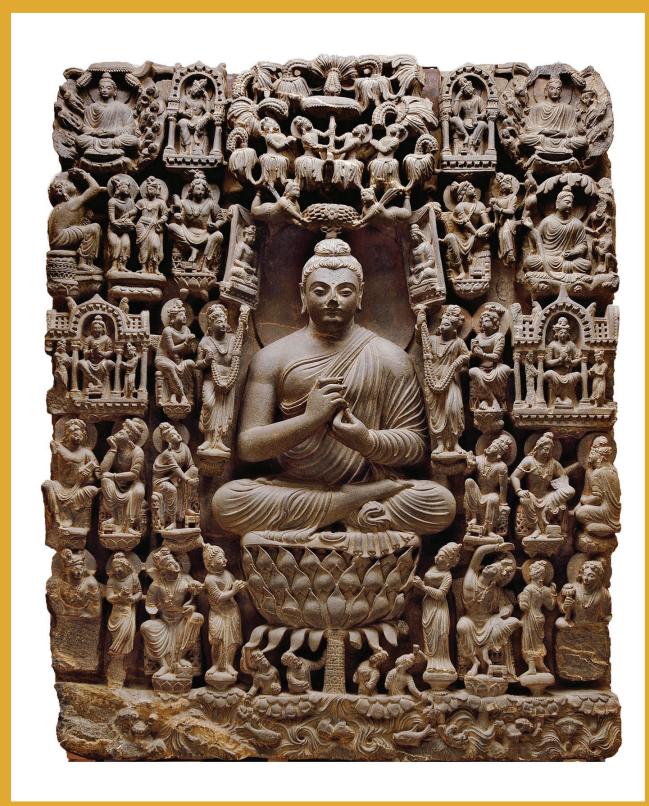


# BUDDHIST HERITAGE TRAIL PAKISTAN



An Initiative of the Government of Pakistan  
Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation





## Buddhist Heritage Trails

- Peshawar Museum Trail
- Swat Museum Trail
- Taxila Museum Trail
- Karakoram Highway / G.B Trail

## ATTRACTIOnS



1. Sphola Stupa
2. Peshawar Museum
3. Gor Khatri Peshawar
4. Shahboz Garhi Rock Edicts
5. Takht-i-Bahi Stupa and Monastery
6. Jamal Garhi Stupa and Monastery
7. Ghologay Rock Carving
8. Swat Museum
9. Jahanabad Buddha
10. Butkara i & iii
11. Shingardar Stupa
12. Amluk Dara Stupa
13. Gumbat Stupa
14. Rani got Stupa
15. Sirsukh
16. Bhamala Stupa
17. Jinna wali Dheri Site Remains
18. Badalpur Stupa
19. Mohra Muradu Stupa and Monastery
20. Piplan Stupa
21. Jaulian Buddhist Stupa and Monastery
22. Sirkap Remains
23. Taxila Museum
24. Dharmarajika Stupa and Monastery
25. Bhir Mound
26. Mankiala Stupa
27. Ban faqiran Stupa Islamabad
28. Ashoka Rock Edicts
29. Mansehra Rock Edicts
30. Shatial Rock Carving
31. Chilas Rock Carving Gilgit
32. Kargah Buddha
33. Manthal Buddha Rock, Sapporo

# GANDHARA CIVILISATION

Gandhara, the ancient Peshawar Valley and the cradle of Buddhist Civilisation, which gave birth to the famous Gandhara Art, is first mentioned in the Rigveda. It remained one of the provinces of the Achaemenian Empire according to a Darius period inscription of 6th century BC. Pushkalavati (Balahisar-Charsadda), its first capital from 6th century AD was invaded in 327 BC by Alexander the Great. Later, ruled in turn by Mauryans, Indo-Greeks, Scythians, Parthians and Kushans who established their capital at Pushapura or Peshawar in 1st century AD. In 7th century AD, the Shahi Dynasty established its capital at Hund, which remained their centre till the invasions of Ghaznavids in 998 AD, hence ending the rule of Gandhara. The sites and antiquities of Takht-i-Bhai, Sahri Bahol, Jamal Gahi, Rani Gut, Aziz Dheri, Butkara, Saidu Stupa, Andan Dheri, Chat Pat, Dam Kot, Khanpur and the monasteries in the Taxila Valley provided richest collection of the Gandhara Art to the Peshawar, Mardan, Pushkalavati, Taxila, Swat and Dir museums through the excavations by British, Italian and Pakistani scholars.

# GANDHARA ART

The cosmopolitan art of Gandhara with influence from Greeks Romans, Indians and local artists, appeared in this region in the 1st century BC, strengthened in the 1st, flourished till 5th and lingered on till 8th century AD. The purpose was the propagation of Buddhism through images carved and made in stone, stucco, terracotta and bronze, mostly enshrined in stupas and monasteries. Thousands of such stupas were mentioned by the Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang, who visited Gandhara in 6th century AD. The main focus of the art was Buddha's life stories and individual images, his previous birth stories (or jatakas) and Bodhisattvas (future Buddhas). Post enlightenment Buddhas. The most important is the historic Buddha and all episodes from his birth to death are beautifully and liberally carved in a fascinating manner. The artists, inspired by the personality of Buddha, took motifs and technology from Greeks, Romans and Persians which gave Buddha and eternal life.

The life stories of Buddha are carved according to the Buddhist text. These were composed during the time of Emperor Kanishka in Peshawar. In fact, the sculptors of Gandhara, transformed the Buddhist Mahayana religious text and philosophy into stone thus making it more romantic whilst providing a base for the expansion of the religion towards the Far East via Silk Route into China and beyond through pilgrims and traders. These sculptures were fixed to the bases, drums and stairs of the Stupas, around which the worshipers circumambulated. Also, the harmika i.e. the solid box in square above the dome of the Stupa was carved on all sides with life stories of Buddha. The stories were chiselled on stone tablets and fixed to the stupa inside which relics of Buddha were kept in a casket for worship. Indeed, the Gandhara Art, mainly a product of land under the Kushana rulers, is far more alluring and intricate than the contemporary Mathura Art of India in comparison.

