

Buddha

The Prophet of the East

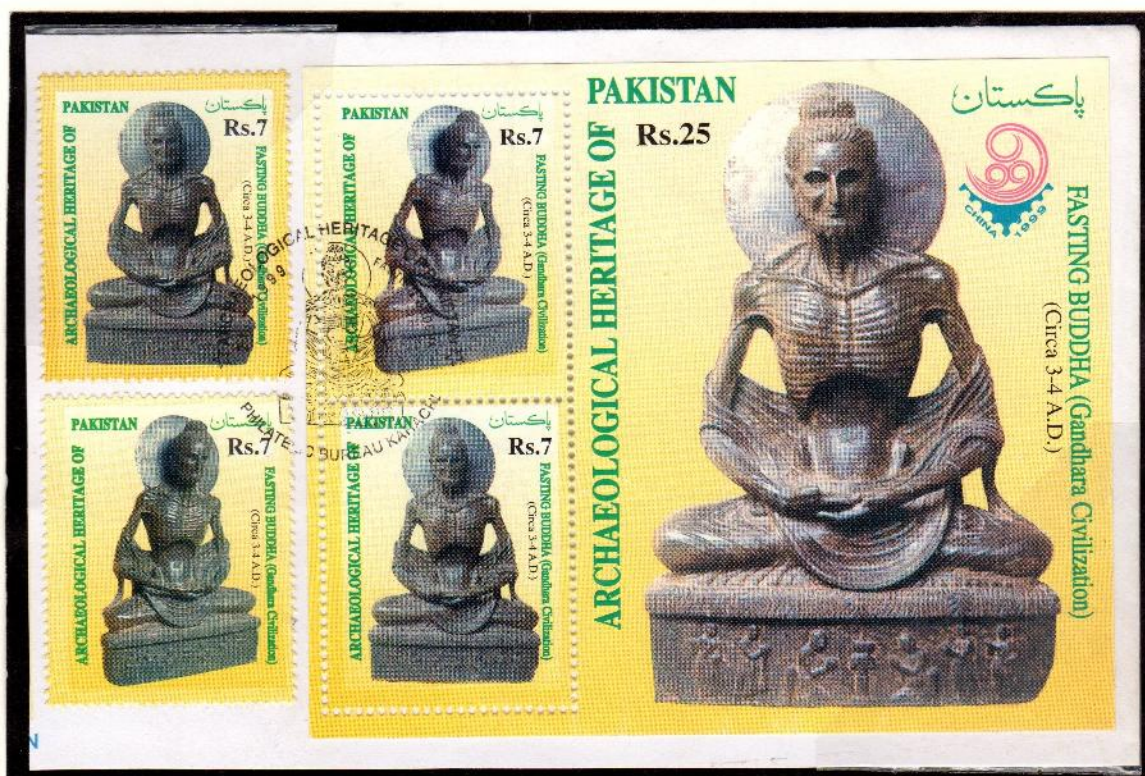
Since Afghanistan inherits a Buddhist Heritage too, it features a beautiful stone head of Buddha on the occasion of South Asia Tourism Year.



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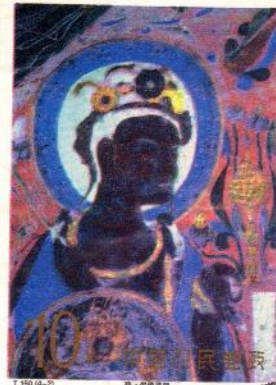
Buddhism, is practiced today throughout most of East and Southeast Asia, including China, Japan, Korea, Tibet, Nepal, Srilanka, Burma Thailand, and countries of the Indochinese peninsula.



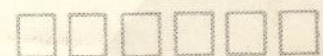
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At last, apprised in a dream of his approaching "awakening", the bodhisattva seats himself under a pipal tree (bo tree) located in Bodh-Gaya and begins the meditation that is to bring him enlightenment. He is repeatedly attacked by Mara, the demon of death, who sends an army of demons against him, but the bodhisattva remains unshakable.



