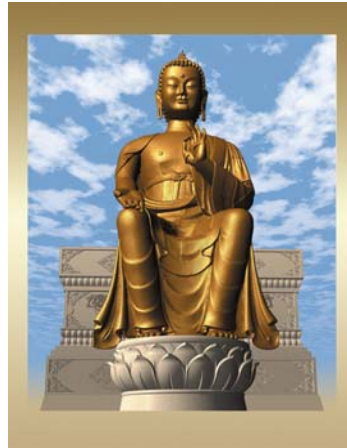


**ANNOUNCEMENT  
THE MAITREYA PROJECT KUSHINAGAR  
DECEMBER 2013**



*“The very name ‘Maitreya’ means loving-kindness. In today's world, we really need loving-kindness.”  
– His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

Maitreya Project Trust is thrilled to announce that, on 13th of December 2013, the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh State, The Honourable Shri Akhilesh Yadav, will preside over a Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony on Maitreya Project land in Kushinagar. Venerable Lama Zopa Rinpoche and the Board of Trustees of the Maitreya Project Trust are State Guests of Honour. In attendance will be State Ministers, and Senior Government Officials.

Throughout this week, preparations have been frantically going on 24 hours a day in Kushinagar which is preparing to host Government Ministers, Senior Government Officials, dignitaries, and a crowd of about 100,000 people. State Government are offering a helicopter to convey Rinpoche and Trustees from Lucknow to the Kushinagar site and back again after the Ceremony.

