

Available Facilities and Services

Accommodation and Food

- Only a few tourist hotels with very limited bed capacity are currently available in Taulihawa. A newly established Tharu home-stay at Jagadishpur village offers basic home stay accommodation and food facilities.
- Several local hotels are also available in Taulihawa and Gorusinghe.
- Ranges of accommodation facilities are available in Lumbini, Bhairahawa and Butwal, the nearby cities from the Ancient Kapilavastu.

Access and Transportation

- Taulihawa is linked by local road networks to Lumbini, Krishnanagar, Jitpur, Bangai, and Gorusinghe.
- Public bus services are available in Bhairahawa-Lumbini-Taulihawa and Jitpur-Jahadi-Taulihawa routes.
- E-rickshaw can be hired at Taulihawa to visit major sites in the Ancient Kapilavastu.
- Day and night bus services to Kathmandu and major cities in the eastern and western Nepal are available at Taulihawa.
- Visitors are advised to use their own vehicle or hire it in Bhairahawa, Lumbini or Taulihawa.



- Indian national can also enter into the Ancient Kapilavastu via Khunuwa and Chakad Chouda borders with Nepal.

Other Facilities and Services

- Tourist class and big hotels offer free Wi-Fi facility to their guests.
- Credit card is accepted by tourist standard hotels in Bhairahawa and Lumbini.
- Trained and experienced heritage tour guides are available at Tilaurakot and Lumbini.
- Limited tourist information can be obtained from Lumbini Development Trust site office in Tilaurakot.



Travel Distance

Lumbini → Tilaurakot.....	29 km	Tilaurakot → Sisaniya	18.0km
Tilaurakot → Kudan	6.0km	Kudan → Sisaniya.....	10.km
Kudan → Gotihawa.....	3.0km	Taulihawa Bus Park → Kudan.....	1.5km
Gotihawa → ChoubisHajari.....	7.5km	Taulihawa Bus Park → Tilaurakot	3.0km
Tilaurakot → Sagarhawa.....	8.0km	Jitpur → Tilaurakot.....	23.3km
Sagarhawa → Jagadishpur	0.8km	Taulihawa → Gorusinghe.....	14.0km
Jagadishpur → Niglihawa	8.5km	CDO Chowk → Dohani	4.7km
Sagarhawa → Niglihawa.....	3.7km	Dohani → Sisaniya	8.2km
Tilaurakot → Niglihawa	9.0km	Dohani → Lumbini.....	17.4km
Niglihawa → Araurakot.....	1.4km		

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ANCIENT KAPILAVASTU

The Capital of the Ancient Sakya Kingdom
The Home Town of Prince Siddhartha
The Birthplaces of Two Earlier Buddhas before Sakyamuni Buddha



Government of Nepal
Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation
Lumbini Development Trust
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LUMBINI DEVELOPMENT TRUST
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Introduction

Situated on the foothills of the Siwalik range, the Ancient Kapilavastu and present day Kapilavastu district of Nepal is identified with the kingdom as well as the capital city of Sakya dynasty where Siddhartha spent his 29 years of palatial life as a Prince.

Ancient Kapilavastu is also the birthplaces of two earlier Buddhas (Krakuchhanda Buddha and Kanakamuni Buddha) before Sakyamuni Buddha. After witnessing Chatur Nimitta Darshan (four causative sights), Siddhartha renounced the worldly life through the Eastern Gate (Mahabhiniskramana Dwara) in a quest for enlightenment.

Pilgrimage to the area by Emperor Asoka in 3rd century BC, early Chinese travelers Fa-hsien and Hiuen Tsang (during 5th and 7th century AD respectively), and King Ripu Malla of Western Nepal during 14th century AD signify the importance of the Ancient Kapilavastu as a center of pilgrimage from the ancient times till the medieval period.