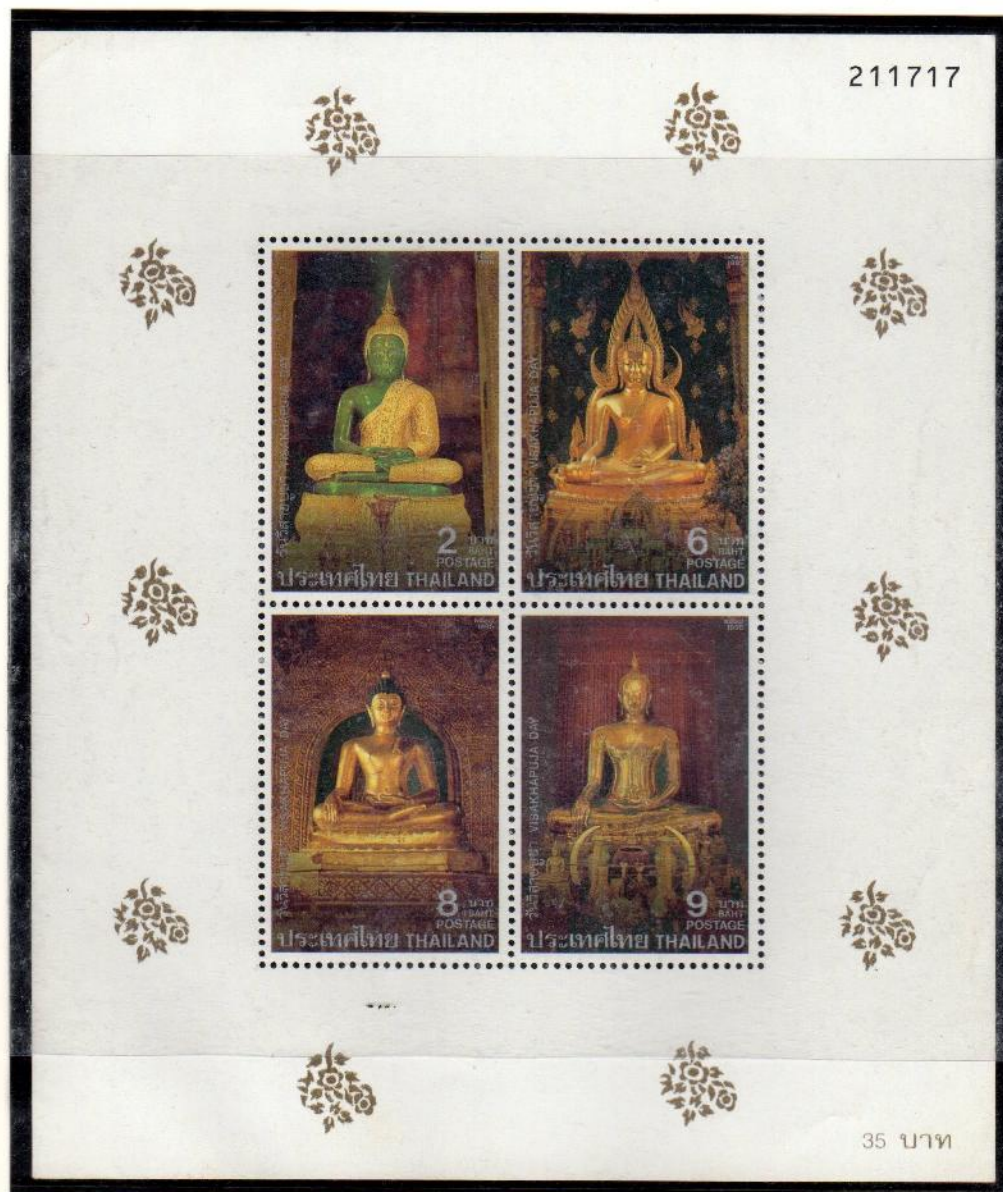
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Buddha