# BUDDHIST HERITAGE TRAIL

Pakistan, the crucible of many cultures and civilisations from the Stone Age Sites to the British era has historical remains scattered all over the country. However, the most popular are the Indus Valley and Gandhara Civilisations. Almost all the major museums of the world have pieces of Gandhara Art exhibited in their galleries. For the convenience of visitors interested to explore the Buddhist Heritage, we have developed the following four trails:

- a. Taxila and surroundings (Punjab)
- b. Peshawar and surrounding (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)
- c. Swat and surroundings (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)
- d. Karakorum Highway & Gilgit Baltistan

Some of the most important sites on these heritage trails are mentioned on next pages.



## Sphola Stupa

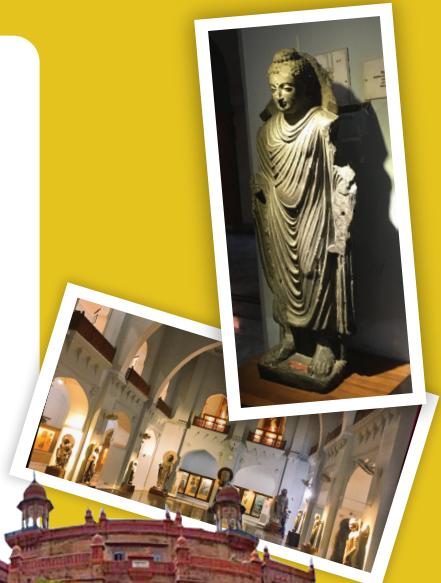
The stupa is a 2nd century Buddhist monument in Zarai village near Jamrud Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It is a reminder of the great Kushan Empire and Buddhism nexus which is often depicted in Gandhara artefacts. In fact, Gandhara sculptures were excavated at this very stupa and are now housed in the museum in Peshawar. In their wake came Buddhist missionaries and pilgrims in response to the intense religious revival occasioned by Kanishka's patronage. Several Buddhist monasteries nestled within the folds of the Khyber Pass offered haven. Even in ruin the Khyber's Sphola stupa proclaims the glory of its day.

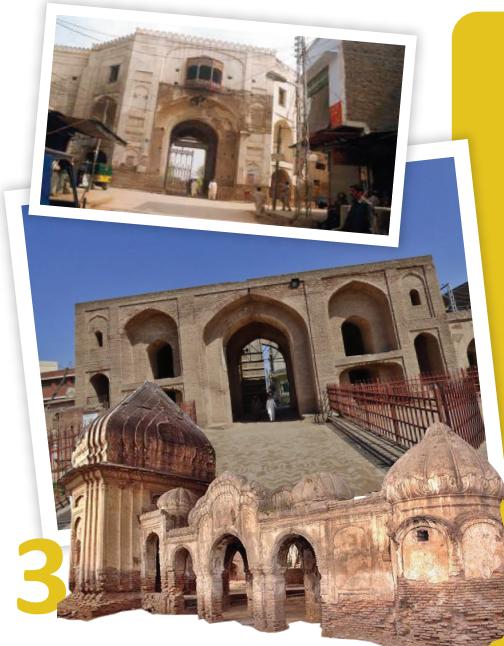
## Peshawar Museum

The Peshawar Museum is located in Peshawar, capital of Province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Museum is notable for its collection of Buddhist artwork dating from the ancient Gandhara Empire. The museum was set up in November 1907 to house the Gandharan Sculptures excavated by the British scholars from major Gandharan sites of Shah-Ji-Ki-Dheri Peshawar, Sahri Bahol, Takht-i-Bahi in the Mardan District and Jamal Garhi etc. The Peshawar Museum has the most important and largest collection of Gandhara Art in the world, including antiquities of Buddhist stone sculptures and panels, architectural elements, stucco, sculptures terracotta figurines, relic caskets, and toiletry objects. The selected collection is exhibited in the main hall, eastern and western galleries on the first floor of the museum and western side of the building, Although no Buddhist monument survives in Peshawar today, the Peshawar Museum holds one of the richest stores of Gandhara Buddhist art.

**Museum Timings:**  
SAT - THU  
9:00 AM - 05:00 PM  
Friday Closed.

**Entry Fees:**  
Pakistani Nationals : Rs. 10  
Foreigners : Rs. 300





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## Gor Khatri Peshawar

Gor Khatri is a public park in Peshawar, located within a Mughal-era caravanserai that was built at the site of ancient ruins. Located on one of the highest points of Peshawar city. The Gorakhnath Temple is situated in the centre, a network of cells and buildings in the southern and western side of the complex and a fire brigade building, which was built in 1917. The archaeological site of Gor khatri is located at the heart of walled city of old Peshawar. The city Museum is established inside the Gor khatri complex. The existing structure of the complex was established by Begum Jahanara, the beloved daughter of the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan in 1640 A.D. It was established as caravanserai for the merchants who came to Peshawar from central Asia and Afghanistan etc. The museum consists of two small galleries i.e., the Archaeological and Ethnological, while a third gallery has recently been added for the exhibition of the antiquities of the British time. The archaeological gallery of this museum represents a continuous profile of the Peshawar Valley in the form of excavated material recovered from the site of Gor khatri.

## Shahbaz Garhi

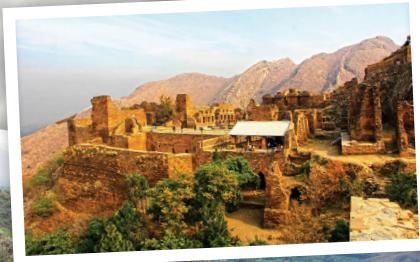
Shahbaz Garhi, or Shahbazgarhi, is a village and historical site located in Mardan District of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. The town was once a thriving Buddhist city surrounded by monasteries and stupas. The town is the location of ancient rock-inscriptions that are cut into two large rock boulders and written in the Kharosthi script. These curtain immense historical importance, as they appear to be the first examples of writing in South Asia. They were constructed during the 3rd Century BC (272-231 BC), during the reign of Ashoka, the famous Mauryan emperor, inscribed in the Kharoshthi script. The rock edicts were added to the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List on 30 January 2004 in the Cultural category.



