

# MOST INCREDIBLE BUDDHIST STUPAS IN INDIA

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India has been a significant place for Buddhism and it is home to several incredible Stupas of all sizes and varieties. Stupas are hemispherical structures with Sacred Buddhist Relics in them. They mainly used to be places of meditation for the Arahats and other monks. The country has some famous Stupas such as the Dhamek Stupa and Sanchi Stupa, which are among the oldest Stupas in the world.

Let us have a look at some of the must-visit Stupa attractions in India.

## Do-Drul Chorten Stupa, Gangtok, Sikkim



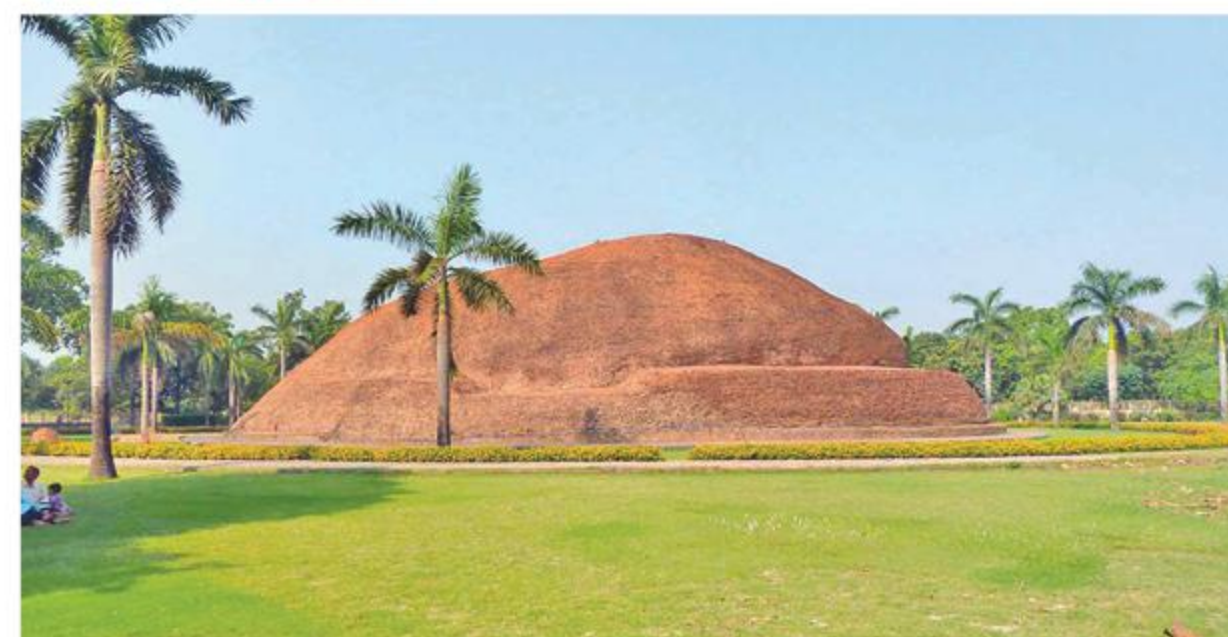
The Do-Drul Chorten Stupa in Gangtok was built in 1945 by Trulshik Rinpoche, who was the head of the Nyingma Order of Tibetan Buddhism. There is a complete set of holy books and several other religious objects here. Besides, the 108 Mani Lhakor or prayer wheels around the Stupa look amazing.

## Sanchi Stupa, Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh



Situated inside a massive Buddhist complex, the Great Sanchi Stupa is set on a hilltop in the Raisen District of Madhya Pradesh. It is one of the oldest stone structures in the country and was built by the Mauryan Emperor Ashoka (later known as Dharmashoka after he embraced Buddhism) in the third century. Incidentally, Sanchi was also the venue of Emperor Ashoka's wedding.

## Ramabhar Stupa, Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh



This dome-shaped Buddhist monument stands at a height of 49 feet in the Kushinagar District of Uttar Pradesh. It is an important Buddhist pilgrimage site as the Buddha attained *Parinirvana* (Passing Away) at the spot. That is why the Stupa is also known as the Parinirvana Stupa and is believed to be the cremation site of the Buddha.