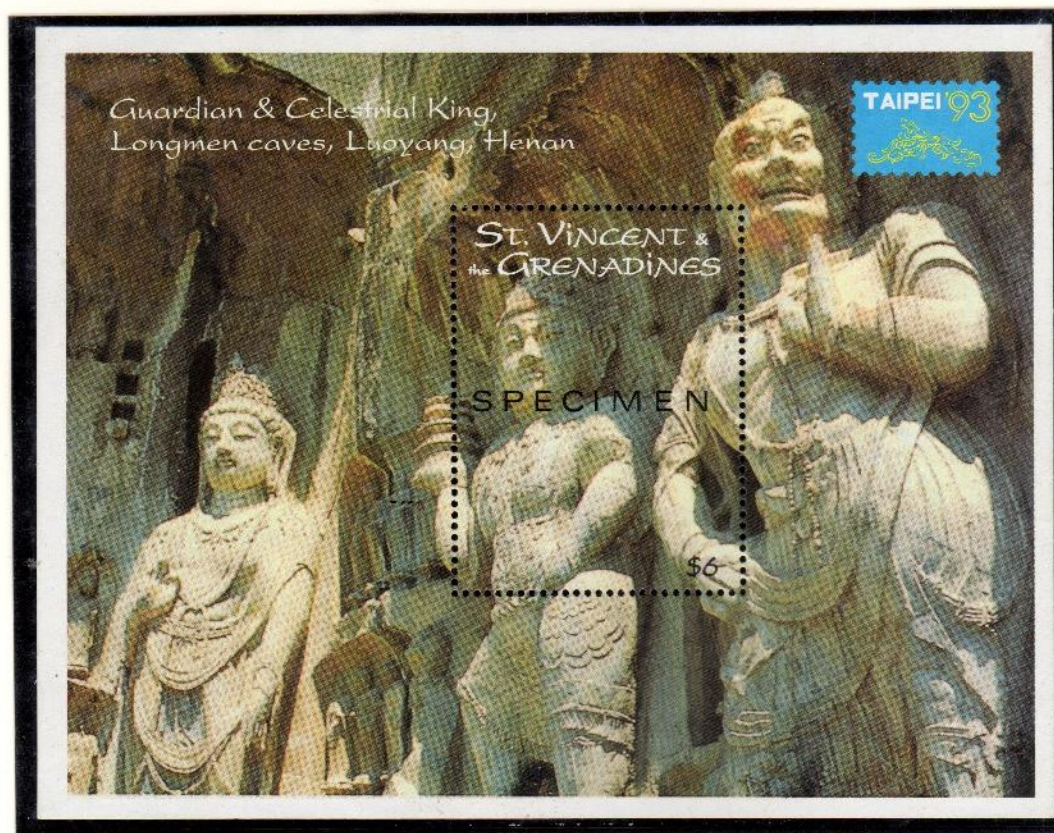
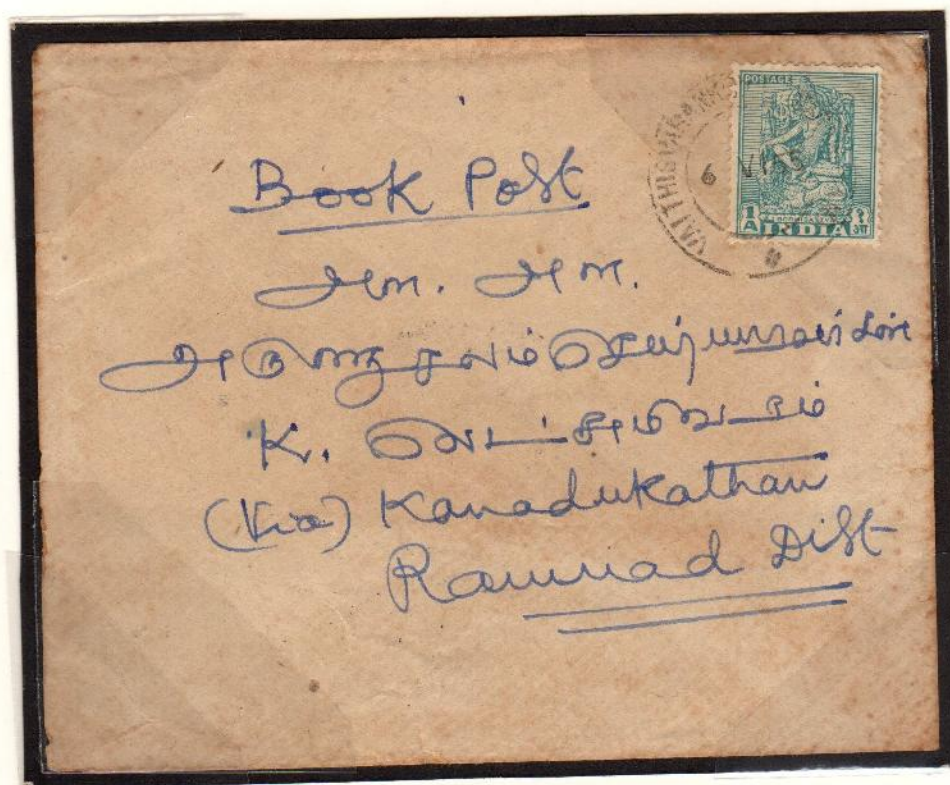
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Siddharta perfected himself in the knowledge, techniques and sports of his time, known collectively as the 64 arts (kala-jnana). At the age of 16, in 550 BC he marries, as have other Buddhas before him. Although he is reluctant to take this step, he does so in deference to social custom.



