

# NOV. 2023 IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE BUDDHA

Pilgrimage to India and Nepal for 17 days (16 nights)

Jointly organized by:



**Sāsanārakkha  
Buddhist Sanctuary  
(SBS)**



**Cetiycarika.org**



## **DAY 01 11 NOV | SAT: DELHI (Meal on Board/Supper)**

“Swagatam” – Welcome to New Delhi, India’s capital city where a thousand years of history greets the visitor. It is a city of contrasts, a combination of both the old and new metropolitan city. Flight will arrive late in the evening and you will be greeted by the local representative and transferred to the hotel for a good night’s sleep. Overnight at Hotel in Delhi.

## **DAY 02 12 NOV | SUN: DELHI – LUCKNOW – SRAVASTI (B/L/D)**

Rise and shine. After breakfast, we will check-out at 8.30am and begin our tour with a visit to the Delhi National Museum to view the original sacred relics of our supreme Buddha. This is a must visit for all Buddhist pilgrims, as these relics were confirmed by archaeologist and historians to have been excavated in a stupa built by Emperor Asoka in Pipahrawa, in the ancient city of Kapilavastu. These relics are part of the skull and collar bone of our Lord Buddha. We will all have a chance to pay homage to the relics.

After lunch we shall proceed to the domestic airport to catch our flight to Lucknow. On arrival, we will hop onto a premium coach to travel to Sravasti (3 hours drive) where the Buddha spent 24 Vassas (rain retreats) and where most of his discourses were expounded. Upon arrival in Sravasti, we will check into our hotel and have dinner there.

## **DAY 03 13 NOV | MON: SRAVASTI – LUMBINI (NEPAL) (B/L/D)**

After breakfast, we will proceed to visit the Jetavana Garden which was offered to the Lord Buddha by his devout lay supporter Anathapindika and Prince Jeta. Legend has it that at Sravasti the Buddha impressed his critics with a millionfold manifestation of himself seated on a thousand petalled lotus, as fire and water simultaneously emanated from his body (twin miracle). We will also visit the Angulimala stupa and the Ananda Bodhi tree.

After returning to our hotel for lunch, we will check out and leave for Lumbini which is about 7 hours away (inclusive of Immigration clearance at the border). We will arrive at Lumbini in the late evening and check-in to our hotel and have dinner there.

## **DAY 04 14 NOV | TUE: LUMBINI – KAPILAVASTU – LUMBINI (B/L/D)**

After breakfast, we will visit the birth place of Lord Buddha and tour the Lumbini gardens which include the Ashoka or Rummir Pillar, base relief image of Maya Devi, Puskarnim – the sacred pool sanctum- sanctorum of the birthplace of the Buddha (marking the spot where Queen Maya Devi gave birth to the Buddha),

After lunch, we will proceed to visit Tilaurakot located in Kapilavastu (2 hrs). Some archaeologists have identified present-day Piprawaha, Kapilavastu (on India soil) as the ancient capital city of the Shakya Kingdom. Evening back to Hotel for dinner & overnight at Hotel.

## **DAY 05 15 NOV | WED: LUMBINI – KUSHINAGAR (B/L/D)**

After breakfast, we proceed to visit International Buddhist Temples at Lumbini which have been designated by UNESCO as heritage sites. If time permits, we will also visit Panditarama Vipassana Meditation Centre which is currently managed by a German Abbot, Sayadaw Vivekenanda. The meditation centre conducts short and long term retreats for yogis from all over the world.

After lunch, we proceed to Kushinagar (5 hours). Overnight in hotel where dinner will be served.



**DAY 06****16 NOV | THU: KUSHINAGAR (B/L/D)**

After breakfast, we shall proceed to the Mahaparinirvana Temple to perform puja, have a meditation session and listen to a Dhamma talk. It is here that the Tathāgata entered into Mahaparinirvana. The Mahaparinibbana Temple houses a reclining statue of the Buddha brought from Mathura by the monk Haribala. Afterwards we will visit the Matha Kuar Shrine, which is where it is said that the Buddha decided to leave his mortal body and asked for permission from the Malla King to pass on (die) in his Kingdom.

Back to Hotel for lunch and in the afternoon, we will visit Ramabhar Stupa (the spot where the Buddha was cremated by the ancient Malla people). Dinner & Overnight at Hotel.

