

Exposition of Holy Devnimori Relics of Lord Buddha in Sri Lanka

The Holy Relics exposition will be held at the Gangaramaya Temple, Colombo from 04-11 Febraury, 2026

Shri Acharya Devvrat, Governor of Gujarat and Shri Harsh Sanghavi, Deputy Chief Minister, Gujarat will lead the Indian delegation

Posted On: 02 FEB 2026 5:50PM by PIB Delhi

In a continuation of the vision articulated by the Prime Minister of India during his visit to Sri Lanka in April 2025, India is set to undertake a profound gesture of spiritual outreach and cultural diplomacy through the exposition of the sacred Devnimori Relics of Lord Buddha in Sri Lanka. The Holy Relics, presently enshrined at The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, will travel to Colombo for a public exposition from 4 to 10 February 2026, with their return scheduled on 11 February 2026. This sacred journey underscores India's enduring civilizational responsibility as the birthplace of Buddhism and reaffirms the deep spiritual, cultural and people-to-people bonds between India and Sri Lanka.



The Holy Relics will be accompanied by a high-level Indian delegation led by Shri Acharya Devvrat, Governor of Gujarat, and Shri Harsh Sanghavi, Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat, along with senior monks and officials. In keeping with established protocol and the sanctity accorded to the Relics, they will travel with full state honours aboard a special aircraft of the Indian Air Force, reflecting the reverence with which India upholds its sacred heritage. The delegation will participate in ceremonial, religious and official engagements in Colombo, including the formal inauguration of the exposition and associated exhibitions highlighting India's Buddhist legacy and its contemporary cultural engagements.



The Holy Relics will be enshrined for public veneration at the revered Gangaramaya Temple in Colombo, one of the most iconic and spiritually significant Buddhist institutions in the country. Founded in the late nineteenth century by Venerable Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Nayaka Thera, the temple has evolved into a major centre of worship, learning and cultural exchange, and provides an apt and dignified setting for the exposition. In a nation where Buddhism shapes cultural ethos, history and daily life, the exposition is expected to resonate deeply with devotees across Sri Lanka and further reinforce the shared Buddhist heritage of the two countries.

The Devnimori Relics originate from the Devnimori archaeological site, located near Shamlaji in the Aravalli district of Gujarat, a site of immense historical and spiritual significance. First explored in 1957 by eminent archaeologist Prof. S. N. Chowdhry, the excavations revealed important Buddhist structures and relics that stand testimony to the flourishing of Buddhism in western India during the early centuries of the Common Era. The relics represent not only a priceless archaeological treasure but also a living symbol of the timeless teachings of Lord Buddha—peace, compassion and harmony.



The relic casket found within Devnimori Stupa at a height of 24 feet from the base, made out of green schist. It is inscribed in Brahmi Script and Sanskrit language, it reads. “dashabala sharira nilay” - the abode of the Buddha’s bodily relic. It holds a copper box having organic matter with holy ashes, with silk cloth and beads. The casket consists of three parts: the body (6.8” base, 2.9” height, 4” ledge diameter), the lid (6.7” diameter, 1.05” thickness, 0.7” height), and a knob with a rounded top (0.66” high, 1.1” diameter).



The copper box had a flat top and base with a slipon lid fitting onto a rim ledge, and contained silk cloth, a gold coated silver-copper bottle, organic material with holy ashes, and black clay used as covering. The small amphora-like gold coated bottle had a sagger base, cylindrical body, and a narrow neck with a screw-type lid.



The desiccator now houses the Holy Relics. It is sealed in an air-tight glass to prevent further deterioration of the object inside. The relics, along with the gold coated silver- copper bottle and silk cloth, rest on a cotton base to ensure further preservation.

Beyond its spiritual significance, the exposition of the Holy Devnimori Relics in Sri Lanka serves a vital diplomatic purpose by advancing India's cultural diplomacy and reinforcing its people-centric foreign policy. By sharing its most sacred Buddhist heritage with Sri Lanka, India underscores the civilizational foundations of the bilateral relationship, anchored in shared faith, history and values. The exposition acts as a powerful instrument of soft power, fostering deeper people-to-people connections, enhancing mutual trust, and complementing formal diplomatic engagements with a profound cultural and emotional resonance. It reaffirms India's role as a responsible custodian of global Buddhist heritage and strengthens regional harmony in the Indian Ocean neighbourhood, while reinforcing Sri Lanka's place as a valued partner in India's vision of peace, stability and cooperative coexistence in South Asia.

The forthcoming exposition in Sri Lanka builds upon India's longstanding tradition of sharing its Buddhist heritage with the world. In recent years, sacred relics of Lord Buddha have been successfully exhibited in countries such as Thailand, Mongolia, Vietnam, the Russian Federation and Bhutan, drawing millions of devotees and strengthening people-to-people connections. The Sri Lanka exposition also follows the recent and widely celebrated repatriation of the sacred Piprahwa Jewel Relics to India, hailed by the Prime Minister as the homecoming of a priceless national treasure.

Through this exposition, India once again conveys the universal message of Buddha Dhamma—non-violence, compassion and coexistence—while reaffirming its commitment to cultural diplomacy and global harmony. The journey of the Devnimori Relics to Sri Lanka stands as a powerful symbol of peace, a celebration of shared spiritual inheritance, and a reaffirmation of the special and enduring friendship between India and Sri Lanka, rooted in centuries-old civilizational ties and mutual respect.

M Annadurai

(Release ID: 2222243) Visitor Counter : 621

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