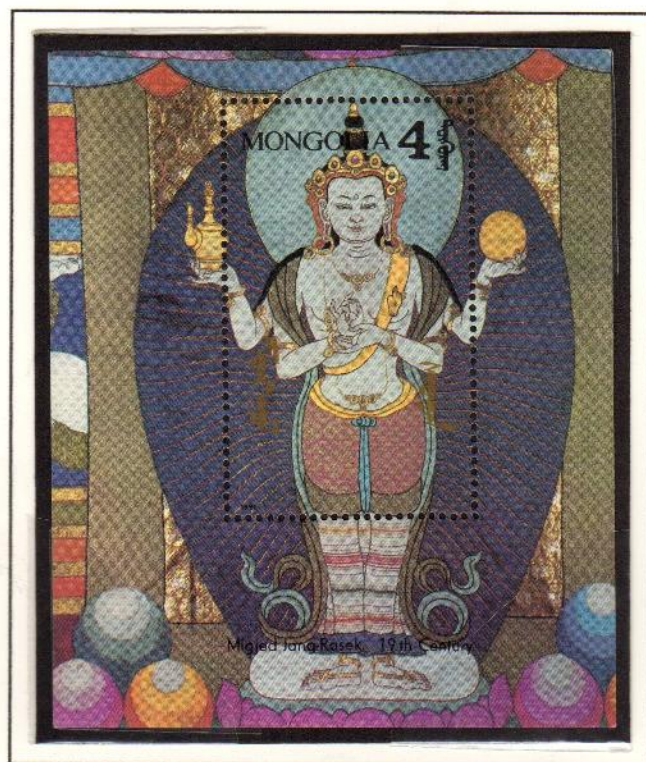
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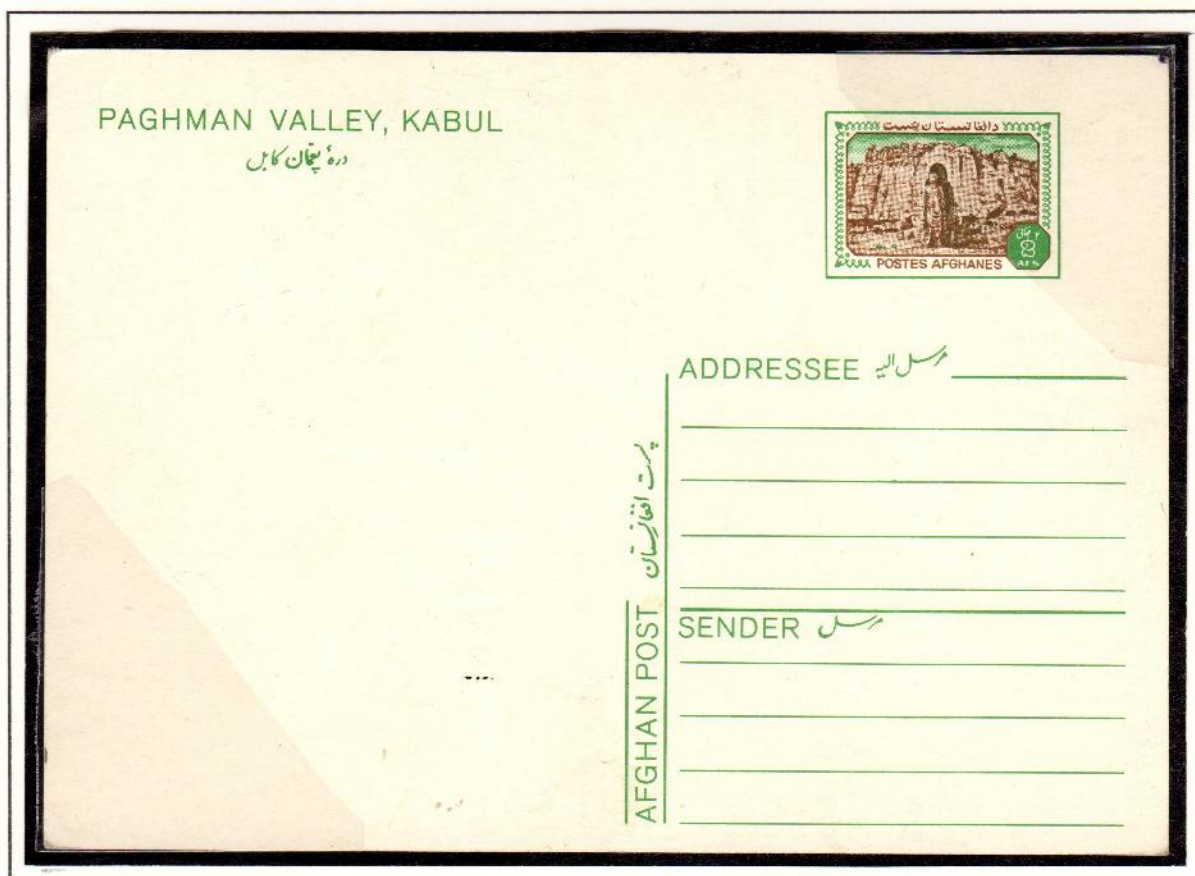
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Buddhism reached the northern Kashmir, and further west into Kabul. In Kabul there stands a 'Paghman Valley' where one can find Buddhist temples and enormous stone carvings of Buddha.