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## Takht-i-Bahi Buddhist Monastery

"Throne of the water spring" commonly mispronounced as Takht-i-Bhai ("Brother throne"), is an Indo-Parthian archaeological site of an ancient Buddhist monastery in District Mardan, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. The site is considered amongst the most imposing relics of Buddhism in all of Gandhara and has been "exceptionally well-preserved". It is located around 500 feet atop a small hill around 2 km from village bazar. This Buddhist monastery was found in the 1st century and was in the use until the 7th century AD. Takht-i-Bahi was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1980. There are four main areas of the Takht-i-Bahi complex: The Stupa Court, a cluster of stupas located in a central courtyard. The monastic chambers, consisting of individual cells arranged around a courtyard, assembly halls, and a dining area.



5

## Jamal Garhi

Jamal Garhi is a small town located 13 kilometers from Mardan district at Katlang - Mardan road in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Jamal Garhi was a Buddhist monastery from the first until the fifth century. There is a beautiful monastery and main stupa, surrounded by chapels closely packed together. The ruins of Jamal Garhi were first discovered by the British explorer and archaeologist Sir Alexander Cunningham in 1848. In 1871, the site was excavated by Lieutenant Cromten, who unearthed a large number of Buddhist sculptures which are now part of the collections of the British Museum and the Indian Museum in Calcutta. At the monastery a kharoshthi inscription was also discovered which is now kept in Peshawar Museum.

6



7



## Ghalegay Rock Carvings

On the way to Saidu Sharif in Swat district there is a statue of Buddha sculptured in a rock on the right side of the main road. There are also some remnants in a cave beside this statue.



## Swat Museum

Swat Museum is located on main Mingora-Saidu Sharif road. This museum has a huge collection of Gandhara sculptures from the Buddhist sites in Swat. The original museum was constructed by DOAM with the contribution of the Wali Swat and the Italian Mission in 1958, when a twin Museum was inaugurated in Rome (Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale).

The present building of the museum has been designed by Italian architects Ivano Marati and Candida Vassallo, and set up in collaboration with an engineer from the University of Naples Federico II and engineers from the University of Engineering and Technology, Peshawar.



### Museum Timings:

SAT - THU  
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
Friday Closed.

### Entry Fees:

Pakistani Nationals : Rs. 10  
Foreigners : Rs. 300



8

## Jehanabad Buddha

The huge image of a seated Buddha carved into a high rock face of reddish colour that rises on the hillside to the southwest of jehanabad (Shakhrai) village. It is situated at a distance of 5km to the N-E of Manglawar. This huge image of Buddha is also visible from the road, on the right side to Malamjaba. Due to its high position above the narrow terrace, it is well preserved except the nose seems to have been damaged. The Buddha figure is about 7 meters in height and is certainly the most impressive piece of sculpture to be seen in Gandahara region back to 7- 8th century A.D. Apart from these Gandharan Sites, there are several other remains alongside the Karakoram Highway (Old Silk Route). Shatial and Chillas Rock Carvings, Kargah Buddha in Gilgit, Sadpara Buddha in Skardu and Ganish Rock Carvings are the most significant and prominent footprints of Buddhism in this area.



## Shingardar Stupa

The largest stupa of the Indian subcontinent is located in village Shingardar (a village between Ghalegay and Barikot) on way to Said Sharif, Swat. This stupa is a remnant of Buddhist era, and is one of the many ancient monuments in the Swat Valley. It was built by Uttarasa, an ancient king of Swat. The stupa structure is made out of large stones and layers of thin slate.



## Butkara i & ii

The Butkara Stupa is an important Buddhist stupa near Said Sharif, the capital of Swat. It may have been built by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka, but it is generally dated slightly later to the 2nd century BC. The stupa was enlarged on five occasions during the following centuries, every time by building over, and encapsulating, the previous structure. The stupa was excavated by an Italian mission to learn about the various steps of the construction and enlargements. The mission established that the stupa was "monumentalized" by the addition of Hellenistic architectural decorations during the 2nd century BC.

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## Amluk Dara Stupa

Amluk-Dara stupa is located in the Swat valley and is a part of Gandhara civilization at Amluk-Dara. The stupa is believed to have been built in the third century. The stupa was first discovered by a Hungarian-British archaeologist Sir Aurel Stein in 1926. It was later studied by Domenico Facchina in the 60s and 70s.

The foundation of the stupa is a square plinth about 4 meters thick. This is surmounted by a hemispherical dome measuring 7 meter in height and 21 meters in diameter, making it visible for miles around it.



## Gumbat Stupa

Gumbat Stupa is situated 9 kilometres south of Birkot (locally known as Barikot) in the Kandag Valley. This is one of the best preserved stupas of Swat. It consists of a cell of about 12 feet square with windows. It is surrounded on all sides by a narrow passage intended to walk around sacred images while worshipping. Before Gumbat is a large building known as Kanjar Kot, meaning Dancer's Mansion. The place is beautiful but it is not advisable to walk there without the help of locals. There is a hike of 30 minutes from the road to the stupa. Besides the remains of the stupa, there are some remains of the monastery as well.

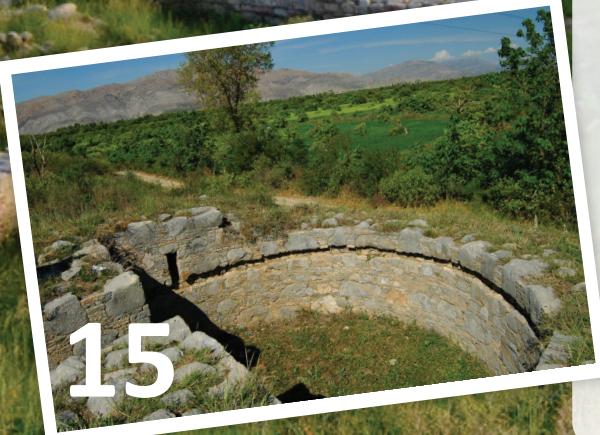


## Rani Got Buddhist Ruins

Rani Gat (the queen of stones in Pashto) is a 2500-year-old Buddhist archaeological site belonging to the Gandahara civilization located in district Buner of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Rani Gat is a good evidence of the Buddhist past of the area. The site is located on top of a hill, accessible by climbing the stairs constructed by the Japanese. The main attractions include; Stupas, a big rock erected by the ancient people at some distance that they probably used to worship. The city or the town was beautifully designed and stones from the local mountains have been extensively used. Rani Gat is easily accessible through M1 and N35. It is about 20 km away from Swabi city and 100 km from Peshawar and Islamabad.



