty. Knowing his end was near, the Buddha lay between twin saal trees near the banks of the Hiranyavati River. He embarked on his final journey surrounded by his followers, including Ananda, one of his greatest disciples.

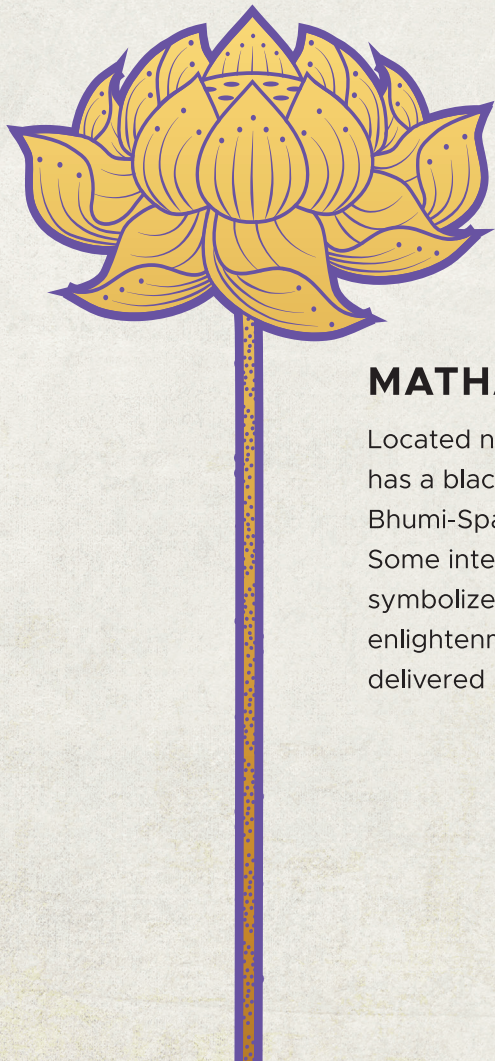
THE MAHAPARINIRVANA TEMPLE & NIRVANA STUPA

The temple has a 6-metre long idol of the Buddha reclining on his right side. It is believed that he attained the supreme state of salvation here. With pilgrims applying gold leaves on it, the stone statue gleams brilliantly. Glowing candles and chanting of mantras bestow the temple with a sacred aura that moves both believers and non-believers. Behind the temple, lies the Nirvana Stupa. Made of brick, it stands at a height of 2.74 metres. An ancient Brahmi inscription states that the Stupa is the revered site of Lord Buddha's remains.

EXPLORING THE HERITAGE

The Buddha's final legacy lives on in the bricks and stones of the ancient Buddhist monuments at Kushinagar. Forgotten for centuries, they were discovered during excavations done by A. Cunningham and A. C. L. Carlleyle in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Work done over the years by the Archaeological Survey of India has breathed life back into them.





MATHAKUAR SHRINE

Located near the Nirvana Stupa, the shrine has a black stone image of the Buddha in the Bhumi-Sparsha mudra (earth touching posture). Some interpretations state that the posture symbolizes the moment before his enlightenment. It is believed that the Buddha delivered his last sermon here.

RAMABHAR STUPA

Referred to as Mukut-Bandhan Vihar in ancient texts, the Ramabhar Stupa marks the site where the Buddha was cremated. The large stupa rises to a height of 49 feet.

KUSHINAGAR MUSEUM

The museum displays sculptures, seals, coins, banners, antiquities and statues discovered during the archaeological excavations in Kushinagar. The most striking exhibit is the stucco idol of Lord Buddha built in Gandhara style.



Apart from its spiritual significance, the monuments and archaeological evidence dating back to this glorious period make Kushinagar an important part of India's civilizational and historical heritage. There was a time when the town and its rich past lay forgotten and neglected. However, Kushinagar has since seen a revival and Buddha's magnificent legacy lives on here, attracting tourists from all over the world.

.....



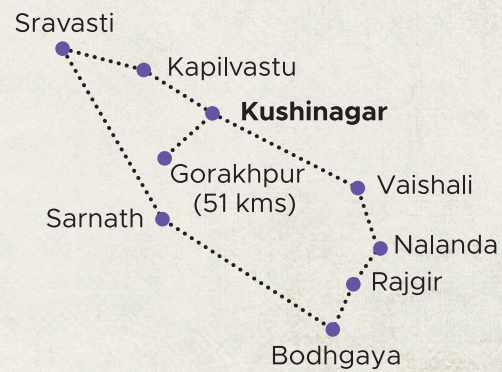


HOW TO REACH

By Road 51kms from Gorakhpur

By Rail 51kms from Gorakhpur,
25kms from Deoria

Nearest Airport Kushinagar
International Airport



*Line drawing of the map is for representational purpose only. Not to be scaled.



Ministry of Tourism
Government of India






75
Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav



अतुल्य ! भारत
Incredible !ndia

Ministry of Tourism
Transport Bhawan
1-Parliament Street
New Delhi-110 001, India

   @incredibleindia
www.incredibleindia.org