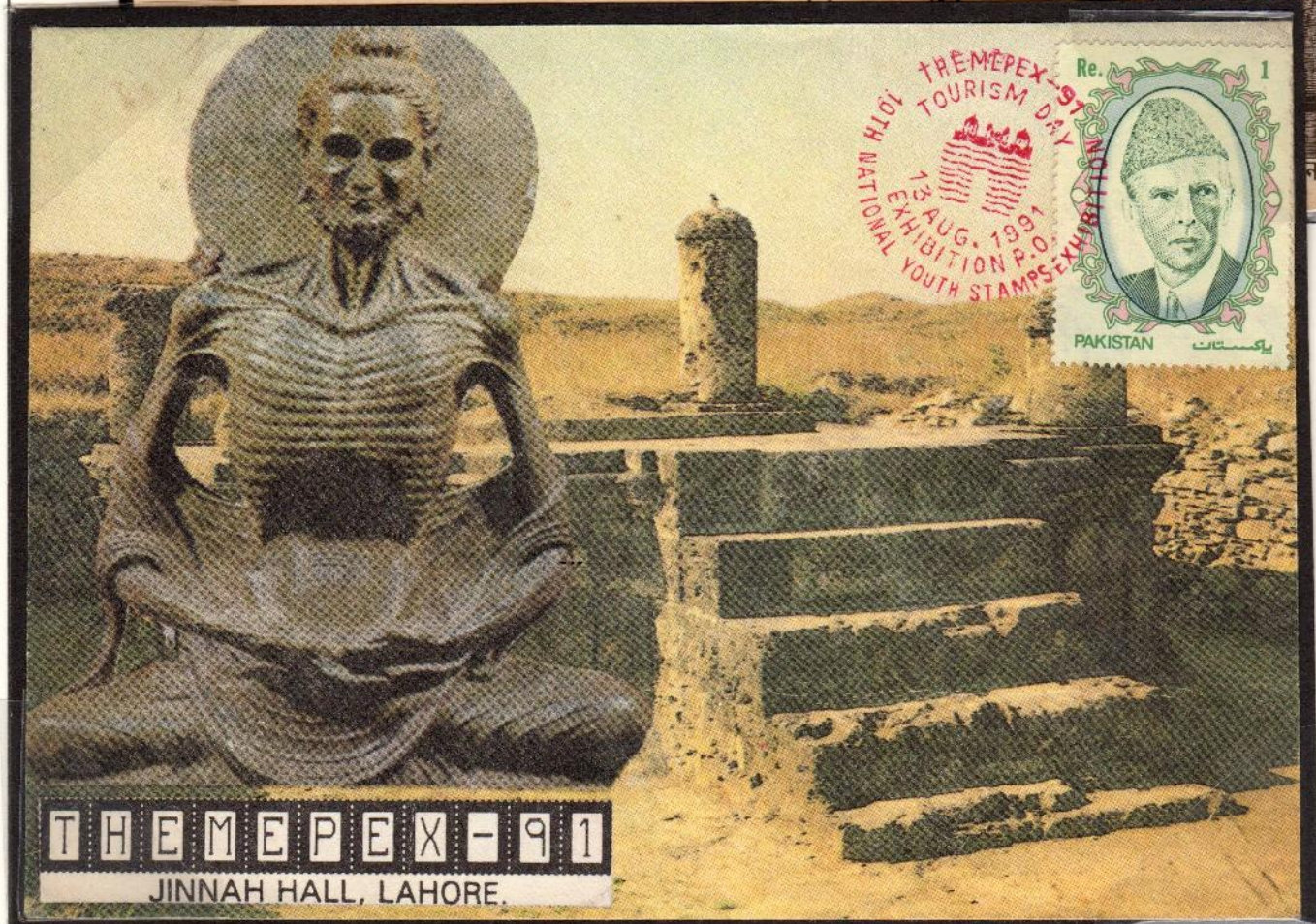


An Afghan stamp and a postcard depict the stone carved standing Buddha in one of the mountains around Paghman Valley.

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In the 6th century BC the Frontier region of Pakistan to the vast Achaemenid Empire. Charsaddha (old Pushkalavati) and Taxila were prosperous cities of the Gandhara Civilization. Excavations at Taxila's Bhir Mound have revealed the use of iron in the 6th century BC. The famous Stupa at Taxila is a magnificent monument of the Buddhist period.



Buddha

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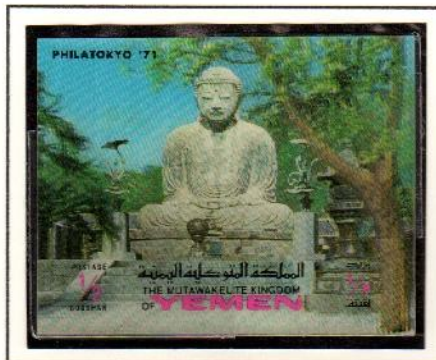
With Ananda, one of his disciples, Buddha went to Kushinagara. Stricken with a fatal illness, he lies down on his side facing the west with his head facing the north, and in this position attains the state of 'great total extinction'.



Buddha

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After his "awakening" the Buddha proceeds to a deer park at Sarnath near modern Varanasi (Benares), gathering his five disciples around him. He begins his preaching by exposing the Four Noble Truths, which are the fundamentals of his doctrine, followed by a homily on the character of "no-self". This first sermon in the deer park is known as "setting in motion the wheel of the law" (Dharmachakra-pravartana)



Buddha

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With his first sermon in the deer park, Buddha begins his 45-year public ministry (531-486 BC). The Buddha and his disciples separate to preach the doctrine throughout India. He visits Kapilvastu, and there he converts his father and the shakyas. Although the Buddha had originally refused to receive women into the Community, he admits his aunt Mahaprajapati Gautami.



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In the north of India, Buddhism reached China & Tibet and from there to Japan. In China 'The Longmen Grottoes', located in Luoyang, Henan Province, took 400 years to build. Today there are 2100 niches and 100,000 statues in Longmen Grottoes, among which are several remains of the Buddhist religion.

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首日封 F. D. C.



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(Above):
The cover of the
folder issued by
India for the
2500th
Anniversary of
Buddha Jyanti
stamps. Buddha is
shown seated under
the Bodhi tree.