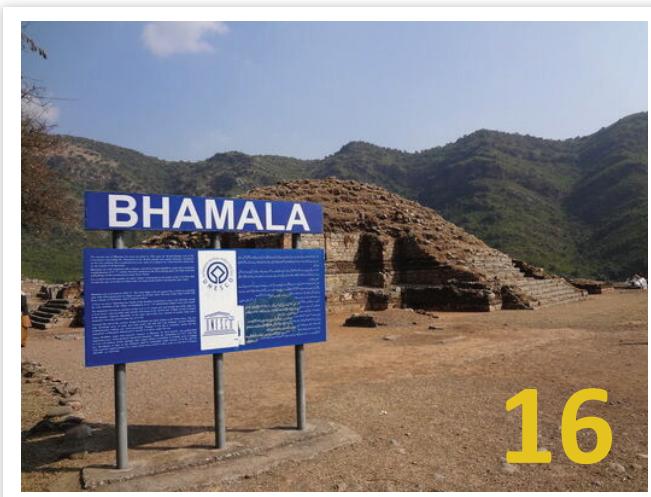
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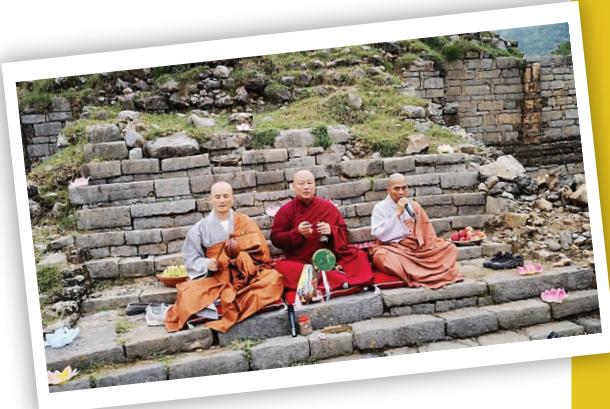
## Sirsukh

Founded in the 2nd half of the 1st century CE, the Kushan city of Sirsukh was probably established either to shift the populace away from the earthquake ruined remains of Sirkap, or to establish a new capital to testify to the Kushan conquest. The site has not been properly excavated due to local farming in the area which would need to be heavily disrupted in order to facilitate the excavations. However, the narrow strip of fortifications around the rivulet which hugs the walls on one side have revealed coin hoards of not just the Kushan rulers but also dating to the time of the Mughal emperor Akbar, showing that the city continued to function at least 1000 years after its original foundation.



## Bhamala Stupa

Bhamala is situated at the very head of the Haro valley on the east and lies on the north-eastern route towards Mansehra, about 16 Km to the east of Sirsukh. On the three sides it is protected by the river Haro which at this point sweeps in sharp bends around its base, and on its fourth side are the hills. The monastic establishment came into existence in the 4th or 5th century. It consists of a well-built monastery on the east, almost of the same pattern as seen at Jaulian with the main stupa on the west, surrounded by a number of votive stupas and chapels. The main stupa is unique, having a cruciform plan, consisting of a tall square base for the dome above with offset projections for flights of steps on all four sides. The core of the stupa is built of heavy blocks of limestone, laid in regular courses, with small pebbles and mud filling, while the facing is of semi-ashlar masonry.



# 17



## Jinna Wali Dheri Site

The site is located 10 km to the north east of Taxila museum near the village Bhera and on the left bank of river Haro. The monastery is square in plan and consists of 17 cells and two entrances. Main entrance of the monastery is towards west, which leads to the main stupa and the backside passage in the eastern side. Floor of the monastery was found five meters below the surface of the mound and in the middle of the monastery 40 x 23 x 8 cm water tank lined with burnt bricks.

Stupa is square in plan measuring 10 x10 meters with elongated staircase towards east, base of the stupa is decorated with Corinthian plasters on regular intervals, space between the pilasters was once adorned with images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas. Main stupa is flanked by two small votive stupas which are also square in plan, floor of the stupa court is paved with dressed lime stone and circumambulation path (pradakshinaya) was plastered with lime, traces of which are still visible. Stupa court is surrounded by the row of chapels of varied sizes. A fair quantity of minor antiquities, like coins of the Kushan dynasty including Kanishka, Vasudeva, Kidara Kushans and one silver coin of the White Huns, glass and shell bangles, stone and terra-cotta beads, earthenware storage jars, bowls and small spouted pots, metal objects consisting of large copper bells, iron arrow heads, fragments of daggers and spear heads and nails stucco heads of Buddha and Bodhisattva were recovered from stupa area.