Major Monuments and Sites in the Ancient Kapilavastu



The Ancient Kapilavastu is an open museum as it alone houses more than 130 important archaeological sites. Both the pilgrims Fa- Hien and Huen- Tsang noted that they saw Kapilavastu in complete ruins and counted 10 deserted cities within Kapilavastu. Archaeological excavations carried out by various archaeologists and scholars including P.C. Mukherji (1899 AD), D. Mitra, T.N. Mishra and B.K. Rijal has recognized the present day Tilaurakot as the ancient

capital city of the Sakya Kingdom, Kapilavastu. Recent geophysical survey and excavation carried out by Lumbini Development Trust, Department of Archaeology and Durham University (UK) with several other institutions through JFiT/UNESCO project has discovered additional evidences including the existence of brick structures similar to that of Central Structural Complex at Tilaurakot

Excavations carried out so far, in the ancient Kapilavastu have revealed Grey ware (9/8th century BC), NBP (6/5th century BC); coin minting factory, palace structures, temples, ponds, roads, earth rampart, brick fortification, ancient habitation and various antiquities within thirteen layers of human depositions dated from 9/8th century BC to 2-3 century AD. Major monuments and sites of great religious, archaeological and historic value located in the Ancient Kapilavastu include the followings:

Tilaurakot: The Capital City of the Ancient Sakya Kingdom

Tilaurakot is recognized by many scholars as the capital city of the ancient Sakya Kingdom where prince Siddhartha spent his early life. It is situated 27km west of Lumbini, 3km north-west of Taulihawa. Lost to the jungle for a long time, Tilaurakot was



rediscovered in 1899 AD by P.C. Mukherji. Important archaeological and religious monuments uncovered so far from Tilaurakot include: (i) Fortification Wall, (ii) Western Gate, (iii) The Central Structural Complex, (iv) The Central Walled Complex, (v) The Central Pond, (vi) The Samai Mai Temple, (vii) The Eastern Gate (Mahabhiniskramana Dwara), (viii) The Northern Twin Stupa (Dhamnihawa Stupa), (x) Eastern Stupa and Monastery (Hastigarta), and (x) The Southern Industrial Mound (Lohasaudiya).

The Western and Eastern Gates: Both the eastern and western gates have been excavated by the Department of Archaeology and evidence of wooden door was uncovered at the western gate. It was through the eastern gate that Prince Siddhartha, aged 29, departed Kapilavastu, on his quest for enlightenment.

Central Structural Complex: The Central Structural Complex consists of conserved rectangular brick structures. Recent geophysical survey has identified similar structures between roads and lanes oriented on the cardinal directions forming a grid-iron city layout across the entire site.

The Central Pond: To the west of the Central Structural Complex is a pond measuring 30x30 meters in size. Fitting the grid-iron city layout, face of the pond had 26 surviving brick courses.

Samai Mai Temple: Near the center of the site lies a modern temple dedicated to the deity Samai Mai. The temple is located on top of a mound, which had 4 meter occupation sequence with early timber architecture followed by carved brick structures.

The Fortification Wall: The fortification wall defines the grid-iron plan of cardinally orientated structures within the city.

The Eastern Stupa and Monastery: The Eastern Stupa is a part of large monastic complex as discovered by a geophysical survey. A hoard of 497 silver punch-marked coins was excavated from the monastery. Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsang mentions about a commemorative stupa of Kanthak east to the

Mahaviniskramana Dwara.

The Southern Industrial Mound: South of the city, is a mound scattered with waste from iron-working.

The Northern Twin Stupas: Excavated by the Department of Archaeology in 1968-69 AD, these twin stupas are thought to have been built to commemorate the Lord Sakyamuni Buddha's parents, King Suddhodana and Queen Maya Devi.

Kudan: The Ancient Nyigrodharama

Situated about 3km south of Taulihawa, is the ancient and historical site of Nyigrodharama, currently known as Kudan or Lori-Ki Kudan. The



King Suddhodhana met Lord Sakyamuni Buddha here for the first time after enlightenment. Some scholars have also identified Kudan as the natal-town of Krakuchhanda Buddha. Early Chinese travelers Fa-hsien (5th century AD) and Hiuen Tsang (7th century AD) describe several events in their travel accounts including the arrival of Lord Sakyamuni Buddha at the Nyigrodharama. Major structural ruins excavated and conserved, so far, in Kudan include the followings.

Stupa 1: Located in the southeastern corner and also called as the Rahula Stupa, it is believed that it was built to commemorate the event and spot where Rahula, was ordained by the Lord Sakyamuni Buddha's chief disciple Sariputra. The Stupa also bears an octagonal Shiva temple on its top, built later by the Hindus.

