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Competitive Exams: The Buddha

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- The Buddha also known as Sakyamuni or Tathagata.
- Born in 563 BC on the Vaishakha Poornima Day at Lumbini (near Kapilavastu) in Nepal.
- His father Suddhodana was the Saka ruler.
- His mother (Mahamaya, of Kosala dynasty) died after 7 days of his birth. Brought up by stepmother Gautami.
- Married at 16 to Yoshodhara. Enjoyed the married life for 13years and had a son named Rahula.
- After seeing an old man, a sick man, a corpse and an ascetic, he decided to become a wanderer.
- Left his palace at 29 in search of truth (also called 'Mahabhinishkramana' or The Great Renunciation) and wandered for 6 years.
- Attained 'Enlightenment' at 35 at Gaya in Magadha (Bihar) under the Pipal tree.
- Delivered the first sermon at Sarnath where his five disciples had settled. His first sermon is called 'Dharmachakrapracartan' or 'Turning of the Wheel of Law'
- Attained Mahaparinirvana at Kushinagar (identical with village Kasia in Deoria district of UP) in 483 BC at the age of 80 in the Malla republic.

Buddhist Councils

- First Council: At Rajgriha, in 483 BC under the Chairmanship of Mehakassaapa (king was Ajatshatru) . Divided the teachings of Buddha into two Pitakas-Vinaya Pitaka and Sutta Pitaka.
- Second Council: At Vaishali, in 383 BC under Sabakami (King was Kalasoka) . Followers divided into Sthavirmadins and Mahasanghikas.
- Third Council: At Pataliputra, in 250 BC under Mogaliputta Tissa (King was Ashoka) In this, the third part of the Tripitaka was coded in the Pali language.

- Fourth council: At Kashmir (Kundalvan) , in 72 AD under Vasumitra (King was Kanishka, Vice-Chairman was Ashwaghosha) . Divided Buddhism into Mahayana and Hinayana sects.

Buddhist Literature

1. Buddhist Literature: In Pali language.
2. Vinaya Pitaka: Rules of discipline in the Buddhist monasteries.
3. Sutta Pitaka: Largest, contains collection of Buddha's sermons.
4. Abhidhamma Pitaka: Explanation of the philosophical principles of the Buddhist religion

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