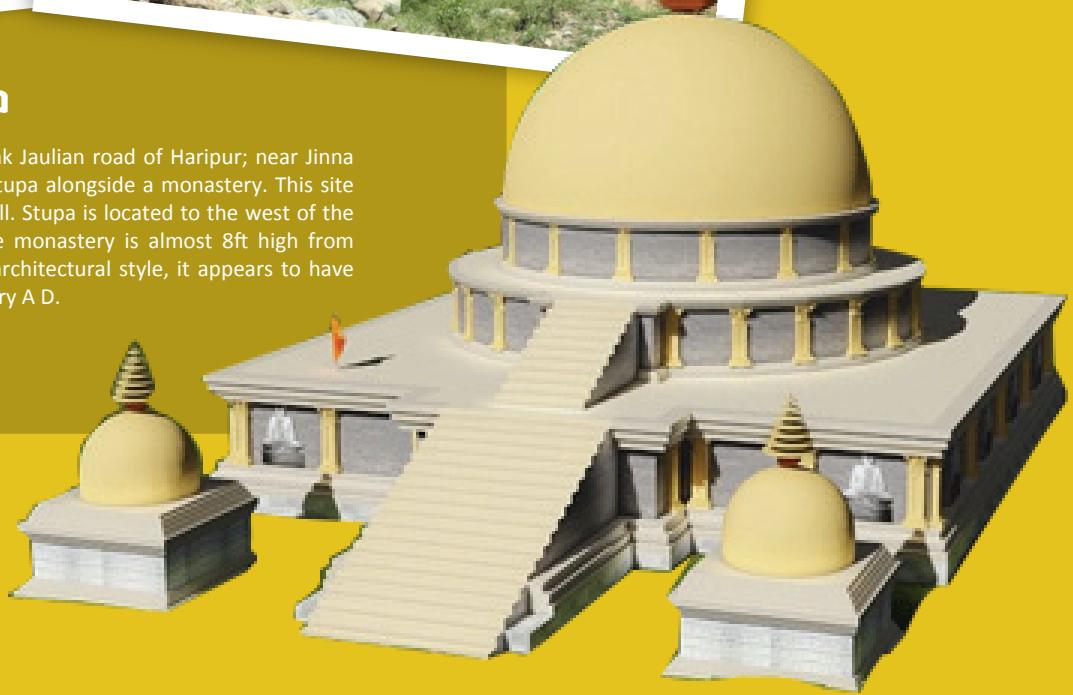
The most remarkable discovery from Jinna wali Dheri is the Buddhist mural paintings. Fragments of painting were found on the floor of the main entrance of the monastery. The paintings depict images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas in different attitudes and figures of worshipper. The paintings were executed on the thick mud plaster of the entrance wall. Black, red, sepia and blue colours were used on white surface of a fine layer of stucco. This type of mural paintings have not yet been discovered in any Buddhist sanctuary of Gandhara.





## Badalpur Stupa

Badalpur site is located on the Link Jaulian road of Haripur; near Jinna Wali Dheri. The site consists of a stupa alongside a monastery. This site was excavated by Sir John Marshall. Stupa is located to the west of the site with height of 25ft while the monastery is almost 8ft high from ground level. On the basis of its architectural style, it appears to have been built between the 3rd to 5th century A.D.



## Mohra Moradu Monastery

The ruins of Mohra Moradu lies about 1.6 kilometres to the south-east of the city of Sirsukh at the back of the village of Mohra Moradu. When first discovered, both monastery and stupa were buried in a deep accumulation of detritus from the surrounding hills, the only part of the structures visible to the eye being about 1.5 meters of the ruined stupa, which in years gone by had been cut in twain by treasure-hunters in search of the relics.



Apparently, the whole surface of the structure up to the top of the drum was covered with figures. In the bays between the pilasters, and on the face of the pilasters themselves were series of Buddhas ranged one above the other. Among the many detached heads, found round the base of this stupa and now displayed in the museum, It is standing at a height of 3.6 meters and is circular in plan, its plinth being divided into five tiers, with elephants and Atlantis alternating in the lowest tier, and Buddhas seated in niches alternating with pilasters in the tiers above.



**20**  
PIPLAN

## Pipplan Stupa

Pippalan Stupa lies at the foot of the hills between Mohra Moradu and Jaulian, about 365 metres south of the road leading to the Jaulian monastery. The remains are of two periods. To the east, is a courtyard of a monastery dating from late Parthian or early Kushan times and comprising an open quadrangle in the centre with ranges of cells on its four sides. In the middle of the courtyard is the basement of a square stupa facing north, and close beside it the ruins of three other smaller stupas. The monastery is built of heavy semi-ashlar masonry and comprises a court of cells on the north, with a hall of assembly, kitchen and refectory on the south.



## Jaulian Buddhist Stupa & Monastery

It is a stupa and monastery site which dates back to 2nd century AD, it has numerous chapels and votive stupas in its two courts. It is located on the top of a mountain, its location is considered one of the most picturesque in the region. Other sites include the Mohra Moradu complex, Jinna Wali Dheri and the recently re-excavated Bhamala stupa (a rare cruciform stupa).



**21**





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## Taxila Museum

Taxila remained a hub of Buddhism for centuries, a centre of learning, an urban metropolis and a meeting point of various cultures, namely the Achaemenids, Greeks, Mauryans, Scythians, Parthians, Kushans, Huns and eventually the Muslims. Taxila is located in the province of Punjab, about 30 km north of Islamabad. The archaeological region of Taxila is composed of 18 sites of significant cultural value which were inducted as a whole into the UNESCO world heritage umbrella in 1980. The city of Taxila, was a renowned site of Buddhist Gandhara, especially after Ashoka's rule and in the 1st century Kushan era. The civilization flourished during the time of Buddhism in this area is known as Gandhara Valley Civilization.

### Museum Timings:

Summers: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Winters: 9:00 PM - 4:00 PM

First Monday of Every Month Closed.

### Entry Fees:

Pakistani Nationals : Rs. 20

Foreigners : Rs. 500

## Sirkap Remains

The 2nd ancient city of Sirkap is thought to have been formally established by the Bactrian Greeks in the 2nd century BC. The city has been attributed to the Greeks not only because of the archaeological remains but also because of various urban planning factors. Some areas of importance include the Royal Residence, Sun Temple, Apsidal Temple, Double Headed Eagle Stupa and the Jain Temple

23





## Dharmarajika Stupa & Monastery

This is the largest Buddhist establishment in the Taxila region and dates from the time of Ashoka, the great Mauryan emperor who united India in the 3rd century BC and is known in some Buddhist sources as Dharmraj, the name which the site itself is associated with. It is firmly believed by most scholars that Dharmarajika is one of the locations where the remains of the Buddha were buried and this makes it a relic depository stupa.



## Bhir Mound

The archaeological remains of this, the 1st city, exist south of the existing Taxila Museum covering an area of approximately 1200 x 730 yards and consist of 4 levels ranging from the 5th-6th century BC (Achaemenid period) to the 2nd century BC in the Indo-Bactrian Greek period.



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## Manikiala Stupa

The Mankiala Stupa is a 2nd-century Buddhist stupa near the village of Tope Mankiala, in the Punjab province. The stupa was built to commemorate the spot, where according to the Jataka tales, an incarnation of the buddha called Prince Sattva sacrificed himself to feed seven hungry tiger cubs.