Stupa 2: It is believed that this Stupa was built during the Sakya period to commemorate Lord



Sakyamuni Buddha and Suddhodana's first meeting (after enlightenment), the Lord Sakymuni Buddha's discourse on the five Suttas of the Majjhimanikaya.

Stupa 3: Located in the northern-most part of the garden, this stupa is believed to have been built to commemorate the events and place where Queen Prajapati Gautami offered Lord Sakyamuni Buddha the Kashaya Vastra, and Yasodhara invited Lord Sakyamuni Buddha and his Sangha for a meal at the Kapilavastu palace.



Other monuments and sites include the *ancient well* and the *Nyigrodharama Pond*.

Gotihawa: The Birthplace of Krakuchhanda Buddha

Located about 5km southwest of Taulihawa, Gotihawa is identified as the holy place where Krakuchhanda



Buddha was born, attained enlightenment and met his father after his enlightenment. Emperor Asoka visited the site in 249 BC, erected the Asoka Pillar and built a big stupa, dedicating to the Krakuchhanda Buddha.

The Asoka Pillar: Standing in-situ on the original masonry basement foundation, the existing pillar is 3.25m high, has a diameter of 83/79 cm. The inscription bearing upper portion of the pillar is broken off long ago and the remains are still missing.

The Stupa: It was built by the Emperor Asoka to pay reverence to Krakuchhanda Buddha in 3rd century BC. It is estimated that the enlargement of the stupa was carried out in Saka and Kushana time (end of 1st century BC to the 2-3 century AD). As per the findings of the excavation carried out by researcher Dr. L.A. Waddell, the stupa has a diameter of 22m with a Pradakshinapatha (circumambulatory path) around it. At the center of the present village there is an ancient well, and in the south there lies an ancient water tank.

Niglihawa: The Birthplace of Kanakamuni Buddha

Situated about 7km northeast of Taulihawa, Niglihawa is identified as the holy place where Kanakamuni Buddha was born. Emperor Asoka visited the site in 249 BC and erected the stone pillar with the inscription on it. The Asoka inscription engraved on the pillar in Brahmi script and Pali language attests the fact that Emperor Asoka enlarged the Kanakamuni Buddha's stupa, worshiped it and erected a stone pillar to mark the birthplace of Kanakamuni Buddha on the occasion of the twentieth year of his coronation. The pillar also bears an inscription, "Om mani padme hum and Sri Ripu Malla Chiram Jayatu 1234" of King Ripu Malla written in the year 1234 (Saka Era corresponding to 1312 AD).

Dr. Alois Fuhrer discovered this pillar in 1895 AD. It is now in a broken state, into two pieces. Unfortunately, both the basement and the capital of the pillar together with the lion atop, of which Hiuen Tsang spoke are still missing.

Araurakot: The Natal Town of Kanakamuni Buddha

Located 1.4km east of Niglihawa, and about 10km northeast of Taulihawa, Araurakot is identified as the natal town of Kanakamuni Buddha where he lived, grew up, and spent his married life. It used to be a walled forest in ancient times. Today, it is a large rectangular fortified area with the remains of ancient moat and brick fortifications. A UNESCO led joint geophysical survey in 2015 has unveiled many huge structural ruins underneath the citadel.



Sagarahawa: The Massacre Site of The Sakyas

Located about 12km north of Taulihawa Sagarahawa (Lumbu Sagar) is identified as the place where the Sakyas were massacred by the King Virudhaka, the son of Prasenajita Raja of Kosala out of revenge. Later, in the memory of the noble Sakyas, hundreds of stupas were built there by their descendants.

The ancient ruins, primarily the stupas and monasteries, are situated on the west and south banks of the pond. Dr. Fuhrer in 1897 AD, on behalf of the Government of Nepal, carried out the first excavation in Sagarahawa and uncovered thousands of small relic stupas.



Sisaniya: The Ancient City of Sakyas

Sisaniya is an important archaeological mound. The site is believed to have had an ancient stupa and a Sangharama built by the Sakyas. Prof. Giovanni Verardi, the Director of the 1993-94 Nepal and Italian joint investigation team mentions the existence of an important craft center of Kusana Period in Sisaniya based on the evidences found in his excavation report.