**DAY 07****17 NOV | FRI: KUSHINAGAR – VAISHALI (B/L/D)**

After breakfast at the hotel, we'll proceed to Vaishali (225 km; 5 hrs). Upon arrival at the hotel, lunch will be served. Vaishali was the centre of the 2nd Buddhist council, held 100 years after the Buddha's Parinibbana. We will visit the mango grove that was offered to the Buddha by the courtesan Ambapali. Also, it was here that the Buddha announced that in 3 months' time, he will enter Parinibbana. Furthermore, the one and only Asoka pillar that is still intact, with a lion on top facing the direction of Kushinagar, is found here.

Also at Vaishali the Buddha allowed women to be admitted into the sangha after Ven. Ananda successfully lobbied for the ordination of Maha Prajapati Gotami (the Buddha's stepmother). Vaishali is also celebrated as the place where the Buddha's Alms bowl was excavated from Kesaputta stupa, which is the largest stupa in the world.

Dinner and overnight at hotel.

**DAY 08****18 NOV | SAT: VAISHALI – NALANDA – RAJGIR (B/L/D)**

Departure from hotel at 4am, so that we can reach Rajgir (100km; 3hrs) for breakfast at our hotel. After breakfast, we leave for Nalanda which is the site of the oldest university of the world. It once had twelve million books, ten thousand students, and two thousand teachers and was a centre of great learning. It reached its zenith between 5th and 12th century A.D. Both Lord Buddha and Lord Mahavira (founder of Jains sect) are said to have visited this place.

After check in at hotel for lunch and visit to Veluvana (Bamboo Grove), which is the first property that the Sangha received from King Bimbisara, we'll proceed to Gridhakuta (Vulture's peak) which was the seat from where the Buddha delivered many sermons. Also, it was here that Devadatta planned to kill the Buddha by pushing a big boulder from the top of the hill after the Buddha's return from his alms round. An aerial ropeway takes the pilgrims up to the hill where the Japanese Buddhist Foundation built a beautiful stupa, called the World Peace Stupa. Evening back to Hotel, dinner & overnight stay at hotel.

**DAY 09****19 NOV | SUN: VAISHALI – RAJGIR – BODHGAYA (B/L/D)**

After breakfast at the hotel, we will proceed to hike up to Satapani Cave where the first Buddhist Council was convened 3 months after the Buddha's Parinibbana by the elder Maha-Kassapa together with 500 arahants.

We'll return to the hotel for lunch and later proceed to Bodhgaya (80km; 2hrs). Upon arrival at Bodhgaya, transfer to hotel for check-in and proceed to Mahabodhi Temple for paying our deepest respects to our supreme teacher, Lord Buddha, followed by a meditation session. Returning to the hotel for dinner & overnight stay.

**DAY 10****20 NOV | MON: BODHGAYA (B/L/D)**

Bodhgaya is the most important Buddhist pilgrimage centre due to the Buddha's attainment of spiritual Awakening there. After breakfast, we will visit the magnificent Mahabodhi Temple, as well as the giant Bodhi tree which is believed to have grown from the original bodhi tree where the Buddha attained nibbana. We will also visit the Chankarama, the jewel-walk, where the newly awakened Buddha paced up and down while still in deep meditation.

The whole day will be spent only at Maha-Bodhi Vihara with puja, meditation and Dhamma talk by the Sangha members.







## DAY 11 21 NOV | TUE: BODHGAYA – URUVELA – BODHGAYA (B/L/D)

After breakfast we proceed to Uruvela forest where the Bodhisattva practiced several austerities to the utmost extreme, and then we'll undertake a short hike up to Dugeswari hill to the Pragbodhi Cave. It was here that the Boddhisatta supposedly spent most of the time during the 6 years of asceticism (fasting, breath control etc.). In the afternoon, we will visit Sujata kuti as well as pay a visit to the Japanese, Thai, and Tibetan temples nearby. The evening will be free for individual activities at Mahabodhi Temple or elsewhere. Dinner & overnight at hotel.

## DAY 12 22 NOV | WED: BODHGAYA (B/L/D)

After breakfast at the hotel, we'll have a full day at Maha-Bodhi temple with Dhamma talk and meditation.

In the evening we will visit a temple of the Tibetan Karmapa lineage, and perform food dana to the novice monks at this Tibetan school temple. Later we'll return to the hotel at Bodhgaya for dinner & overnight stay.