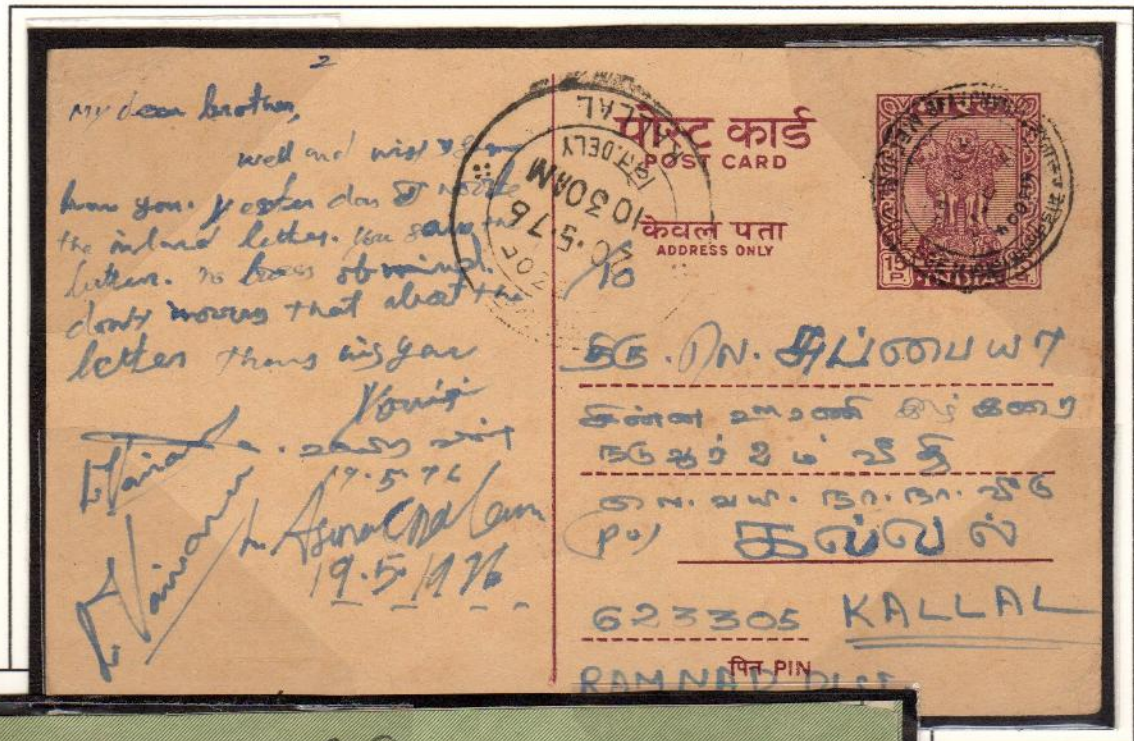


(Left):
The stamp issued by
India on 2500th
Anniversary of
Buddha Jyanti. The
stamp shows the
Bodhi Tree. The
stamp is cancelled
by special postmark
showing 'the circle of
life'.

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On the birth of the child, Siddhartha, the astrologers predicted to its father Suddhodana: "The child, on attaining manhood, would become either a universal monarch (Chakravarti), or abandoning house and home, would assume the robe of a monk and become a Buddha, a perfectly enlightened soul, for the salvation of mankind".



15p postcard and 10p inland letter of India issued in 1976, show the Asoka Lions, which stand upon a column with the base showing the Dharmachakra 'The wheel of Life' - the Buddhist philosophy of life.

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The Great Departure, as it is known, takes place on his 29th birthday; despite the objections of his father, he is determined to go. Even the birth of a son, Rahula, born to him, could not stop him. With the help of the gods, who put everyone in the palace to sleep, Sidhartha sets out toward the southeast on his horse, accompanied by his driver, Chandaka. He meets a hunter, exchanges his royal clothes for the hunter's and sets out for the great search of his "awakening".



Budhist temple remains can be found in Bangladesh and Thailand.

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Siddhartha took Alamo Kalamo, a hermit, as his first teacher. He was not satisfied with his instructions. He left him and sought the help of another recluse named Uddako Ramputto for spiritual instructions. He abstained almost entirely from taking food. He did not find much progress by adopting this method. He was reduced to a skeleton. He became exceedingly weak.



Charity stamp
issued on 2500th
Anniv. of
Buddhism. Later
the same stamp
was issued with
charity value
obliterated