## Ban Faqiran Stupa

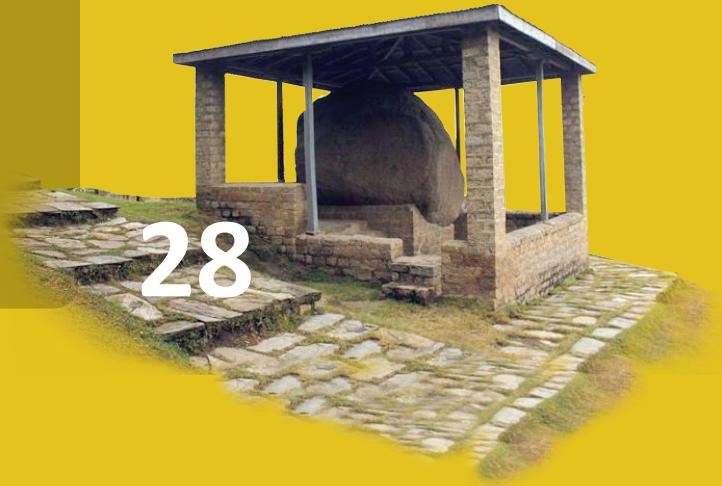
Ban Faqiran is Islamabad's oldest historical site, located at the top of the Margalla Hills. The archaeological remains of Ban Faqiran, date back to the 2nd to 5th century. Around two kilometers from the Buddhist caves in Shah Allah Ditta, the Ban Faqiran complex was thought to be a watchtower. The Ban Faqiran stupa served as a milestone for travelers, mostly pilgrims, on the way to the 3 BC Dharmarajika monastery that housed some remains of Lord Buddha. Built by the Maurayan King Ashoka, Dharmarajika is a world heritage site that can be seen from Ban Faqiran, about two and a half kilometers away in the Taxila valley.



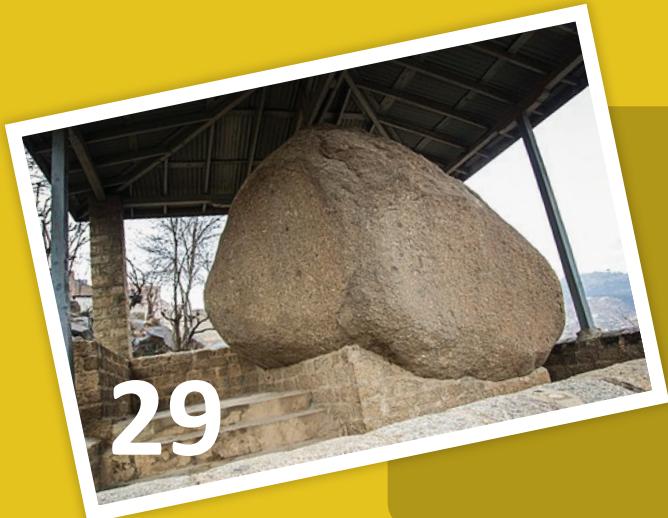
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## Ashoka Rock Edicts

In the course of extending his empire, Ashoka once experienced great remorse over the grief he had inflicted upon a city in 260 B.C. He vowed to put an end to misery in his empire and issued a series of edicts to this effect, with orders to his governors to post them at prominent places. Fourteen edicts were issued, and sometime after 257 B.C. seven varying versions were carved on massive boulders throughout the empire. The two most complete versions to survive are in Gandhara. One on natural boulders near Shahbazgarhi, 16 kilometer east of Mardan; another on three boulders on the outskirts of Mansehra, east of the Indus River, 30 km north of Abbottabad.



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## Mansehra Rock Carving

Mansehra Rock Edicts are fourteen edicts of the Mauryan emperor Ashoka, inscribed on rocks in Mansehra in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The edicts are cut into three boulders and date back to 3rd century BC are written in the ancient Indic script of Gandhara culture, Kharosthi. The edicts mention aspects of Ashoka's dharma. The site was submitted for inclusion in the World Heritage Sites and is currently on the tentative list. The site is located near the Karakoram Highway on the ancient Silk Route. Mansehra Rock Edicts are one of the 33 inscriptions of Edicts of Ashoka describing expansion of Buddhism and his Law of Piety or dharma. The fourteen edicts contain text in the Kharosthi script which is an ancient script used in the Gandhara.