## DAY 13 23 NOV | THU: BODHGAYA – VARANASI (B/L/D)

After breakfast we proceed to Varanasi (270km, 6hrs), one of holiest and most fascinating cities in the East. Upon arrival and lunch at the hotel, we can relax in the hotel until evening time, which is when we will visit the most holy river of the Hindus, the Ganga. We'll also visit the Ghats and watch AARTI in the evening (prayer with lights performed by a Hindu priest). We will also have the chance to take a boat ride alongside Manikarnika Ghat (cremation ground). It is believed by Hindus that if one is cremated in Varanasi and one's ashes are released into the sacred purifying water of the Ganges, one will surely take rebirth in a heavenly plane of existence. We will have an opportunity to witness the cremation of dead bodies, as well as the rites and rituals performed by Hindu priests at the bank of the river.

Before we return to the hotel for dinner, we will have a chance to experience the taste of original lassi (natural yoghurt) served in an earthen cup.

## DAY 14 24 NOV | FRI: VARANASI – SARNATH – VARANASI (B/L/D)

After breakfast at the hotel, we will pay a visit to Sarnath, hosting the Dhamek Stupa, which marks the location of the Buddha's first sermon (Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta) at the deer park. Afterwards we will visit a museum displaying lots of Buddhist artifacts, as well as a remarkable statue of the Buddha setting in motion the wheel of Dhamma. Later we will return to the hotel for lunch and in the late afternoon we will proceed to Mulagandha Vihara (perfumed chamber) where the Buddha used to stay whenever he visited Sarnath. We'll return to the hotel for dinner & overnight stay at Varanasi.

## DAY 15 25 NOV | SAT: VARANASI – NEW DELHI (B/L/D)

After breakfast there will be plenty of time for packing. Upon an early lunch we will transfer to the airport to catch the flight from Varanasi (departure at 2:10pm) to New Delhi. Upon arrival we'll transfer to a Chinese Restaurant for hot dinner. Afterwards we will check-in to the hotel in Delhi to spend the night.

## DAY 16 26 NOV | SUN: NEW DELHI – KUALA LUMPUR (B/L/D)

After breakfast at the hotel, we will check out and take a short city tour of New Delhi. After lunch, we will visit Akshardham temple (Divine Abode of Gods), which will be a spiritually enriching experience, fostering an understanding of Hinduism. This magnificent Hindu temple covers an area of 80 acres and was completed within 5 years (2000 – 2005; 10,000 workers; 7,000 full time workers – 3,000 volunteers). According to the Guinness book of Records, the Akshardham is the world's largest and most comprehensive Hindu temple. We will have dinner at a local restaurant and then proceed to the International Airport to take our flight home with sweet memories of India.

## DAY 17 27 NOV | MON: KUALA LUMPUR (MOB)

Arrival at KLIA around 6am, transit and connect flight to Penang. Home Sweet Home.



## ACCOMMODATIONS FOR LAITY



### Domestic Air tickets Inclusive

DELHI - LUCKNOW  
VARANASI – DELHI

### International Air tickets Inclusive

PEN/KUL/DEL/ + DEL/KUL/PEN  
*economy Malaysia Airlines seats*

KUL/DEL + DEL/KUL  
*economy Malaysia Airlines seats*

### + Price includes:

- Accommodation on TWIN sharing basis
- Premium Volvo air-suspension coach (37 seaters)
- English speaking guide
- All Meals as per itinerary
- All entrance tickets to monuments
- Chair Lift in Rajgir
- Boat Ride in Varanasi
- Rikshaw Ride in Varanasi
- Bottled Mineral Water (free flow)
- Daily Juice & Snacks during Journey
- Sweet Famous Lassi Drink in Varanasi
- Group Travel Insurance
- Nepalese Visa Fees (US\$ 25)
- Dana (Dinner meal) for all the Sangha @ Karmapa temple

### – Price Excludes:

- Gratuities/ Tipping for local Guides
- Hotel Porter
- Coach Driver
- Bus Boy (US\$ 10/day X 15 days = US\$ 150)
- India Visa Fees (need to be paid directly to the Indian Consulate when applying online; submission of scanned passport, photos and biometric scanning) – US\$ 30

## FULL TOUR FARE

# RM13,880 / pax\*

\*Pricing based on Twin Sharing rooms.  
If wishing to stay in a single supplementary room, additional cost of RM 5,100 will ensue.

## TOUR BOOKING

If you are interested to join the pilgrimage, kindly submit your application through the Google form provided below. Applications will be vetted and approved by the SBS Pilgrimage Committee. First preference will be given to applicants who have previously attended meditation retreats or workshops organized by SBS.

<https://tinyurl.com/pilgrimage-SBS>

For further queries, don't hesitate to contact us at [pilgrimage@sasanarakkha.org](mailto:pilgrimage@sasanarakkha.org)

