

## Twitter Thread by [Bharadwaj](#)



**Bharadwaj**  
[@BharadwajSpeaks](#)



**Did you know?**

**The Bamiyan Buddhas are famous throughout the world.**

**Did you know that the Bamiyan Buddhas had a gold covering until 9th century?  
They were adorned with precious gems.**

**Did you know that the Bamiyan Buddhas were built by a HINDU king?**

**[Thread]**

Who built Bamiyan Buddha?

There lies a painting of the king who sponsored the construction of Bamiyan Buddhas inside Bamiyan caves.

The name of the king who built Bamiyan Buddhas was Narendraditya Khingila(6th-7th century CE).

He was the same king who worshiped Gardez Ganesha

Khingila consecrated a temple for Ganesha in Gardez, Afghanistan.

The temple has not survived.

However, the Ganesha image has been moved out of Gardez and is now at Pir Rattan temple, Kabul (the same temple whose priest is Pandit Rajesh Kumar, the last Hindu of Afghanistan)

When Xuanzang visited Bamiyan (c. 629 CE) , the Buddhas were standing in full glory.

Xuanzang describes the larger standing Buddha as follows

-

"It is 140-150 meters high. It is of a dazzling gold color. It is resplendent with ornamentations of precious substances"

During this period, the clothes of Buddha were very brightly colored. The larger buddha was clothed in red and the smaller Buddha in white.

And this coloring survived until recently.

This is why Muslims named larger Buddha as "Surkh But"(red idol) and the smaller as "Khing But"

Bamiyan Buddhas once glowed in red, white and blue: say researchers

<https://t.co/Pcfn0tGoYY>

Dipankara Buddha from Mes Aynak, Afghanistan

This image would give us an idea as to how the Bamiyan Buddha may have looked like before it was damaged by invaders

However, there were originally three giant Buddhas in Bamiyan.

The third, reclining Buddha was largest of all. It was 1000 feet long.

Xuanzang says "Two li to the east of the city in a monastery, there is a lying statue of Buddha entering Nirvana, more than 1000 feet long"

What happened to the third Buddha?

This seems to be Parinirvana Buddha. He is depicted in a lying position. Consider this image of Buddha from Ajina Tepe in Tajikistan( Now in Dushanbe Museum).

The third Buddha of Bamiyan would have been similar in style but it was much larger

The third Buddha could have been destroyed by Islamic iconoclasts because a reclining Buddha is easier to destroy than a standing Buddha.

But it is also possible that the third Buddha is still hidden in a secret spot somewhere in Bamiyan

In this context, it must be mentioned that there is a statue of Buddha that still stands in Kakrak, Afghanistan just beside Bamiyan.

For some reason, it has not come to the notice of Taliban ( as yet)

According to Xuanzang, the ruler of the Bamiyan was a kshatriya.

Bamiyan was first captured by Islamic armies in 871. And then there were incessant attacks on the Buddhas.

Taliban only dealt final blow. Their predecessors tried to destroy Bamiyan Buddhas for 1200 years

The Saffarid ruler Ya'qub ibn Layth captured Bamiyan in 871 CE.

He destroyed several idols. But it was not easy to destroy Bamiyan Buddha.

The Bamiyan Buddhas were defaced by him

A very important thing needs to be said.

There was no "Afghanistan" during those days.

In fact, the early Muslim scholars considered Bamiyan as a part of India!

For example, the 10th century Arabic Scholar Al Nadim wrote that Bamiyan was a "frontier of India"

"Ascetics and devotees occupy Bamiyan. In Bamiyan, there are idols of Gold adorned with precious stones"

Al Nadim also mentioned that people used to make pilgrimage to Bamiyan from all parts of India