भगवान बुद्ध की महापरिनिर्वाण स्थली कुशीनगर में

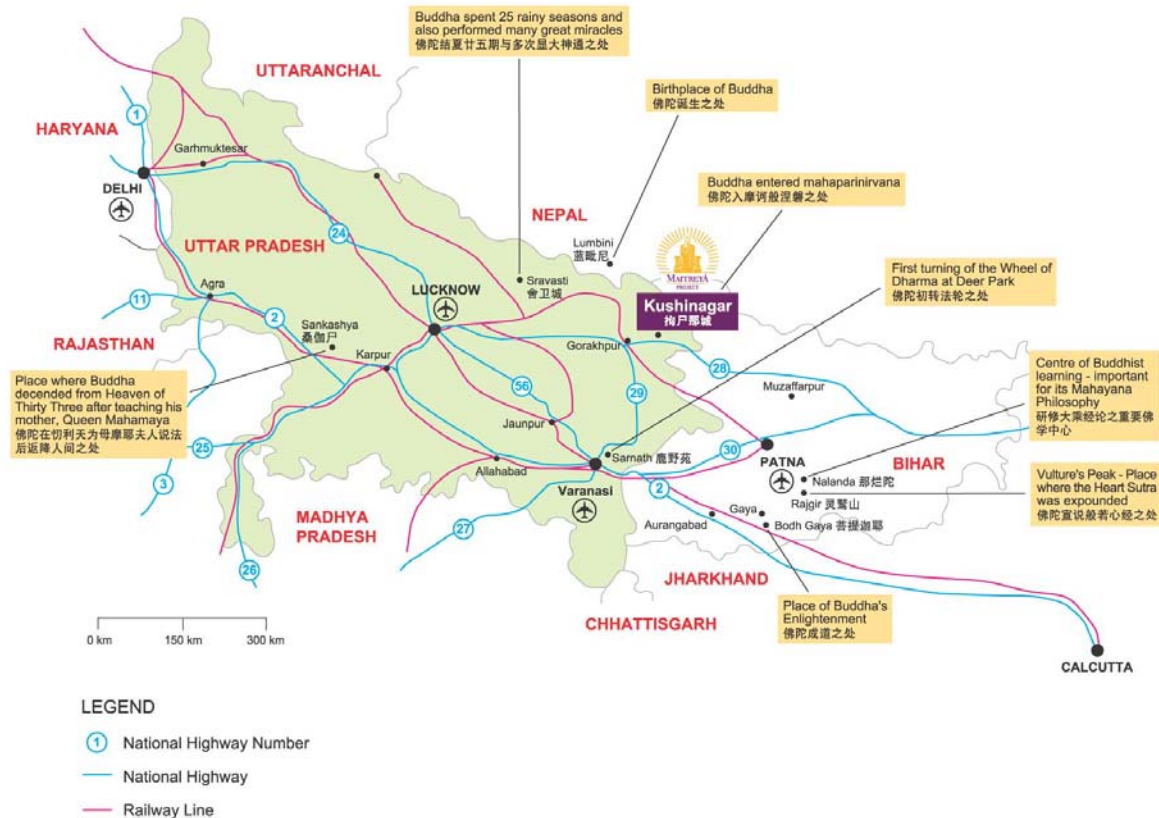
**मैत्रेय परियोजना का**

श्री अखिलेश यादव मा. मुख्यमंत्री उ.प्र. के कर कमलों द्वारा शिलान्यास  
गरिमामयी उपस्थिति - परम् पूज्य रिनपोषे लामा ज़ोपा  
दिनांक 13 दिसम्बर 2013, स्थान - कुशीनगर

मा. मुलायम सिंह यादव  
अखिलेश यादव  
मा. मुख्यमंत्री उ.प्र.

परम् पूज्य  
रिनपोषे लामा ज़ोपा  
मैत्रेय स्वामिनी  
निर्वाण प्राप्त परम् पूज्य लामा रिशे

Kushinagar is one of the 4 most holy Buddhist pilgrimage sites, being the place where Shakyamuni Buddha passed away and was cremated. Historically Kushinagar was a flourishing Buddhist city and home to a number of the great Buddhist monastic universities. Ancient textual references predicts that when Maitreya, the future Buddha, appears on earth, it will be in Kushinagar.



For more than 12 years, the Maitreya Project has worked with State Government of Uttar Pradesh in planning construction of a magnificent statue of Maitreya, the future Buddha in this key Buddhist pilgrimage site in India. The Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony is the culmination of tireless work by many involved at Government, and Project levels in India and overseas.

The following is the text of a message Lama Zopa Rinpoche received from His Holiness Dalai Lama to be read out at the ceremony;

*“I extend my greetings and best wishes to the Government and people of Uttar Pradesh.*

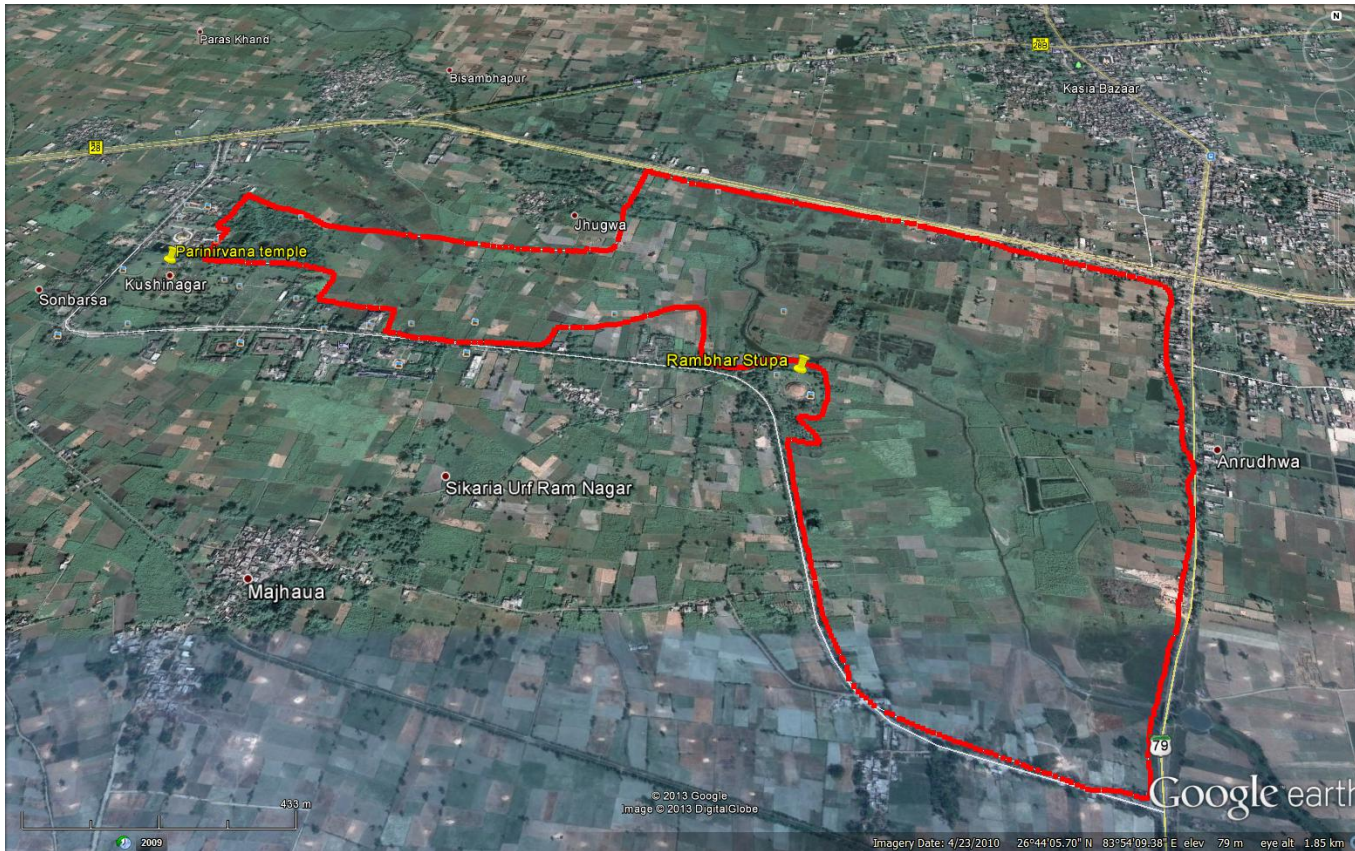
*About 15 years ago, the Government of Uttar Pradesh approached me with a request that the Maitreya Project to construct a large statue of Maitreya Buddha, come to Uttar Pradesh. I discussed this with Zopa Rinpoche and we agreed that Kushinagar would be the most favorable location for the statue.*