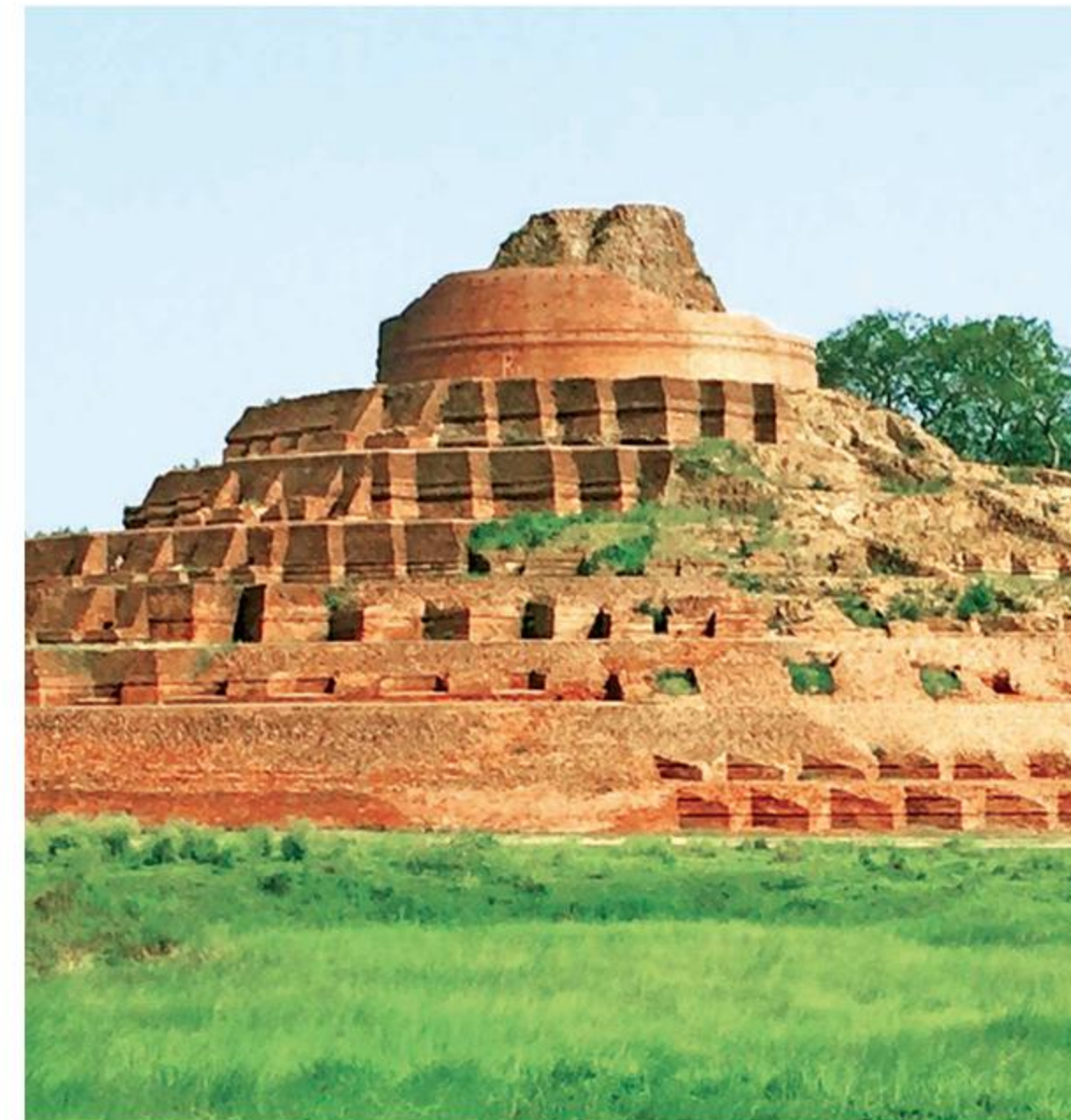
## Maha Stupa, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh



The Thotlakonda Buddhist Complex is about a 15 km drive from Visakhapatnam. Situated on a hill, 420 feet above the sea, the place is beautiful and overlooks the endless sea. The Telugu name *Totlakonda* is taken from the presence of a number of rock-cut cisterns here in the hillock. The place is home to the Maha Stupa which is quite popular among pilgrims.