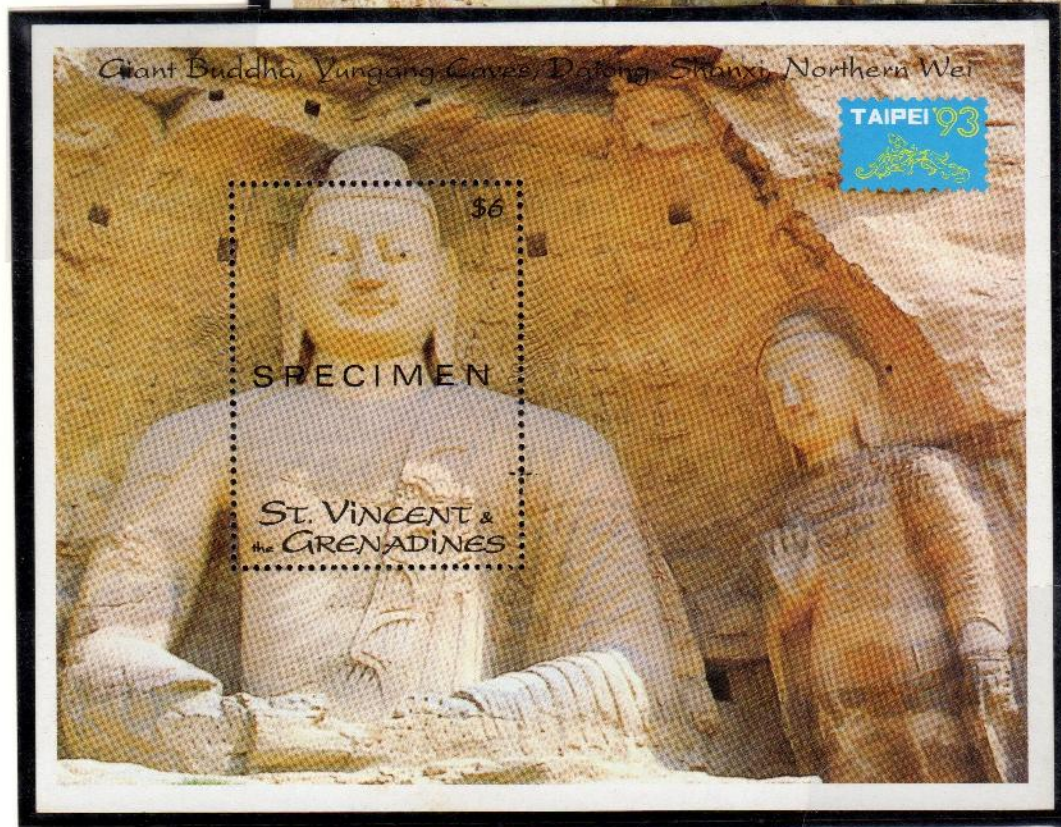
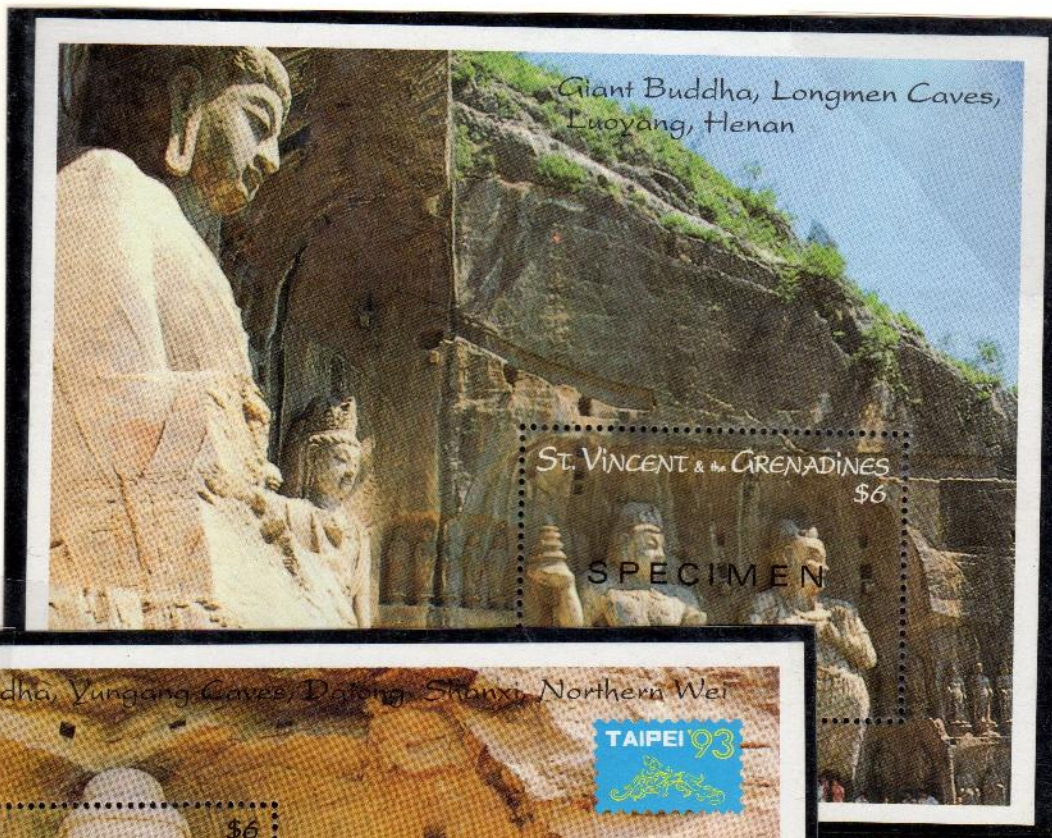


2500th Anniversary of Buddha Jyanti. The 10ft wide umbrella that once surmounted the colossal Bodhisattva statue at Sarnath, India (carved in the first-second century AD) is shown at left and on the right is shown the Bodhi tree under which Guatama attained enlightenment.

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The Longmen Caves in Luoyang, Henan, and Yungang Caves at Datong, China, display magnificent wealth in carved Buddhist structures of gigantic scales. Both are depicted on stamps of St. Vincent & the Grenadines issued on the occasion of Taipei'93 Stamp Exhibition.



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A great majority of people of South Korea adhere to Buddhist religion though religious practices are confined to rituals on ceremonies as marriages or deaths. The Popchu Temple Towers of Korea depicted on the sheetlet below is one of the largest Buddhist temples in the country.



The statue of Buddha and the temple building of Popchu Temple Towers.

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China, Japan, Nepal, Srilanka and Bhutan are the major Buddhism practising countries. They either issue stamps on Buddhist Festivals or relate Buddhist images to every important event,



Stamps of Indonesia, Thailand & Korea depicting Buddha



A Souvenir Sheet of Korea depicting the magnificent statue of Buddha and the view of a Buddhist temple.