*A long time has passed but I am happy to learn that the Government of Uttar Pradesh has kindly decided to provide land for the Maitreya Project to fulfill its purpose. I would like to express my gratitude to the Honorable Chief Minister and offer prayers for the success of the Maitreya Project – that it inspires peace, harmony, and goodwill throughout the entire world.*

*I am grateful to the Maitreya Project and Zopa Rinpoche for undertaking this work. I understand that construction of a clinic to provide free medical services and the school will also be part of the larger project and therefore of additional benefits to the local people.*

*With my prayers and good wishes*

*December 10, 2013 “*



Google Earth screen shot showing Maitreya Project boundary, the Parinirvana Temple and the Rambhar Stupa.

On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony will signify the handing over of approximately 275 acres of land State Government has generously provided for the site of the Maitreya Project.



Parinirvana temple and Rambhar Stupa

The land is immediately adjacent to the Parinirvana Temple denoting the place where Buddha Shakyamuni passed into Parinirvana, and the Rambhar Stupa which marks the holy site of Buddha's cremation.

For the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony, a colorful cultural program will include performances by the Tibetan Dance Troupe from Lower Dharamsala. Monks and nuns from Kopan, Root Institute staff, and attendees from the recent Kopan course are assisting hundreds of local worker with preparations.

Realizing the great potential of the Maitreya Project, and to further public benefit, the UP State Government invited the Maitreya Project to locate at Kushinagar.

The State Government recognized that the Maitreya Project will have a major positive impact on the development of the Kushinagar area, as well as on tourism in India, Uttar Pradesh, and on Buddhism, and peace in the world.

Together, the Maitreya Project and the UP State Government have created a comprehensive plan for development of the area surrounding the Project administered by the Kushinagar Special Area Development Authority.



Besides the core project of setting up of the Maitreya Statue, Maitreya Project will engage in a range of social programs aimed specifically at providing employment, education, and healthcare.

Maitreya Project Kushinagar will proceed in parallel with Maitreya Project in Bodhgaya where a statue of Maitreya Buddha is being planned in accordance with Lama Yeshe's original wish - the wish to build a large Maitreya statue in order to repay the kindness of Mother India where Buddhism began, which has so generously provided refuge for the Tibetan community, and to continuously inspire the essential human qualities of loving-kindness

For updates and to follow progress please return often to;

<http://fpmt.org/maitreya/>

or email

[maitreya@fpmt.org](mailto:maitreya@fpmt.org)