

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4525

ANSWERED ON:30.08.2011

CORPOREAL REMAINS OF BUDDHA

Bapurao Shri Khatgaonkar Patil Bhaskarrao;Gaikwad Shri Eknath Mahadeo

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the corporeal remains of Lord Buddha is being preserved in various museums in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether various Buddhist Organizations have requested the Government to place the corporeal remains of the Buddha in pagodas or stupas;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) The steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (KUMARI SELJA)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details are at Annexure- 'A'

(c) & (d) Yes, Sir. Representations from various Buddhist organizations have been received to place the corporeal remains of Buddha in Pagodas or Stupas. Details are at Annexure – 'B'

(e) Govt. is seized of the matter of management, preservation of Buddha relics and necessary steps are being taken to hold consultation with various stake holders.

3. Maha Bodhi Society, Sarnath

Two Relics located at Maha Bodhi Society of India, Sarnath are described as below:

1. "The Relics enshrined in the Mulagandha Kuty Vihara of Sarnath were found by Sir John Marshall in 1913-14 at the ancient city of Taxila in a small Buddhist Chapel close to the Dharmarajika Stupa in a reliquary containing a Silver Scroll on which is engraved an inscription dated in the year 136 (Circa, 79 A.D.) wherein they are recorded to be the relics of the Blessed One. These relics were presented to the Mahabodhi Society to be enshrined by them in a Vihara at Sarnath.

2. The other relics enshrined in the Mulagandhakuty Vihara at Sarnath were found by Mr.A.H. Longhurst, Superintendent, Southern Circle, Archaeological Survey of India, in the year 1929 in a large Stupa at Nagarjunakonda. This relic was presented to the Mahabodhi Society to be enshrined by them in the aforesaid Vihara at Sarnath.

4. Maha Bodhi Society, Kolkata

1 The Bhattiprolu relics of Buddha are located at Mahabodhi Society of India, Sri Dharmarajika Chaitya Vihara Head Quarter, Kolkata.

5. M.S. University Vadodara

The Buddhist Relics housed in the M.S. University, Vadodara was unearthed during the excavations at Devnimori by the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History in the year 1959-63. The unique inscribed relic schist stone casket (7" dia and 5" ht.) containing the bone relics of Lord Buddha was unearthed at the depth of 13 feet from the top at the center of the Stupa in an earthen pot. The holy ashes were placed in a small gold bottle. This in turn was enclosed in a copper bowl/box alongwith a silk cloth bag. The copper bowl was placed inside the stone casket. The lid, external surface and base of the stone casket are inscribed in Kshatrapa Brahmi Characters and the language is Sanskrit. The inscription on the body of the casket indicates that, the Mahastupa was built near the Mahavihara, during the reign of King Sri Rudrasena-I in the 127th year of Kathika Kings.