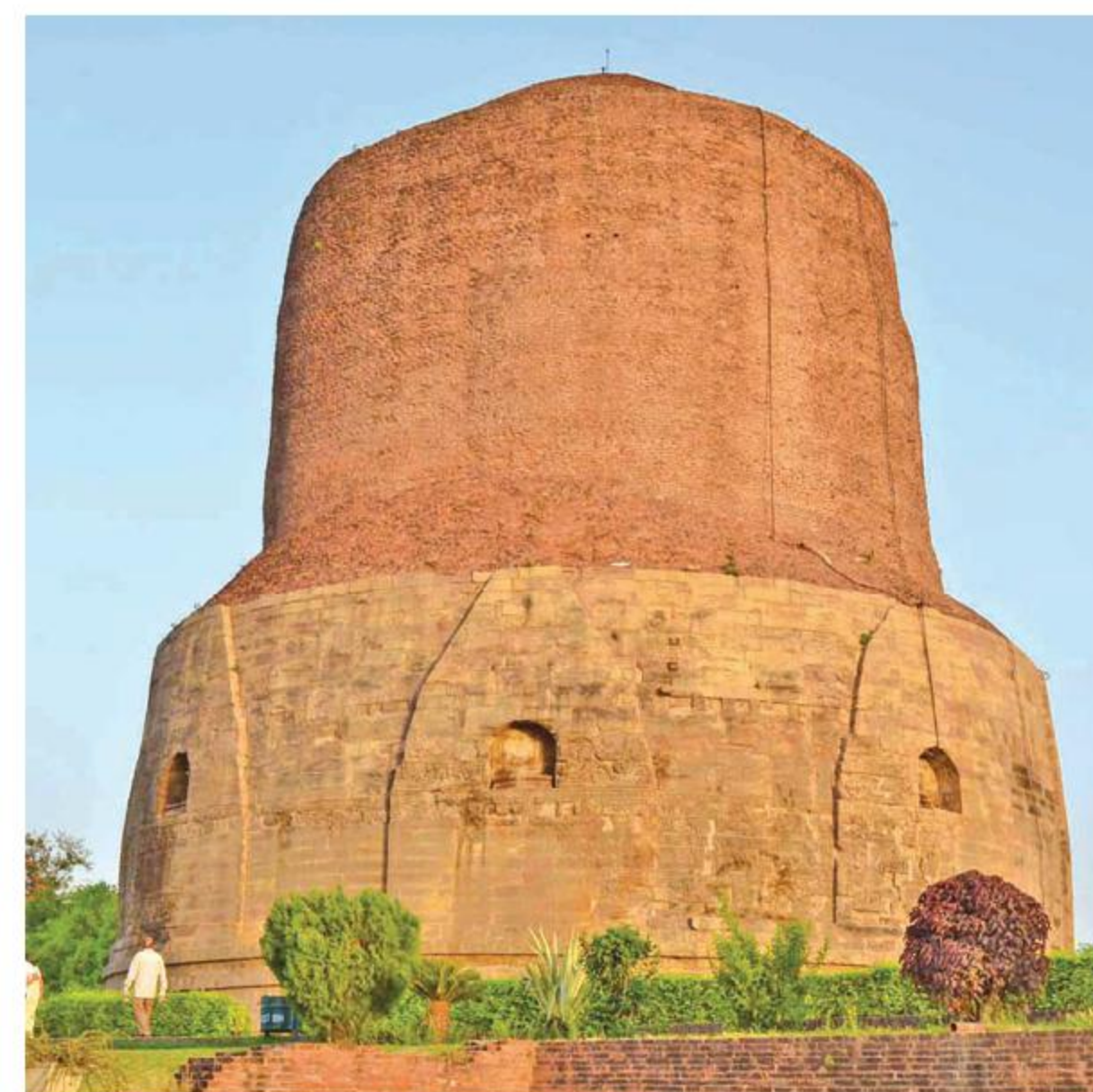
## Kesaria Stupa, Champaran, Bihar

It is among the most famous Buddhist sites in Bihar known for the striking Kesaria Stupa. Set around 110 km from Patna, the Stupa is in the Champaran District of



Bihar. The original construction of the Stupa probably dates back to the third century, the time of Emperor Ashoka.

## Dhamek Stupa, Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh



One of the oldest Stupas in the world, the Dhamek Stupa is huge. It is in Sarnath, which is only 13 km from Varanasi, from where international flights are available. This Stupa is said to mark the spot where Buddha gave his first sermon (*Dhammachakkapavattana Sutta*) to His first five disciples after attaining Enlightenment. And that is why this whole place is so important for Buddhists.

## The Great Peace Stupa, Dehradun, Uttarakhand



The Great Peace Stupa in the Clement Town of Dehradun is known for being one of the largest Stupas in the world measuring 185 feet. Situated in the sprawling Mindrolling Monastery, it is one of the most important places for Buddhist pilgrims from around the world.

## Animeshlochan Stupa, Bodh Gaya, Bihar



Mahabodhi Temple, also known as the Great Awakening Temple, is one of the most prominent Buddhist temples in India and the world. The place is about 96 km from Patna and attracts Buddhists and travellers from across the globe. The temple complex has a holy Bodhi tree, a monastery and the Animeshlochan (after the Buddha's homage to the Bodhi Tree under which He attained Enlightenment known as *Animisa Lochana Pooja*) Stupa. (Times of India)