30

## Shatial Rock Carving

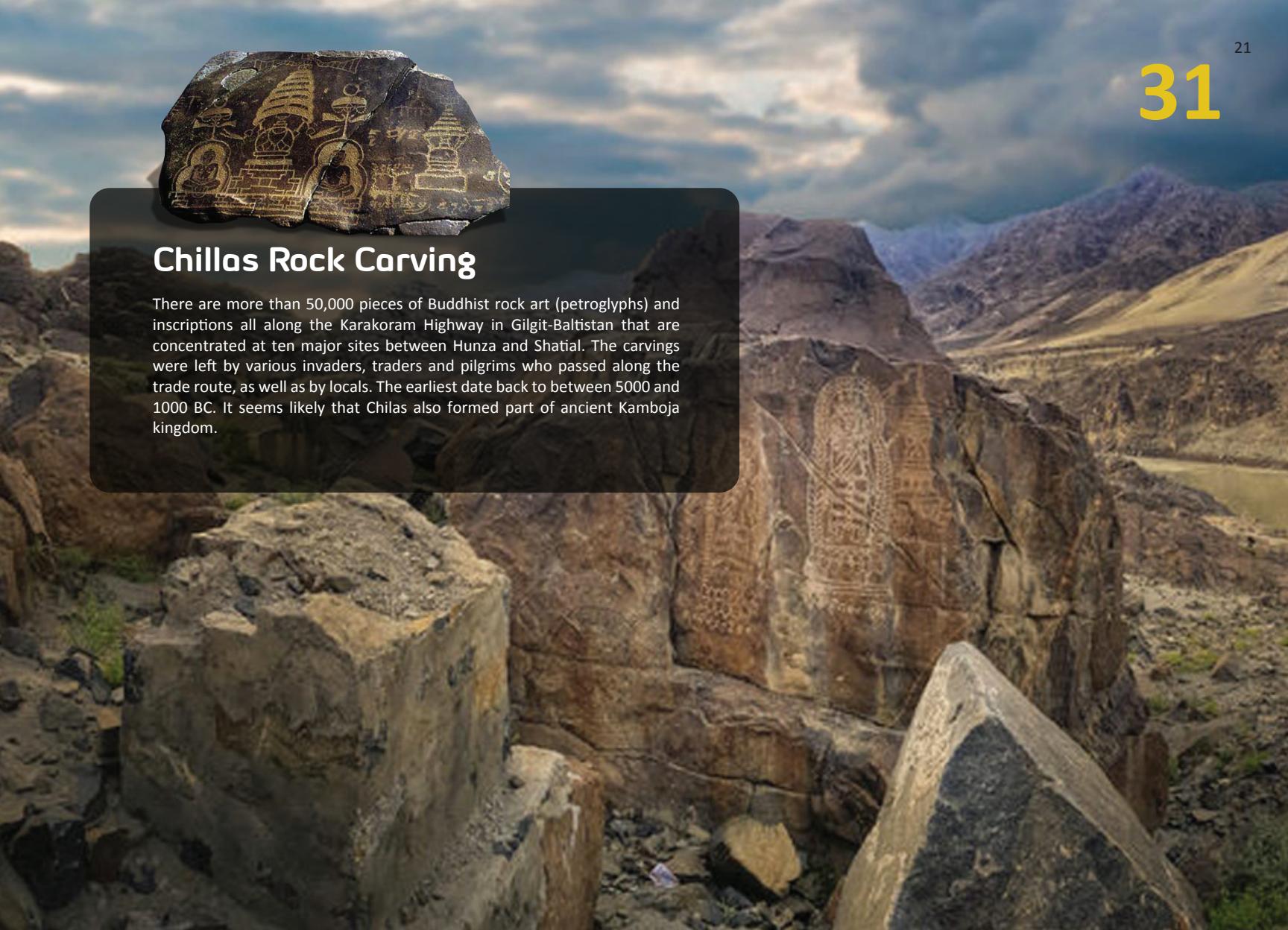
Shatial is a small town located on the Karakorum Highway (KKH) and administratively falls in the Upper Kohistan district in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, which is known for Buddhist and Zoroastrian symbolism and hundreds of ancient scripts especially Kharosthi, Sogdian, Brahmi etc. Even some Chinese inscriptions were recorded from this site. A huge stupa engraving covers the face of the boulder, flanked by a few votive stupas. Near the huge stupa is a Kharosthi inscription from the 5th century AD. The inscription records the name of the artist of the stupa as "religiously devout daughter of Jikhodarkha".