Buddha

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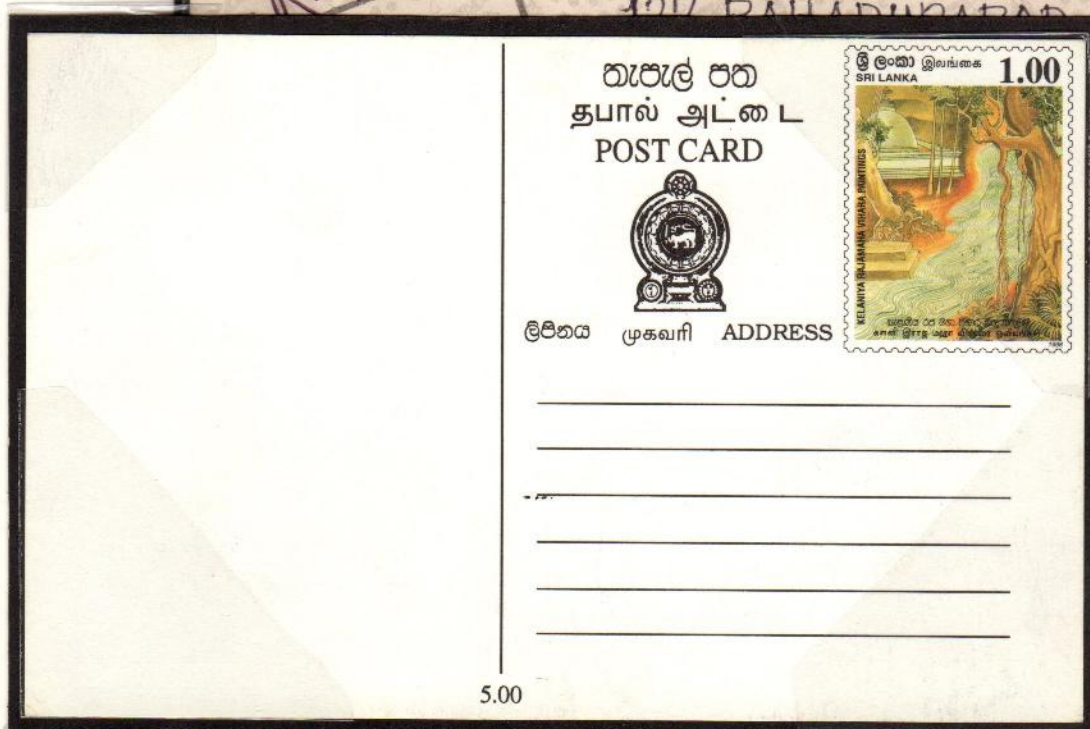
Art in Mongolia and Tibet has blend Buddhist religious themes into the culturatal motives and colours and have produced beautiful depictions of the Great Buddha and his disciples and even later followers.



Buddha

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From India Buddhism spread around the region. Today, even after thousands of years Buddhism is well established in Bhutan, Nepal, Tibet, China, Burma, Vietman, Malaysia, Thailand, Srilanka, Philipines, Japan, Korea, etc. Remains of Buddhist archaeological sites can be found in Pakistan, Afghanistan, etc.



A Srilankan postcard shows a beautiful stamp issued on Bhudhist Paintings. A cover from Bangladesh bear stamps depicting archaeological sites ; the 6t stamps show a bronze statue of Princely Buddha, found at Mainamati, Comilla.

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Buddha was born in the 6th century B.C., in the Lumbini gardens, a grove near the city of Kapilavastu, at the foot of Mount Palpa. The body of the child bore at birth the thirty-two auspicious marks which indicated his future greatness. He was named Siddhartha, meaning one who has accomplished his aim.



Buddha's mother, *Maya*, dies
seven days after giving birth to
her son.



After the death of Buddha's mother, her
sister brought up the child and became his
foster mother.

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Siddhartha spent his boyhood at Kapilavastu and its vicinity. Gautama left forever his home, wealth, dominion, power, father, wife and the only child. He shaved his head and put on yellow robes. He marched towards Rajgriha, the capital of the kingdom of Magadha. There were many caves in the neighbouring hills. Many hermits lived in those caves.



Buddha's not attracted to palace
life not even his own wife.



Buddha leaving his palace.

Buddha

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Buddha realized then that he should not go to extremes in torturing the body by starvation and that he should adopt the golden mean or the happy medium or the middle path by avoiding extremes. Then he began to eat food in moderation. He gave up the earlier extreme practices and took to the middle path.

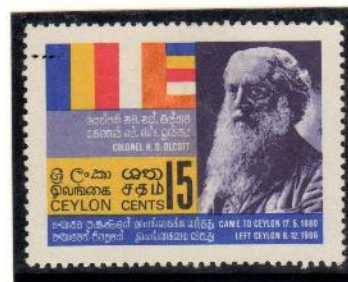


Single stamp and its First Day Cover, issued by Srilanka, on the Commemoration of World Fellowship of Buddhists. This stamp was scheduled for issuance in May 1971 but was when issued in May 1972 had the year '1972' additionally printed on the stamp. The FDC cachet shows the globe & the Buddhist flag.

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Two Pirivenas (schools primarily for the training of Buddhist monks), both located near Colombo, were given university status in 1959 as Vidyalankara University and Vidyodaya University. The Pirivenas go back to the country's earliest days, when they made up the entire education system.



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Ancient Sinhalese art had its origin in Buddhist Indian art, but the genius of Sinhalese artists transformed the borrowed themes and styles into distinctively Srilankan forms.



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Buddhism which had become firmly established in India, was brought to Srilanka in the 4th century BC, by Mahendra, the son of Asoka, the great buddhist king of India. King Tissa was converted by Mahendra. Soon Srilanka became the spiritual capital of Theravada Buddhism as it declined in India.



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Srilanka has issued many stamps on the Buddhist themes, including the 'Vesak Festival' themes. Buddhists personalities, institutes, the Buddhist flag, the sculpture and the paintings have always had a permanent place on Sinhalese stamps.



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