Other Cultural and Natural Sites

Major cultural villages worth to visit in the Ancient Kapilavastu include Jagadisapur Tharu village, Tilauri village, Herdewa village, Gotihawa village, Shivpur village, Nigali village, Bikuli Kot, Gotihawa village, Sisaniya village etc.

Popular religious and sacred sites include Touleshwor Nath Temple, Ram Ghat, Laxman Ghat-Bolbom Dham, Shringi Rishi Dham, Shantakunja Madhuwan Dham, Kailash Ashram, Tarakeshwar Dham, Kapil Dham, Samay Mai, Hanuman Mandir, Patthar Kot, Ram Datiwan Kut, Bikuli Kot, Dohani Kot, Darkhaswa, Chetra Dehi, Semara Temple, Pipari, Gaurigunj, Murchahawa, Derwa Stupa, Sarkup Pokhari, Kopawa Stupa, Ram Kumari, Sonwagadh,

Pipari, Daldalhawa, Simari, Rajuwapur, Babhani, Dohani, Pattharkot etc.

Worth visiting important natural sites include Jagadisapur reservoir (inscribed in the list of Wetlands of International Importance, known as RAMSAR site in 2003), Bhagirathi river, Ajigara lake, Shankarpur Tal, Bajaha Tal, Tilaurakot Sajhedari forest, Churia forest etc.

Jagadisapur Jalasaya Tharu Home-stay

Visitor can have a unique tourism experience by visiting cultural, natural and Buddhist heritage sites in a single visit by staying at the Jagadisapur Jalasaya Tharu Home Stay in Jagadisapur.

Recommended Tour Itineraries and Activities

i. Day-Tour to Ancient Kapilavastu

- Arrival in Taulihawa by public bus or private vehicle.
- Visit to Tilaurakot, the ancient capital city.
- Visit to Kapilavastu Museum.
- Visit to Kudan and Gotihawa.
- Visit to Niglihawa and Araurakot.
- Visit to Jagadisapur Tal.
- Departure.

- Visit to the Araurakot: The natal town of Kanakamuni Buddha.
- Visit to Sagarhawa: The massacre site of the Sakyas.
- Lunch at Tharu homestay at Jagadisapur village.
- Visit to Jagadisapur Tal and enjoy bird watching, leisure walks and sightseeing.
- Depart to the desired destination.

iii. 2 Night and 3 Days Tour to Ancient Kapilavastu

DAY 01: Programs as suggested above.

DAY 02:

- Programs as suggested above and stay at the Jagadisapur Tharu home-stay.
- In the evening enjoy Tharu cultural dance at the home-stay.
- Spend leisure time sitting at the edge of the reservoir or watching the tranquil lake water and birds from the view tower.

DAY 03: Sightseeing tour to other pilgrimage, cultural and natural sites

- Enjoy guided jungle walk to Tilaurakot Sajhedari forest and ancient Bhagirathi river (Banganga river).
- Enjoy fishing and swimming in the Banganga river.
- Visit Banganga Laxman Ghat.
- Day hiking and trekking to Churia Hill through Madhuban Dham, Kapila Dham and Shringi Ashram.
- Visit Shivagadhi with 1-2 hours of hiking.
- Hike back to Dhankhola (on highway) and depart to the desired destination.

ii. 1 Night and 2 Days Tour to Ancient Kapilavastu

DAY 01:

- Arrival in Taulihawa by private vehicle or public bus.
- Visit to Tilaurakot, the ancient capital city; feel spiritually awakened by visiting the Eastern Gate (Mahabhiniskramana Dwara), and visit other important monuments and sites in and around Tilaurakot.

- Visit to Kudan where Lord Sakyamuni Buddha met his father King Suddhodhana for the first time after enlightenment.
- Visit to Gotihawa, the birthplace of Krakuchhanda Buddha (the earlier Buddha).
- Visit to Sisaniya, the industrial city of Sakya era.
- Observation of evening lighting and chanting ceremony at one of the Viharas at Kudan or Tilaurakot.
- Stay at hotels/lodges in Taulihawa or at the Tharu homestay in Jagadisapur.

DAY 02:

- Visit the Niglihawa: The birthplace of Kanakamuni Buddha (the earlier Buddha).