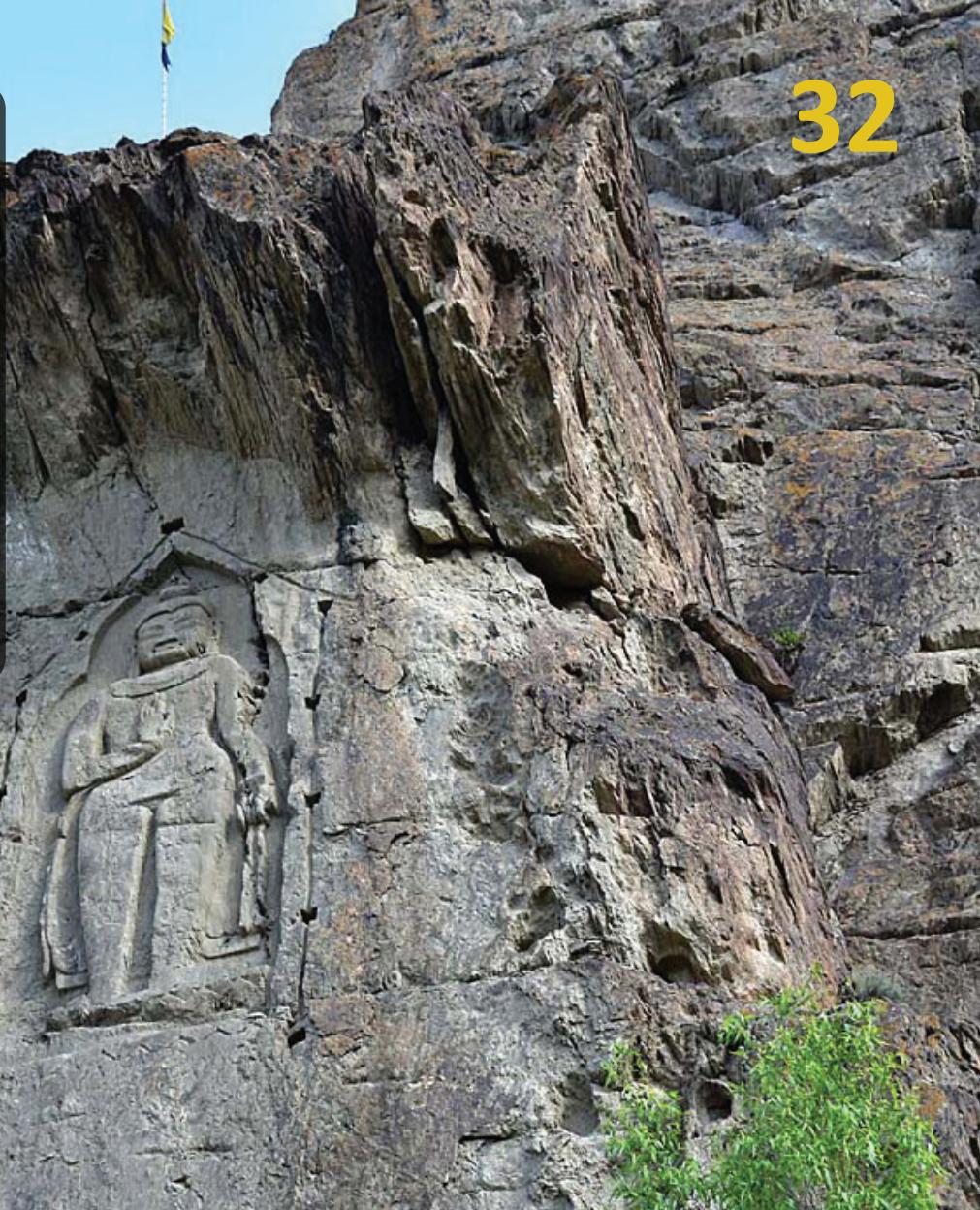
## Chillas Rock Carving

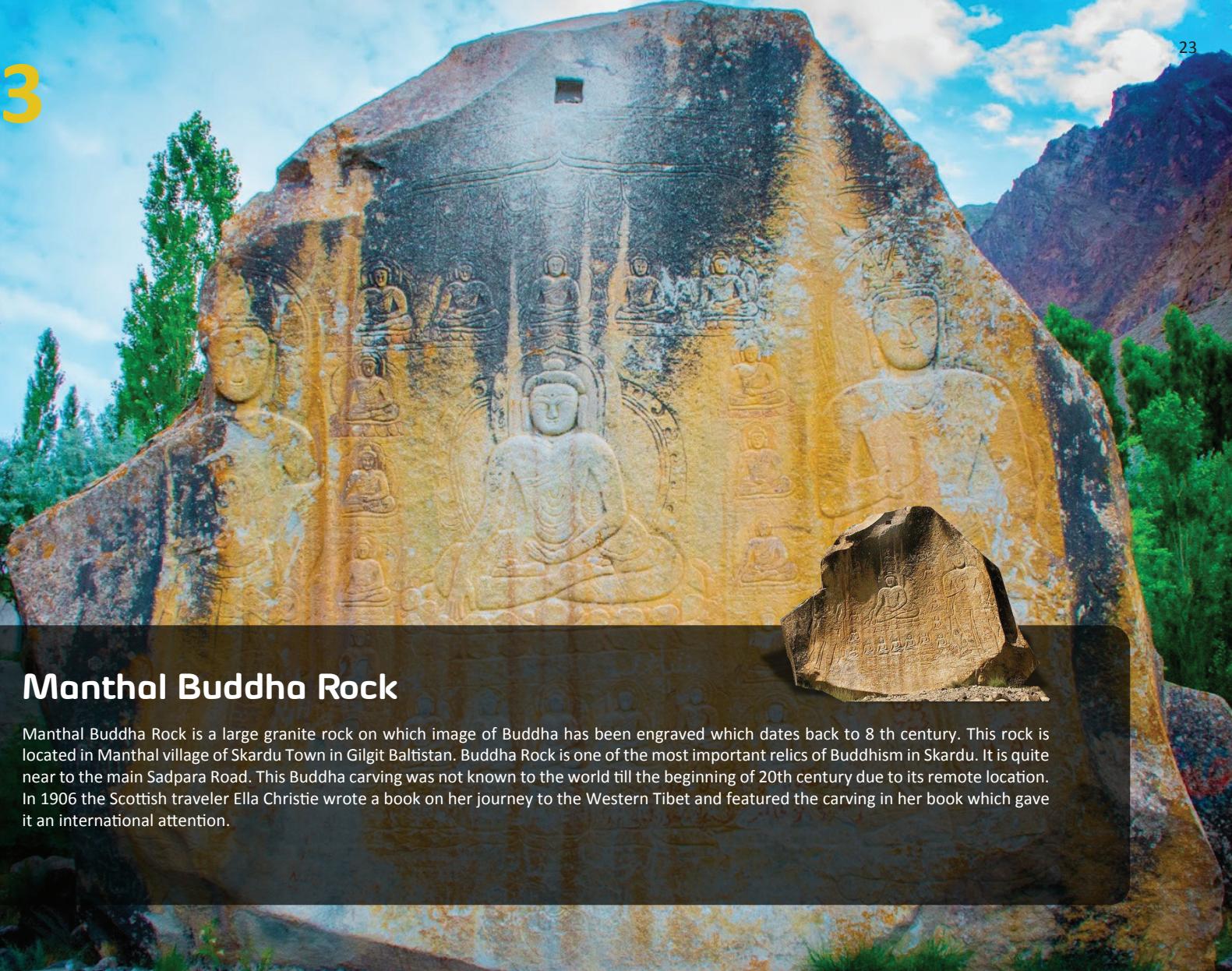
There are more than 50,000 pieces of Buddhist rock art (petroglyphs) and inscriptions all along the Karakoram Highway in Gilgit-Baltistan that are concentrated at ten major sites between Hunza and Shatial. The carvings were left by various invaders, traders and pilgrims who passed along the trade route, as well as by locals. The earliest date back to between 5000 and 1000 BC. It seems likely that Chilas also formed part of ancient Kamboja kingdom.



## Kargah Buddha

Kargah Buddha is an archaeological site located about 9.7 km outside of Gilgit. It is a carved image of a large standing Buddha, some 50 feet high, in the cliff-face in Kargah Nala. The carving, which is in a style also found in Baltistan, probably dates to the 7th century. From the 3rd century to the 11th century, Gilgit was the center of Buddhism. Nearby, about 400 metres (1,300 ft) upstream, a Buddhist monastery and three stupas containing Sanskrit manuscripts were excavated in 1931. It is estimated that the carving was completed in the 7th century. It was discovered in 1938–39, following the innovation of supposed Gilgit manuscripts in 1931.



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## Manthal Buddha Rock

Manthal Buddha Rock is a large granite rock on which image of Buddha has been engraved which dates back to 8 th century. This rock is located in Manthal village of Skardu Town in Gilgit Baltistan. Buddha Rock is one of the most important relics of Buddhism in Skardu. It is quite near to the main Sadpara Road. This Buddha carving was not known to the world till the beginning of 20th century due to its remote location. In 1906 the Scottish traveler Ella Christie wrote a book on her journey to the Western Tibet and featured the carving in her book which gave it an international attention.



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## Useful Contacts

- Peshawar Museum (+92) 91 9210985
- Swat Museum (+92) 91 9210985
- Taxila Museum (+92) 51 9315477
- Directorate of Archaeology KP (+92) 51 9222752
- Punjab Directorate of Archaeology (+92) 42 99332672

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Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation  
Kohsar Block (Ground Floor), Pak Secretariat, Islamabad.



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